

Illinois Ready Mixed Concrete Association

IRMCA News

Volume 28, Number 2

Summer 2009

**Life-Cycle Cost
Legislation**

**Pervious
Pavement**

**Association
News**

IDOT Update

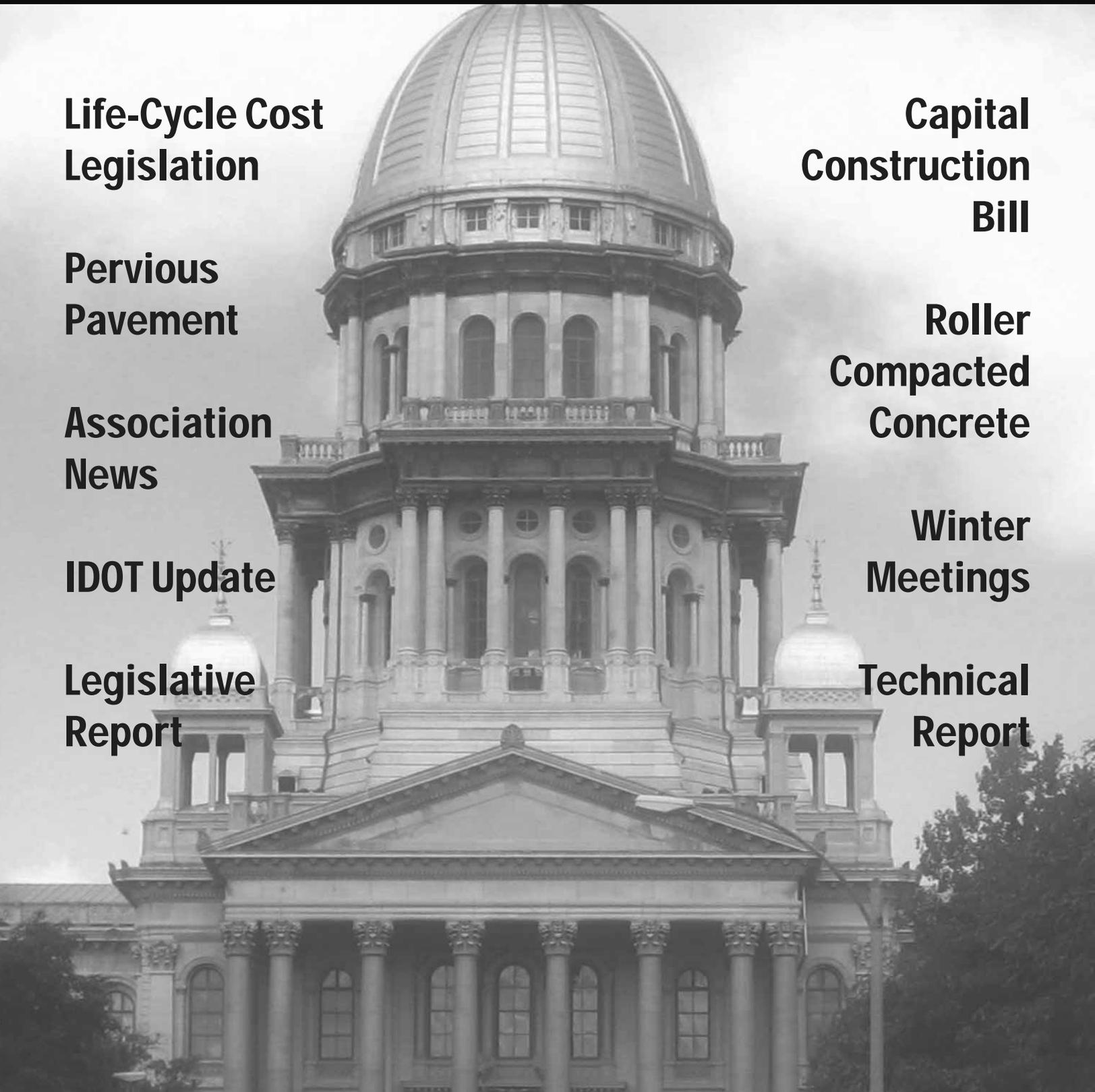
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COMING EVENTS

Harvey Hagge
Scholarship Golf Outing
September 9th, 2009

IRMCA Short Course
January 11th & 12th,
2010

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our condolences to the family and friends of Don Payne, who was general manager of Contractor's Ready Mix in Lincoln, Mason City, Petersburg and Jacksonville.

We are delighted to announce the arrival of Dan and Jennifer Bedell's daughter, Mia. Jennifer is the Special Projects Coordinator for the Illinois Ready Mixed Concrete Association.

