



## SPRI meets industry challenges

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Roofing/Siding/Insulation (RSI)



Windy weather did not stop the Team Building Event "Test your Super Powers Boat Building Competition." Boats were built in a ballroom and set sail in the pool. Each team had to have two people get in the boat and power it from one side of the pool to the other. The boats were judged on speed and customization.

The 24th Annual SPRI (Single-Ply Roofing Industry) Conference and Business Meeting, held in mid-January 2006 in Naples, FL, set out to demonstrate that, even though the roofing industry might be "above it all," when members of the organization put their heads together, the innovative thinking results in some very down-to-earth solutions.

Bringing together a powerhouse roster of speakers, SPRI presented an impressive education program that included two discussions about California's Title 24 legislation and the cool roofs that ensure both climate and economic relief to all zones within the state.

André Desjarlais, group leader of Oak Ridge National Laboratory's Building Envelope Program, summarized for the audience a project that provided data to argue that insulation can be a surrogate to a cool roof to control peak energy demand.

Also speaking on Title 24, Peter Turnbull, the senior program manager at Pacific Gas and Electric Company's Customer Energy Management Department, and vice chair of the Cool Roof Rating Council, talked about the recent updates to Title 24, including the strong emphasis on residential buildings and the possible changes to Title 24 in 2008.

From Factory Mutual Approvals, technical team manager Philip J. Smith and assistant vice-president George A. Smith conducted a hands-on computer lab for RoofNav—the online system for do-it-yourself configuring of roofing installations that meets FM-approved criteria for buildings. In the session, SPRI members became familiar with the program, offered feedback, asked questions and made suggestions for program enhancements.

Symposiums that covered the spectrum of interests impacting the roofing industry were also presented. Attorney Cam Fentriss gave an overview of roofing legislative action in Florida; a progress report on R2T2 (The Roofing Tax Treatment Act of 2005) was presented by Craig Brightup, vice-president of government relations for the National Roofing Contractors Association (NRCA); and, from the Department of Energy, manager Marc LaFrance discussed research related to commercial roofing systems.

### Good makes education a priority

During his annual address to SPRI, NRCA Executive Vice President Bill Good said that NRCA has made it a high priority to begin educating both contractors and building owners about revolutionary roofing alternatives.

"Clean and efficient methods—methods that have the tandem purpose to be both energy-focused and to save money—these ideas propel the 'new thinking,' and they are the guidelines, the essential mantra for the industry. The task is to get the word out there," Good said.

He also offered a peek into NRCA's new *SpecRight*—an industry-wide training forum that will educate building owners and contractors about state-of-art roofing solutions that integrate energy conservation, energy production, environmental protection and fiscal attractiveness.

*SpecRight* enlisted the help of manufacturers, design consultants, contractors and those directly involved in the roofing industry to devise a training component that will be available to contractors in different parts of the country.

As for the 2006 economic outlook, insight was provided by Dr. William F. Ford, holder of the Weatherford Chair of Finance at the College of Business at Middle Tennessee State University. He said that the recovery operations from hurricane damage will increase the workload for the roofing industry in 2006.

Dr. Ford told the SPRI membership, "In spite of the hurricanes, the real economy will grow, so we're looking at basically a favorable business environment for the industry. Building will, of course, proceed at a very intensive pace along the Gulf Coast for both residential and nonresidential construction."

In tandem with its speakers program and workshop forums, the 24th gathering of the Annual SPRI Conference offered an opportunity to handle association business. There was a full day of technical task force meetings. David Roodvoets, SPRI's technical director said, "We discussed all components—including the properties of thermoplastic, thermoset, modified bitumen, edge metal, fasteners, and insulation. A good roundtable session was held that reflected what we achieve in our more concentrated, highly technical quarterly meetings that are held throughout the year."

During the Annual Business Meeting, SPRI Past President, Steve Moskowitz of Stevens Roofing, handed the gavel to Paul Larson of ITW Buildex, who assumed the 2006 President's role.

When the SPRI members meet next January, SPRI will be celebrating its 25th anniversary, and all past and present association members are invited to join in for a rousing tribute to SPRI's on-going service to the roofing industry.

For more detailed information about SPRI and the programs scheduled for 2006, please visit [www.spri.org](http://www.spri.org).