whole new level. Discover luxury at its best, all wrapped in pure mountain serenity. The resort sits in the foothills of the Flatiron Range of the Rocky Mountains and is centrally located from a variety of area attractions. Estes Park and Rocky Mountain National Park are a short 28-mile scenic drive away. The Chautauqua National Historic District offers a playground, hiking trails, breathtaking views, and entertainment. Children and adults alike will find plenty of excitement at Denver’s Six Flags Elitch Gardens.

Indulge yourself in luxury at the Omni Interlocken Resort. Come prepared for some special pampering during your stay. We have reserved a block of rooms at the Omni. Our convention rate is $189 per night plus tax, single or double occupancy. It is highly suggested that you book your hotel reservations now!

Call the reservations office at 800-843-6664 and ask for the Midwest Insulation Contractors Block. Please note that we have blocked a limited number of rooms. If you wait until the last minute to reserve your room, you run the risk that our block will be filled, and the hotel will not have any additional rooms available. As we have stated in the past, if you reserve your hotel room now, you can always cancel it later, but you may not be able to reserve a room if you wait too long. We will be monitoring our block and making room adjustments accordingly.

Our block of rooms will be released on May 16, 2019, but if you wait until May 16th, the block of rooms will be filled, and we may not be able to accommodate your needs.

The Board of Directors is most excited about the technical topics and speakers for the spring convention. The topics and speakers were selected to help educate and inform you on a variety of industry topics pertinent to our current business climate. We are going to have presentations that cover a wide array of topics that will help you grow your knowledge as a business professional. Our opening keynote speaker is Kelli Poole. Kelli Poole is an expert in wildlife species conservation and management. Her work is as varied as her travel locations. She has

(Continued on page 5)
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PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

TO: THE MICA MEMBERSHIP

In looking around our region; it appears to me that the forces of winter are not cutting anyone in our region any slack this winter at all. I see well below zero wind chills and anyone I talk to has nothing to say about anything but the cold and snow. Hang in there; spring is just around the corner.

With a couple of months left until we need to be ready to enjoy the warmer weather, there is plenty of time left to prepare our body’s for it. I am sure by now that everyone has a full month of stretching behind them. Now it’s time to prepare the heart for those summer activities with the family.

How many of us go up a flight or two of stairs and start getting winded? Just about every one of us has access to a flight of stairs, if it be in our home, office, or shopping mall. If we would start to do two flights of stairs every other day for a week (3 days a week) it would be a great start. Then every week, you add another flight. By the time our June meeting rolls around, you will be doing 45 flights a week. I know that sounds like a lot. Time wise at 30 seconds per flight, that is only 7-1/2 minutes 3 times a week. Add that to the stretching from last month and that totals out to under an hour a week. I know everyone’s lives are busy with our businesses, kids, grandkids, and just a little bit of “me time,” but everyone could find an hour a week for themselves.

For you over achievers (George Shimada), if the two flights are not enough to get your heart pumping, add a back pack with some weight and do more flights.

We have a responsibility to our businesses, families, and more importantly, to ourselves to be on the top of our game physically and mentally. I am fully aware that the recliner looks and sounds better than doing those flights of stairs. I’m right there with you, but it’s worth the effort.

As a volunteer Firefighter & EMT, I get to see the direct results of poor health in people in their 40’s, 50’s and 60’s. The number of people I see in that age group that have signs on their doors, “Oxygen in use, no flame,” is astounding. Now, I am not saying that every single one of these people would have a better life if they did 45 flights of stairs a week and participated in the stretching program. Some of them just had some bad luck with the health genes, and just got a bad deal. We all either know or have known a number of people that just didn’t deserve what they got. But we can all try to do better.

I will stop with the preaching for now, take care and be safe.

Be sure to make your reservations for June in Bloomfield.

Stay warm and stay safe!

Scott Weekley,
MICA President
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worked in the Pamir Mountains in Tajikistan, where she assisted in ground surveys of Marco Polo and Ibex sheep. This involved spotting and stalking animals to classify their age and sex. While in Tajikistan, she skinned and harvested trophy animals and trained young women as guides for hunting high alpine ungulates.

During her time in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado and Montana, Kelli has conducted surveys of the Gunnison Sage grouse, deer and elk for the Colorado Parks and Wildlife in Monte Vista, CO. She has set camera traps for Lynx, vaccinated prairie dogs, and collected data on Highlands Bighorn sheep herds. This work involved 6+ miles daily hikes and “four wheeling” in the mountains. One of her more memorable adventures involved an 80-mile, 6 day mountain goat surveys in the Pintler Mountains for the Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks in Butte, MT.

