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MICA’s 63rd Annual Convention Canceled to Protect the Health and Safety of Its Members

It is with great reluctance that the Board of Directors is notifying you of its decision to cancel the 63rd Annual Spring Convention scheduled for June 22 – 25, 2020, at the Lodge of Four Seasons in Lake Ozark, Missouri, due to the current and future impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. As important as this convention is to you, our members, your safety and well-being is paramount to us. As such, we will not be rescheduling the convention. We are disappointed with we will not be able to “formally” thank Matt and Holly Hymer for their time and leadership this past year. We will delay Matt’s recognition until the October business meeting.

We do anticipate that our annual fall business meeting will go on as scheduled. We are looking forward to reconnecting with you in Omaha on October 15 & 16, 2020, at the Omaha Marriott Downtown.

This has not been an easy decision for us nor for the resort. The convention services executives were understanding of our need to cancel the convention, but shared with us how devastating this pandemic has been on their business as well. They had to lay off over 160 associates who were so looking forward to the conference season taking off in March, their usual time. They have lost all Group business from the second week of March thru May, and now their June group business is crumbling away every day. They continue to support their associates on lay off with farmer’s markets of product in stock, and they provide a dinner to go one night each week. They can’t wait to bring everyone back to work!

The Lodge of Four Seasons are automatically canceling all existing reservations. Each person with a room reservation are receiving an email confirmation of the room cancellation directly from the Lodge. There is no need for you to call the resort directly.

During the next couple of weeks, the MICA office will be issuing credit card refunds or refund checks for your convention registration, depending on your initial registration payment.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this process, please contact the MICA office.

Thank you for your continued support of and participation in MICA.

Sincerely,
Tom Shimerda
Executive Secretary of MICA
PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

TO: THE MICA MEMBERSHIP

I’ve had to make an amendment to my original letter that I have included below. I originally wrote this on April 14th, but we have had several developments since then. **After much discussion with the MICA executive committee and our legal counsel, the Board of Directors have made the difficult decision to cancel the upcoming spring conference scheduled for June 22nd-25th at The Lodge of the Four Seasons.**

Lodge of the Four Seasons has been very understanding of our predicament and have been fantastic to work with. They notified us that hotel reservations will be automatically canceled for the MICA Convention attendees who booked their rooms within MICA’s discounted room block and that they will email a notification of the cancellation to you.

This was just finalized this afternoon so I will have more details next month.

Figures. I will now go down in the history of MICA as being the only President to have their convention canceled......I think I will blame this on the Associate’s President, Robert Thompson. Way to go, Robert!!

Well, to say things have been interesting since my last letter would be an understatement! (see above!)

We have been very busy here at Midwest Materials making adjustments to almost all facets of our business. We have temporarily closed our lobby (we honestly do not have a lot of walk-in traffic) and made some changes to how deliveries to the shop are handled, but most of the changes have been to our field operations. Sanitizers for the guys, sanitizers for the tools, sanitizers for the trucks......we even resorted to making our own sanitizer as commercial products by and large are simply not available. Our kitchen here at the office has been turned into a laboratory! There is an endless list of entry procedures that have been enacted at various facilities, and we have had a few projects get delayed for 30 days or so but overall, we are operating as normal!

On that note, this is not the case for 20+ million Americans that filed for unemployment over the past 4 weeks. The effects of this virus on the heartbeat of this country, small businesses, has been immediate and will be felt for many years to come, assuming they are around to feel it. Many will not. This event is different in that this is a truly global crisis as no country is spared. Anything reliant on tourism, travel, hospitality, and entertainment for their growth are experiencing particularly large disruptions.

But as I have spoken about several times in these letters, do not obsess on the negative! It WILL consume you and drive you mad! During the 10+ years since my Dad has retired from the business; I’ve racked my brain trying to plan and anticipate all the things that could affect our business operations. **THIS IS NOT ONE OF THE SCENARIOS I EVER DREAMED OF!** I will admit, and Holly can confirm, that I have had numerous sleepless nights worrying about this virus and the future of my little company. Many nights I have come home exhausted; fell asleep in the recliner, headed to bed early and crashed hard, only to be wide awake a few hours later. Let me tell you there are some funky shows on the T.V. at 3am! Fear and panic will consume you, but only if you let it! Several times I have had to remind myself to take a deep breath, SLOW DOWN, analyze the situation, to allow me to then make a deliberate, informed decision on how to proceed, and go with it!

