

IRMCA NEWS

Volume 24, Number 3

September 2005

ISU Adds Pervious to Whitetopping

This is ISU's second UTW lot in two years.

Ultra-thin whitetopping was completed early this summer on a second large parking lot (right) at Illinois State University. The 3.2 acre lot located on the east side of Hancock Stadium was completed with time to spare before the students returned for fall classes. This lot, G73, connects with lot G83 on the north side of the stadium. G83 was successfully overlaid last summer (see *IRMCA News*, September 2004).



The ultra-thin application (above) of approximately 3½ inches was placed over the deteriorating asphalt lot by contractor Stark Excavating of Bloomington, IL. Illinois State University Director of Grounds Operations, Mike O'Grady, expressed satisfaction with the overlay project, emphasizing the significant improvement in brightness on the newly renovated lots. He also said that the dramatically increased safety to students afforded by the whitetopping has made future overlay projects distinctly possible.

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

New Member Benefit: Environmental Newsletter

In early 2006 the environmental committee will produce the first issue of its environmental newsletter, which will be published twice a year. This new service will help members monitor and understand current and new environmental requirements, legislation, forms, and much more.

Membership Directory

It is once again time to begin compiling updated contact information for our annual membership directory. A request for this information will be mailed November 1st to the main contact for each company. Careful, prompt responses to this request will help us produce a comprehensive, accurate publication.

Included with each company's directory update request will be a list of the company's employees who receive IRMCA mailings. To ensure an efficient mailing system we ask that you make any corrections, deletions, or additions and return this list along with the directory update sheet. The corrected mailing list is essential for keeping our database current and our mailing costs low.

IRMCA Is Grateful For Its Reception Sponsors

Gold: Buzzi Unicem, CEMEX, Continental Cement, ESSROC Cement, Holcim (US), Illinois Cement, Lafarge North America, Lehigh Portland Cement, McNeilus, St. Mary's Cement, W.R. Grace.

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Summer Travels

by John H. Reed

Pervious, *to be, or not to be*. For the past several months I have been learning about pervious concrete and the stormwater system below the "Pervious Armor Coat." And, at this writing, I have realized that there is much more to learn.

I have had several meetings and have gone to several demonstrations with our Indiana counterparts, educating myself on pervious.

I traveled to Iowa State University to speak with the engineering faculty about the on-going pervious testing that is being done at the university. I also traveled to Omaha for a pervious seminar facilitated by the Nebraska Concrete & Aggregates Association that was geared to concrete contractors from various upper Midwest states.

While on vacation, I even stopped at the newly finished pervious concrete parking lot at the Safeway Grocery Store chain in Denver, Colorado. And I thought school was supposed to be out for the summer!

At a meeting on August 9, 2005, I included a rough presentation on pervious to members of our promotion committee. The next day we coordinated a pervious placement demonstration at the Illinois State University Football Parking Lot here in Normal, IL (see article on page 1).

Also this summer, pervious has been placed in the parking lot of Faith United Methodist Church in Champaign. IRMCA member Champaign Builders Supply delivered nearly 400 cy of pervious topcoat for this project.

Most recently, I spoke to a group of architects and engineers in Northbrook who had asked for a presentation on pervious concrete pavement. (Note: we have developed a short PowerPoint presentation that is ideal for architects and engineers. If you are interested, we can make the presentation ourselves or we can provide you with a CD for your own use.)

Fortunately, pervious has not consumed all my time. I went to a seminar on tilt-up concrete as well as a seminar about decorative concrete. I also kept my eye on the second UTW project at Illinois State that made 3.2 acres of asphalt disappear.

For some time, I have been championing the IRMCA cause with the Illinois Society of Professional Engineers. ISPE will host a 4-day intensive series of education sessions on October 18-21 in Springfield at which an engineer can earn up to 30 professional development hours (PDHs). We will be a big part of that meeting. We are utilizing IRMCA members and their companies as we line up presenters for a variety of concrete topics that are of interest to the engineers.

