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Patio Enclosures

Mike Leigh – Vice President
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Admiral Sunrooms

Lyndon Johnson
Harvey Industries

Andy Snelling
Seaway Manufacturing

Brian Fabian
Four Seasons Sunrooms

Future Meeting Locations

2009 NSA Spring Meeting
March 4-6, 2009
Rio All Suites Hotel
Las Vegas, Nevada

2009 NSA Fall Meeting
Oct. 14-16, 2009
Renaissance Concord Atlanta
Atlanta, Georgia

Association Staff

Craig Addington
Dan Walker
John Addington
Leslie Schraff
Dana Wentling



NSA Headed to Las Vegas

The 2009 National Sunroom Association spring meeting is scheduled for March 4-6, 2009 at the Rio Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada. A Technical Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 4, as well as a Marketing Committee meeting. The 2008 Design Awards will be presented during the March 5 luncheon. The following speakers are scheduled to present:

- Dr. Stephen Miller, Chairman of the Department of Economics and the University of Nevada Las Vegas. The presentation will focus an economic forecast for 2009 and beyond.
- Dennis Smith, President & CEO of Home Builders Research. Mr. Smith's presentation

will focus on data for the housing market in Southern Nevada.

- Julie Schimmelpenninck, Technical Services Manager for Solutia, Inc. The presentation will focus on trends in safety glazing and the laminated glass industry.

There will also be presentations given on the work of the Marketing and Statistics Committees.

Registration for the meeting is open and materials are available on the NSA web site, www.nationalsunroom.org. Please make your reservations as soon as possible. We look forward to seeing you in Las Vegas. ☀

President's Message



"This is sort of an economic Pearl Harbor we're going through."

— Warren Buffet

This is not another article about how bad the construction industry is doing during the great recession of 2008/2009. There is nothing for me to tell you that you can't see for yourself looking at your local newspaper, your television or your own bottom line.

No, I will leave it to the financial gurus of the world to come up with sweeping analogies like "economic Pearl Harbor", although for the life of me, I don't know what that means. It's not like the recession snuck up on us, did its damage, then flew back to Tokyo, Mr. Buffet.

Instead, this article is about strategies for surviving the recession. There are, of course, the oft-repeated strategies of watching your cash flow, staying lean, and diversification. But I'd like to focus on something closer to home: staying in touch with the sunroom industry by active participation in the National Sunroom Association.

The NSA is the voice and the face of the sunroom industry among the greater building community. NSA is the meeting place for all the major players in the industry. It is the technical authority for all things sunroom. It is a resource to and for suppliers to the industry.

In challenging economic times, being a part of NSA becomes that much more important. When every lead and every sale is critical, you need accurate and current information about the state of the industry. When every building department has more time on their

hands to pour over the details of your permit requests, you need the technical resources of NSA. When thousands of remodelers who don't have enough work suddenly become your competitors, you need the strength and solidarity of the NSA.

For Affiliate Members, NSA represents a cost effective way to stay in touch and support existing customers and to meet prospective new ones. Through NSA's technical and code development activities affiliates can ensure that the products they supply remain current and code-compliant in the face of growing pressure from regulatory agencies.

At our March meeting in Las Vegas, NSA will be presenting the results of its first ever industry survey. For the first time ever, members will be able to benchmark their own performance against that of the industry as a whole.

In summary, your continued involvement in the National Sunroom Association is one of the best actions you can take toward weathering this economic storm and coming out of it stronger and healthier.

I look forward to seeing all of you March 4-6 at the Rio in Las Vegas.

Tony Bouquot
President, National Sunroom Association

New Board Members

The NSA is pleased to announce that Brian Fabian from Four Seasons Sunrooms, and Mike Leigh from C-Thru Industries, were approved to serve another term on the Board of Directors. NSA also welcomes new Board member, Jim Hall from TEMO Sunrooms. Mr. Hall also serves as the NSA Treasurer.

On behalf of the entire NSA membership, the Board of Directors would like to thank Mr. Russ Schmidt of Joyce Manufacturing for his service on the NSA Board of Directors and as Treasurer. ☀

Member Feedback

The NSA office would like your comments and suggestions to make NSA better than ever. If you have a meeting presentation topic, a suggestion for the website, potential member information, or anything that would benefit the NSA, please email association headquarters at info@nationalsunroom.org. ☀

NSA Technical Spotlight

Passive Solar Design – Perfect for Sunrooms

An often overlooked or misunderstood benefit of sunrooms is their ability to collect heat from the sun. Called “passive solar heating”, this concept is not a new one. The concept is that light from the sun enters through glazing or openings in the space and is converted into heat when the components of the rays of light strike objects in the space. In effect, this creates a miniature “greenhouse effect” in the space.

The proper consideration of this phenomenon in the placement of glazing, the type of glazing or coatings used, and the use of carefully designed overhangs can maximize the benefits and minimize the potential for overheating.

Basics of Passive Solar

The basic principle is to maximize the solar heat gain in the winter months and to minimize it in the summer.