Kelli holds a B.S. in Fish and Wildlife Ecology and Management from Montana State University, a general biology degree from Colorado Mountain College, and a degree in Painting and Drawing from the College of Visual Arts in St. Paul, MN. When she is not outside in the mountains, her hobby is painting wildlife scenes. Kelli will share her experiences with us during her keynote presentation on, “Conservation and Management of North American Species”.

Safety in the workplace is an essential factor for all organizations. We, at MICA, continue to stress this important aspect for any successful company. One major area of safety in our industry is fall protection. Fall protection continues to be a high priority area for OSHA. Fall protection at roof edges is one aspect of fall protection that receives a lot of attention. We will have a certified safety professional address this issue and the complexities of recognizing the multiple hazards that may be encountered and the challenges of having the correct equipment and qualified people to perform the work as it pertains to our industry.

Six years have passed since Coloradans voted to legalize recreational marijuana use, but many are still wrestling with how it impacts individuals and communities. The state's employers face some of the toughest questions:

- Can I enforce a drug-free workplace policy that includes marijuana use?
- What if my employee is injured while under the influence of marijuana?
- Should I treat the use of medicinal marijuana differently than recreational marijuana?

These issues are not unique to Colorado. The use of medical and recreational marijuana is becoming more prevalent as more and more states pass laws legalizing its use. Operating a business and working in a state that has legalized medical and/or recreational marijuana can be challenging. The challenges are strategic in nature and affect the type of insurance coverage necessary for a business and the establishment of appropriate hiring practices. We will have a presentation that will help provide guidance for business owners who currently are, or will be, facing these workplace challenges.
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FUTURE MICA MEETING DATES

62nd Annual Spring Convention — June 17 — 20, 2019, Omni Interlocken Resort, Broomfield, CO.

Fall 2019 Annual Fall Business Meeting — October 16 & 17, 2019, Embassy Suites Downtown, Omaha, NE.

2020 Winter Board and Committee Meetings — January 2020, Site To be Determined.

63nd Annual Spring Convention — June 22 — 25, 2020, In Region. Site Under Consideration.

Fall 2020 Annual Fall Business Meeting — October 20 & 21, 2020, Downtown Omaha, NE.

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.
Human Resource personnel and business owners are faced with the challenges of hiring young professionals into the insulation profession for craft laborer and management positions. **Ms. Robyn Kavanagh**, Director, Human Resources with PCG, leads the human capital programming and initiative development for PCG. With oversight of HR Administration, HR Compliance, Recruitment, Drug Testing and Diversity and Inclusion, she is passionate about establishing and maintaining a proud culture and driving results through a people-centric model. Robyn will discuss her firm’s approach to the many challenges of managing a cohesive workforce of new hires to seasoned employees.

**Gary Auman** will provide an update on OSHA requirements that will include a presentation on the ever changing landscape of OSHA. **Ms. Dana Vlk**, NIA President for 2019 – 2020, will give us an update on our industry activities at the national level.

We will have a union contractor forum, an open shop contractor forum, and an associate member forum all running simultaneously. This approach allows more of the members to participate in craft issues without being part of a formal committee. You will have the opportunity to interact with other MICA members with similar business concerns.

The New/Young Professionals Committee was established to give those individuals who are new to the insulation industry a forum to meet and discuss issues unique to their position in the industry. Rudy Nigl with L & C Insulation and a member of the Board of Directors, is serving as this year’s chairperson of the committee. This committee will meet on Monday afternoon, June 17, 2019, as part of this year’s spring convention.

**If you are new to the industry; within 5 years, or under 40 years of age, you qualify for participation in this committee.**

If you are interested in participating, come to the June convention. Be sure to contact Rudy Nigl by email at rudyn@lcinsulation.com, or the MICA office at mica@micainsulation.org, and let us know of your interest and that you will be attending the June meeting.

We will recognize those companies that participated in our twelfth annual “Best Practices in Safety” Award. This award was established to formally recognize our member firms’ efforts in safety and safety practices. This year, we again will use the grading system that recognizes each applicant’s achievement in developing a quality safety program. On our second day of meetings, representatives of the participating firms will meet in a roundtable discussion on safety. They will share with us their efforts in promoting safety and establishing best practices in safety.

