



# SEICA

SOUTHEASTERN INSULATION CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION

## NEWSLETTER

The Latest  
Industry Study on  
**INSULATION &  
EMISSIONS**

*p. 16*



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**More Details  
for the  
2024 Spring  
Conference  
in Aruba**

*p. 32*

**New Feature:  
Q&A with a  
SEICA Past  
President**

*p. 40*



WINTER 2024



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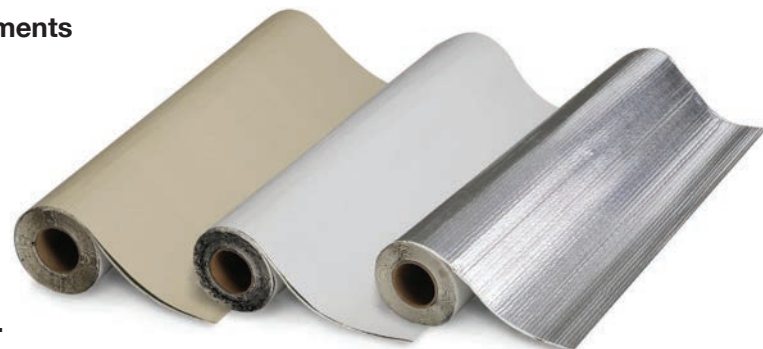
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2024 NUMBER 1: WINTER EDITION

## WHAT'S INSIDE

President's Message .....	4
Executive Director's Report .....	6
SEICA Leadership .....	8
Membership and Dues .....	10
Now Available: SEICA's Online Membership Platform.....	12
An Analysis for Employers: Which Factors Determine Independent Contractor Status under DOL's Final Rule?.....	14
Study Proves Insulation's Ability to Reduce Energy Usage and Emissions .....	16
Join the SEICA Network in Aruba for the 2024 Spring Conference.....	32
How to Influence External Factors Impacting Productivity .....	36
A Q&A with a SEICA Past President: Ron Stewart.....	40

*A Quarterly Publication of the Southeastern Insulation Contractors Association*

**PLEASE NOTE**

This publication does not approve, sanction, or guarantee the validity or accuracy of any data, claims, or other opinions stated in the articles or advertising. The information is presented with the understanding that SEICA, the organization, and its members are not engaged in rendering legal or expert services in this newsletter.

**SHARE YOUR OPINION WITH SEICA!**

As members of SEICA, your input and ideas are critical for the success of this newsletter. We welcome your thoughts on useful, current, interesting, and informative content for the SEICA Newsletter. We invite you to become a regular contributor—please send your ideas and content to [director@seica.org](mailto:director@seica.org). You will be glad you did!



David Bickley  
and Family

## President's Message

Happy 2024 everyone, and I hope your holidays were a time of refreshment and joy with friends and family. This year is a big year for our SEICA family as we celebrate our 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary! While this is a huge association milestone, we are actively working to ensure the organization is set up for another 75-year run.

As a result, there are a lot of exciting changes taking place. We are currently working to extend and improve our current partnership with NIA. This relationship has already had a profound impact on our ability to support our membership, as well as modernize and grow while maintaining the culture we are all so proud of. We are excited about upcoming enhancements to our website, advertising, newsletter, and other communications. In addition, we just launched our Membership Portal so please make sure to check your email for login info and update your profile (see more about this new platform on [p. 12](#))!

Along with the Board of Directors, it is my sincere hope that these efforts are being felt by our membership and leading to a more effective and greater value to you and your companies. If that is the case, please consider partnering with us at a higher level in 2024. Whether you get involved in one of our committees, advertise with us, or help in sponsoring our upcoming events, all participation helps ensure the continued growth and impact of SEICA. If you would like to learn more, please reach out to me or [director@seica.org](mailto:director@seica.org) with any questions.

Lastly, we hope you are planning on joining us in beautiful ARUBA for our upcoming Spring Conference, June 23-25, 2024! It is going to be a special time as we begin to celebrate our 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, and I look forward to seeing you there. Register online at [www.seica.org/2024-springconference](http://www.seica.org/2024-springconference).

*David Bickley*

David Bickley  
SEICA President

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## Executive Director's Report

I am looking forward to a busy and productive 2024 as we celebrate SEICA's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary! In January we launched SEICA's new online membership platform (<https://seica.member365.org>), which allows you to renew your company's membership, secure advertising, register for events, and much more. For additional details see [page 12](#). If you have any feedback about the platform so far, please make sure to reach out to me.

Thank you everyone who has already submitted their 2024 SEICA membership dues, directory updates, and everyone who committed to advertise in 2024—we appreciate your support! If you haven't sent along this information already, please do so by February 29.

The next chance to see everyone is coming up June 23-25 at the Hyatt Regency Resort and Spa in Palm Beach, Aruba! This meeting will feature an extra night of networking—three total evening events with Monday night focused on family—so please make sure you book your reservations to come in by Sunday and depart no earlier than Wednesday morning. Aruba is the PERFECT location to bring your family, and the resort offers so many fun activities to enjoy. We hope to see lots of spouses, guests, and kids at the event. The Hyatt Regency is honoring the discounted room rate before and after the conference dates (based on availability), so book your reservations soon.

As always, if you need anything or have any suggestions or feedback, please reach out to me. I hope to see you in Aruba in June!

*Erin Penberthy*

SEICA Executive Director

Phone: 571-266-3129

Email: [director@seica.org](mailto:director@seica.org)

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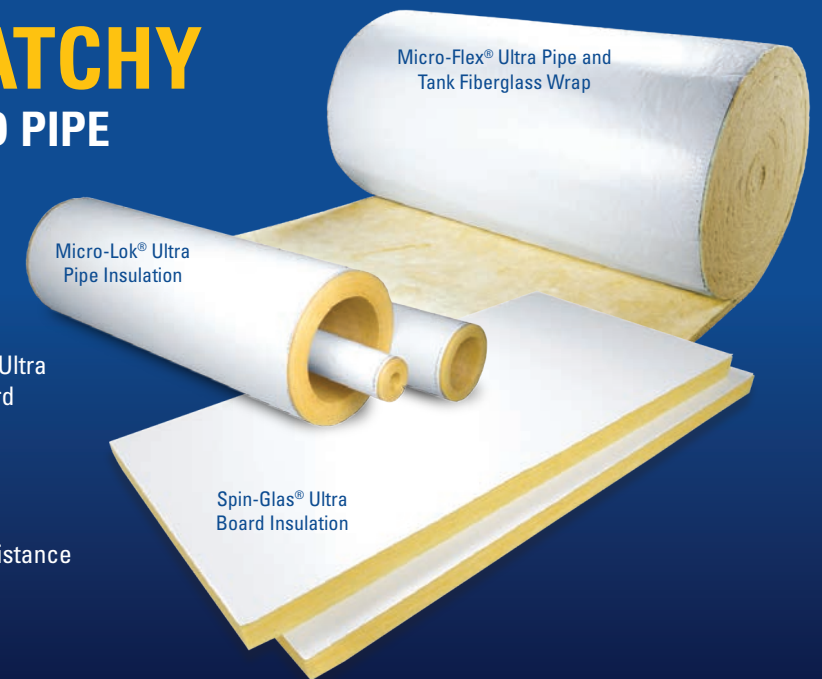
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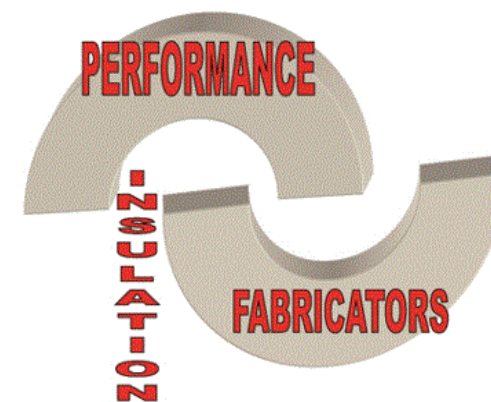
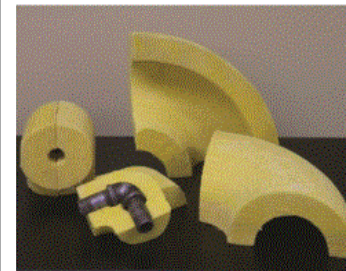
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## Membership and Dues

Any person or corporation whose primary business is the installation or distribution of industrial or commercial insulation for the conservation of heat and cold or any person or corporation whose primary business is abatement of mechanical and industrial systems and who is affiliated with the mechanical insulation industry.