Specifically, in heating dominated climates (such as the northern U.S.) south side glazing should be maximized. If the sunroom is situated within 30 degrees of due south, it will benefit from about 90 percent of the optimal winter solar gain. Even if the long wall of the sunroom cannot be oriented in this way due to the layout of job site, glazing and overhangs can still be selected to maximize the free energy from the sun.

The designer should select glazing options to take advantage of the benefits, or reduce the drawbacks, of solar gains. This may require the selection of different glazing performance on the various walls. This is a delicate balance, because too much solar gain can make the sunroom uncomfortable in any season.

Sunrooms in Heating Climates

In heating dominated climates, where heat is used more than air-conditioning, reduced window area is best on the North, West and East Facing walls. For sunrooms situated with glazing in these directions, select high-performance glazing with the lowest practical U-factor to minimize heat loss. For East or West house side installations, the designer may consider ways to maximize southern glazing, if possible.

In heating dominated climates, glazing on the southern exposure of the sunroom should have the lowest practical U-factor and the highest practical Solar Heat Gain Coefficient (SHGC), usually 0.60 or higher. A high visible transmittance

(VT) is also desirable to allow for as much daylighting on the south wall as possible.

Sunrooms in Cooling Climates

In cooling dominated climates (areas where air-conditioning is used more than heat), a north-facing sunroom is preferable to take advantage of the shading provided by the existing house. For glazing that faces south, effective use of external shades, insulated operable curtains (for daytime use) or an appropriately sized overhang will minimize undesirable solar gain. New or existing landscaping can also be employed to shade the sunroom. Trees that shed leaves in the winter are ideal since they will block the summer sun, but will allow approximately 60% of the beneficial sunlight through during the heating season.

In cooling dominated climates, glazing on the southern exposure of the sunroom should have a low U-factor (similar to heating climates), however the Solar Heat Gain Coefficient (SHGC) should be minimized to no more than 0.55 – less is preferable. In this case a lower SHGC will reduce the unwanted solar gain and reduce cooling costs and increase human comfort.

More information on specifying the appropriate window performance for specific climates can be found on the Efficient Window Collaborative website, www.efficientwindows.org.

Temperate Climates

For climates that are neither heating nor cooling dominated, careful use of overhangs on the south face of the sunroom can maximize solar heating in the winter and minimize it in the summer. Because the sun is higher in the summer sky, and lower in the winter, the correctly sized overhang will block solar gain in the summer and allow it in the winter.

Use Thermal Mass Where Appropriate

Thermally massive construction materials for floors and walls should be carefully considered, depending on the local climate, orientation of the sunroom, and the personal preference of the home owner. Materials such as concrete, masonry, brick and tile are excellent for retaining the collected heat from solar gains. These items have the natural ability to store heat and release it gradually, even after the sun has set. This design element can extend the use of the unheated sunroom into the evening hours,

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Passive Solar Design – Perfect for Sunrooms

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but if over-used can also make the sunroom uncomfortable during the peak hours of sunlight.

Other Factors

Some factors that will improve the efficiency of a solar heated sunroom include thermally broken framing, proper air sealing of the joints, and using at least the recommended insulation levels for sunrooms in the building and energy codes (see International Residential Code (IRC) Section N1102.2.10, or the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) Section 402.2.10).

The thermally isolated sunroom glazing performance (U-factors) is also outlined in the codes, in IRC Section N1102.3.5 and IECC Section 403.2.5. There are no specific requirements in either code for solar heat gain coefficient (SHGC) for thermally isolated sunrooms, so working knowledge of passive solar effects is very important to achieve the best results.

It is important to note that sunrooms that are permanently open to the existing home will need to comply with the regular provisions of the residential and energy codes for roof and wall insulation and glazing performance, similar to any other construction in the home.

For more information on passive solar design, visit the following links:

- U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy: www.eere.energy.gov
- National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) Research Center: www.nahbrc.org
- The Southface Institute: www.southface.org
- The Oak Ridge National Laboratory: www.ornl.gov/ORNL/BTC ☀

Highlights from the 2008 Fall Board of Director's Meeting

Here are some highlights from the 2008 fall Board of Directors Meeting:

- Revisions to NSA bylaws approved by Board and General Membership.
- 2008/2009 budget was approved.
- A new Marketing Committee and Statistics Committee were formed.
- NSA moving forward with the Jesse Beitel of Hughes Associates (See fire test update for more information.)
- Board supports the Technical Committee's efforts for incorporating Appendix H of the IRC into the main body of the International Residential Code.
- New Board members and Officer approved.
- Board agrees to focus efforts on new marketing opportunities for NSA. ☀

NSA Forms New Committees

During the 2008 fall meeting, the meeting attendees took part in an industry opportunities session. This session gave the members a chance to discuss the marketing of NSA, the association web site, NSA public relations efforts, the direction of the technical program, etc. During the course of these conversations, the members approved the formation of two new committees, the Marketing Committee and the Statistics Committee.

The NSA Marketing Committee was asked to develop a new membership flyer, enhance the homepage of the NSA web site, and to make recommendations to the Board on how to best promote the sunroom industry and why it is important to buy products from members of the National Sunroom Association.