IRMCA's New Web Site Goes Live

IRMCA's new web site combines the previous site's best features, expanded and enhanced, with a variety of beneficial new tools and content. On the home page you will find concrete industry and IRMCA web site highlights and a calendar of events. From there you can reach additional site content, including:

- A comprehensive list of links.
- A resource section, where you can download or order IRMCA newsletters and many other publications.
- A concrete topics area that offers information, links, photos and resources by topic.
- A gallery of photos organized into concrete topics and projects.

The new web site is a great informational and promotional tool that is easy to navigate. Visit www.irmca.org and make use of this improved member service.

NEW MEMBERS

Breckenridge of Illinois, LLC

229 N. Old U.S. Rte.. 66, P.O. Box 25

Hamel, IL 62046

Phone: 618-633-2236

Fax: 618-633-2345

Products & Services: Ready Mixed Concrete and Related Building Materials
(bought Ready-Mix Service, Inc.)

Robert E. Lee & Sons Company

5721 Bohlander Avenue

Berkeley, IL 60163

Phone: 708-544-4148

Fax: 708-544-4174

Products & Services: Concrete Contractor

Ruane Construction, Inc.

Mark Ruane, President

8779 Laraway Road

Frankfort, IL 60423

Phone: 815-464-0681

Fax: 815-464-0685

Products & Services: Concrete Contractor

IRMCA NEWS

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Illinois Ready Mixed Concrete Association



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*Working together to create value, teach excellence,
and produce quality.*

Officers

Cheryl Moeller, President

Justin Ozinga, Vice President

George Mobarak, Secretary/Treasurer

Directors

Jim Amundsen, Mike Blunier, Kyle Cain,

Brad Doll, Tim Huiner,

Dennis Probst, Dan Stevens

Staff

Bruce Grohne, Executive Director

Jennifer Bedell,

IRMCA News Editor/Special Projects Coordinator

John Reed,

Director of Marketing & Promotion

JoAnn McKeown, Office Manager

John Albinger, Technical Consultant

Jim Randolph, Political Affairs

Dick Plimpton, P.E., Consultant

Mission

To be the voice for the ready mixed concrete industry in Illinois. To promote the use of quality ready mixed concrete through innovative educational programs. To accomplish common goals as an organization that cannot be done individually.

The Times They Are A-Changin'

For years IRMCA producers have dutifully filled out their ANNUAL FACILITY INSPECTION REPORT and felt secure in the knowledge that for one more year they were satisfying the storm water discharge requirements of the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. However, with the arrival of a letter from IL-EPA dated April 3, 2009, members got a first look at the changes EPA (IEPA) has implemented to the General NPDES Permit for Storm Water Discharges from Industrial Activities, otherwise known as the Illinois EPA Storm Water permit held by many IRMCA members.

When the IL-EPA made changes to their air emissions regulations they held several meetings with IRMCA to solicit our input, and eventually the partnership produced a plan satisfactory to all. Not so with stormwater. The comprehensive letter outlining the new policy was a surprise to everyone.

IRMCA Environmental Committee members reacted immediately, met to discuss the ramifications, and eventually disseminated as much information and guidance to the membership as possible. We attempted to set a meeting with the IL-EPA to ask for clarifications and direction but were unsuccessful until just recently – too late for the July 1, 2009, deadline.

IRMCA encouraged members to do their best and to send both the inspection report and either an updated storm water plan or the old one with a pledge to begin updating it. We have now made contact with a representative from the water division of IL-EPA who has agreed to meet with us and discuss the situation. You will be kept informed.

The line it is drawn

The curse it is cast

The slow one now

Will later be fast

As the present now

Will later be past

The order is

Rapidly fadin'.

And the first one now

Will later be last

For the times they are a-changin'.

--Bob Dylan

HB 255
HB 312
HB 2400

Capital CONSTRUCTION Bill

On July 13, Governor Pat Quinn approved the first capital construction program in more than 10 years. Lawmakers approved the measure in late May, but the governor only recently decided he would sign the measure, which will put people to work and allow for much-needed improvements to Illinois' infrastructure.

The approximately \$30 billion program reflects a bipartisan effort between the four legislative caucuses and will finance improvements to schools, roads and municipal infrastructure, creating hundreds of thousands of jobs in the process.

The massive public works program is contained in three bills, including House Bill 255, which creates the Capital Projects Fund. The Capital Projects Fund will contain revenues generated by the legalization of video gaming, an increase in license plate fees, and new taxes on coffee, tea, candy and grooming and hygiene products. Additional measures include House Bill 312, which is the spending (appropriations) bill for the capital construction program, and House Bill 2400, which is the bond authorization legislation for the capital construction program.

Special effort was made to outline all spending, eliminating the lump sums and mystery money that had been criticized in previous capital bills. Communities will have an equal opportunity to apply for competitive grants to make improvements to parks, museums, local sewage, water and treatment facilities and other projects.