As fall approaches I will be active in an ICF booth at this year's Farm Progress Show in Decatur. I will continue to work on the ISPE "boot camp"; I have presentations scheduled with engineering companies; and I am beginning to infiltrate the architects!

I encourage all of you to contact me with your thoughts about concrete promotion. If you feel that your local government needs to learn more about concrete, call me. If you have a progressive engineering or architectural firm in your area, tell them that IRMCA would love to talk to them about concrete. If you can put together a group of interested contractors, we'll gladly coordinate a program. We're all in IRMCA's promotion effort together-I look forward to hearing from you!



January 9 & 10, 2006
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Mission

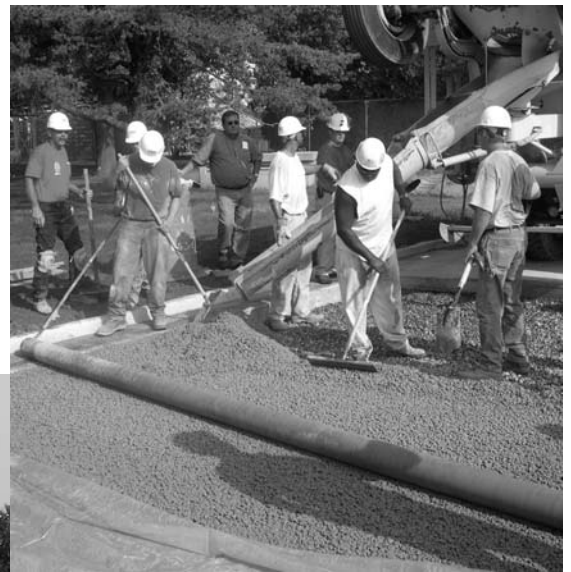
To be the voice for the ready mixed concrete industry in Illinois. To promote the use of quality ready mixed concrete through innovative educational programs. To accomplish common goals as an organization that cannot be done individually.

(ISU continued from front cover)



Early in the project, Illinois Ready Mixed Concrete Association promoters John Reed and Dick Plimpton presented a case to O'Grady and his engineers to consider paving a section of the lot (left) with pervious concrete. The university agreed for two reasons: the southwest corner of this lot needed stormwater control and pervious offered that opportunity; and, there is an entire lot at ISU that is a candidate for pervious and this relatively small pour gave the university a place to "test".

IRMCA arranged for a meeting with Mr. O'Grady, his engineers from Lewis Yockey and Brown, the contractor, and representatives from the Indiana Ready Mixed Concrete Association (InRMCA). The InRMCA promoters have been concentrating on pervious promotion, even to the extent of purchasing all the specialized equipment needed for a proper pervious placement. It was decided that InRMCA would bring their equipment and personnel and that the pour (right) would be videotaped and widely publicized.



Approximately 20 yards of pervious were placed on August 10th (left). Representatives from radio, television, and the local newspaper were present to observe, as well as engineers from State Farm,

Caterpillar and representatives from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Also present were several interested producers and suppliers from the Illinois Ready Mixed Concrete Association.

Everyone involved feels that the pervious placement at ISU went very well and there is anticipation that the pervious will do just what it is designed to do. It is a great feeling to have a progressive university in our town.

IRMCA at the Farm Progress Show

Over 100,000 farmers and others interested in international agribusiness visited Decatur, Illinois, on August 30, 31 and September 1 to be part of the 2005 Farm Progress Show. Decatur has been awarded the show for the next 20 years, allowing for permanent buildings, facilities and roads—a huge improvement over previous sites. One of the most popular tents was sponsored by the Touchtone Energy Cooperative and within that tent area, IRMCA member Allan Anderson and IRMCA Marketing and Promotion Director John Reed had the opportunity to promote the concept of Insulated Concrete Forms to literally thousands of interested observers. John also had a pervious pavement sample with water flowing through it that also elicited hundreds of curious questions. Reports from Decatur claim that this was the largest and most successful Farm Progress Show ever—IRMCA was glad to be a part of it!