The NSA Statistics Committee was directed to develop a statistical reporting form that will be used to collect annual sales data for 2006-2008. The statistics program will also allow NSA members the ability to benchmark data for the industry. The data will be collected by Thomas Associates and individual member data will remain confidential. A compilation of the data collected will be reviewed by the members at the 2009 spring meeting. ☀

Fire Test Update

During the 2008 NSA Board of Directors meeting in Chicago, the members reviewed the original fire testing proposal from Hughes Associates. The proposal was discussed during the Technical Committee meeting as well as the Industry Opportunities Session. The Board decided to divide the project into two phases. The Board voted to approve Phase I immediately, which is to have Mr. Jesse Beitel of Hughes Associates review any existing fire test reports to determine which assemblies have already been tested by individual member companies. After reviewing the existing test data, Mr. Beitel will be able to make a recommendation regarding any necessary industry testing. If additional industry testing is recommended, it will be proposed to the Board of Directors as Phase II of the project, which would be approved separately after a quote for the work has been obtained. ☀



Legal Tips on Notable Topics

By Naomi Angel, NSA Legal Counsel

BEWARE BUSINESS DATA ENDING UP ON P2P NETWORK

P2P is short for Peer To Peer networks, the networks millions use to share music, photographs, movies and other files. The problem is that P2P users may compromise sensitive business information by passing such data along with the other files they share with friends and others (“peers”). This may be deliberate but more often it is inadvertent, often due to carelessness, and mixing personal and business information on laptop computers used at work and home.

Tip: Businesses need to be aware of these developing technologies, establish policies on what information may and may not be taken from the office on employees’ (and consultants’ and others’) computers for use while on business trips, vacations or simply working at home. Be proactive, and if you don’t understand the technology, get help from someone who does.

IRS REDUCES STANDARD MILEAGE DEDUCTION RATES FOR 2009

The Internal Revenue Service has announced the standard business mileage deduction rate will be reduced from 58.5 cents per mile to 55 cents per mile effective January 1, 2009. The mileage deduction rate for medical or moving purposes is reduced from 27 cents to 24 cents per mile, and remains at 14 cents per mile for miles driven for charitable purposes. This reflects currently lower prices for gas from mid-2008 highs. A year ago the mileage deduction rates were set as of January 1, 2008, then raised in July when fuel prices skyrocketed. The 55, 24 and 14 cents’ rates also reflect generally higher vehicle operating costs compared to 2008 costs other than gas prices.

Tip: Companies should factor in the new rates for expense reimbursement purposes and for personal deduction purposes.

NEBRASKA SUPREME COURT RULES ON ANNUAL BONUSES

The Nebraska Supreme Court overturned a trial court verdict awarding seven nurse anesthetists \$88,000 in annual bonuses even though the seven had resigned from the employer’s firm in mid-September of the year in which they sought the bonuses. The seven contended they met Nebraska’s three-part statutory test that the bonuses were compensation, previously agreed to, and all conditions had been met by them. The Nebraska Supreme Court said the bonuses were intended to retain employees long-term and paid at year-end by the employer. By resigning in mid-September the employees had forfeited their claims to the bonuses historically based on firm profits and paid at year-end.

Tip: The lesson to be learned here is that bonus arrangement should be more precise in all respects including eligibility. Ambiguity breeds litigation, good for lawyers, usually not so good for clients.

EMPLOYEE BOUND TO ARBITRATE CLAIM DESPITE MERGER

A former employee was obliged to arbitrate her employment discrimination claim with the corporate successor of her former employer despite her contention that her employment contract was nullified when her employer merged with another company. A federal district court in Chicago ruled the former employer’s contracts were assigned to the entity created by the merger as a condition of the merger; all employees were informed that all terms of their employment remained the same; and the employee continued to work after the merger without objection to continuing under her contract, including its provision to arbitrate any claims.

Tip: The employee’s contention that her contract did not survive a merger was a stretch, but courts, especially state courts, go both ways on enforcing arbitration provisions in employment agreements. If you prefer arbitration to address employees’ or others’ claims, be sure the process is fair and in accordance with the precedents for such claims in your federal and state jurisdictions.

WARRANTLESS SEARCHES AT BORDER INCREASINGLY CHALLENGED

Two widely reported federal appellate court decisions upholding warrantless searches by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (“CBP”) agents of travelers’ computers, cell phones, cameras and other electronic equipment have resulted in a number of challenges to such searches, including Freedom of Information Act inquiries, litigation and now congressional inquiries and at least two congressional bills that would require reasonable suspicion of criminal activity before searching a traveler’s computer, cell phone, camera or other digital device. CBP personnel argue such searches are needed to deter criminal and terrorist activities, and digital data is one of the most common sources of criminal and terrorist contraband, and should be treated no differently than print and other media.

Tip: While this is sorted out by the courts, be advised that if you travel across a U.S. border, your computer, cell phone, camera and other electronic equipment remain subject to search, copying and seizure, and recent challenges to CBP search practices have not yet resulted in any changes.

These articles are provided solely for informational purposes and do not constitute legal advice. If you have specific questions or concerns about a legal issue, consult your company’s legal counsel for guidance. ☀