Application shall be made in writing, accompanied by initiation fee and dues. Members shall be elected by the Board of Directors with an affirmation vote of most of the members of the Board of Directors. The initiation fee shall be Fifty Dollars (\$50.00) payable at the time of application for

membership. The amount and method of payment shall be such as may be determined by the Board of Directors.

Only active members shall be entitled to vote in the affairs of the Association and each active member shall be entitled to one vote.

A branch office of a member who desires to receive the benefits of SEICA is eligible for membership. The branch office shall pay annual dues as herein prescribed but shall not be liable for an initiation fee if its principal office is a member at the time it applies for membership.

## Southeastern Insulation Contractors Association Rick Huggins Scholarship Fund

SEICA is proud to offer the Rick Huggins Scholarship Fund to assist students who are interested in pursuing a career in engineering, design, construction, and related professions or students who are sponsored by a SEICA member.

Interested applicants should contact SEICA at 571-266-3129 or [director@seica.org](mailto:director@seica.org) for information or to request an application.

**Applications must be completed and received no later than 5:00 p.m.,  
Thursday, February 29, 2024.**

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## SEICA's Online Membership Platform

We are excited to announce that SEICA's new online membership platform (<https://seica.member365.org>) was launched in January 2024! This platform allows you to renew your company's membership, secure advertising, register for events, and much more. You should have received an email in mid-January with instructions on how to set up your profile. See the easy steps below:

### Set Up Your Profile

- Locate the email that was sent in mid-January (if you can't find this email, please contact [director@seica.org](mailto:director@seica.org) to have it re-sent).
- If you do not see an email, please check your spam or junk folder and search for "Member365 Username & Password to Access Member Portal".
- Use your email address, and the temporary password included in the email to set up your account.

### Once Your Profile Is Set Up

- Review and update your contact information (add your job title, confirm the address we have on file for you is correct, etc.)
- Register for the upcoming SEICA Spring Conference in Aruba ([www.seica.org/2024-springconference](http://www.seica.org/2024-springconference))
- Contribute to the Rick Huggins Scholarship Fund ([www.seica.org/scholarship-program](http://www.seica.org/scholarship-program))
- Secure advertising or sponsorship at an upcoming SEICA event (<https://seica.member365.org/sharingnetwork/store>)
- Check out the upcoming events and deadlines on the Events Calendar (<https://seica.member365.org/sharingnetwork/event>)

If you have not done so already, and to ensure that all SEICA communications are delivered to your inbox, please add [director@seica.org](mailto:director@seica.org) and [rgleeson@insulation.org](mailto:rgleeson@insulation.org) to your safe sender list in your email platform.

If you have any questions about the login process, the new platform, or adding emails to your safe sender list, please email Erin Penberthy at [director@seica.org](mailto:director@seica.org) or call 571-266-3129.



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# An Analysis for Employers: Which Factors Determine Independent Contractor Status under DOL's Final Rule?

By Heather A. Jackson and Matthew Hauer

On January 9, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) released details regarding its final rule on the classification of independent contractors under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), and on January 10, the DOL published the rule itself (see <http://tinyurl.com/5yzz7b64>). DOL indicated that the intent of the new regulation was to bring the regulatory framework in line with the FLSA itself, as well as judicial precedent interpreting the law.

Determining whether an individual should be classified as an independent contractor or an employee is relatively complex, and the proper analysis has been the subject of a decades-long debate by courts and administrative agencies, with various standards utilized and evolving over time.

The independent contractor versus employee inquiry can have far-reaching consequences on an employer's management of its workforce. For instance, independent contractors are not protected by the FLSA, which governs employers' minimum wage and overtime obligations, and also imposes certain recordkeeping requirements. Moreover, employers are not required to withhold or remit taxes—such as Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA), Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA), or income tax withholding—on payments made to independent contractors, and independent contractors typically are not entitled to the same benefits, such as health care coverage. As a result, misclassification of an employee as an independent contractor poses a significant liability risk for employers, including statutory penalties under federal and state law.

Prior to 2021, the DOL had not addressed the independent contractor/employee distinction through regulation. Instead, DOL had only issued

informal guidance, which identified seven factors to be considered in determining whether an individual was an independent contractor or an employee. The DOL under President Trump issued a proposed rule in 2020, which was finalized in January 2021. The 2021 rule established a multi-factor test—commonly referred to as the “economic realities test”—focusing on the extent of the worker's economic dependence on the employer. The ultimate inquiry was whether, as a matter of economic reality, the worker was dependent on the employer for work (and was thus an employee), or whether the worker was in business for themselves (and was thus an independent contractor). The prior rule established a five-factor test, and while no one factor was dispositive, the 2021 rule explicitly stated that two of the factors (the “core” factors) carried greater weight than the others: (1) the nature and degree of the worker's control over the work, and (2) the worker's opportunity for profit or loss based on initiative and/or investment.

When the Biden administration took office in January 2021, the DOL first delayed the implementation of the rule and then purported to withdraw it altogether in May of 2021. The DOL's actions were subsequently challenged in court, and on March 14, 2022, the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Texas held that the DOL's delay and withdrawal of the 2021 rule was unlawful due to certain procedural defects in violation of the Administrative Procedure Act. As a result of the court's ruling, the 2021 rule was reinstated retroactively to March 2021. The court's decision was appealed to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals; however, the appeal was stayed when the DOL issued a new proposed rule in October 2022.

After receipt of more than 54,000 public comments, DOL issued the final rule. The new rule returns to a totality-of-the-circumstances analysis, with six factors identified, but with no single factor having greater weight than another. The factors are:

1. The worker's opportunity for profit or loss depending on managerial skill. The regulation indicates that the following facts may be relevant:
  - Whether the worker determines or can meaningfully negotiate the charge or pay for the work provided;
  - Whether the worker accepts or declines jobs or chooses the order and/or time in which the jobs are performed;
  - Whether the worker engages in marketing, advertising, or other efforts to expand their business or secure more work; and
  - Whether the worker makes decisions to hire others, purchase materials and equipment, and/or rent space.

If a worker has no opportunity for a profit or loss, then this factor suggests that the worker is an employee.