Reprinted with permission from the *Senate Republican Capitol Connection*, July 13, 2009.

Did You Know?

Concrete, Washington, was incorporated on May 8, 1909, and has a population of 835.

Early settlers came to the Baker River in 1871, originally calling the settlement on the west bank *Minnehaha*. In 1890, the townsite was platted by Magnus Miller, a post office was set up, and the name *Baker* was adopted. On the east bank of the river, the community that sprang up around the Washington Portland Cement Company (1905) was named *Cement City*. After the Superior Portland Cement Company plant (1908) was built in Baker, it was decided to merge the two towns and, in 1909, after much discussion, the new community settled on the name *Concrete*. Prior to 1921, several fires destroyed most of the original wooden buildings that had lined Main Street. Since concrete was in ample supply, it was decided that subsequent commercial buildings would be made from this nonflammable material. Historic plaques on many of the buildings list their construction dates.

As found on www.concrete-wa.com.

Awakening...

By Randell C. Riley, P.E.

During my years as a concrete pavement promoter I've been exposed to a number of unique perspectives and involved in a variety of concrete pavement promotion projects. The most recent effort was getting life-cycle cost legislation passed in the General Assembly of the State of Illinois (many were involved, including some of you). For me it was a learning experience, and your Executive Director, Bruce Grohne, asked that I convey to you a little of what I learned along the way.

Passing life-cycle cost legislation required a lot of hard work, similar to what we are used to doing but with a group and type of individual to whom we are not used to talking. Following are a few simple things I have learned that can be applied to any future effort we might like to make with the Legislature, but keep in mind the same rules apply with your City Councilman or Alderman.

1. Prepare a written message explaining the issue and the desired resolution. Keep the message simple and concise. If it goes beyond one page, political folks rarely have the time or desire to read it. They do like to engage verbally.
2. Since they are verbal people, try to avoid the engineering jargon to which most of our customers are accustomed. Many of these folks just barely know that roads are made of "cement" or "blacktop." Be willing to adjust to their jargon as soon as you hear the phrase being uttered from them and to speak in their terms. (They have the votes – you don't.) Trying to correct them will be fruitless and lose you votes and it boils down to the vote – nothing more.
3. Try to do item #2 without talking down to them. Most of these individuals are intelligent but, again, not accustomed to the quirky jargon and methods of engineers and concrete industry representatives. Be happy that they know what a "cement truck" actually does. Our sensitivities are not theirs!
4. Stay "in their face." This does not mean that you should be argumentative, but rather that you not worry about bothering them. When I told one of our elected officials that I was sorry to be a bother again, she recognized that I was new to this and quickly corrected me with a very convincing argument: Don't worry about it; if we don't see you several times, we don't know you are serious. She added, "You snooze, you lose!"
5. Ask them for names of others who might support your cause. The old Chicago line, "Don't send me nobody that nobody sent," quoted so often by our Northern Illinois Promotion Director, Jimmie Wheeler, works. One of the best guys I worked with from the ready mix industry here in Illinois is Jim Randolph, PBI, and he was extremely good about this. It does make a difference.
6. Plan on becoming a resource and commit to respond if possible when elected officials ask you questions about another issue that pops up in some other bill or thing they are working on that you were unaware of. I found out about some labor issue from one of the legislators that wanted our opinion on a particular issue and its impact on contractors. Remember, these folks are dealing with and making laws on a myriad of issues that you may not know are even working their way through the system. By helping them, you become a friend and resource, too. It will not always get you the vote, but it doesn't hurt and may pay off on that other bill you didn't even know was "in the hopper."
7. When working with the General Assembly, plan on doing nothing but waiting until you have 90 seconds to make a clear and concise, well-rehearsed verbal pitch on your issue. Legislators will give you more time if they want to and if they can, but they do not always have that luxury. I always thought the phrase *walk with me*, as used on *The West Wing*, was a bit facetious, overused and silly. I now know better. Be able to do your 90 seconds practically on the run. You would be surprised how fast some seemingly out-of-shape legislators can move. Black dress Reeboks would be an excellent shoe selection for this job if you could find such a thing.
8. Watch your restroom conversations. You never know who is listening and/or how their interests might run counter to yours. On the other hand, if you are a listener you might pick up something useful while you are attending to, shall we say, other business.

Continued on page 18.

Legislative Report

By Jim Randolph

Most of the attention in Springfield has been on Governor Quinn, the Capital Plan and the state's incomplete budget. Many bills have made it to the governor's desk for signature, which is good. He will need to either sign them or veto them. If he does neither, the bills will automatically become law. What follows is an update on the bills we have been working on this session.