IRMCA members: Allan Anderson, right, and Matt Morrison with son Riley.

ILLINOIS READY MIXED CONCRETE ASSOCIATION

2006 Short Course

January 9 & 10, 2006

Exhibits, Reception, Dinner,
Sessions

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Casino
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We are excited to have Dr. Ken Hover, internationally renowned expert on concrete issues, as our featured presenter.

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CO₂ Emissions Standards Drive Changes in Cement Specifications

By Randell C. Riley, P.E.

Effective November 1, 2005, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) will be permitting portland cement made with up to five percent interground limestone to be utilized on projects. This change comes on the heels of the adoption of new cement specifications by American Society of Testing and Materials (ASTM). Driving this change was the ever tightening carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions requirements being implemented by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Those requirements restrict production of CO₂ per ton of finished product.

Though five percent may sound to a ready mix concrete producer as though it could have major

“As a ready mix producer this means for you that intermixing of the cement meeting the new standards with cement meeting the old standards on IDOT projects will not be permitted.”

implications for the finished product, in reality the impact should be minor and in many cases go totally unnoticed. The changes in the specification for portland cement, ASTM C150, reflect changes in this country that are already in place in much of the international market. Illinois' cement producers and suppliers indicate that due to other chemical requirements of the finished portland cement that the maximum content of interground limestone is unlikely to exceed about three percent.

What impact should you, as a ready mix producer, anticipate on your daily operations? To ascertain what the implications might be, IDOT has already evaluated cement supplies from four companies providing product in Illinois: Continental Cement, Holcim, Illinois Cement and St. Mary Cement Co. The evaluation included a look at the basic properties of the portland cement itself and its effect on the finished concrete.

Plastic concrete evaluation included standard pressure meter tests for entrained air and evaluation of impact on slump. Set times were also evaluated. Finished concrete evaluation included strength testing, freeze-thaw durability testing and tests for susceptibility to salt scaling. The results of these tests demonstrate that little or no effect is likely to be observed in day-to-day concrete operations.

Though IDOT has opted to approve the change, it is treating the cement supplies from the individual producers as though they are a new cement producer. Since not all cement producers have been evaluated, IDOT is taking a cautious approach and will require that the individual cement manufacturers submit documentation indicating the cement is one containing interground limestone and treat and administer it accordingly.

As a ready mix producer this means for you that intermixing of the cement meeting the new standards with cement meeting the old standards on IDOT projects will not be permitted. There are a few other minimal documentation requirements at this time, but you should check with your District or Regional IDOT Materials personnel for details.

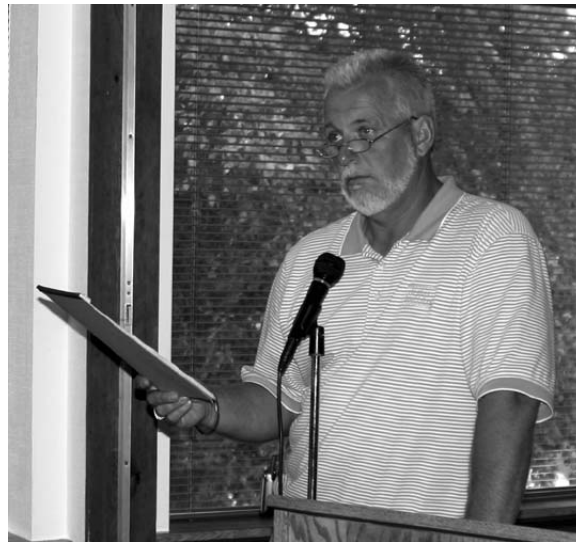
Also, though we have not seen any adverse effects on admixtures stemming from the specification change, you should also make your admixture technical support personnel aware of the change when you incorporate cement made under the new specification. It is better to be in a prepared mode rather than a reactionary mode.