I’ve seen and read about how panic and fear has brought out the worst in some people. People thinking the world will end, bread and soup lines for everyone, total stock market crash, all kinds of silliness. You know of my disdain for the media and how they have contributed to the fear and helplessness of this situation. I found this the other day and thought I would share:

“The world has been through many viruses, world wars, financial panics, major natural disasters, huge spikes in inflation, terror attacks, and much, much more — but this is the virus that is going to end the world?? I think three things are contributing to all this negativity: social media, the news, and being stuck at home. Social media is toxic, the news is designed to scare you to keep you watching for ratings, and we’re all dealing with various amounts of stress being quarantined at home.”

Step away from the social media, step away from the news, take some precautions, and enjoy this wonderful thing called life.

Sincerely,
Matt Hymer
MICA President

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WHY IT’S IMPORTANT TO GET A GOOD NIGHT’S SLEEP DURING THE CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK

Cindy and I were watching the nightly news the other evening when the national news interviewed a sleep expert on the importance of good sleep habits during this time of self-isolation and the COVID-19 pandemic. We thought it would be good to share one doctor’s opinion on sleep. I searched the Internet and found the following article by Lisa Medalie. Lisa Medalie, PsyD, DBSM, is a behavioral sleep medicine specialist at the University of Chicago Medicine. She specializes in the treatment of chronic insomnia in adults and children and uses evidence-based behavioral strategies in that effort.

Anxieties related to loss of control and uncertainty are understandable as we shelter in place during the COVID-19 pandemic. While a natural fear response is par for the course, too much anxiety can be problematic. Instead of spending time and energy worrying, why not channel that energy into what you can control — self-care. Focusing on sleep is a natural fit for working on self-care, as we know that getting enough sleep can benefit your immune system.

Can sleep help my immune system fight the coronavirus?
Ample sleep supports the immune system, which reduces the risk of infection and can improve outcomes for people fighting a virus. On the other hand, sleep deprivation weakens the body’s defense system and makes people more vulnerable to contracting a virus.

Can sleep help improve my mood and productivity during the COVID-19 pandemic?
It’s not easy to function at our best without easy access to our usual coping skills (e.g., social support, exercise, etc.) while sheltering in place. Adequate sleep can maximize your potential for having better days under these circumstances. Optimal sleep helps regulate mood, improve brain function, and increase energy and overall productivity during the day.

Why are so many people having trouble sleeping while sheltering in place?
Elevated stress and an overload of information can keep the mind racing and elevate the body’s arousal system response, triggering insomnia.

People are spending every waking moment getting one last look at their screens (news updates, COVID-19 education, social connections). The blue light from these screens tells the brain to stop producing the sleep hormone melatonin, which can lead to trouble falling asleep.

Also, loss of daytime structure can upset nighttime sleep schedules. Inconsistent bedtimes and wake times can shift the pres-
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FUTURE MICA MEETING DATES

CANCELED — 63rd Annual Spring Convention — June 22 — 25, 2020, Lodge of the Four Seasons, Lake Ozark, Missouri.

Fall 2020 Annual Fall Business Meeting — October 15 & 16, 2020, Omaha Marriott Downtown, Omaha, NE.

64th Annual Spring Convention — June 21 — 24, 2021, Hyatt Regency Coconut Point Resort, Bonita Springs, FL.

Fall 2021 Annual Fall Business Meeting — October 14 & 15, 2021, Omaha Marriott Downtown, Omaha, NE.

65th Annual Spring Convention — June 20 — 23, 2022, TBD.

MICA MEMBER ADDRESS/INFO. UPDATES
Be sure to inform the MICA office of any changes or corrections to your listing for either the MICA Directory, e-mail correspondence or mailing address. Even if you update your company listing on the MICA website, please inform the MICA office of the changes. We try to be as current as possible with your help.
wake time. Set cell phone reminders to anchor your schedule, and as a reminder to turn off screens an hour before bedtime.

What else do I need to know about my sleep?
While sleep is important, try not to fret about it! Worrying about sleep just turns into more stress. Instead, just do your best to get to bed on time and follow these tips if there are problems. Remember to always come back to “controlling the controllables.” You can’t control the outcome of your efforts, only the efforts themselves.

