

International Association of Geosynthetic Installers

IAGI Newsletter

A Note from IAGI's President - John "Robbie" Robinson



Well, here it is November and at this time most years we're all making plans and booking flights to GRI. Not this year however. Las Vegas will just have to wait until next year, and I'll save some money. Our destination this year is Austin, TX.

As I'm sure you know, all the Geo-folks will be gathering in Austin, Texas (a great city!) for the Geo blowout of 2005. GeoFrontiers 2005 will have something for everyone and we on the IAGI Board hope

that a large percentage of our membership will make the trip to Austin. Dates are January 23rd to the 26th and the Exhibit Hall will be open Monday evening and Tuesday and Wednesday during the day.

For more information about the conference look on the web at www.geofrontiers05.org. The lead Hotel is the Austin Hilton, 512-482-8000, at \$149.00 per night; however, for the more budget minded, I'm sure that less costly rooms can be had in the city.

The IAGI schedule is to include:

IAGI's General Assembly - Monday 24 January 2005 5:30

IAGI Proctor Training - Day and time to be determined.

IAGI Corporate Recognition Program Committee - Day and time to be determined.

We hope that you all will attend. We will send notice in early January to confirm meeting times and locations.

See you in Austin,

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Website Information

All members are asked to check the IAGI website to ensure their contact information is correct. Log on to www.iagi.org and go to the membership directory section. If any corrections need to be made to your company listing, please contact Sally Perillat at iagi@iagi.org. Thank you for your help in this area.

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Corporate Recognition Program Continues to Move Forward

A meeting of industry volunteers was held November 18, 2004 to discuss the Corporate Recognition Program.

For several years the geosynthetic industry has been discussing the implementation of a Corporate Recognition program. IAGI members got together to discuss what a program of this nature would look like. A meeting will be held during the GeoFrontiers 2005 conference.

Here are some of the highlights outlined during the telephone conference call. A re-write of the draft will be available early January 2005. If you would like a copy, please email Sally Perillat at iagi@iagi.org and she will send the copy out when it is available.

The participants on the conference call wanted the Corporate Recognition Program broken down into different levels to accommodate the variety of businesses in the geosynthetics marketplace. The method for doing this has not yet been established. These levels will be developed and incorporated into the revised draft due out early January 2005.

The Proposed Company Recognition Program would require:

Corporate Histories / Business Practices

- Complete list of officers and owners with 10 percent ownership stake.

- Primary business location, years in business.
- Bonding capability—different levels will be established for different classes of recognition.
- Bankruptcy filings—list the owners, officers or their spouses involved in a bankrupt company within the past two years.
- Minimum acceptable Dun and Bradstreet credit rating.

Insurance

- Employee Modifier Rating—a rate of 1.0 or lower.
- General Liability Insurance minimum of \$1 million.
- Workers Compensation insurance—statutory requirements.
- Automobile liability—minimum \$1 million.

Safety Training

- Drug Free Work Place Program.
- DOT Log—Require DOT registration number for having trucks on the road.
- Established Safety program—copy of table of contents of safety program the company provides.
- 40 hour safety training.

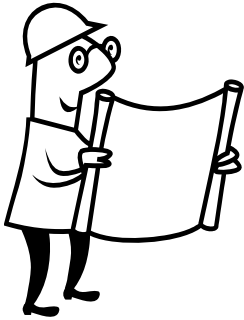
Professional Competence / Experience

- Provide a reference list with 2 engineers, 2 contractor/owners and 2 manufacturers reporting.
- Certified Welding Technicians—15 percent of technicians must be certified.
- Resumes of supervisory experience.

The proposal is to have certification and recertification periods held two times per year: June and December. It is anticipated that a third party (such as an independent accounting firm) will be used to gather and verify the information submitted by companies. IAGI members have indicated that they may be reluctant to provide information to IAGI when the specific information could potentially be shared with members of the Board and / or certification advisory committee. It is important that the information needed is clearly defined so that the third party firm can determine the definitive criteria for granting certification.