Adoption of this specification reflects a positive forward change in the cement industry. Though the amount of additional production possible as a result of the change is relatively minor, it significantly enhances portability of the product in an increasingly global climate. This enhances supply, minimizes logistical transportation issues, encourages competition between suppliers and furthers the environmental efforts of our entire industry.

For more information on this issue, contact your IRMCA associate member suppliers of portland cement.

Scholarship Golf Outing

Over 100 IRMCA golfers and diners met at Quail Meadows Golf Club in Washington, IL, on Wednesday, September 7, 2005, to enjoy a beautiful day on the links and a fun-filled evening of food and fellowship. Support of this year's event was spectacular! Many thanks to the 30 holes sponsors whose generosity will fund 3 scholarships; thanks also to those who bought raffle tickets as net proceeds from the raffle alone will practically fund a scholarship. Mainly though, thanks to all our members and friends who participated in the event. This year's event will allow IRMCA to offer the most scholarships ever to students in or from Illinois studying civil engineering or construction management. Way to go!!!



Concrete Home Construction on the Rise

More people are recognizing the benefits of owning a concrete home

By Jennifer Bedell

Proposed federal legislation that includes up to \$2000 tax credit for new energy efficient homes

S. 680

Efficient Energy Through Certified Technologies and Electricity Reliability (EFFECTER) Act of 2005

Sponsors: Senators Olympia Snowe [ME], Dick Durbin [IL], Dianne Feinstein [CA], John McCain [AZ]

"With the volatile mix of increased energy consumption and higher costs, it is critical to encourage the use of the most energy efficient products and building designs. This legislation offers helpful incentives to encourage energy efficiency in our homes and would move us in the right direction toward smarter use of our precious energy resources."

- Senator Richard Durbin

H.R. 1834

Efficient Energy Through Certified Technologies and Electricity Reliability (EFFECTER) Act of 2005

Sponsors: Representatives Randy Cunningham [CA-50], Edward Markey [MA-7]

H.R. 1212

Save America's Valuable Energy Resources Act of 2005

Sponsors: Representatives Jerry Weller [IL-11], Benjamin Cardin [MD-3]

My husband and I were in the process of building our first home when I began working for IRMCA in 2001. At the time we knew very little about concrete and had never heard of an ICF home. Neither our architect nor our general contractor mentioned ICF homes to us during the many months we worked together searching for a lot, designing our home, and waiting for the ground to thaw so that construction could begin.

Since then I have gained both knowledge and appreciation of the many advantages ICF homes have over traditional wood construction and have become increasingly disappointed that I did not have this information four years ago.

Today, above ground concrete homes represent a growing percentage of new home construction in the United States. The Concrete Network reports that in 2002 nearly 15% of all American single-family homes were built with exterior above-ground concrete wall systems, with the percentage forecasted to jump to 25% in 2005. Consumers are realizing that the small additional upfront cost of ICF home construction is more than recouped with reduced ownership costs and numerous other benefits.

The energy-efficiency of an ICF home is particularly significant because it requires less energy consumption and, therefore, costs less to heat and cool. Allan



Tom and Gail McDermott's 4200 square foot concrete home. The McDermotts commented that the very deep windowsills created by the thick concrete walls are an attractive feature of their concrete home.

Anderson of Buzzi Unicem Cement has a background in ICF and explains, "The mass of concrete joined with the insulated concrete forms allows no air infiltration." So, less energy is required to run heating and cooling units, which results in reduced owner cost. The savings is very noteworthy when considering the current high cost of fuel. As oil prices soar, the U.S. Department of Energy projects that the 2005-2006 winter heating costs may rise 16% from 2004-2005 winter heating costs, which were up 34% from winter 2003-2004.

IRMCA member Brad Doll of Dolls Inc. is incorporating several energy-efficient measures in his ICF home construction, including Integraspec Insulating Concrete Forms for the basement and upper level, radiant hot water heat in the floors, and a geothermal heat pump for heating and cooling. Brad commented that the combination of radiant heat, ICF, and a geothermal pump will be very energy-efficient. And it is. Allan Anderson illustrates this point by

citing an acquaintance who owns a 4200 sq. ft. ICF home with a geothermal heat pump and whose total heating and cooling expense for a twelve-month period was just under \$200.