2. Investments by the worker and potential employer, particularly whether investments by a worker are capital or entrepreneurial in nature. Investments that support an independent contractor status are those that “generally support an independent business and serve a business-like function, such as increasing the worker's ability to do different types of or more work reducing costs, or extending market reach.”
3. The degree of permanence of the relationship. Work that is indefinite in duration, continuous, or exclusive of work for other employers weighs in favor of an employee relationship. Work that is definite in duration, non-exclusive, project-based, or sporadic based on the worker being in business for themselves and marketing their services or labor to multiple entities is indicative of an independent contractor relationship.

4. The nature and degree of the potential employer's control over the work. Relevant factors include whether the potential employer:
  - Sets the worker's schedule;
  - Supervises the performance of the work;
  - Explicitly limits the worker's ability to work for others;
  - Uses technological means to supervise the performance of the work;
  - Reserves the right to supervise or discipline workers;
  - Places demands or restrictions on workers that do not allow them to work for others or work when they choose.
5. The extent to which the work is “integral” to the potential employer's business. If a worker is performing services that are critical, necessary, or central to the potential employer's principal business, this factor weighs in favor of an employment relationship. If a worker is performing services that are not critical, necessary, or central to the potential employer's principal business, this factor weighs in favor of an independent contractor relationship.
6. The worker's skill or initiative. This factor indicates employee status, to the extent that the worker does not use specialized skills in performing the work.

The regulation further provides that additional factors may be relevant in determining whether the worker is an employee or independent contractor for purposes of the FLSA, if the factors in some way indicate whether the worker is in business for themselves, as opposed to being economically dependent on the potential employer for work.

It is unclear how the new rule will affect the pending litigation relating to the 2021 rule, but employers should review the new rule carefully, with the expectation that the new rule will go into effect as of March 11, 2024. It is therefore important to determine if any changes are appropriate to the classification of workers for FLSA purposes before the effective date.

*Heather A. Jackson and Matthew Hauer are Attorneys with Taft Stettinius & Hollister LLP ([www.taftlaw.com](http://www.taftlaw.com)). Reprinted with permission.*



# Study Proves INSULATION'S ABILITY TO REDUCE Energy Usage and Emissions

By the National Insulation Association

An independent study determines that even using one type (ready to use) of insulation on mechanical systems results in massive energy savings and corresponding GHG and carbon emission reductions. Businesses and governments should prioritize insulation projects as a first step in achieving energy and carbon reduction goals.

In late 2023, the National Insulation Association (NIA) and the Foundation for Mechanical Insulation Education, Training, and Industry Advancement (Foundation) commissioned Industry Insights to perform an independent, third-party survey of manufacturers of ready-to-use insulation products for higher operating service temperatures to assess the amount of energy saved and the reduction in carbon and other greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. This study sought to determine the value and role mechanical insulation systems have in assisting industries in the United States and Canada to achieve their decarbonization goals. This study is valuable evidence for facility owners, engineering firms, government agencies, code officials, that mechanical insulation projects should be funded and prioritized as an energy-saving and decarbonization technology.

Mechanical insulation is defined to encompass all thermal, acoustical, and personnel safety requirements for mechanical piping and equipment, and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning



(HVAC) applications. The operating or service temperatures can range from cryogenic levels -423°F (-253°C) to above 1,000°F (538°C).

The study's results surprised even the insulation industry because the study's scope was so narrow. It only examined some types of "ready-to-use" mechanical insulation used on pipes and equipment operating at a slender temperature range —between 150°F (66°C) and 800°F (427°C). This study did not include some insulation materials that were suitable for the the temperature range and did not include other operating temperatures

The study covers a time span of 11 years, broken into three segments:

- 2017 to 2021,
- 2022, and
- 2023 to 2027

The study objective was to answer two questions:

1. How much energy is saved, and GHG emissions reduced, over time by the use of mechanical insulation systems in the higher operating service temperatures in the commercial/building and industrial market segments?
2. Conversely, how much is at risk or lost due to under-insulated areas in the higher temperature market segments?

While those questions have been asked for years, the industry has never had adequate visibility to core information from which to calculate the answers. The questions appear to be simple, but the answers have been unknown, and unknowable, until now.



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Table 1. Summary of Study Cumulative Findings

Cumulative Findings Without the Inclusion of Under-Insulated Areas			
Study Results – Savings			
Past 5 Years 2017–2021	Base Year 2022	Next 5 Years 2023–2027	Total 11-Year Window 2017–2027
Savings – Kbtu			
35,013,651,544,356 35.0 Trillion	9,673,266,495,847 9.7 Trillion	62,335,972,385,680 62.3 Trillion	85,940,850,362,833 85.9 Trillion
Dollar (\$) Savings			
\$91,035,494,015 \$91.0 Billion	\$25,150,492,889 \$25.2 Billion	\$162,073,528,203 \$162.1 Billion	\$278,259,515,107 \$ 278.3 Billion
CO <sub>2</sub> Savings – lbs.			
5,441,121,449,993 5.4 Trillion	1,503,225,613,455 1.5 Trillion	9,687,010,108,735 9.7 Trillion	16,631,357,172,182 16.6 Trillion
CO <sub>2</sub> Savings – Metric Tons			
2,468,748,389 2.5 Billion	682,044,289 682.0 Million	4,395,195,149 4.4 Billion	7,545,987,828 7.5 Billion

### Decarbonization

Decarbonization is the term used to describe efforts to keep our planet from warming more than 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. Most countries, including the United States and Canada, have goals to reach net zero emissions by 2050, meaning that all GHG emissions produced are counterbalanced by an equal number of emissions that are eliminated.

There are two basic aspects to decarbonization. The first entails reducing the GHG emissions produced by the combustion of fossil fuels, and the second is energy efficiency—to reduce the demand for energy.

As decarbonization strategies are developed and implemented, energy efficiency is more important than ever. The impact all insulation industry segments can contribute to that effort should not be overlooked or underappreciated. This study confirms the significant contribution the mechanical insulation market segment in particular can make to energy efficiency and, accordingly, carbon reduction initiatives.

If all insulation systems deliver energy savings and emission reduction benefits, why should mechanical insulation be viewed differently? The answer is related to temperature differential and heat loss/gain. The greater the temperature differential between ambient and service/operating temperature, the greater the opportunity for energy savings and reduction in carbon emissions. Accordingly,

mechanical insulation applications, on a unit basis compared to other insulation segments, will yield much greater savings.

Renewable energy sources and electrification will not by themselves bring us to net zero emissions. Mechanical insulation can and should play a substantial role alongside the transition to renewable energy and electrification.

The study points out the obvious and impressive savings, but more importantly, it highlights what could be saved if mechanical insulation systems were viewed as a decarbonization technology that is proven and available now.

When you consider the potential of complete and intact mechanical insulations systems, the total energy savings and emission reduction findings are impressive, and the potential loss of even a portion of those savings should not be overlooked. The study findings, summarized in *Table 1*, are conservative and do not include possible loss of benefits from partial or under-insulated areas. “Under insulated” is defined as items left uninsulated that could have been insulated, or where insulation has been removed and not replaced; items that are either not code compliant or are compliant but do not follow the most current model energy or building codes; items that are not specification compliant; and/or items that are damaged. More information is provided in the body of the report.