It is anticipated that the initial fee will be higher than the renewal fee. The initial certification may prove to be more involved and hence cost more to conduct. The renewal process should involve the company sending updated information. At this time IAGI does not have an estimate for costs. The goal is to have this information at the meeting scheduled for GeoFrontiers.

The next telephone conference call is scheduled for early January 2005. If you wish to be notified about this call, please send Sally Perillat an email at: iagi@iagi.org and she will put you on the list to receive notification.



New Members

IAGI extends a warm welcome to the following new members:

WIL-Key International
William Steinke
54A, Jalan USJ 10/1B
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Fax: +60 603-5631-1812
E-mail: bill@wil-key.com.my
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Board Nomination Announced

Lee Taylor, Taylor Geosynthetics, Inc., has been nominated for a seat on the Board of Directors for a period of one year. Taylor has accepted this nomination. A ballot will be sent out to all members for voting in January 2005. Please take the time to respond to this ballot to make your voice heard.



DEMO DAVE'S CORNER

TRICKS OF THE TRADE – EXTRUSION WELDING:

Let's face it, extrusion welding is a necessary component of PE and some PP liner installations; it is also a pain in the neck, back, and wallet! In this continuing series of articles, I will use my column to share a few "tricks" I've learned over the years that probably won't save the pain in the neck or back but might help save time and money.

TRICK NUMBER THREE: Cutting/Shaping Teflon Shoe (Die)

Most extrusion welder suppliers offer pre-cut Teflon welding shoes. However, welding technicians have their own idea of what a weld bead profile (height and width) should be and

use a grinder or knife to cut/shape blank Teflon shoes to match their mood.

Industry standards and material manufacturer's recommendations specify weld bead height (twice material thickness), but as long as the finished weld meets minimum peel and shear values, bead width comes down to a matter of technician preference. A narrow bead increases weld speed but a wide bead makes staying on center less critical.

Please feel free to call me with questions, comments, and suggestions regarding this or future articles. Telephone: (530)-621-3200 or demodave@demotech.com.

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2005 Membership Dues Increase

We all have much to be thankful for and the Board of Directors are especially thankful for all of you. Thank you for making all we do possible.

As is the case with many nonprofit organizations, IAGI is still recovering from a couple of tough years financially. We are committed to prudently using the financial

resources entrusted to us. IAGI Board of Director's wants to develop more programs to help our members.

One of the programs IAGI is currently developing is the Corporate Recognition Program. (More information about that program on page 2) We are also having representation at the GeoFrontiers conference, finishing the reinforced certification program and con-

tinually improving the IAGI website.

We cannot do this with the current resources. For this reason, the Board agreed to raise the 2005 membership dues to \$300 for both the installer and associate classes.

Again, thank you for your continued support.

Resin Prices Climb During 2004

It's happening everywhere—price increases seem to be an unavoidable aspect of business these days. Gas

prices—up; paper prices—up; labor costs—up; insurance rates—up, up, up and in our business resin prices are facing the same fate.

have been contributing to the price increases. Crude oil prices have risen sharply, demand for polyethylene from China has been strong and, finally, no new capacity is slated to come on line until 2008. In 2008, Middle East producers will bring projects on line that will contribute to the supply chain.

Polypropylene has not escaped price increases during the past year. The polypropylene (PP) resin index has increased nine percent. PP makers are pointing to high feedstock prices as the reason for these price increases according to "Plastics News", November 24, 2004 issue. Overall, the average per pound prices for polypropylene have increased 22 cents in 2004 according to "Plastics News".

Geomembrane prices have gone up and the factors causing these price increases remain important. The November 1, 2004 "Chemical Market Reporter" says the price of polyethylene has climbed nine cents per pound since January 2004. Another price increase of five cents per pound has been announced.