The consumption of less energy is not the only environmentally-friendly aspect of concrete home construction. The process of making concrete also includes the use of many recycled materials. Portland Cement Association (PCA) clarifies that combustible waste is used as a fuel source in the cement manufacturing process and various consumer and industrial waste products are used (i.e., fly ash, slag, and crushed concrete).

Durability, comfort, and safety are also important benefits of concrete home construction. Concrete is more fire-resistant, it reduces outside noise, and it provides greater protection against pests, mold and disasters. Furthermore, the strength and safety of concrete homes results in lower insurance premiums and less maintenance.

Tom and Gail McDermott of Bloomington, Illinois, found their concrete home by chance when they attended an open house. They have lived in it for three years now and say that they feel very safe and secure in such a solidly built home. "We sometimes are not aware of strong storms taking place, and, according to our building specs, our home should withstand a F5 tornado." The McDermotts also mentioned that their home is approximately two miles from an airport, and they do not hear the many planes that fly directly over their home.

Who doesn't want lower ownership costs and maintenance, a unique home design, and the comfort and security of a durable home? Concrete home construction offers all of this and more. A concrete home is a solid investment, one that I hope is in my future.



Left: Brad Doll used Integraspec Insulating Concrete Forms for the upper and lower levels of his 3000 sq. ft. concrete home.

Below: Reid Doll stands on the plywood that will be removed after the suspended Speedfloor system concrete floor is placed and set.



"Word of the Quarter"

Albedo: A measure of reflectance. The ratio of the amount of light reflected from a material to the amount of light shone on the material. A low albedo suggests that more sunlight light is absorbed by the pavement. This sunlight is converted into thermal energy and the pavement gets hotter. Pavements with higher albedo absorb less sunlight and remain cooler. This reduction in pavement temperature reduces the "Heat Island Effect", saves energy by reducing the demand for air-conditioning, and improves air quality. It also increases the durability of the pavement and lengthens the pavements lifetime. Research consistently shows that concrete has a higher albedo than asphalt!

Corrections: Allan Anderson's name was misspelled in the June 2005 issue; Tom Kerouac's name was misspelled in the June 2005 issue; Raspolich Material Co. was incorrectly referred to as Raspolich Ready Mix in the June 2005 issue; Randell C. Riley's name was left off of his article, "Promotion Principles 101", in the March 2005 issue.

Three Gorges Dam

China is building the world's largest dam

This summer Dick and Joanne Plimpton visited the IRMCA office to share what they experienced during their recent trip to China. Though they saw ceaseless concrete construction, the most notable project was the Three Gorges Dam. The following are some of the project details:

- √ **Purpose** - flood control, hydroelectric power generation, navigation, irrigation, lower cost of transporting goods on the Yangzi River.
- √ **Size** - it will be the world's largest hydroelectric dam; it will stretch approximately 1.5 miles across the Yangzi River and it will rise 600 feet above the valley



(continued on back cover)

2006 Annual Convention



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Disaster Planning

Is your business prepared for the unthinkable?

According to the American Red Cross, only 6% of businesses that experience a disaster survive. If your business were struck by disaster would you and your employees know what to do? We all worry about day-to-day problems and we all “manage by crisis” more than we would like; that’s business as normal. However, how many of us have a plan, even a vague plan, of what we’d do if we got the call that our office and everything in it was destroyed by fire, or that our batching operation was rendered useless by a tornado?