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**Table 2.** Reduction in GHG and CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions from Mechanical Insulation Compared to Other Initiatives

Equivalencies	Savings			
	Past 5 Years 2017–2021	Base Year 2022	Next 5 Years 2023–2027	Total 11-Year Window 2017–2027
<b>Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions from:</b>				
Gasoline-powered passenger vehicles driven for 1 year	549.4 Million	151.8 Million	978.1 Million	1.7 Billion
<b>CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions from:</b>				
Homes' energy use for 1 year	311.1 Million	86 Million	553.9 Million	951 Million
Barrels of oil consumed	5.7 Billion	1.6 Billion	10.2 Billion	17.4 Billion
Coal-fired power plants in 1 year	661	183.0	1,176	2,020
Natural gas-fired power plants in 1 year	6,204	1,714	11,044	18,962
<b>GHG Emissions Avoided by:</b>				
Wind turbines running for 1 year	686,474	189,653	1,222,153	2.1 Million
Incandescent lamps switched to LEDs	93.6 Billion	25.9 Billion	166.6 Billion	286.0 Billion
<b>Carbons Sequestered by:</b>				
Acres of U.S. forests in 1 year	2.9 Billion	813.3 Million	5.2 Billion	9.0 Billion

The United States represents 91% +/- of the findings, and the Canadian portion equates to 9% +/-.

It is important to note the study results are cumulative beginning in 2017 and ending in 2027. "Cumulative," for the purposes of the study, means successive inclusion from year to year, so what exists in one year will exist in the next, and every year thereafter, unless something happens that changes the basis of the information.

For example, if a mechanical insulation system saves 1 metric ton of carbon emissions in 2021, it is assumed that it will save the same amount in 2022, 2023, and each year thereafter. Similarly, if 2% of the insulation system is under insulated in 2021, 2% will

be considered to be under insulated in 2022 and each year thereafter.

How do these results compare to other carbon reduction initiatives or GHG reduction equivalents? We turned to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator to answer that question.<sup>1</sup> Results appear in *Table 2*.

A significant portion of the savings are at risk due to areas that are under insulated.

The questions are, how much is under insulated; and, over time, does the problem turn into a much bigger number? Once again, what that percentage is by industry segment, facility, or nationally has been unknown.



**Defining "Under Insulated"**  
For purposes of the study, "under insulated" was defined as including the following:

- Items left uninsulated that could have been insulated (unions, flanges, valves, etc.)
- Items that are not code compliant
- Items that are code compliant but do not follow the most current model energy or building codes
- Items that are not specification compliant
- Items that are damaged by/as a result of:
  - Other crafts working on site
  - Weather-related events (wind, hail, flooding, etc.)
  - Moisture intrusion or intrusion of other contaminants (product, oil, grease, etc.)
  - Mechanical equipment (forklifts, scaffolding, ladders, etc.)
  - Maintenance and/or other facility personnel
  - Environmental elements (corrosive or contaminant environment)
- Being used as a walking surface or work platform (pipe rack, for example)
- System penetration for inspection purposes (destructive testing) and not being repaired in a proper and/or timely manner
- Washdown or similar occurrences
- Fire or similar events
- Installation quality issues
- Insulation removed for maintenance and/or other purposes and not replaced
- Insulation removal for maintenance and/or other purposes exposing the remaining insulation system to potential damage
- Improper and/or not timely maintenance
- Improper insulation system replacement

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**Table 3.** The Cost of Under-Insulated Areas

Summary of Cumulative Findings vs. Potential Loss Due to Under-Insulated Areas				
Study Results – Savings				
	Past 5 Years	Base Year	Next 5 Years	Total 11-Year Window
	2017–2021	2022	2023–2027	2017–2027
<b>CO<sub>2</sub> Savings – Metric Tons</b>				
	2,468,748,389	682,044,289	4,395,195,149	7,545,987,828
<b>Average Potential Loss</b>				
Commercial Market Segment	(41,474,973)	(11,458,344)	(73,839,279)	(126,772,596)
Percent of Total Savings	-1.7%	-1.7%	-1.7%	-1.7%
Industrial Market Segment	(204,494,658)	(56,496,002)	(364,068,665)	(625,059,325)
Percent of Total Savings	-8.3%	-8.3%	-8.3%	-8.3%
Combined Total	(245,969,631)	(67,954,346)	(437,907,944)	(751,831,921)
Percent of Total Savings	-10.0%	-10.0%	-10.0%	-10.0%

The discussion and degree of under-insulated areas applies to all mechanical insulation systems. The industrial segment typically represents a larger percentage of the issue than the commercial segment. Many of the insulated piping systems in the commercial segment are located in wall cavities or above ceilings, and so are not exposed

to weather elements or potential mechanical or personnel abuse on a regular basis.

There are, however, multiple areas in both market segments that are under insulated. While the specific scope of those areas can only be determined on a facility-by-facility or project-by-project basis, the study examines the impact at various levels. Under-insulated areas offer an opportunity to regain potential loss of energy and reduction of carbon emissions while improving mechanical insulation systems in support of other goals, such as personnel safety, process control, mitigating corrosion under insulation (CUI), etc.

On average, based upon the variable percentages of under-insulated areas, the potential loss equates to 10%: 1.7% for the commercial market segment, and 8.3% for the industrial market segment, for an approximate ratio of 1 to 5 (see *Table 3*).

Conservatively, the study indicates a potential average loss of under-insulated areas in the two market segments combined of 751 million metric tons of carbon over the 11-year span of the study, which equates to more than 827,000,000 carbon offsets. (1 ton = 1 carbon offset).

This loss simply should not be overlooked by companies, industries, or governing agencies. The opportunity is there, and the technology is real and proven. Mechanical insulation represents a massive and immediately available GHG reduction opportunity.

How do these results compare to other carbon reduction initiatives or GHG reduction equivalents? The answers are provided in *Table 4*.

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**Table 4.** Summary of Potential Loss Compared to Other Carbon or GHG Reduction Initiatives

Equivalencies	Potential Average Lost – Under-Insulated Areas			
	Past 5 Years 2017–2021	Base Year 2022	Next 5 Years 2023–2027	Total 11-Year Window 2017–2027
<b>Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions from:</b>				
Gasoline-powered passenger vehicles driven for 1 year	54.7 Million	15.1 Million	97.4 Million	167.3 Million
<b>CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions from:</b>				
Homes' energy use for 1 year	31.0 Million	8.6 Million	55.2 Million	94.8 Million
Barrels of oil consumed	568.9 Million	157.2 Million	1.00 Billion	1.7 Billion
Coal-fired power plants in 1 year	65	18	117	201
Natural gas-fired power plants in 1 year	618	171	1,100	1,889
<b>GHG Emissions Avoided by:</b>				
Wind turbines running for 1 year	68,396	18,896	121,767	209,059
Incandescent lamps switched to LEDs	9.3 Billion	2.6 Billion	16.6 Billion	28.5 Billion
<b>Carbons Sequestered by:</b>				
Acres of U.S. forests in 1 year	293.3 Million	81.0 Million	522.2 Million	896.6 Million

The service operating temperature range of 150 to 600°F represents 80%+/- of the total savings and potential loss due to under-insulated areas. That is significant because many facilities do not experience process temperatures above that range.

Given the reality of what little data was available, manufacturers that produced “ready-to-use”

insulation (sectional pipe insulation and board products that can be taken from the manufacturers’ packaging and installed) were asked to provide their 2022 annual linear footage sales by pipe size and thickness, and square footage of board product by thickness.

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multiple industry segments. Its primary use is in the lower service temperature ranges, however, and as a result, it was not included in the study.

The exclusion of elastomeric and non-ready-to-use mechanical insulation material such as aerogel, cellular glass, polyisocyanurate (polyiso), ceramic fiber, removable/reusable insulation cover, and other products makes the results of this study extremely conservative by anyone's measure. Many of these non-ready-to-use materials are heavily used in commercial and industrial applications, particularly at extreme temperature ranges.