Several factors

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Insurance Program Update by Elizabeth Peggs

Geosynthetic.net (Elizabeth, Lara, and Ian Peggs, accompanied by Retained Earth Design's John Paulson) recently attended the *International Construction Risk Management Conference*. The conference, held annually in the fall, is strictly technical in nature. By that I mean there is no exhibit or direct commercial venue at the event. There were approximately 1,300 attendees, each paying approximately \$1,300 to participate over three days. I must say the content and production value of this conference was phenomenal. The participants were very involved, and the presenters, panels, and speakers were top-notch.

Geosynthetic.net was asked to host a Technology Showcase, one of six rooms in which the attendees could listen to a presentation, pursue information, and discuss issues regarding geosynthetics and associated loss control and risk management. The important questions were: did we learn anything, were we able to find a niche for our "Geosynthetics Risk Management Program" and did anyone from the insurance side have any interest in backing or participating in the program? The answers to all questions are YES.

We discovered that there are a host of places that we, the geosynthetics

community, can provide information and valuable input that will instigate the insurers and construction companies to ***insist*** on: best practice, peer-reviewed design, selection of most appropriate materials, qualified installation, and effective CQA. We discovered that there are many places in the big picture where we can insert ourselves to improve the quality of use where the geosynthetics community is concerned. Some of the places we can have an impact on the manner in which underwriting is managed include: pre-contract design review, contract negotiation, CCIPs (Contractor Controlled Insurance Programs), Design-Build Insurance, and a host of other situations.

We were able to illustrate to the insurers that losses occur every year - which they pay for unnecessarily - and that the *Geosynthetics Risk Management Program* will enable them to control their losses, manage the risk, and be more profitable at a very low cost. Installation is a key issue in this arena, as has been proven. The use of knowledgeable sub-contractors is imperative for the successful installation and subsequent satisfactory performance of many geosynthetic materials

and products. ***Requisite use of qualified installers by contractors and insurers can be achieved.***

A qualification must first exist to identify "qualified installers" or "qualified installation companies" in order for the contractors and insurers to insist on the use of those people. This is quite obviously where IAGI has the power to make the serious geosynthetics installation companies stand above the rest. It is where we have the ability to identify those installers who provide a valuable, quality service and let them compete together on an even playing field, thus removing from the ranks those companies that do not adhere to best practice, don't have experience, and therefore compete with low-dollar employees who negatively affect the economy of the installation community.

"Requisite use of qualified installers by contractors and insurers can be achieved."



Landfill cap with erosion control blanket

Dr. Weld ... a parody

Dear Dr. Weld,

I've been having a bit of a problem with wedge welding textured HDPE sheet and I am hoping you can settle a disagreement I've been having with my foreman about it. He says I should set up the machine for the 60 mil material thickness, plus the texturing. I say we should set it up for the 60 mil thickness only and let the texturing melt off. So far we've been doing it his way (he IS the boss after all), but we've been having some weld failures. He says it's the sheet, I say it's the set up. Who's right?

Signed,

Can't Agree

Dear Can't Agree,

Yes, I see your problem. In fact, I see both your problems. One is that you've got a bonehead for a boss, and the other is that you've got the backbone of a sea anemone. Tell your boss he's wrong! Wedge welding textured sheet is very doable, but only if you disregard the texture and set your welder for the parent material thickness in order to have the proper heat penetration (and melt) into the parent sheet. The parent sheet is, after all, where the weld will take place. But hey, the good news is, if your

boss keeps making failed welds, maybe you can have his job.

Dear Dr. Weld,

I've been having trouble sleeping lately and thought maybe you could help. The problem is this: the last time we did an installation where they placed a sand overburden on the liner, I saw waves of wrinkles forming ahead of the sand, which eventually got folded over and buried. This can't be good, can it? I mean, won't those wrinkles crease, and concentrate stress? And I can't even think about my extrusion welds bent like that. Doc, you've gotta help. My conscience won't give me any peace. What should I do?