Here are some questions that you should have the answer to:

- 1) Do you know your “time to recover” - how long it would take you to be up and running at full capacity following a disaster?
- 2) Do you back up your customer and company computer data each day and store the information off-site? Do you test that backup periodically to be sure you’re getting everything you think you are? Does the back-up include all information on contacting customers and suppliers?
- 3) Do you have a recovery location-a pre-planned back-up location, back-up computer, back-up phones and such so that you could continue to communicate without delay? Do you have a small source of supplies stored somewhere other than the office?
- 4) Do you have a plan on communicating to the public and customers immediately, so as to not lose business to the “rumor mill”?
- 5) Have you recently reviewed your business interruption insurance? Remember, business interruption insurance is important, but it doesn’t keep your customers from looking elsewhere if you are totally incapacitated.
- 6) If you do not have a second plant nearby, do you have an understanding with a competitor that you will “help each other out” in emergencies?
- 7) If material deliveries to and from your plant must all cross over the same bridge, do you have a plan for operations if the bridge goes out?
- 8) Is there employee contact information available to management in a place other than the office?

Obviously, the questions could go on and on. The Red Cross provides a CD-ROM “Guide to Business Continuity Planning” that is available on their website www.redcross.org. There is also much more on disaster planning on that website.

Editor’s note: the above article was written prior to the devastation left in the wake of hurricane Katrina and in no way suggests that the measures above would suffice in such a disaster.

Metz-Stoller Lot



Keep pushing concrete as the pavement of choice and you might even convince your insurance agent! Of course, when that agent is Steve Metz of Metz-Stoller Insurance, who has been listening to IRMCA promotion presentations for 20 years, the job gets a little easier. Metz Stoller recently completed an office expansion (left) at their location in Fairbury and an important part of that expansion was a new parking area and access to the business. Steve says there was never discussion as to the type of lot he wanted-concrete all the way! Steve and all the staff at Metz Stoller are proud of their expansion and invite IRMCA members to “stop on by”.

Changes to Workers Compensation Act

By Bruce A. Grohne

On July 20, 2005, Governor Rod Blagojevich signed HB 2137 (Public Act 94-0277) amending the Workers Compensation Act and Workers Occupational Disease Act. This signing was heralded by politicians as: "About time!", "Now businesses will stay in Illinois!", and various other political superlatives.

A seminar outlining the changes and impacts of this bill was held in Rockford on July 27th and was attended by insurance representatives, health care providers, and a few business owners (including two IRMCA producers). The presentation was given by Frank Gildea of Gildea & Coghlan in Western Springs, IL. Mr. Gildea is an attorney whose clients include insurance companies and self-insured businesses. He works exclusively for the employer.

Following are some highlights of Mr. Gildea's interpretations of the bill:

- 1) Creation of a medical fee schedule which will set the maximum allowable payment for medical treatment. This is the section that is being touted as great for business.
- 2) Elimination of balance billing (related to the fee schedule change). Providers will not be able to bill the claimant for charges not paid by the insurance company (or employer). Good for the employee.
- 3) Quicker payments mandated plus **HIGHER** allowable penalty interest rates set.
- 4) Creation of a 3rd arbitration panel to hear appeals from arbitration decisions. Note: who is chosen for this panel will be very important.
- 5) Allowable penalty amounts are **INCREASED**.
- 6) Unreasonable delay of payment penalties can be **INCREASED**.
- 7) Minimum benefits in death cases are **INCREASED**.
- 8) The maximum weekly amount of compensation for each scheduled body part has **INCREASED**.
- 9) Wage differential rates are **INCREASED**.
- 10) Formation of a unit to investigate charges of workers compensation fraud. If effective, this could be a positive.
- 11) Big increase in "criminal" penalties for employers who do not have workers compensation insurance.
- 12) Treatment records, reports and bills produced by medical practitioners will be allowed into evidence **WITHOUT** deposition or cross-examination. This will be challenged!
- 13) Temporary partial disability benefits will now be owed when a petitioner returns to work on a part time basis or is earning less than they were pre-injury. **NOT GOOD!**

This entire HB 2137 can be seen at www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/94/094-0277.htm.

The Illinois Workers Compensation Act can be viewed at www.state.il.us/agency/icc/. Note to employers: you might want to go to the Act website and click on "handbook". You will be able to print out a 33 page handbook that could be very helpful.