SB 1434 was the repeal of the *Commercial Distribution Fee* but became the *Life Cycle Cost Analysis Bill* that is sitting on the governor's desk. (See Randy Riley's article on page 6 for the particulars of this bill.) Thank you, to those who called their senators when we asked for your help. The support of both houses could not have been stronger! Thank you, Randy, for the years of preparing the way for this bill; good job!

SB 43 is the prevailing wage expansion into TIF districts and Enterprise Zones. This bill has been inactive since May 19. Now the deadline for its second reading has been extended to November 30, 2009, in the fall session. We will keep an eye on this bill.

HB 255, Capital Bill - 80,000# Truck Access: provisions for statewide 80,000 pound access on most state and local roads was included in the Capital Bill, which passed July 13. It will be effective January 1, 2010. What does that mean for us? The easiest way to understand it would be to use the Federal Standard of weights for roads and bridges charts. This legislation has done away with the Illinois Standard charts. It affects all Illinois roads unless otherwise posted for bridge limits or freeze-thaw period limits.

HB 2424 was also signed into law with the Capital Bill. This bill will allow 20,000# on a single axle and 36,000# on a tandem when you purchase the SHV, Special Hauling Vehicle, with your registration.

Governor Quinn can be contacted by phone @ 217.782.6830 or by mail:

The Honorable Governor Patrick Quinn
207 Statehouse
Springfield, IL 62706

Mid-West Truckers Association is instrumental in making these changes that are effective January 1, 2010. Matt Hart, Legislative Activities Coordinator, indicates there are many "fingers" of the current and new weight laws branching into many areas of the Illinois Motor Vehicle Code. MTA is working with IDOT and ISP to clean up and clarify other components of the weight laws that are affected.

HB 3956 continues to sit on the governor's desk awaiting his action. The bill would adopt a uniform 65 MPH speed limit on rural Illinois interstate highways outside of Cook, DuPage, Kane, McHenry, Lake and Will Counties (where the speed limit would remain at 55 MPH). The bill does not affect secondary highways, which will retain a maximum speed limit of 55 MPH or lower for all vehicles. Now is the time to contact the governor's office and urge his support for this bill.

Thank you for your active support and please contact the IRMCA office @ 800.235.4055 if you have questions.

Jim Randolph is the IRMCA
Government Relations Consultant
and Legislative Committee Chair.

Winter Meetings

IRMCA held its annual Short Course in East Peoria, Illinois, in early January of 2009 and two months later held its Annual General Membership Meeting and Convention in Naples, Florida. Attendance at both meetings suffered slightly due to the economy, but both offered excellent speakers and good opportunities for networking.

Speakers at the Short Course focused on parking lot promotion and “flipping” lots to concrete. Presentations by Phil Kresge, NRMCA; Tom Winkelman, Continental Cement; Brad Doll, Doll’s Inc.; John Albinger, IRMCA; and Len Swederski, Swederski Concrete equipped listeners to successfully state the case for concrete paving. George Wyness of Crossroads Compliance talked about producers’ compliance responsibilities and Doug Dirks from IDOT gave his annual report. On Monday evening then-Senator Gary Hannig talked to dinner guests about concerns in the state Legislature. (Mr. Hannig is now Illinois Department of Transportation Secretary.)

At the Annual Meeting speakers were Jim Posadny, Continental Cement; Catherine Miller, Freeborn and Peters; Mitch Mariotti, VCNA Prairie; Marty Ozinga III, Ozinga Brothers; Jim Randolph, IRMCA; and Julie Garbini, RMC Foundation.

Clockwise from top: Then-Senator Hannig (now IDOT Secretary) speaks and answers questions at the Short Course; networking at the Short Course reception; sisters Cheryl Moeller, IRMCA president, and Catherine Miller, Annual Convention speaker.





Wal-Mart Super Center in Carlyle, Illinois, gets concrete parking lot.

Faced with high, unstable asphalt prices and concerned about weather, officials constructing a Wal-Mart Super Center in Carlyle, Illinois, agreed to allow contractor Poettker Construction of Breese, Illinois, to submit a concrete alternate for the parking lot, which was originally specified as asphalt. The concrete bid was accepted by Wal-Mart, and Vee-Jay Cement Contracting of St. Louis was selected for placement. The concrete was delivered by IRMCA member Quad-County Ready Mix and the shopping center opened on time in June of 2009. The parking lot design included placement of 5" PCC pavement in standard-use areas and 6" in heavy use areas, both with integral curb. All concrete was specified 3500 psi. The building is approximately 100,000 square feet and the parking lot is 290,000 square feet. Congratulations to all involved in this project, and to everyone else, note that Wal-Mart WILL use concrete!

Wal-Mart Chooses Concrete



I-74/I-55 wraps around Bloomington-Normal and has recently been paved with concrete.



Concrete streets and traffic circle in uptown Normal.