While the study results were based on four ready-to-use materials from two primary groups, those materials are NOT the only ones subject to under-insulated areas.

Every 2 years since 1997, the NIA and the Foundation have conducted a separate measurement survey to gauge the size of the mechanical insulation industry. (Visit <http://tinyurl.com/yc8hbwhn> to see the latest results.) By using the information from the 2020 to 2022 measurement survey, we were able to extrapolate insulation usage looking backwards 5 years, and by using historical trends we could look forward 5 years, netting an 11-year window of information from 2017 to 2027.

Determining the energy, emissions, and dollars saved was accomplished with the use of the 3E Plus® software developed by the North American Insulation Manufacturers Association.

Only 2" to 12" iron pipe sizes (IPs) and 1" to 3" pipe and board single layer thicknesses were used in the study. The limited IPs and thicknesses again highlight how extremely conservative the study findings are. There is a significant volume of larger sizes, especially in the industrial higher temperature ranges. Those large-diameter applications often exhibit more extreme heat loss and energy savings.

In addition, the scope of the study did not include operating temperatures below 150°F, which excludes a significant portion of the commercial market, as well as portions of the industrial market.

Again, these scope exclusions underscore the conservative nature of the study findings.

Mechanical insulation systems are not a "one and done" initiative. You do not install it and forget it. The negative impact of areas not insulated is

easy to understand. The efficiency impact of damaged insulation is always subject to varying opinions and interpretations as to the scope and extent of efficiency loss.

The efficiency level of a damaged insulation system is important in determining the amount of heat loss. The actual level of efficiency can only be determined on case-by-case basis and may require product testing.

A level of energy efficiency has been considered by the professionals who designed and specified the insulation system. In order for an insulation system to be as effective as anticipated, it needs to remain as close to each component's manufactured state as possible, and the system must be intact and operating as designed.

Mechanical insulation systems are not a 1- or 5-year initiative. Properly designed, installed, and maintained mechanical insulation systems will last longer than the 11-year span upon which the study's cumulative results are based, and may last the lifetime of the facility.

As with all facility systems, mechanical insulation systems should have regular inspection and timely and proper maintenance. Lack of proper and timely maintenance only makes any problem with the system worse. What today may be a simple repair could be a major problem tomorrow. Additionally, there are other potential consequences—such as personnel and process safety concerns, process control, and CUI to consider.

History has proven that mechanical insulation simply has not been installed in some areas, or it has been removed for one reason or another. Further, mechanical insulation, if not protected, can be damaged, as mentioned above. The study attempted to recognize and account for these under-insulated areas by using a consistent methodology to determine the potential loss of energy and the emission reduction opportunities.

Each facility or project would need to determine its estimated percentage of under-insulated areas. The percentages used in the study are not meant to imply that every facility has that level of under-insulated areas; some will have less, and some may have more.

Recognizing the risk level difference between the market segments, a potential loss percentage scale was developed (Table 5).

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Because the exact breakdown between market segments is unknown, through a series of estimates, assumptions, and extrapolations, the total savings was allotted between the two market segments.

- For each potential percent of under-insulated areas, calculations were made as follows:
- 50% of the percentage was assumed to contain no insulation; and
  - 50% of the percentage was assumed to be damaged and the insulation system performing at a 50% efficiency level, which may be a conservative approach.

### Conclusion and Next Steps

The impressive results of insulation are not surprising to those within the mechanical insulation industry. The magnitude of the savings, and what could be lost, is the data the industry has been missing. Again, it is important to remember that the energy and emission findings are ultra conservative.

This study offers a unique view of mechanical insulation's potential, looking at it holistically rather than focusing singularly on individual products or systems. Each uninsulated or damaged area plays its own important role, but governmental agencies and individual companies need to look at the full potential impact of how effective installing mechanical insulation systems can be for their energy savings and carbon/GHG emission reductions.

Rather than complex solutions businesses and governments should focus on the one change that can happen immediately—adding insulation to their mechanical systems and/or inspecting current systems for possible insulation repair or maintenance. Mechanical insulation is a proven technology that will help achieve a company's—and our country's—decarbonization and sustainability objectives.

Once recognized and applied as a primary contributing technology to the solution, mechanical insulation will help businesses, states, and provinces obtain their regulatory or voluntary carbon reduction goals now, tomorrow, and for years to come.

One facility at a time making a commitment to look at mechanical insulation in new construction and existing facilities can make a difference

**Table 5.** Percentage Scale of Potential Loss Due to Under-Insulated Areas

Commercial Market Segment	Industrial Market Segment
2.0%	5.0%
4.0%	10.0%
6.0%	15.0%
8.0%	20.0%
10.0%	25.0%
N/A	30.0%

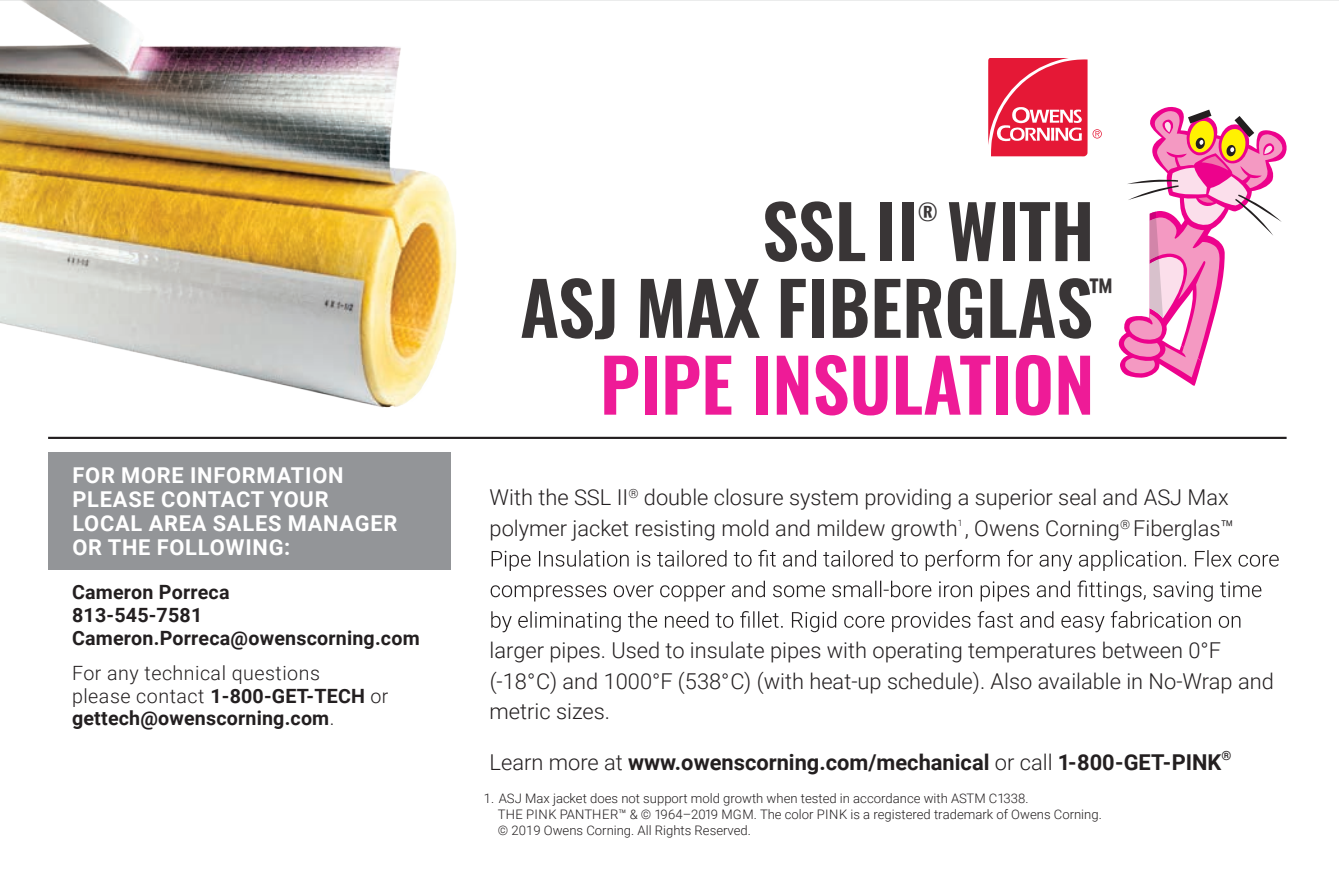
now. Taking small steps can lead to significant, large-scale results. To achieve decarbonization goals, many aspects of the economy must change—from how energy is generated to how we produce and deliver goods and services; and how we manage lands, our businesses, and our lives.

