

Insulation Contractors

REPORT


A PUBLICATION OF THE INSULATION CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

JULY/AUGUST 2008



ICAA'S 30TH ANNIVERSARY

Thirty years ago a group of insulation contractors established a trade association to represent those who install thermal insulation. The founding fathers wanted the association—the Insulation Contractors Association of America—not only to speak out in behalf of insulation contractors but to educate members about new technology, the latest insulation products, and those business skills that facilitate doing business better. Built into this strategic plan was a once-a-year Convention and Trade Show where suppliers can present their products and contractors can shop.

ICAA and the attendees at this year's Annual Convention and Trade Show will celebrate ICAA's 30th Anniversary and the contribution it has made to its members and the insulation industry. Mark your calendar for the ICAA Convention & Trade Show, September 25–27, 2008, in Denver. 



GOING GREEN— *Insulation is the Answer*


ICAA has selected a timely theme for the 2008 Convention and Trade Show: *Going Green—Insulation Is the Answer*. The Convention will be held at the Denver Marriott City Center from September 25 to 27. This modern and beautifully appointed downtown hotel is an ideal location for travelers who want easy access and moderately priced hotel rooms.

Going Green—Insulation Is the Answer reflects the conviction expressed by ICAA members during recent committee meetings that insulation is the most important initiative in building green. Nothing, including caulking or installing new windows, is as effective and timely as insulation to immediately conserve energy and reduce greenhouse gases.

The ICAA Convention program includes key sessions on climate change and its impact on the environment, green building, business strategies, and recommended company structural changes needed to expand into the retrofit market.

The recovery in the housing market, the economy, an insulation technical learning lab, balance sheet management for insulators, and an immigration update are topics that will be explored in Denver.

The Gala Dinner, the ICAA Golf Tournament, and a tour of Denver-area highlights have also been planned.

Mark your calendars for Thursday, September 25, to Saturday, September 27, 2008. Attending the ICAA Convention and Trade Show is one of the most important business decisions that you can make. The ICAA Convention provides you with direct access to suppliers and insulation professionals from across the country. The networking with other insulators will be world class! 

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Waste Not, Want Not

Joe Miller
ICAA President
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Maybe you too can remember some of the laws that your mother made when you were a little kid. “Stand up straight.” “Elbows off the table.” “Clean your plate.” “Don’t waste.”

In these modern times, I’m not sure if any of Mom’s Laws are still important, except for one. “Don’t waste” has become a national battle cry. There’s a whole new jargon to describe efforts to preserve our fragile planet like *reducing carbon emissions, sustainability, carbon footprint, and going green*. But for me, “Don’t waste” says it all.


These are amazing times. As people learn more and more about threats to our environment and the damage caused by carbon emissions, they are willingly and energetically trying to change many habits that have been a part of modern life. Wasting precious resources has become a big deal to young people. Previous generations sought to save the planet with big projects like recycling and cleaning up rivers and conserving endangered lands, but now young people are striving to sustain resources in their own day-to-day lives—in their homes and their schools.

A recent article in *The New York Times* described how college students are working to create green environments on campuses. Can you believe that one Midwestern campus has installed hourglass timers in showers to remind students when three minutes—the environmentally-aware showering time—is up? And college kids are having fun with energy-use Olympics when dorms challenge each other to determine which is the most energy efficient. You may not want to think about the recent winners of such a contest—a dorm whose students did not shower for two weeks. Turning lights off and never turning the television on are two of the energy-saving

techniques in common use on campuses.

And college students in environmental studies are learning the importance of insulation. Here’s where we come in as insulation experts. We have evidence that more and more people from school-age children to college students to ordinary homeowners really, really want to learn how to live green. Insulation contractors have the know-how and skills to help customers “green up.” Our experience with materials and technology can make a difference in reversing the damage that is being done by the over 60 million homes and thousands of commercial buildings that are under insulated and contribute damaging greenhouse gases to the environment.

There’s a lot of work ahead of us. The experts tell us that there is no time to lose to stop and reverse the carbon footprints that mark our planet. I have listened to ICAA members who are anxious to demonstrate leadership in going green. To bolster this interest, the theme of the 2008 ICAA Convention and Trade Show is “Going Green—*Insulation Is the Answer*.” Special sessions will focus on the role of insulation contractors in going green and the future of retrofit as older homes are insulated to ideal standards.