This bill is so new that ramifications are hard to predict. Much more will be known on February 1, 2006, when the Commission announces the maximum allowable payments for any treatment. If, as some including Mr. Gildea fear, the maximums are set high, most of the benefits this bill would have afforded the employer will be greatly diminished. Inevitable challenges to the bill will take years; interpretations will be made and remade.

The fact that labor was enthusiastically behind this bill should be of some concern to an employer as should the fact that many insurance and employer groups were not. Nonetheless, a bill attempting to address our workers compensation woes has finally been passed and signed. Let's hope the changes prove positive for the Illinois business climate.

Important Note: If this article reads more like an editorial than an informative piece, please excuse the author, he can't help himself.

Why Anti-trust Statements?

Have you ever wondered why we pass out anti-trust statements at our IRMCA meetings and ask that everyone present sign them? Have you ever noticed that other state organizations and the NRMCA do the same? Did you realize that we keep copies of these statements with the other records of every meeting? Read on!

For over six decades, the mission of the Antitrust Division of the United States Department of Justice has been to promote and protect the competitive process - and the American economy - through the enforcement of the anti-trust laws. The antitrust laws apply to virtually all industries and to every level of business, including manufacturing, transportation, distribution, and marketing. They prohibit a variety of practices that restrain trade, such as price-fixing conspiracies, agreements to allocate territories or customers, and agreements to limit production or output.

The Illinois Ready Mixed Concrete Association deems it vital that all meetings and activities of the association be conducted in a manner that is consistent in compliance with both the letter and the spirit of the antitrust laws. Therefore, it is highly risky and potentially improper for competitors attending IRMCA meetings or activities to discuss pricing, terms and conditions of sale, customers, costs or other factors that might affect competition. Any discussion concerning sensitive antitrust issues should always be avoided.

IRMCA staff has been instructed to be vigilant in monitoring meetings and activities for potential sensitive topics under the antitrust laws and to immediately advise and halt further discussion. In addition, any member attending a meeting should never hesitate to voice similar concerns at any time.

Signing an antitrust statement at the start of each meeting or activity is an important reminder that we, as well as our government, take the antitrust laws very seriously. We will continue with this practice. In addition, we encourage all of our members to be aware of and diligent in adherence to the antitrust laws in any and all activities that include competitors.

Association News



We are pleased to announce that Whitney Rush has been promoted to IRMCA office manager. Whitney has worked for IRMCA for 3½ years and continues to pursue a degree in Information Systems at Illinois State University. Personal note- astute observers might be dazzled by a new, shiny object on Whitney's left hand.



Past IRMCA administrative assistant Emily Reynolds is now living in Washington, DC where she is the Coordinator of Young Feminists Programs for the National Organization for Women (NOW).



Congratulations to former IRMCA administrative assistant, Nikko Santiago on her recent marriage to David Jefferson. The couple lives in Arlington Heights and Nikko now works as human resources director for the Oil-Dri Corporation in downtown Chicago.



Best wishes to Dick Goken, who recently retired from Prairie Group.

Our condolences to family & friends of Joe Baker, St. Mary's Cement; Linda Liss, daughter of Tony Mertel, Mertel Gravel Company; Lee Stone, father of Susan Oremus (wife of Alan Oremus), Prairie Group.

A Practitioner's View, Lesson 2

Starting with Government

By **Randell C. Riley, P.E.**

In "Lesson 1," we briefly discussed your immediate customer, the contractor's perceptions regarding promotion and his level of involvement in the process.

As you will recall I pointed out the unfortunate reality that contractors' mindsets are usually oriented not toward growing future market, but toward dealing with the myriad of problems that develop from completing existing projects. That means that for a vision of market growth to become a reality, somebody (you) will have to take the initiative in promotion after informing your immediate customer, the contractor, of your intent.