The Board of Directors feels that each presentation will add value to your understanding of the technical topics discussed. You will come away from the convention more informed and better prepared to successfully manage your business. It is the Board’s intent to make this convention attractive to our membership in its location, cost and program content. In this light, our registration fee has been adjusted to encourage additional member participation. The registration fee is $625.00 for the first attendee from a member company. Registration for all additional attendees from a given company is reduced to $600. The registration fee is $1,200.00 for the first member and spouse registered from a member company. Registration for all additional registered couples from a given company is reduced to $1,150.00. This year we have included a children’s registration for the Welcome Reception and Farewell Brunch events only. The fee is $40.00 to $80.00 per child. The Board is delighted to offer this incentive for multiple attendees from member companies. The benefit of joining an association comes from participating in association activities.

The twenty-first annual “Mick Van Horn Memorial Golf Tournament” is set for Tuesday afternoon, June 18, 2019, at The Omni Interlocken Golf Club. We have a lunch cookout beginning at 12:00 p.m. followed by a shotgun start at 1:00 p.m. Enjoy golf as it was meant to be played at this stunning, links-style course. The Vista nine sits atop the highest point between Denver and Boulder, delivering breathtaking views of Denver and the Front Range. Each golf cart is equipped with the GPS system. The system takes the guesswork out of the yardage, but it does not hit the ball for you. You still need to bring your swing! As you would expect, there is plenty of water on the course, so you have a great chance to win the coveted “Fish Award” that was a favorite trophy of Mick’s. The course is located only minutes from our hotel, and the hotel does provide a complimentary shuttle to the course. We still have the four-person scramble format for you to enjoy. This year’s fee is $150.00 per golfer, which includes a lunch, cart, green fees, complimentary use of practice and range area, and of course, prizes. Please read the golf registration carefully. Payment for golf must accompany the registration fee. Please complete the golf portion of the registration form as fully as possible, especially the handicap information. This is essential for us to properly match the foursomes. **You need to register for the golf tournament by May 25, 2019.**

The entire program also affords you ample time for fun and relaxation and to interact with your fellow contractors and distributors. We have the traditional opening evening Welcome Reception. This year’s reception is sponsored in part by the contributing associate members. We will feast on hors d’oeuvres, libations, and renew friendships. Our gala dinner and dance will be on Wednesday evening. This year’s gala is casual with a western theme. Jeans and casual western shirts are in order. But please no shorts and tee shirts.

Your cooperation in completing the pre-registration material early and making your hotel reservations early is most appre-
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equipment and tools are used in buildings or semi-enclosed spaces without adequate ventilation. The danger increases during the winter months when this type of equipment is used in indoor areas that have been sealed tightly to block out cold temperatures and wind.

In addition to portable generators and space heaters, sources of carbon monoxide can include anything that uses combustion to operate, such as power tools, compressors, pumps, welding equipment, furnaces, gas-powered forklifts, and motorized vehicles.

To reduce the risk of carbon monoxide exposure in the workplace, employers should install an effective ventilation system, avoid the use of fuel-burning equipment and vehicles in enclosed or partially enclosed spaces, and use carbon monoxide detectors in areas where the hazard may exist. They should also take other precautions as outlined in OSHA’s Carbon Monoxide Fact Sheet. Additional OSHA resources include videos (in English and Spanish), QuickCards (in English and Spanish) and a fact sheet on portable generator safety.

RESPONSE FROM U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR REGARDING FAKE OSHA CARDS

WASHINGTON, DC – The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) issued the following statement in response to a New Jersey safety trainer's guilty plea of selling more than 100 fraudulent training cards.

"OSHA's outreach training serves to educate workers about safety issues they will encounter on the jobsite," said OSHA Regional Administrator Richard Mendelson. "Falsifying documents not only undermines the program, it fails to protect workers on the job. OSHA will refer fraudulent activity to the Department of Labor's Office of Inspector General, and trainers caught falsifying information will be subject to criminal prosecution."