Signed,

Sleep-deprived in Cincinnati

Dear Sleep-deprived,

Stop sleep-walking and wake up! Buried wrinkles are to be avoided for the very reasons you've described. Usually, spot placement of the overburden ahead of the bulldozer can help. Check your spec under "overburden, placement of" and see whose whistle needs blowing. Oh, and just a suggestion — make sure someone signs off on your liner work before the earthwork boys start their engines. Then go and take a nap.

Dear Dr. Weld,

As a liner technician, I'm away from home about months out of the year. That was fine while I was single, but a month ago I got married, and now the new Missus is worried about all the time away from home. She thinks maybe it's time I tried some other line of work. I kind of like liner work, and the money's good, but I've gotta think of someone else now. So we decided we'd write to you, and abide by your advice. What do you think—should I quit installing liners and stay home or take my chances with life on the road?

Signed,

Newlyweds in Nevada

Dear Newlyweds,

Hey! Did you think you were writing Dear Abby here? What do I know about this stuff? If you wanted to know how to keep your extrusion rod dry, or how to make a nice slope vent, I could help. But marriage? Ha! Better ask my 3 ex-wives. On second thought, better not. Listen we both know that life on the road is mostly just long days of hard work and a quick bite of food before bed. But since your marriage hangs in the balance, here's my Solomon-like solution. See if your wife would like to join the crew. If she doesn't mind carrying sandbags, or can do a good 'as-built' drawing, there may be hope for you lovebirds yet.

GSI's Continuing Education Short Courses

GSI will be holding four courses during the month of January 2005. All of these courses will be held at Geosynthetic Institute in Folsom PA.

6 January 2005

- Geosynthetics in Transportation Geotechnical Applications. *Instructors: Bob Koerner, George Koerner, Grace Hsuan*

7 January 2005

- Geosynthetics in Reinforced Walls and Slopes including Computer Design. *Instructors: Bob Koerner, Dov Leshchinsky, George Koerner*

13 January 2005

- Geosynthetics in Waste Containment Applications. *Instructors: Bob Koerner, George Koerner, Grace Hsuan*

14 January 2005

- Quality Control / Quality Assurance of Geosynthetics. *Instructors: Bob Koerner, George Koerner*

For more information on these courses, contact Marilyn Ashley at telephone: + 610-522-8440 or mashley@dca.net.

*IAGI wants to hear from you!
If you have an announcement you would like in the IAGI newsletter, please send it to IAGI at PO Box 18012, St. Paul, MN 55118 USA or via email at iagi@iagi.org*

Newsletter Ad Space Available

Take advantage of advertising space available within each IAGI newsletter. Ads must be business card size and camera ready—jpg format is preferred. The cost per ad is \$55 for IAGI members and

\$110 for nonmembers. Space is limited.

If you wish to place an ad, contact Anne Steacy, IAGI Treasurer. She can be reached at 713-432-0322 or via email at anne@steacy.org

Stolen Equipment Program Update

In the last issue of the newsletter, IAGI announced the implementation of a program to try to recover stolen equipment. We have gotten some submittals, but are still looking for additional submittals. Please send this information to iagi@iagi.org.

finds the equipment is stolen, the police can be contacted.

Our goal is to help installers recover stolen equipment and take the street value out of installation equipment.

If you have any further questions about the equipment recovery program, contact Laurie Honnigford at 651-554-1895 or iagi@iagi.org.

The collected list of stolen equipment will then be published on the IAGI website. Members can look over the list to see if anything they are purchasing from a private party is stolen. If the company



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Now you can tout the quality of the Welding Technician on your job – specifying that the Welders have the IAGI Certification for the type of welding they will perform. These Welding Technicians have demonstrated their skill in welding polyethylene and reinforced geomembranes and are committed to meeting high standards of performance.

The IAGI Certification Program was designed to raise the level of professionalism in the Geomembrane Industry. The test is available for Polyethylene and Reinforced materials. The test is available in a variety of languages.

For information about the IAGI Certification Program,
call Laurie Honnigford at 651-554-1895.

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