A Concrete Community

The variety and quantity of concrete in Bloomington-Normal, Illinois

Throughout the world concrete is a widely used building material. People walk, drive and park on it every day and often do not appreciate its extensive use in their communities.

The Illinois Ready Mixed Concrete Association staff has long recognized that its office is located in a community of prolific concrete construction. Bloomington-Normal has a great quantity of concrete subdivisions, streets, sidewalks and parking lots, as well as many and varied special projects. Here is a sampling:

- Uptown Normal is undergoing a revitalization effort, complete with concrete streets and traffic circle.
- I-74/I-55 wraps around Bloomington-Normal and, recently, many miles of this four and six lane Interstate were paved with concrete.
- BroMenn Hospital is a large regional medical center. Concrete pavement was chosen for its new entrance off of Main Street.
- Decorative concrete was used to create a beautiful walking path and courtyard at Ewing Cultural Center.

The extensive variety and quantity of concrete construction in Bloomington-Normal does not happen by chance. Rather, it is the result of promotion efforts by people such as Dick Plimpton combined with an abundance of qualified concrete producers and contractors.



**BroMenn Hospital
picked concrete for
its new entrance off
North Main Street in
Normal, Illinois.**

**Decorative concrete
at the Ewing Cultural
Center in Bloomington.**



One of the ICF concrete homes built recently in Bloomington-Normal.

IRMCA and IDOT Meet

Several IRMCA producers, associates and staff met with representatives of the Illinois Department of Transportation's Department of Materials & Physical Research on June 18 in Bloomington for what is intended to be a resurrection of regular meetings between the two groups. Below is a synopsis of the issues discussed and some thoughts on follow-up:

- **Recycled water and stormwater use in ready mix.** Water disposal issues are under great IEPA scrutiny and regulations will certainly only tighten. Using the water stored on a plant site as a portion of the water used in a load of concrete may become crucial to adhering to future rules. While IDOT rules now state that water must be potable, they indicated willingness to meet further to help address this sustainable issue.
- **Crushed concrete usage as aggregate for fresh concrete.** Short discussion with no direction determined.
- **Mix designs.** Discussed repercussions of needing new mix design approval every time a material changes during an IDOT project. The concern here is twofold: one, new approvals often take time and hold up a project; two, there is no consistency between districts. IDOT talked about their personnel shortages and we were reminded that the resident engineer has complete control over a project. Further discussions will be held concerning both district consistency and liabilities related to construction delays.
- **Low cylinder results.** It was verified that there is no written IDOT policy covering procedures to be followed for low test cylinder reports. Each district resident engineer handles the issue independently. It was decided that IRMCA will initiate efforts to prepare and put forward a policy that would cover all districts. Meanwhile, producers involved in this issue are advised to be very careful to do everything by the book in concert with the resident engineer and have everything pre-approved and in writing.
- **Admixtures.** The new admixture policy was discussed with mention that the admixture committee would be meeting again soon.
- **Fly ash.** A long discussion was held concerning the future availability of fly ash in Illinois and the impact that possible shortages will have on the ready mix industry. IDOT, who specifies fly ash in its mixes, was equally concerned. Producers are advised to talk to their fly ash providers.

If anyone would like a complete copy of the minutes, covering these and other issues, contact IRMCA. The meeting achieved everything IRMCA had hoped it would. The dialog was positive and it was obvious IDOT welcomes our help and suggestions. In many matters they are as frustrated as we are. IRMCA will follow up on issues discussed and, where possible, create more dialog with IDOT. If members have issues they would like proposed to IDOT, please let IRMCA staff know.

IDOT/Industry Joint Co-op Committee

Several years ago the Illinois Department of Transportation met with interested parties (mostly contractors) and formed the IDOT/ Industry Joint Co-op Committee. The purpose of the committee is to allow contractors and suppliers to bring issues and concerns to IDOT in a face-to-face manner. The group meets quarterly in the offices of the Illinois Chapter of the Associated General Contractors (AGC) in Springfield and attendees include several IDOT officials, paving contractors, materials suppliers and others. Randy Riley, IL-ACPA, and John Reed, IRMCA, attend the meetings and represent the Illinois concrete industry.

Discussions often cover special traffic issues, material supply issues, pay problems, material testing, construction technique concerns and more. This very public forum is a good way to solicit comments from IDOT; the IL-ACPA and IRMCA will continue to bring problematic issues to the group. If you have a concern that IDOT could address, please contact John or Randy and they will add it to the next Joint Co-op meeting agenda.

IRMCA producer members in Chicago and the surrounding counties have placed significant quantities of pervious concrete in the last several months. Ozinga Brothers delivered pervious concrete to a Comcast property on 112th Street in Chicago for a parking area covering 2 acres! The pervious was placed and finished by Raffin Construction, Chicago. The lot was completed with concrete curbs and full depth concrete entry ways.