The Outreach Training Program trains workers on the recognition, avoidance, abatement, and prevention of workplace hazards. The voluntary program also provides information on workers' rights, employer responsibilities, and how to file a complaint.
JANUARY CONSTRUCTION STARTS RISE
2 PERCENT

Modest Improvement Follows Two Months of Decline

NEW YORK – February 22, 2019 – The value of new construction starts in January advanced 2% compared to December, reaching a seasonally adjusted annual rate of $722.5 billion, according to Dodge Data & Analytics. The slight gain followed the loss of momentum that was reported towards the end of 2018, with total construction declines of 7% in November and 10% in December. Each of the three main construction sectors in January registered modest growth. Residential building climbed 4%, lifted by a rebound for multifamily housing. Nonresidential building edged up 1%, reflecting a stronger pace for its commercial building segment including large office projects in Reston VA, Houston TX, Boston MA, Austin TX, and Seattle WA. Nonbuilding construction also edged up 1%, helped by the start of a $1.0 billion natural gas pipeline in Oklahoma and several large electric utility projects. On an unadjusted basis, total construction starts in January were $51.5 billion, down 12% from the same month a year ago. On a twelve-month moving total basis, total construction starts for the twelve months ending January 2019 held steady with the corresponding amount for the twelve months ending January 2018.

The January statistics produced a reading of 153 for the Dodge Index (2000=100), compared to December’s 150. During 2018, the pattern of construction starts featured especially strong activity in June and October, which was then followed by declines in the months immediately following. This led to December’s reading of 150 for the Dodge Index, which was at the low end of last year’s range of activity. “January’s slight increase suggests that construction starts are beginning to stabilize after the diminished activity reported at the end of last year,” stated Robert A. Murray, chief economist for Dodge Data & Analytics. “This is consistent with the belief that total construction starts for 2019 will be able to stay close to last year’s volume. It’s true that the rate of growth for total construction starts has subsided from the 7% annual gain reported back in 2017, but it’s still too early to say that construction activity has made the transition from deceleration to decline.”

“In early 2019, there are several near-term positives for construction,” Murray continued. “Interest rates have settled back from levels reached during last year’s fourth quarter, material prices appear to be rising more slowly, and the partial government shutdown was brought to a close. The federal budget deal signed into law on February 15 included a 2% increase to $45.3 billion for the federal-aid highway obligation ceiling, as called for by the 2015 Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act. However, the benefits of tax reform on economic growth are expected to wane this year. Furthermore, the most recent survey of bank lending officers conducted by the Federal Reserve suggests that a more cautious lending stance emerged during the latter half of 2018, especially with regard to loans for multifamily projects.”

Nonresidential building in January was $245.2 billion (annual rate), up 1% following a 13% slide in December. The commercial building categories as a group rose 4% in January. Office construction picked up the pace, climbing 18%, and featured groundbreaking for these large projects – the $550 million Reston Gateway office complex (Block A and Block B) in Reston VA, the $350 million Hines office tower in Houston TX, the $225 million Amazon at Seaport Square office building in Boston MA, the $180 million Oracle office complex in Austin TX, and the $150 million Amazon Urban Treehouse office building in Seattle WA. Hotel construction in January rose 10%, helped by the start of the $245 million Westin Anaheim Resort Hotel in Anaheim CA, while the commercial garage category advanced 21%. Limiting the January increase for the commercial building group were declines for warehouses, down 13%; and store construction, down 24%. Despite its January decline, the warehouse category did include the start of several large projects, including a $95 million warehouse complex in Kenosha, WI and the $90 million Savannah Port Logistics Center in Pooler, GA. Manufacturing plant construction in January grew 9%, boosted by the start of a $125 million steel plate mill in Baytown TX.

The institutional side of nonresidential building slipped 2% in January. Educational facilities, the largest nonresidential building category by dollar volume, retreated 10% after surging 26% in December. Cushioning the downturn for educational facilities was groundbreaking for several large projects, including the $124 million Comal Independent School District High School #5 in New Braunfels, TX, the $120 million Thayer School of Engineering at Dartmouth College in Hanover, NH, a $109 million high school in Gainesville, VA, and the $102 million Cape Cod Regional Technical High School in Harwich, MA. The healthcare facilities category in January dropped 11%, falling for the third month in a row, alt-

(Continued on page 15)
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though the latest month did include the start of the $175 million University of Central Florida Lake Nora Teaching Hospital in Orlando, FL and the $95 million Covenant Medical Center tower in Lubbock, TX. Church construction, which experienced a 17% hike in December, fell back 34% in January. On the plus side for institutional building, the public buildings category jumped 46% in January, lifted by the start of the $525 million Utah State Prison relocation in Salt Lake City UT. The transportation terminal category, which includes service facilities, climbed 39% in January with the boost coming from the start of the $365 million Croton Harmon rail service facility for Metro-North in Croton On Hudson NY, as well as the start of a $90 million airport terminal at Lafayette.