THE PASSING OF THE PATRIARCH OF LONG TIME MICA MEMBER FIRM

Longtime MICA member and friend to the insulation industry, William H. (Bill) Brauer, arrived safely in the arms of Jesus on March 29, 2020. Beloved husband of Cookie (nee Wanda Koch). Loving father of Gayle (Jim), Bill (Jackie), Nancy (Terry), Diane (Timothy) and Bob (Melanie). He was also cherished by 20 grandchildren and 30 great grandchildren. After serving in the United States Navy during WWII, Bill graduated with a degree in chemical engineering from Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Following a 5-year stint with Monsanto Chemical Company, Bill joined his father at Brauer Supply Company in 1953. Bill was promoted to president in 1968 and played a tremendous role in Brauer Supply’s continued growth. He remained with the company as Chairman of the Board until his death. Bill loved his Lord, his family, Brauer Supply, and his boats. A private service was held at Timothy Lutheran Church on April 2, at 10:30 A.M.

Bill was an adamant supporter of MICA and the insulation industry. He instilled the importance of participating in industry trade associations in his sons as they became involved in the family business. MICA has been blessed with members like Bill. Our continued success with second and third generation involvement is the direct result of the foresight and leadership of members like William H. Brauer. He will be missed, but his influence on MICA continues through the continued participation of Brauer Supply and his son, Bob. Expressions of sympathy and support may be sent to the Brauer family at the company address: Brauer Supply Company, 1218 South Vandeventer Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63110.

A celebration memorial will be held on a later date when restrictions have been lifted. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to Timothy Lutheran Church (6704 Fyler Ave., St. Louis 63139); Concordia Seminary (801 DeMun, Clayton, MO 63105); Family Shield Ministries (P.O. Box 230015, St. Louis, MO 63123); or Our Saviors Lutheran Church (2645 Old Jacksonville Rd. Springfield, IL 62704).
BEST PRACTICES IN SAFETY AWARD APPLICATION DEADLINE EXTENDED

The Safety and Environmental Committee of MICA has agreed to extend the deadline of submitting the “Best Practices in Safety” application to **Friday, May 1, 2020**. We realize that these past two months have been anything but routine for the member companies of MICA. Many key staff and safety professionals within your firms may have been working remotely and do not have ready access to the necessary safety program sections that need to be submitted as part of the safety award application process.

One of the strategic initiatives of MICA is “To inform and educate the membership on matters concerning safety and related to safe work practices that are common to our industry”. We would like to see all of our member firms participate in the safety award process. Contact the MICA office if you still want to participate in this safety award process.

The deadline to complete the submittal process is the end of the work day on Friday, May 1, 2020.

DRAGON JACKET INSULATION JOINS MICA

The latest associate member firm to join the MICA family of members is **Dragon Jacket Insulation**. Dragon Jacket Insulation is headquartered and manufactured in Rathdrum, Idaho. Their products offer an engineered solution to the familiar problems faced by facilities and insulators including CUI, inconsistent R Values, and installation hurdles that accompany old style insulation products. For more about the company, you may visit their website [www.dragonjacket.com](http://www.dragonjacket.com) for case studies, product specification and information sheets, installation guidelines and other valuable information.

Company President, Todd Peretti, and Dan Jameson, Western Regional Sales Manager, are excited to join MICA and to become actively involved in our association activities. Please extend a warm MICA welcome to Dragon Jacket Insulation and add the following company information to company records:

Dan Jameson, Western Regional Sales Manager
Dragon Jacket Insulation
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The second quarter of 2020 survey results suffered a significant tumble in both the CIRT Sentiment Index and the Design Index. The CIRT Sentiment Index experienced an unprecedented plunge from 63.6 to 21.6, with the Design Index seeing a similar drop from 62.7 to 39.8, indicating fewer opportunities are likely in the coming quarter(s). This historic decline appears to manifest the dual concerns of fear and uncertainty driven by the global pandemic, COVID-19, alongside corresponding market disruptions and volatility. Though many hope a government stimulus can help alleviate some of the losses, an economic recession appears to be very possible, if not an imminent threat.

This quarter our current issues questions address impacts on the various economic disruptions seen over the past few weeks (including COVID-19, depressed oil prices and market volatility). Open-ended comments pointed to a common theme related to the significant uncertainty COVID-19 was causing throughout the industry. Many found ongoing difficulty in keeping up with a range of local- and state- restrictions. Geographic impact points to hardship across the Northeast and West. Sector performance suggests short- and long-term resiliency in institutional and infrastructure segments.

In order to address current economic disruptions, a large majority (over 90%) of CIRT members reported limiting business travel as well as staff exposure on-site and/or in the office. Further, approximately 84% of members were postponing business meetings, and 79% were deferring spending decisions. When asked about schedule impact, well over half of all respondents (58%) reported some extension. Of those who realized changed schedules, two-thirds of respondents noted extensions between one and three months, 16% saw schedules extended between three and six months, and, combined, nearly one out of five (19%) had seen schedules extended by six months or more, or indefinitely. When inquired on material cost and availability, approximately half (51%) of all respondents reported that prices were unchanged. The second largest group, 38% of respondents, indicated a greater concern for material availability than price.