So, who are the target customers of the contractor and what do they need to know? This is probably readily apparent, but bears repeating. Not all customers of the contractor are the same. Each customer has different objectives and different informational needs in arriving at a concrete decision. Promotion is a people business, and the better you understand that concept, the greater likelihood you will have of success in this venture. Meeting the target customer's needs is primary to successful project development. Though sometimes it may not make sense to you why an individual is asking a particular question, do your best to answer it. You will build that essential relationship and become a resource to that customer. The result will be more concrete in place.

Since I am a paving guy, I will relate my experiences and understanding from that perspective, but the concepts are not strictly related to those applications. If you use the simple concepts of trying to put yourself in the customer's shoes and come up with the answers to those questions he/she is likely to pose in advance, you will be well on your way. Let us examine a few of the customers that I've come to know over the years.

Starting in the government sector at the local level you will encounter several titles of individuals. If an organizational chart exists of the city or county government you are targeting, and you do not know the people, it is a place to start.* Do not take it to literally! More often than not, the decision-making process lies not at the top of the chart, but somewhere within the third or fourth tier.

Why is that? Community leaders such as mayors, village presidents, council members and aldermen show up in the hierarchy at the

More often than not, the decision-making process lies not at the top of the chart, but somewhere within the third or fourth tier.

top of the chart. They are primarily managers. They largely depend upon staff to collect the information upon which they can act in an informed manner in arriving at a decision. Your job is to have the people below them on the chart that they already trust making your case for you on a city street or parking lot project. If you already have a relationship with people higher up in the hierarchy, you have an even better probability of achieving your goals, but lacking that relationship, you will need to go to the folks upon whom the decision makers depend.

Finding the proper titles farther down in the hierarchy can be a challenge. Sometimes these are the Directors of Public Works or Superintendent of Streets. However, depending on the specific governmental/political structure you may be working farther down the ranks with a staff municipal engineer, project engineer

or design engineer. Each community is different. You find out only by asking the question and paying attention to what you hear and observe.

I have seen situations where all of the above people in the hierarchy were on board for a decision, but an effort was temporarily derailed due to comments from the village foreman actually charged with doing curb and gutter repairs. These folks are equally important to the process, but do not show up on the chart or list. Such occasions require nimble thinking and awareness on your part of what your options are in repairing something in the unlikely event of a failure. Be prepared to answer those questions. Anticipate that they will be asked.

Now let us look at the hierarchy and some of the concerns of the particular individuals. This is not a complete perspective, but should give you an idea of how to think in approaching this process. Mayors, village presidents, alderman and city councilmen are largely focused on budgetary and aesthetic matters. They want a project to look as good as it can for the least money possible. Their mindset is "how can we do more with less?" Unfortunately for us, this mindset usually falls right into the hands of the other industry as project duration is an important, but frequently secondary concern. Bringing that concern to the forefront is usually in the hands of the Director of Public Works, Superintendent of Streets or Municipal Engineer.

Why? These latter individuals are the ones that have to live with the consequences of decisions made by those higher in the hierarchy for years to come. They have to solve the problems when things do not work as planned. They also have to make already strained budgets accommodate the needs and requests of others as the electoral process unfolds and new individuals higher in the hierarchy have different visions of the needs of the community. These engineers and managers are historically the point where the concrete industry has focused its efforts. These folks are usually more receptive to our products and principles since they plan and hope to be around awhile.

Next time, supporting engineers and other technical people in project promotion.

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*For a good "first source" of information on local communities if you do not know the people, obtain a copy of the directory published by Illinois Municipal League, <http://www.iml.org/cnt/files/PublicationsList.pdf>. Illinois Municipal League, 500 East Capitol Avenue, P.O. Box 5180, Springfield, IL 62705-5180, Phone: 217/525-1220. \$30 and highly recommended.



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(Three Gorges continued from page 10)

floor; it will have double way ship locks (one up, one down), each with five chambers; it will have a one stage vertical hoisting ship lift; it will have two powerhouses with space for thirty-two 700-watt hydro turbines.

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The IRMCA staff regrets any omissions from the above list.