Jump on the green bandwagon. Make Mom’s Law—“Don’t waste”—key to your business plan. Make a difference for yourself, for your customers, for the planet. Come to the ICAA Convention and Trade Show. I know it will make a big difference for your business. 

To bolster your knowledge of Green, come to the 2008 ICAA Convention and Trade Show: “Going Green—*Insulation Is the Answer*.”



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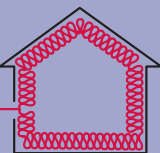
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ICAA Member Contractor

Ahndrea Drum Gamboa **Garland Insulating**

Dallas, TX
adg@insulate.org

Are builders interested in Green?

Yes! The volume builders are beginning to really grab hold of the *green* programs while trying to give themselves an edge over their competitors. The majority of our custom builders are also simply trying to sell houses! Some are using lower prices as a way to compete, and a smaller portion are choosing to compete by becoming *green*. The LEED program is very popular; however, it is usually homeowner driven because of the high expense. I think that in the past insulators were not typically thought of when talking about *green*, but now people are realizing that we can really contribute! Already in a few of the suburbs here in Dallas, *green* programs are required! So now is the time to learn as much as we can about building *green* in order to use it as an opportunity!

What are some major challenges you encounter in sales calls?

With the Internet making information available, everyone thinks that they are an expert. I have a hard time when I walk into a sales call for a new builder, and he has it in his head that he wants no questions asked. I then have to find a creative way to get through to him that what he figured out from the Internet is not exactly what he needs in our climate and with the way we build here in Texas. It always makes for a good day of thinking!

Another major challenge is trying to find the best way to insulate a home the most efficiently with a strict budget. The truth is that people have only so much money in their budget, and most of the time the insulator is an afterthought. If the builder or homeowner

just can't stretch his or her pocketbook, I do my best to work with hybrids, using batts, wall sprays, and foam all in one house.

What kind of problems do people call on you to solve?

The three major problems I face are sound issues, high energy bills, and selling spec homes more quickly.

- Sound is a tough one because it can travel anywhere! However, I have found that if I really take the time to try and figure it out, we as a company can be quite profitable. If I can solve their sound issues, I get excellent referrals to their neighbors and friends from homeowners.
- Everyone knows that the problem of high energy bills is a no-brainer; however, many of my builders are getting call backs for high energy bills on houses they built years ago. We are going in and problem solving retrofit situations which has turned out to be good business since we are down on starts.
- Finally, helping my builders sell their specs can be a problem. I have really made it my job to know what is common or popular in my area of town and what my builders' competition is doing. Even if it doesn't have to do with insulation, and if I can really be helpful and on their side, they will continue to ask for my advice. I am a big believer in upgrades such as wall sprays and foam. These are great ways to give my builders an edge over their competition.

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Commercial Committee Considers LEED Program


Jim Sharar-Stoppel, Homasote, Inc., addressed the Spring meeting of ICAA's Commercial Committee on June 6, 2008, about LEED, the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System™. The following are highlights of his remarks.

LEED was started in 2000. Competing green building programs include Energy Star and NAHB.

Statistics support the need for sustainable building: we spend 90% of our time indoors where 70% of electricity and 40% of energy are consumed. It is a fallacy that sustainable green building costs more.

LEED buildings have a triple footprint: they are designed to be environmental, high quality, and profitable. Materials used are produced within a 500 mile radius. The LEED emphasis is how systems function: "value engineering" rather than "engineering value." LEED buildings frequently use "post consumer" products. LEED does not endorse products.

LEED buildings are "certified;" LEED certifiers are "accredited." LEED certification is multi-levelled: certified, silver, gold, and platinum.

LEED has local chapters all over the US. Joining a local chapter is an excellent beginning for individuals who want to become LEED accredited. The USGBC website (www.gbci.org) lists the schedules of accreditation classes as well as materials to prepare for the test. 