Among the industries represented by CIRT’s member base, lodging, commercial and international work are projected to realize the largest short- and long-term declines within both the design and construction industries. Similarly, both groups anticipate health care will expand unceasingly over the next year. The design industry’s long-term view of project growth remains positive, with every sector tracking above 3.0. The construction respondent’s long-term view is comparably lower, with only five of the tracked 10 sectors projected above 3.0 (health care, industrial, manufacturing, public works and transportation). Construction respondents anticipate commercial, education, international, lodging and office will all remain depressed well into 2021.
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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR ISSUES ENFORCEMENT GUIDANCE FOR RECORDING CASES OF COVID-19

WASHINGTON, DC – The U.S. Department of Labor’s Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has issued interim guidance for enforcing OSHA’s recordkeeping requirements (29 CFR Part 1904) as it relates to recording cases of COVID-19.

Under OSHA’s recordkeeping requirements, COVID-19 is a recordable illness, and employers are responsible for recording cases of COVID-19, if the case:

- Is confirmed as a COVID-19 illness;
- Is work-related as defined by 29 CFR 1904.5; and
- Involves one or more of the general recording criteria in 29 CFR 1904.7, such as medical treatment beyond first aid or days away from work.

In areas where there is ongoing community transmission, employers other than those in the healthcare industry, emergency response organizations (e.g., emergency medical, firefighting and law enforcement services), and correctional institutions may have difficulty making determinations about whether workers who contracted COVID-19 did so due to exposures at work. Accordingly, until further notice, OSHA will not enforce its recordkeeping requirements to require these employers to make work-relatedness determinations for COVID-19 cases, except where: (1) There is objective evidence that a COVID-19 case may be work-related; and (2) The evidence was reasonably available to the employer. Employers of workers in the healthcare industry, emergency response organizations and correctional institutions must continue to make work-relatedness determinations pursuant to 29 CFR Part 1904.

OSHA’s enforcement policy will provide certainty to the regulated community and help employers focus their response efforts on implementing good hygiene practices in their workplaces and otherwise mitigating COVID-19’s effects.

For further information and resources about the coronavirus disease, please visit OSHA’s COVID-19 webpage.
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WASHINGTON, DC – The U.S. Department of Labor’s Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has issued an alert listing safety tips employers can follow to help protect construction workers from exposure to the coronavirus.

Measures that can help protect employees working in construction include:

- Encouraging workers to stay home if they are sick;
- Training workers how to properly put on, use/wear, and take off protective clothing and equipment;
- Allowing workers to wear masks over their nose and mouth to prevent them from spreading the virus;
- Continuing to use other normal control measures, including personal protective equipment, necessary to protect workers from other job hazards associated with construction activities;
- Advising workers to avoid physical contact with others and directing employees/contractors/visitors to increase personal space to at least six feet, where possible. Where work trailers are used, all workers should maintain social distancing while inside the trailers;
- Promoting personal hygiene. If workers do not have immediate access to soap and water for handwashing, provide alcohol-based hand rubs containing at least 60 percent alcohol;
- Using Environmental Protection Agency-approved cleaning chemicals from List N or that have label claims against the coronavirus; and
- Encouraging workers to report any safety and health concerns.

The new alert is available for download in English and Spanish.

Visit OSHA's Publications webpage for other useful workplace safety information.

The alert is the latest effort by OSHA to educate and protect America’s workers and employers during the coronavirus pandemic. OSHA has also published Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19, a document aimed at helping workers and employers learn about ways to protect themselves and their workplaces during the ongoing pandemic.

Visit OSHA’s COVID-19 webpage frequently for updates. For further information about the coronavirus, please visit the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
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WASHINGTON, DC – The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has issued an alert listing safety tips employers can follow to help protect manufacturing workers from exposure to coronavirus.

Safety measures employers can implement to protect employees working in manufacturing include:

- Practicing sensible social distancing and maintaining 6 feet between co-workers, where possible;
- Establishing flexible work hours, (e.g., staggered shifts), if feasible;
- Training workers on how to properly put on, use/wear, take off and maintain protective clothing and equipment;
- Allowing workers to wear masks over their nose and mouth to prevent spread of the virus;
- Monitoring public health communications about coronavirus recommendations for the workplace and ensuring that workers have access to and understand that information;
- Promoting personal hygiene. If workers do not have access to soap and water for handwashing, provide alcohol-based hand rubs containing at least 60 percent alcohol. Provide disinfectants and disposable towels workers can use to clean work surfaces; and
- Encouraging workers to report any safety and health concerns.