The challenge for the business and finance communities, as well as policymakers, is to identify how best to use the time and resources we have—especially solutions that are available now—to advance the changes needed.

### Next Steps

While each business, company, agency, etc., may have unique circumstances, structures, and procedures to consider, there are a few common “next steps” that should be considered in determining how and to what level mechanical insulation can help achieve energy savings and decarbonization goals.

1. Commit to investigating and developing a better understanding as to the benefit(s) of mechanical insulation and the consequences of not having up-to-date specifications and dealing with improper installation and/or insufficient or improper maintenance.
2. With the support of internal subject matter experts (SMEs) and the help of external resources (manufacturers, contractors,

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fabricators, associations, etc.) complete a thorough and objective review of current project or company specifications or standards, and develop recommended changes as needed.

3. Develop and implement specific mechanical insulation energy efficiency and emission reduction appraisals/audits with inspectors and appraisers certified in those fields.
4. Determine the internal and/or external hurdles or barriers to implementing mechanical insulation energy and carbon reduction initiatives.
5. Commit to and maintain a commitment to continuing education related to all aspect of mechanical insulation systems for the operating systems and environments specific to the company or area of operations.
6. Hold internal company/department meetings to educate all parties on the value of mechanical insulation within your organization, the environment, and the local community, as well as on the consequences of damaged insulation.
7. Share your success with others. There is great value in sharing best practices or case studies. Your organization benefits not only from being recognized as a leader, but also from helping others in addressing climate change.
8. “Inspect what you expect”—not only in monitoring and recording progress of specific plans, but also with initial installation and maintenance processes. If mechanical insulation is not installed or repaired/replaced properly, the expected benefits may not be realized, and it could lead to other areas of concern and additional unexpected cost.
9. Develop an annual inspection and maintenance program for existing facilities. This will benefit short- and long-term operational and capital budget planning, and the information could be used in internal and external climate change/sustainability programs.
10. Ensure you have transition plans to transfer the mechanical insulation expertise and technology. Often—whether by right-sizing,

downsizing, attrition, changes in responsibility, change of ownership, or mergers, etc.—knowledge is lost. That is especially true with mechanical insulation. The decarbonization and other benefits of mechanical insulation is not limited by time.

The study confirms the contribution the mechanical insulation industry can make to decarbonization efforts. It is available now, and it impacts every state, county (province) and city, labor group, all direct or indirect related businesses, and this and future generations—if only we think about mechanical insulation systems differently.

That is potentially the industry’s greatest challenge. It is hoped that this study can be the impetus for change.

The full report can be obtained at [www.insulation.org/carbon](http://www.insulation.org/carbon) and [www.insulation.org/foundation/data](http://www.insulation.org/foundation/data). **NIA encourages you to share this study.**

#### REFERENCE

1. <https://www.epa.gov/energy/greenhouse-gas-equivalencies-calculator#results>

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The study would not have been possible without the support of Johns Manville, a Berkshire Hathaway Company; Knauf Insulation, Inc.; Owens Corning; and ROCKWOOL Technical Insulation. Thank you to NIA Past President and Consultant Ronald L. King for his oversight of this research.

*NIA is a not-for-profit trade association representing both merit (open shop) and union contractors, distributors, laminators, fabricators, and manufacturers that provide thermal insulation, insulation accessories, and components to the commercial, mechanical, and industrial markets throughout the nation. Since 1953, the northern Virginia-based association has been the voice of the insulation industry and is dedicated to keeping the commercial and industrial insulation industry up to date on the latest industry trends and technologies. For more information, visit [www.insulation.org](http://www.insulation.org). Reprinted with permission. Copyright NIA 2023. Contact [research@insulation.org](mailto:research@insulation.org) for more information or visit [www.insulation.org/carbon](http://www.insulation.org/carbon).*



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# Join Your SEICA Network in Aruba for the 2024 Spring Conference



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**What:** SEICA's 2024 Spring Conference  
**Where:** Hyatt Regency Aruba Resort Spa and Casino, Palm Beach, Aruba  
**When:** June 23-25, 2024  
**Registration and Discounted Hotel Reservation Deadline:** May 23, 2024

## Panel Discussion: SEICA's Past, Present, and Future

As we celebrate SEICA's 75th Anniversary, it is important to reflect on the organization's history and the value it has brought to so many companies, members, and families. Attendees will hear from several SEICA Past Presidents about their reflections on where we started, how we have evolved, and what they hope to see for SEICA and the overall mechanical insulation industry in the future.

### Panelists:

- Katie Burell, HR/Purchasing/Office Manager, Breeding Insulation Company, Chattanooga, Inc. (2021-2023 SEICA President)
- Matt Caldwell, President, Caldwell Insulation, Inc. (2008-2010 SEICA President)

- Keith Register, Owner, Register Insulation (2002-2003 SEICA President)
- Ron Stewart, President, Atlantech Distribution, Inc. (2015-2016 SEICA President)
- Moderated by David Bickley, General Manager, Distribution International (2023-2025 SEICA President)

### Educational Sessions

#### Leading Growth and Preventing Workplace Burnout

During this session, Peter Atherton will discuss how to not only recognize the signs but also how to prevent and reverse the burnout-disengagement cycle. Peter will also demonstrate how better designed growth can solve the burnout problem and lead to greater long-term and sustainable success within organizations.



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• **How to Attract and Retain Top Talent—the Latest Data and Insights Needed for Growth**

This session will provide an overview on the *2024 Present and Future of Work in Engineering and Architecture Report*, which will showcase the top trends impacting talent in this industry. Peter Atherton will also discuss the gaps that exist between roles, genders, and generations, and four destabilizing forces that must be better understood and addressed to attract and retain great talent.

**Speaker:** Peter C. Atherton, PE, President and Founder of ActionsProve, LLC.

**Important Schedule Updates for 2024**

The Spring Conference will feature 3 nights of evening events and networking. Spouses and kids are invited to all evening events, but make sure you do not miss the Monday evening event, featuring a casual and family-friendly location and dinner.