VCNA Prairie supplied pervious to an alleyway project in Des Plaines for contractor MQ Construction and for areas of Pritzker Park at State and Van Buren in downtown Chicago. Pervious, as well as conventional and decorative concrete, was placed at Pritzker Park by Speedy Gonzales Landscaping.

Congratulations to these two members and to others who are finding success promoting pervious concrete.

Editor's note: contact IRMCA @ 800.235.4055 to share special promotional successes.

Pervious Placements in Northeast Illinois



Alleyways in Des Plaines.



Comcast parking lot in Chicago.



Pritzker Park in downtown Chicago.



Roller Compacted Concrete

The Great Lakes Regional Office of the Portland Cement Association and the Illinois Ready Mixed Concrete Association partnered on July 15 and 16 to present seminars aimed at educating producers, contractors and material suppliers about Roller Compacted Concrete (RCC).

Those attending the meetings in Collinsville and Joliet learned about the composition, delivery, placement and curing of RCC from presenters Chris Tull, P.E., CRT Concrete Consulting; Tom Winkelman, P.E., Continental Cement Company; and Wayne Adaska, P.E., Director of Pavements, Portland Cement Association.

RCC has the same basic ingredients as conventional concrete but, unlike conventional concrete, it's a drier mix—stiff enough to be compacted by vibratory rollers. It doesn't need forms or finishing, nor does it contain dowels or steel reinforcing. RCC offers three basic benefits for industrial pavement: low cost, high strength and rapid construction. It offers owners the strength to withstand heavy loads, the durability to resist freeze thaw damage and the low cost to be competitive.

PCA and IRMCA were asked by attendees to arrange placement demonstrations, and we will attempt to do so. For most, RCC is new, something with which we have little or no experience. However, in these tough economic times, it is incumbent upon all of us to investigate each and every opportunity to increase our business. For more information on RCC, contact the IRMCA office.

Board of Directors Update

As promised, we are publishing relevant items from IRMCA board meetings in this and subsequent newsletters. Items of interest from the March, May and June Board meetings:

- A report was given on proposed significant, member-financed promotion in northeast Illinois and we are awaiting funding decisions from affected members.
- IRMCA's staff was instructed to give members help regarding distressed concrete problems but not to get involved in potentially litigious situations.
- It was decided that we will not sponsor a fellowship or internship in 2009.
- IRMCA held two RCC seminars this summer.
- In May the board heard a report from PCA warning that financial investment in our promotional efforts will be diminished in 2010. In June, the board directed that there be no staff reduction in 2010 and that member services, including full scale promotional efforts, not be appreciably diminished. The staff was asked to look for potential cost savings as well as new revenue sources.
- The board voted to conduct the mandated Annual General Membership Meeting during the Short Course in 2010 instead of at an Annual Convention. Board members and staff are investigating the possibility of a meeting that could be held in 2010 in place of an Annual Convention; a mandate was passed that such a meeting would incur no cost to IRMCA other than legwork.
- Discussions were held on IRMCA's participation in lobbying for passage of the life-cycle legislation and, generally, on IRMCA's participation legislatively.
- Board members got a glimpse of IRMCA's new web site, which should be out in August, and approved the purchase of a new, larger computer network server. IRMCA also renewed its lease for 3 more years.
- The board reiterated that all IRMCA funds be kept in FDIC institutions, none exceeding the \$250,000 limit.

For details or amplification on the above, please call IRMCA and ask for Bruce.

Board Welcomes New Directors & Extends Term Length for Executive Officers

At IRMCA's Annual General Membership Meeting on March 6, 2009, in Naples, Florida, IRMCA's Board of Directors approved a new tradition of executive officers serving two year terms instead of the one year terms they previously served. Cheryl Moeller of Moeller Ready Mix is now serving a second year as President; Justin Ozinga of Ozinga Illinois continues as Vice President; and George Mobarak was elected as Secretary/Treasurer.

Our newly elected board members are Dan Stevens & Mike Blunier. Welcome!

Dan Stevens has been involved in the ready mix industry for more than 32 years. The bulk of Dan's concrete career has been in the fly ash and admixture industry. His career started in 1976 in Wisconsin, then for a brief period took him to Texas before he moved to Chicago in 1982. In 2007 he joined St. Mary's Cement Company, Inc. as the Illinois District Sales Manager. Regarding his service as an IRMCA board member, Dan conveyed, "It was an honor to serve the members of the IRMCA previously as a board member in 1992-1994 and I am privileged to be able to serve the IRMCA membership again."

Mike Blunier is a graduate of NIU - DeKalb, Illinois. He then taught high school for three years. While going to college and teaching, Mike worked summers driving a truck for Roanoke Concrete Products. He began full time employment with RCP in June of 1978 and now has spent 31 years in the concrete business. Mike is Vice-President/General Manager of Roanoke Concrete Products and Peoria Concrete Construction in East Peoria. "The concrete industry has been a part of my life for many years. I have seen our industry make great strides in improvements to the concrete we produce and market. The daily obstacles we encounter continue to keep the job we do interesting and challenging," says Mike.