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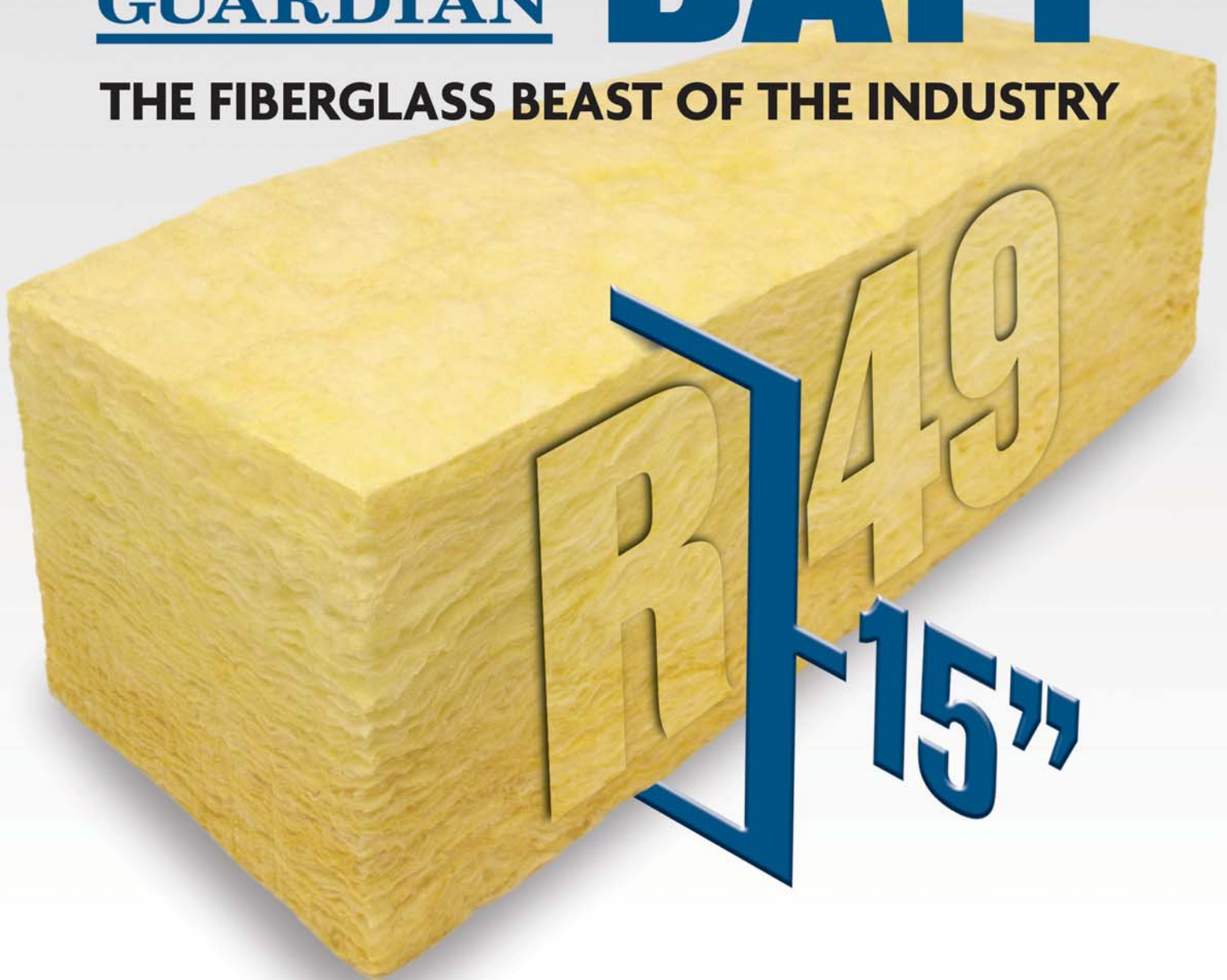
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SPOTLIGHT

Spotlight on Ahndrea Drum Gamboa

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Walk us through a typical work day.

I usually like to set aside either a half or whole day during the week for plans and paperwork. Of course, some papers cannot wait, but if they can, I would prefer to be in the field rather than sitting in the office. Other days during the week, I try to set my appointments for mornings. I feel people have less inclination to cancel in the morning, because they are usually more awake and attentive and not too busy with something else.

After my appointments, I'm off to do take-offs and cold calls. If I'm in the same area as one of our crews, I may drop in on them to check their work and be sure the builder is happy. Usually around late afternoon or early evening I will head back to my home office to enter quotations and fax or e-mail them off before the next day. Finally, I will organize my next day's routes, and I'm done for the day!

Tell us about your sales pitch.