**Residential building** in January was $309.8 billion (annual rate), up 4% and rebounding from its 9% slide in December. Multifamily housing bounced back 14% following its 15% December decline, and was up 1% compared to its average monthly pace during 2018. There were five multifamily projects valued at $100 million or more that reached groundbreaking in January, compared to four such projects in December. The large January multifamily projects were led by the $150 million Watermark at Brooklyn Heights senior apartments in Brooklyn NY, the $146 million multifamily portion of a $250 million mixed-use complex in Washington DC, and a $128 million multifamily complex in Oakland CA. The top five metropolitan areas ranked by the dollar amount of new multifamily starts in January were – New York NY, Washington DC, Boston MA, San Francisco CA, and Charlotte NC. Single family housing in January was unchanged from the reduced dollar amount reported for December, which itself was down 6% from November. January’s rate of activity for single family housing was down 7% from the average monthly pace reported during 2018. By major region, single family housing performed as follows in January compared to December – the West, up 3%; the South Central, up 2%; the South Atlantic, unchanged; the Northeast, down 3%; and the Midwest, down 9%.

**Non-building construction** in January was $167.5 billion (annual rate), up 1% which came after a 9% retreat in December. The electric utility/gas plant category increased 44% in January following a weak December, and January’s level was up 2% from the average monthly pace for this highly volatile project type during 2018. There were two large solar farms entered as construction starts in January – the $550 million Wright Solar Park in Los Banos, CA and a $303 million solar farm in the Bakersfield, CA area. There were also two large wind farms entered as construction starts in January – the $372 million Goodnight Wind Farm in Claude, TX and the $150 million Clean Energy 1 Wind Farm in the Bismarck, ND area. The public works categories as a group dropped 4% in January compared to December. Weaker activity was reported for highways and bridges, down 5%; sewer construction, down 5%; water supply construction, down 22%; and river/harbor development, down 34%. The highway and bridge category did include the start of the $229 million First Coast Expressway improvement project in the Jacksonville, FL area, the $202 million State Highway 146 improvement project in Pasadena, TX, and the $169 million Chelsea Bridge improvement project in Chelsea, MA. Limiting the public works decline in January was a 20% increase for miscellaneous public works, which includes pipelines and mass transit rail projects. Boosting miscellaneous public works in January was the start of the $1.0 billion Midship natural gas pipeline in Oklahoma.

The 12% decline for total construction starts on an unadjusted basis for January 2019 relative to January 2018 was due to decreased activity for each of the three major sectors. Nonresidential building dropped 12% from a year ago, with institutional building down 18% and manufacturing building down 38%, while the commercial building segment ran counter with a 2% gain. Residential building fell 13% from a year ago, with single family housing down 13% and multifamily housing down 11%. Nonbuilding construction descended 10% from a year ago, with public works down 13% while electric utilities/gas plants moved in the opposite direction with a 6% increase. By major region, total construction starts for January 2019 relative to January 2018 showed this pattern – the South Atlantic, up 2%; the Northeast, down 10%; the South Central, down 11%; the West, down 12%; and the Midwest down 33% from January 2018 that included the start of the $2.0 billion NEXUS natural gas pipeline in Ohio and Michigan.

Useful perspective is made possible by looking at twelve-month moving totals, in this case the twelve months ending January 2019 versus the twelve months ending January 2018. On this basis, total construction starts for the most recent twelve months held steady with the amount of the previous twelve months. By major sector, nonresidential building matched the previous period’s volume, with commercial building up 2%, institutional building down 5%, and manufacturing building up 17%. Residential building advanced 4% compared to the previous peri-

(Continued on page 19)
od, with multifamily housing up 7% and single family housing up 3%. Non-building construction fell 6% from the previous period, with public works down 2% and electric utilities/gas plants down 30%.

**KNOW THE SIGNS: HOW TO HELP SOMEONE HAVING A STROKE OR HEART ATTACK AT WORK**

You never know when a heart attack or stroke may strike. Every year, 10,000 Americans have heart attacks at work, and someone in America suffers a stroke every 40 seconds.

Do you know the symptoms of these serious conditions? Understanding the signs of a heart attack or stroke can help you take fast, decisive action if a co-worker, an employee or even a customer shows signs of distress.