Our continuing directors are: Jim Amundsen, WR Grace & Company; Kyle Cain, Princeton Redi Mix Company; Brad Doll, Doll's Inc.; Tim Huiner, Batavia Concrete/VCNA Prairie Materials; Dennis Probst, Mid-Illinois Concrete.

AISWCD Holds Open House

The Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts held an open house on June 30, 2009, to display their new pervious driveway entrance and parking lot. Dignitaries from the Illinois and Federal EPA, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Springfield Park District and others gathered not only to see the sustainable addition to the property but also to learn why the pavement choices were made and to see how they work. During remarks, the representative of the Federal EPA, Tom Davenport, verified that pervious concrete is considered a best management practice by the EPA for stormwater protection.



Permanent plaque beside the new pervious driveway at the state headquarters of the AISWCD.

John Reed of the Illinois Ready Mixed Concrete Association joined AISWCD staff to explain the pervious driveway and to demonstrate its permeability. Reed used IRMCA's tabletop display and joined dignitaries as they each poured a bucket of water onto the driveway and watched it disappear into the system below the pavement.

To further display the effectiveness of pervious concrete, the AISWCD, along with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, are placing a large pad of pervious concrete on the grounds of the state fair for display at this year's event in August. (See article and picture below.)

Pervious at the State Fair

Building on the positive reactions to the new AISWCD driveway, officials from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Natural Resources decided that placement of pervious at this year's state fair would be fun and educational for fair-goers. The groups hired IRMCA member C & G Concrete Construction from East Peoria to place pervious at two locations: Conservation World and Watershed Park. IRMCA member Solomon Colors, located in Springfield, provided green color for the concrete at Watershed Park. All of the pervious for these two projects was delivered by Capitol Ready Mix of Springfield.



Pervious pavement is being cured at the Illinois State Fairgrounds.

Free Training Opportunity!

In January of this year IL-ACPA members, IRMCA members, and a number of IL Department of Transportation and County Engineers were offered the opportunity to attend the National Concrete Pavement Technology Center's course on the Integrated Materials and Construction Practices for Concrete Pavements. The program was well attended and well received.

The National Highway Institute (NHI) is offering free online training modules based on the Integrated Materials and Construction Practices (IMCP) Manual developed by the National CP Tech Center.

The training is structured in an interactive mode for you and your staff to learn at your pace and convenience. This means that you don't have to dedicate staff travel time to a classroom and can get meaningful educational opportunities from the convenience of your office computer. Though you will need to register, the price is right as there is no charge.

Think about this program as you consider training opportunities for your personnel during the coming winter months.

Usually, we give you the web address directly, but in this case, the URL is too long and complex. The easiest way to access the modules is to Google (the new verb) on one of the course numbers and click on the hyperlink. It will take you to the web site where you can then look at all of NHI's the web-based free courses.

Alternatively, you can go here: <http://www.nhi.fhwa.dot.gov/downloads/catalog/NHICourseCatalog.pdf> to see all of NHI's courses and find written registration instructions along with course listings.

Tell It Like It Is

By John Albingger

How many times have you heard the expression, *the only thing that is constant is change*? In June I turned 66 years old and I can tell you that getting older and accepting change can be difficult. So what does my birthday have to do with concrete? Nothing, but change does.

As with other industries, change has come to ours, though maybe a little differently. Change is typically a result of competition and regulations. It also normally starts in larger metropolitan areas where the market demands change and innovation. Chicago became more technically advanced because of high rise construction; large ready mix producers needed bigger, more efficient plants.

The most significant changes started occurring in the 1960's. At that time EPA and OSHA were merely sleeping giants. IDOT work was simple, you just did what they said. Then, almost suddenly, computers appeared, yet many of us remained unaffected. We read about high strength concrete, 5000 cubic yard mass pours and record breaking long bridge spans... big deal.

In the late 1970's, a couple of large foreign owned businesses came to the States and bought ready mix businesses in both large metropolitan and small rural areas. They attempted to "buy" their way into markets but quickly realized their approach was short term. Their influence dwindled, but they are here to stay. They entered the business again, this time with cement, a much more influential approach. Then, in the 1980's, foreign owned admixture companies introduced super plasticizers to the U.S. market.

The '70's and '80's brought a new consciousness of the quality of our environment and a new concern about the safety of our working class. Regulations and laws regarding our air and water quality were being written. Laws governing safety in the workplace soon followed. Enforcement seemed, however, to be localized to big cities and big companies. Once again most of us just heard about what was happening... who cares.