- **Sunday evening**—Welcome Reception and Dinner
- **Monday evening**—Family Friendly Evening, featuring a full dinner and drinks
- **Tuesday evening**—Final Evening Reception and Dinner

**About the Conference Location: Hyatt Regency Aruba Resort Spa and Casino**

Along with spectacular ocean views, enjoy the resort’s amenities and nearby shopping and

**Important Travel Information**

Upon arrival in Aruba, you must have a U.S. passport valid for the duration of your stay. Aruba is one of the few countries with Preclearance Customs, which allows travelers to skip the Customs and Border Protection process upon arrival in the United States. The Aruba ED Card (Embarkation/Disembarkation) is a mandatory requirement for all individuals, including infants and children, entering Aruba. It is necessary to complete and obtain approval for this document. To access the official ED Card, visit <https://edcardaruba.aw>. For more information, visit <https://tinyurl.com/4rh4de78>.

dining options that are within walking distance of the resort. The hotel offers seven unique dining options to eat, drink, and unwind featuring restaurants near Palm Beach with amazing views! Relax under calming Caribbean skies at the new Trankilo adults-only pool or spend free time racing down the waterslide and playing water volleyball at the family activity pool.

**Room Rates**

SEICA has blocked rooms at the Hyatt Regency Aruba Resort Spa and Casino at discounted rates. These rooms are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Rates do not include meals, but are inclusive of taxes and service charges. Resort service charge is 15% of the room rate per night. Please note that the rooms include a step-out balcony (not a full balcony). Rooms are available before and after the Conference at a discounted rate (based on availability).

**Available Room Types:**

- **Garden and Resort View Room:** \$436 (includes 15% resort fees and taxes)
- **Ocean View Room:** \$482 (includes 15% resort fees and taxes)

**Reservation Details:**

Online reservations can be made by visiting <http://tinyurl.com/323eh9n2>. Room types are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

- If you would like to make a reservation by phone, please call 0011 297 5234502, and use the code **G-SPIN**.
- You may also email [aruba.reservations@hyatt.com](mailto:aruba.reservations@hyatt.com) to make your reservation.
- The hotel reservation deadline is May 23, 2024.

**More Information to Come!**

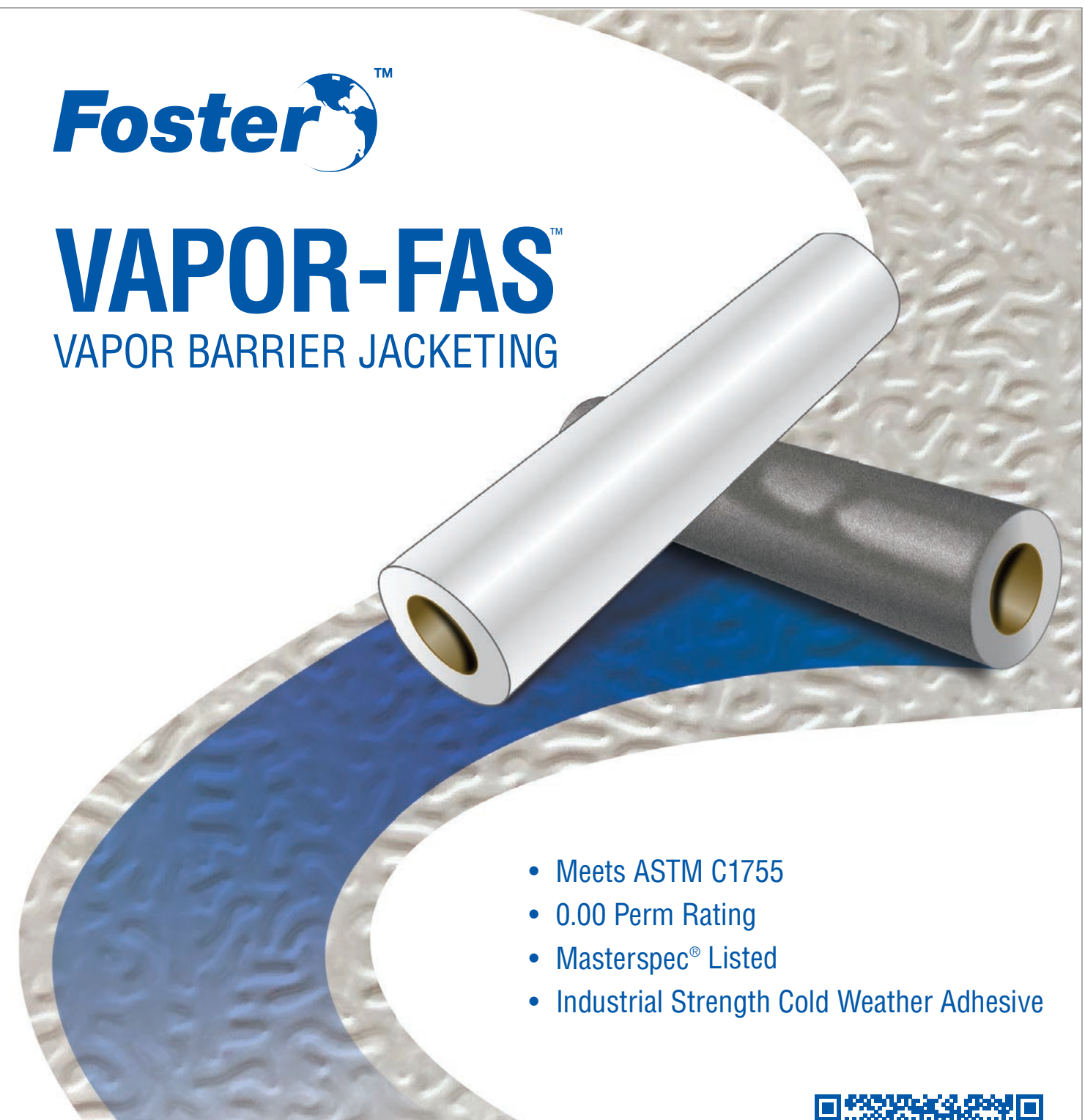
Visit <https://www.seica.org/2024-springconference> to get the latest information or contact SEICA Executive Director Erin Penberthy via email at [director@seica.org](mailto:director@seica.org).

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# How to Influence External Factors Impacting Productivity

By Taylor Paré, FMI

Contractors who participated in FMI's 2023 Labor Productivity Study (<http://tinyurl.com/2aknshmn>) believe they have the potential to improve labor productivity by more than 5% annually. Put into practice, this can have a massive impact on bottom-line performance for labor-intensive contractors.

Most study participants plan to double-down on improving their operational processes and training and developing their people. And while these efforts help address the leading internal factors that negatively impact labor productivity on projects (internal planning and project team communication), what about the external factors with negative impact to labor productivity, including low-quality design documents, unrealistic schedules, general contractors, change order inefficiencies, and other trade contractors? Such factors play a significant role in the success of a given project and are not always controllable by specialty trade contractors.

Even if external factors cannot be directly managed or controlled, they can be influenced through robust planning and communication. Below are a few best practices shown to be effective in FMI's work with labor-intensive, specialty trade contractors.

- **Client Kickoff Meetings:** Most contractors hold internal kickoff meetings to get their teams ready to mobilize and start projects with momentum. Surprisingly, relatively few contractors make it a point to convene similar meetings with their clients, either general contractors or owners.

By formalizing a meeting at the beginning of a project, contractors can influence the level of communication, cooperation, and collaboration from the project's outset. This is a chance to ensure stakeholders are on the same page relative to expectations for schedules, documentation requirements, design or

constructability concerns, change order and payment processes, and other variables.