This is critical because receiving quick assistance diminishes the long-term impact of a stroke and increases the odds of reopening the blocked artery in a heart attack. American Heart Month in February is the perfect time to brush up on tips for recognizing and responding to heart attacks and strokes.

**Recognizing signs of a stroke at work**

Strokes occur when the blood supply to the brain is cut off. To recognize signs of a stroke, use F.A.S.T.:

- **Face drooping**: Ask the person to smile. Does the smile look lopsided?
- **Arm weakness**: Ask the person to raise their arms. Does one slump down?
- **Speech**: Ask the person a question. Do they slur or make no sense when they answer?
- **Time to call 911**: If you see any of these things, call 911 and say you suspect a stroke. The person needs to be taken to a hospital right away.

Other signs of stroke may include sudden onset of numbness, difficulty walking or seeing, and confusion.

**Responding to signs of a stroke at work**

After calling 911, record the time you saw the first symptoms and keep talking to the person until the ambulance arrives. They can lie down, but don’t let them eat or drink. If the person loses consciousness and stops breathing, perform CPR. A 911 operator can talk you through this.
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Recognizing signs of a heart attack at work

A heart attack occurs when blood flow to the heart becomes blocked. Men and women often exhibit different symptoms when having a heart attack.

In women, you might see:
- Pressure, squeezing or pain in the center of the chest that lasts a few minutes or goes away and comes back.
- Shortness of breath.
- Pain or discomfort in one or both arms, back, neck, jaw, or stomach.
- Nausea, vomiting or lightheadedness.

The most common heart attack symptom in women is chest pain or discomfort, although women are somewhat more likely than men to experience some of the other common symptoms listed here.

In men, you might see:
- Chest pain, discomfort or fullness, often mistaken for heartburn. It may last for a few minutes or it may go away and return.
- Shortness of breath.
- Pain or discomfort in one arm, back, neck, jaw or stomach.
- Cold sweat, nausea, vomiting, lightheadedness.

Responding to signs of a heart attack at work

Call 911 immediately if you suspect a heart attack. Give the person an aspirin, unless they are allergic to the drug. If they become unconscious, perform CPR and use an automated external defibrillator if one is available.

Embrace CPR training

Consider empowering your employees with a life-saving skill: CPR. Offer conventional CPR certification at your workplace, and promote what the American Heart Association calls hands-only CPR. It’s CPR without breaths and it can be used if you see a teen or an adult suddenly collapse in a work/home/park setting.

Quick action can save a life in the case of a heart attack or stroke. Share these tips with your employees too, so everyone in your workplace is prepared.
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NEW ARMASOUND MTD MAKES COMMERCIAL SPACES QUIETER

Chapel Hill, NC, Feb 12, 2019 – Armacell, a global leader in flexible foam for the equipment insulation market and a leading provider of engineered foams, today announced the release of ArmaSound MTD, a new acoustic tape for use in commercial buildings.

ArmaSound MTD tape offers an exceptional way to mechanically decouple drywall board from the stud, reducing the amount of structure-borne sound that can pass through partition walls. This ability to bring quiet to a space makes this an ideal solution for healthcare, education, hospitality, worship and government buildings.

This patent-pending foam tape offers a multitude of benefits. It can be used on radiused walls and provides an air seal to the stud. It is an easy alternative to resilient channels, isolation clips or installing extra layers of drywall. Plus, it delivers a significant 7-point typical improvement in the Sound Transmission Class rating that the majority of alternative construction methods cannot match. By comparison, extra wallboard typically equates to two points per sheet and resilient channel typically five to seven points. Isolation clips typically offer up to 11 points, but can be costly and difficult to install.

“Acoustical engineers are tasked with finding new ways to prevent noise from disturbing occupants in close quarters. ArmaSound MTD tape is our latest easy-to-install innovation to structure-borne noise. Its enhanced performance parameters deliver acoustical performance for engineers and a quick and easy method for installers”, says Russ Johnson, Armacell’s Product Manager for Component Foams.

Armacell makes this high-tech acoustical tape in the United States and it is available now through select distributors.
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CONSTRUCTION EMPLOYMENT CLIMBS BY 52,000 IN JANUARY TO 11 YEAR PEAK; INDUSTRY WORKWEEK HITS ALL TIME HIGH AS UNEMPLOYMENT FALLS TO LOW

Government Data on Construction Spending, Association Survey Find Demand for All Project Types; Officials Call for More Funds for Training and Education, Immigration Reform to Keep Work on Track

Construction employment increased by 52,000 jobs in January and by 338,000 jobs, or 4.7 percent, over the past year, while the latest reading on construction spending showed moderate increases in all major categories, according to an analysis of new government data by the Associated General Contractors of America. Association officials urged government officials to strengthen career and technical education programs and facilitate immigration for workers with construction skills before a worker shortage stalls completion of needed infrastructure.