The new alert is available for download in English and Spanish.

WASHINGTON, DC; April 6, 2020 – The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has issued a new poster listing steps all workplaces can take to reduce the risk of exposure to coronavirus.

The poster highlights 10 infection prevention measures every employer can implement to protect workers' safety and health during the coronavirus pandemic. Safety measures include encouraging sick workers to stay home; establishing flexible (Continued on page 24)
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worksites and staggered work shifts; discouraging workers from using other workers’ phones, desks and other work equipment; and using Environmental Protection Agency-approved cleaning chemicals with label claims against the coronavirus.

The new poster is available for download in English, or Spanish.

Visit OSHA’s Publications webpage for other useful workplace safety information.

The release is the latest effort by OSHA to educate and protect America’s workers and employers during the coronavirus pandemic. In response to President Trump’s action to increase the availability of general use respirators, OSHA has issued a series of guidances that expand access to respirators in the workplace. OSHA has also published Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19, a guidance aimed at helping workers and employers learn about ways to protect themselves and their workplaces during the ongoing pandemic.

Visit OSHA’s coronavirus webpage frequently for updates. For further information about coronavirus, please visit the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

(Continued from page 22)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR CONSIDERS EMPLOYER’S GOOD FAITH EFFORTS WHEN ENFORCING COMPLIANCE DURING CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

WASHINGTON, DC; April 16, 2020 – The U.S. Department of Labor’s Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has issued interim guidance to advise compliance safety and health officers to evaluate an employer’s good faith efforts to comply with safety and health standards during the coronavirus pandemic.

Current infection control practices may limit the availability of employees, consultants or contractors who normally provide training, auditing, equipment inspections, testing, and other essential safety and industrial hygiene services. Business closures and other restrictions may also preclude employee participation in training if trainers are unavailable and access to medical testing facilities may be limited or suspended.

During an inspection, compliance safety and health officers should assess an employer’s efforts to comply with standards that require annual or recurring audits, reviews, training or assessments. Officers should evaluate if the employer:

- Explored all options to comply with applicable standards (e.g., use of virtual training or remote communication strategies);

(Continued on page 26)
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Implemented interim alternative protections, such as engineering or administrative controls; and
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Employers unable to comply with OSHA requirements because local authorities required the workplace to close should demonstrate a good faith attempt to meet applicable requirements as soon as possible following the re-opening of the workplace.

OSHA will take employers’ attempts to comply in good faith into strong consideration when determining whether it cites a violation. The agency may issue a citation if it finds an employer cannot demonstrate any efforts to comply. To ensure corrective actions employers have taken once normal activities resume, OSHA will develop a program to conduct monitoring inspections from a randomized sampling of cases where the agency noted, but did not cite, violations.

This guidance takes effect immediately, and remains in effect until further notice. It is time-limited interim guidance in effect due to the current public health crisis. Visit OSHA’s COVID-19 webpage frequently for updates.

OSHA ANNOUNCES INTERIM ENFORCEMENT RESPONSE PLAN

WASHINGTON, DC; April 13, 2020 – The U.S. Department of Labor’s Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) today announced an interim enforcement response plan for the coronavirus pandemic. The response plan provides instructions and guidance to OSHA Area Offices and compliance safety and health officers (CSHOs) for handling coronavirus-related complaints, referrals, and severe illness reports.

During the coronavirus outbreak, OSHA Area Offices will utilize their inspection resources to fulfill mission essential functions and protect workers exposed to the disease. The response plan contains interim procedures that allow flexibility and discretion for field offices to maximize OSHA’s impact in securing safe workplaces in this evolving environment.

“OSHA is committed to protecting the health and safety of America’s workers during this challenging time in our nation’s history,” Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Loren Sweatt said. “Today’s guidance outlines commonsense procedures for investigating complaints related to the coronavirus, while also ensuring the safety of workers, employers, and inspectors.”

The response plan outlines procedures for addressing reports of workplace hazards related to the coronavirus. Fatalities and imminent danger exposures related to the coronavirus will be prioritized for on-site inspections. The response plan contains procedures and sample documentation for CSHOs to use during coronavirus-related inspections. Workers requesting inspections, complaining of coronavirus exposure, or reporting illnesses may be protected under one or more whistleblower statutes and will be informed of their protections from retaliation.

This memorandum will take effect immediately and remain in effect until further notice. It is intended to be time-limited to the current public health crisis.
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