Time marched on. In the 1990's, foreign ownership became more common. Some of our competitors sold their plants to other competitors or to large companies from out of the area. This was change that affected us. OSHA and the EPA gained strength and IRMCA told you that these organizations were starting to look directly at the concrete industry, so be prepared. You heard more and more people say, "This business isn't as much fun as it used to be."

The momentum of change increased rapidly as we went into the new millennium. In fact, more of us started to accept it. Some of us implemented safety and environmental programs within our companies. We started realizing the financial benefits of using new admixtures or promoting new markets. Some of us thought that isolation still worked. Some of us decided it's time to sell.

Then, the coup de gras, the icing on the cake, the straw that broke the camel's back... the economy went to hell. Our business was down 20%, 30%, 40%, ?, and people had to be laid off. The State of Illinois reacted as well and started laying people off, a lot of people. IDOT met with industry members and asked them to get more involved in developing innovative products and procedures. They even wrote specifications encouraging innovation. They told us, "We don't have the manpower to do what we used to do."

For Pete's sake, John, what's with all this doom and gloom, you ask? Is this the end of the concrete industry as we once knew it? Yes! Is it the end of the world? No! Is it different? Absolutely!

The days of "big deal" and "who cares" are history. OSHA and EPA will come to your plant; it's just a matter of time. And NRMCA has developed a "green plants" program... Imagine that!

So, is there an upside to what's happening? Sure there is! What?... OPPORTUNITY!!!

1. The economy has caused everyone, both individuals and government, to look at spending more carefully. We have the technology to give them what they want and what they need. We can give them concrete that gains strength faster so roads can be opened quicker. We can give them concrete that is more sustainable so our roads are safer, so we don't have pot holes, so our driveways don't scale. We have concrete that can be used for parking lots that can be more cost effective and look a heck of a lot better than asphalt. We have concrete with strengths that make wood or steel noncompetitive. We have concrete that controls and stores rain water, eliminating the need for costly retention ponds.

2. If we are going to use new materials and promote new products and methods, we are going to need help. In many cases success can only be achieved through a partnership. A partnership with your suppliers and/or your contractors. The work and the cost are shared and the results are more positive. Choose good, quality conscious contractors who are willing to change and expand their markets. With the help of IRMCA and your suppliers, educate and help train those contractors. Those contractors (but not all contractors) will appreciate the help. Be successful together.
3. As for government regulations (e.g., OSHA, IEPA, EPA), we need to be more involved. The people in those departments know Washington is building bureaucracies that are generally willing to listen to industry. Get involved in IRMCA's Environmental or Safety Committees. If nothing else, you will feel a lot more secure when one of them knocks on your door. Once again everything is easier when you are working together.
4. Here's an area that most of us have never wanted to get involved in: politics. Jim Randolph, IRMCA's Government Relations Consultant and Legislative Committee chair, frequently encourages us to write, e-mail, call, or even visit our local, state, and, when necessary, federal representatives when a pending law would directly affect us professionally or personally. "They listen," as Jim tells us, and we have success stories that prove that they do.
5. Most importantly all of the above take commitment. Words, actions, even money don't work without commitment. Yes, commitment means work and, yes, it can mean money, but, with the help of our business associates, customers and the associations that represent us, it may not be as difficult or as costly as you think.

Change is inevitable and as they say, change or get left behind. Maybe in the next newsletter I'll get off my soapbox... maybe not.

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1. When dealing with the General Assembly, hire a good legislative and government relations group that will tell you most of the above and not mince words when you are doing something wrong! They will help you shape the message in terms the legislators will understand. They will understand the complex processes by which ideas become laws or are killed. These differ from state to state, so the local knowledge is important. A good legislative relations consultant will understand the people and personalities that ultimately make a difference in whether or not a bill passes. Believe me when I tell you that things don't necessarily gain approval in the Legislature on merit alone!

As I write this column, the life-cycle bill is awaiting Governor Quinn's signature, and we are expecting him to sign. Everything considered, this effort took over six months of hard work, and this is only step one of many. We will be working closely with the Illinois Department of Transportation to ensure that the best, most complete and most accurate data available goes into the process. We will take our chances on the outcome from a valid engineering position and let the chips fall where they may when it comes to pavement type selection. But I am quite certain that, though the asphalt industry ultimately supported the legislation, they will be looking for other angles and methods by which to promote their product. We need to be on guard for those efforts.

I am reminded of the old World War II movie, *Tora!, Tora!, Tora!*. You may remember it or at least this quote. Commander in Chief of the Imperial Japanese Navy, Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto, gazes distantly out upon the ocean and upon learning of the successful attack upon Pearl Harbor is reported to have said, "We have awakened a sleeping giant and have instilled in him a terrible resolve." The lingering question for me is, *are we the giant?* I sure hope so!

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