“There has been no letup in demand for construction projects—or workers,” said Ken Simonson, the association’s chief economist. “Even though the industry added employees at more than double the pace of the overall economy in the past year, the average work-week in construction reached an all-time high and unemployment in construction hit a series low, indicating that contractors would hire even more workers if they were available.”

Construction employment totaled 7,464,000 in January, the most since January 2008. A report on construction spending—delayed a month by the partial government shutdown—showed an increase of 0.8 percent from October to November and 4.5 percent year-to-date for the first 11 months of 2018 combined compared to the same period in 2017. Year-to-date spending rose by 3.9 percent for residential construction, 3.5 percent for private nonresidential construction and 7.0 percent for public construction.

Average weekly hours in the industry increased to 39.9 hours in January, the highest since the series began in 2006, the economist noted. Average weekly hours of production and nonsupervisory employees, a series that dates back to 1947 and covers construction trades, set a record of 40.6 hours, Simonson added.

The unemployment rate for jobseekers with construction experience in January was 6.4 percent, down from 7.3 percent in January 2018. The number of such workers fell to 638,000 from 707,000 a year earlier. Both figures were the lowest for January since those series began in 2000, Simonson pointed out.

In a survey the association released in January, more contractors reported they expect the dollar volume of projects available to bid on to expand than to shrink in 2019 in each of 13 project categories. In addition, 79 percent of construction firms reported that they expect to add employees in 2019. However, nearly as many—78 percent—reported they were having trouble filling some positions and 68 percent said they expected that hiring would remain difficult or become harder. Association officials cautioned, however, that contractors’ expansion plans could be thwarted if Washington officials fail to fund more career and technical education to prepare more individuals for construction careers and to allow firms that document a shortage of qualified workers to bring in workers from outside the U.S.

“The pool of unemployed workers with construction experience has virtually evaporated, and everyone in the industry is working longer hours than ever,” said Stephen E. Sandherr, the association’s chief executive officer. “The only way to satisfy the demand is to provide more people with the skills needed to work in construction and to expand the nation’s labor force with qualified workers from outside our borders.”
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NIA’s 64TH ANNUAL CONVENTION

April 3-5, 2019
Grand Hyatt Baha Mar
Nassau, Bahamas

NIA’s 64th Annual Convention will include the networking, educational, and entertainment events that you look forward to each year with new additions in our Wednesday–Friday schedule. The Convention theme—Making a Difference—will become a reality through education and networking and will be paid forward to your business and the industry for years to come. NIA looks forward to welcoming attendees from all segments of the mechanical insulation industry to the Bahamas.

Continuing the New Wednesday—Friday Schedule
In 2018, NIA debuted a new a Wednesday–Friday schedule, which received overwhelmingly positive reviews: 93% of survey respondents preferred the condensed schedule, which gives attendees the option to stay longer for some personal time or head home to get back to your family and your business sooner.

New for 2019—Updated Registration Rates for Kids
Children 5 or younger now come free to the Convention. Additional discounted registration rates are available for children under 17 years of age. We hope that your whole family will be able to join us in the Bahamas!

Who Should Attend
Convention attendees represent all segments of the mechanical insulation industry: merit and union contractors, distributors, fabricators, laminators, and manufacturers. This broad representation of the industry allows attendees opportunities to gain new business contacts, network, and build relationships. Spouses, guests, and children are encouraged to attend.
Sometimes the best amenities are the ones you don’t see

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The January increase essentially reverses December’s decline, and brings the overall Momentum Index back to November’s level. January’s reading is also consistent with the monthly average for the second half of 2018, and just slightly below the current expansion’s high mark set in July 2018. Notably, however, the commercial component remains below the highs set during the summer of 2018, while the institutional component has gained traction as public funding for projects such as schools and transportation terminals remains supportive.

In January, nine projects each with a value of $100 million or more entered planning. The leading commercial building projects were two $300 million CloudHQ data centers in Ashburn VA. The leading institutional building projects were a $235 million arena renovation project in Phoenix AZ and a $140 million academic building at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, NC.
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