Through meeting with the client to go over critical aspects of the project one-on-one, walk the site together and maybe even sit down for lunch, contractors can begin to build a rapport that will hugely influence project success, particularly as it relates to labor productivity. Note that this is different from the kickoff meeting led by clients or owners, which commonly includes a dozen or more different trade contractors in the room. These meetings are generally high-level and do not afford the same opportunities to build connection and trust like a special purpose, one-on-one meeting that you schedule directly with the client.

- **Detailed Trade Scheduling:** Too often, master schedules are created in vacuums, devoid of inputs from key trades on sequencing and duration of activities. Unfortunately, trade contractors commonly accept a client's unrealistic schedule, pointing to its deficiencies when predictable "delays" occur later in the job.

Today, we often see trade contractors who do not develop their own schedules, because they feel general contractors or owners are not open to their input. But you never know until you ask—and few are asking.

Before proceeding to ask for changes to a master schedule, take time to develop your own critical path schedule for your scope of work. If you can demonstrate a schedule logic that optimizes success for your team and the project but this schedule is incongruous with the master schedule, then you have the basis for a conversation with the client about sensible adjustments that can be made for the betterment of the project.

Progressive general contractors and owners ask for input from key trade partners



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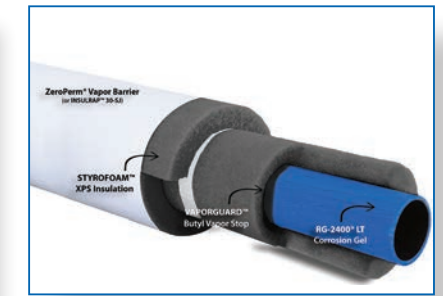
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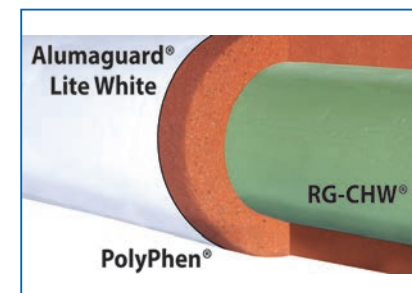
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on schedules and/or engage trade partners in iterative pull planning sessions to optimize the collaborative success of all stakeholders. Absent these client-driven processes, presenting your own schedule to a client can result in productive discussion about schedule deficiencies that could impact your ability to optimize labor productivity for your project.

- **Job Status Updates:** Over the course of a project, there is an endless flow of information from many different parties and through a variety of media (email, project management software, text, phone calls, and in-person and virtual meetings). And although key items get mentioned or discussed, unless they are top of mind, they can fall by the wayside. A solid, weekly job status update helps consolidate all of this information in one place for your specific trades and presents it in an easily digestible format for your client.

A strong job status update typically includes:

- Work that was completed over the past week (including progress photos),

- Work to be completed in the week(s) to come (including a formal look-ahead plan), and
- Outstanding items that could hold things up if not addressed (constraints), such as site logistics, pending submittals, delayed materials, pending change orders, delayed payment, open RFIs, design/constructability issues, etc.

Summarizing this information in one place, updating it weekly, and sharing it with stakeholders (internal and external) keeps everyone on the same page. By ensuring stakeholders are aligned, you can mitigate or eliminate constraints that might otherwise negatively impact your labor productivity.

Because few contractors execute these best practices consistently, by implementing them you can help differentiate your firm in the minds of your clients. If done well, they will provide tremendous value to your client as well as your project team—helping you influence the external factors that can negatively impact your ability to perform and optimize labor productivity on your projects.

Ask any owner or general contractor if they would be against:

- Scheduling a dedicated kickoff meeting with you prior to mobilization to align project teams.
- Receiving a detailed schedule from your team showing how you plan to execute the work.
- Receiving thorough project updates from you on a weekly basis to ensure nothing holds up production.

Most clients would be delighted to hear these suggestions and impressed at your willingness to take additional measures. Perhaps your project teams are already doing these things regularly; if so, great! If not, consider tweaking your approach to client communication by adopting some of these elements. You might be surprised at just how much you can influence as a result.

*Tyler Paré is a Partner for FMI Consulting ([www.fmicorp.com](http://www.fmicorp.com)) and leads FMI's Performance practice, which helps contractors optimize profitability and manage risks. Reprinted with permission.*

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# A Q&A with a SEICA Past President: Ron Stewart

As SEICA celebrates our 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary and gets ready for our Past Presidents Panel in Aruba, we wanted to take this opportunity to check in with a past leader to share some SEICA history and industry perspective.

Ron Stewart  
2015–2016 SEICA President  
President, Atlantech Distribution, Inc.



## 1 What are you most proud of from your term as SEICA President?

During my term, I made the recommendation that the next incoming President serve a 2-year term, allowing them to better serve the position and have enough time in the role to implement their agenda. I quickly realized the President was just beginning to get heavily into the role as they prepared for the Spring meeting in June, and after that meeting would only be 4 months away from turning over the role to the incoming President. The Board approved and implemented the change, and I believe that having officers sit in their position for 2 year terms is serving SEICA well.

## 2 What has been the biggest change in SEICA that you have seen in your years of involvement?

I came into the industry in 1999 and have seen the evolution of Dee Gowen as Executive Director to our current management with NIA. Anyone who worked with Dee knows that she was an absolute delight to work with and would absolutely ride you until you completed any task that she placed in front of you! SEICA now has resources that help us better communicate, register for events, etc. Secondly, the addition of manufacturers as members and guests at SEICA events. As the world has changed and all of us have become busier, we do not have the time for salespeople to drop into our offices like we did years ago. The time at SEICA to meet and share with manufacturers brings value to both contractor and distributor members.

## 3 What has been the biggest change for the mechanical insulation industry during your career?

In 1999, I had a beeper on my belt and they had just introduced the first BlackBerry phone. So, it isn't surprising that one of the biggest changes that come to mind centers on technology and takeoff tools that are available to contractors. We have gone from paper prints and color pencils to digitizers to onscreen takeoff to BIM and beyond. Products have seen some positive changes like jacketing, improvements in CUI, and reduced VOCs but otherwise are largely unchanged over the past 25 years. Another of the biggest changes is also one of the biggest challenges: the availability of skilled labor.

## 4 What are you most excited about for the future?

Energy conservation is one of the most important issues facing our country and the world. The potential impact of mechanical insulation continues to be underappreciated, and that is exciting because that means we have potential for further growth. I tell our organization often that I would be concerned if I felt that we were hitting on all eight cylinders. As our industry continues to push the message, we will see breakthroughs in increasing requirements for mechanical insulation in specifications. The demand for our industry's products and services should continue to grow over the coming years. That is exciting.

## 5 What would you tell someone who is considering the mechanical insulation industry as a career?

Ours is a great industry for a young person as it has significant growth potential over the coming decades. Secondly, it seems that once someone starts into this industry, they are in it for life. They may move between companies and even from contractor to distributor to manufacturer, but they seem to stay. The industry is small and we make friends, and some of these friends are customers, some are competitors, some are suppliers, and some even become like family. My career has included some time in several industries, and I would have been happy to have spent the entirety of my career in the mechanical insulation industry.



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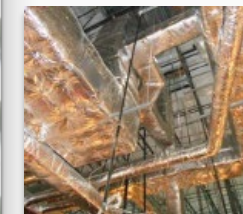
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