The key to my tactic is to LISTEN! We don't always realize it, but we humans love to talk. We very rarely listen. If you want to be better than the next guy and close the deal more quickly, shut up and concentrate on what the customers really want. That doesn't mean that they are going to tell you! Most of the time they don't really know what they want, but if you can listen to their concerns with your expertise in building science and knowledge of applications, you can guide them through their wants and needs to a decision they are very happy with. By guiding them, you have the upper hand on closing the deal.

Can you walk us through your typical sales call?

I have a hard time answering this, because I am always changing my approach. I really walk into every sales call differently, because

Continued on page 10

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Spotlight on Ahndrea Drum Gamboa

Continued from page 8

every builder or homeowner is so different. Once again my goal in sales calls is to LISTEN! Problem solvers usually always get the job. I may be bidding against lower-priced competition, but if I really listen to what the customer wants, I can usually solve the problem giving me the upper hand in the final negotiation. I am NOT the cheapest guy in town, and I tell them that! But I am always striving to be the most knowledgeable.


Are there specific challenges selling a commercial job?

I really concentrate on residential and do very little commercial work. I do dabble in light commercial, and that is usually when the commercial contractor has something out of the ordinary specified by the architect. Once again by being the problem solver, I can usually be more profitable. However, I am continually

learning and would really like to break into the commercial market one of these days!

What do you do for fun?

I just got married this past year, so I'm really having fun hanging out at home with my husband Christian! I enjoy cooking, so it is nice to finally cook for two. Besides that, I love to spend time with friends and family. Working in my family business with my father Ferrell Drum has been incredibly rewarding and really makes work fun!

As for athletics, I am a big Yogi. I usually train four to six days a week, and I am now training to become a Yoga Instructor. I love to travel inside and outside the United States. Later this year, we are planning to visit Cozumel, Mexico, where we used to live, and then to Argentina at the beginning of next year. My husband is from Mexico City, so I have also become very interested in European Soccer which is actually quite fun to watch. We are now planning to go to the World Cup in South Africa in 2010. 

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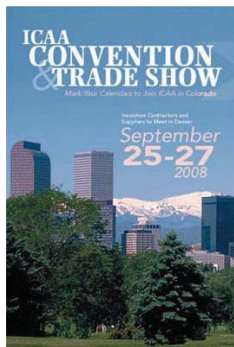
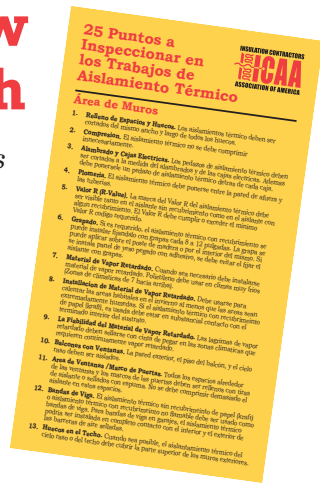
25 Checkpoints Now Available in Spanish

The Spanish version of *25 Checkpoints for Inspecting Insulation Jobs* is now available. The English version was introduced in the May/June 2008 issue of *Insulation Contractors Report*.

The 4" by 7" cards guide inspectors through the essential elements of proper installation in residences. The checklist includes installation best practices for wall, ceiling, and floor areas and focuses on topics such as cavity fill, compression R-value, vapor retarder placement, and recessed lights.

Both the English and Spanish versions of *25 Checkpoints for Inspecting Insulation Jobs* are also educational tools for installers, because they highlight the basics of installation. They are important resources for customers who are unfamiliar with insulation technology.

Contact ICAA at 703.739.0356 or icaa2008@insulate.org to place an order for the English and Spanish versions of *25 Checkpoints for Inspecting Insulation Jobs*. 



ICAA Annual Meeting

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ICAA is the trade association representing the insulation contracting industry.

ICAA 2008 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Fall Meeting—September 25–27, 2008—Denver, CO

Denver Marriott City Center: 800.444.2206 reference ICAA for rate of \$165/night

ICAA Committee Meetings	Thursday, September 25, 8:00 am
ICAA Convention — Platinum Sessions	Thursday, September 25, 12–4:00 pm
ICAA Trade Show — Grand Opening	Thursday, September 25, Evening
ICAA Convention & Trade Show	Thursday–Saturday, September 25–27