

BIA VOICE

The Official Newsletter of the
Building Industry Association of Philadelphia

Vol. 8 / No. 1

Spring 2011

In This Issue

- 4 PGW'S LANDLORD COOPERATION PROGRAM
- 5 RESIDENTIAL SPRINKLERS 101
- 7 THE BRIGHT SIDE OF BLIGHT
- 8 THE LATEST NEWS ON CODE REFORM/SPRINKLER LEGISLATION
- 13 MEMBER SPOTLIGHT
- 14 2010 HOLIDAY PARTY PHOTOS

Pennsylvania Builders Object to Law Requiring Sprinklers in New Homes

By Alan J. Heavens, *Inquirer* Real Estate Writer
The Philadelphia Inquirer December 20, 2010

To the consternation of builders and the delight of firefighters and municipal officials, every one and two-family house built in Pennsylvania after Jan. 1 will be required to have fire-sprinkler systems.

The mandate - part of the 2009 International Residential Code and applicable to new construction, not remodeling - was challenged in Commonwealth Court by the Pennsylvania Builders Association and others after it took effect for townhouses this year.

The builders argued that changes to the residential code, especially the sprinkler rule, would effectively increase the cost of a typical new house \$15,000, would have an effect "on the demand for their home-building and remodeling services, and will adversely affect the availability of financing of homes."

Continued on page 3



Message from the President



This issue of the BIA Voice includes the PBA's one-sheet on the new Residential Sprinkler regulation as well as a piece on sprinklers that appeared in the Philadelphia Inquirer.

Obviously, this is an issue that greatly impacts homebuilders and it is one that has both pros and cons. As a safety issue, sprinklers in homes can save lives. But as with all things related to homebuilding, it comes with costs. The PBA lobbied hard against the regulation. For PBA member builders in rural and suburban areas, the regulation is even more impactful. I urge you to read the relevant articles.

One piece of good news that has come out of this is from Philadelphia's Department of License and Inspection and the Philadelphia Water Department. Mike Fink of L&I has informed the BIA that **L&I is releasing a code bulletin (Reference Code Sections IRC-R313, P2904) regarding sprinkler service.** Basically, it will allow a builder to run service into the building that serves both domestic use and sprinkler. By eliminating one service, the change will offer savings on both fees and service. The BIA is appreciative that L&I and the PWD have worked to provide this reasonable alternative.

Regards,

David Perlman



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of Philadelphia

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Pennsylvania Builders Object to Law Requiring Sprinklers in New Homes

Continued from page 1

The court dismissed the association's petition earlier this year, describing the argument as "disingenuous."

"It is the same argument they have been making since 1989," said John Waters, chief fire marshal and director of safety and code enforcement for Upper Merion Township, which has had its own sprinkler regulations since 1988.

"The builders have been less than forthright in their position," added Waters, who is cochairman of the Pennsylvania Residential Fire Sprinkler Coalition.

Undeterred by its setback in court, the builders association, in a "consumer alert" on its website, urges anyone interested in having a house built to sign a contract before Dec. 31.

Building permits for one- and two-family houses approved by that date will not be covered by the new rules, and, because of action taken earlier this year by Gov. Rendell to help the construction industry, those permits will be valid until 2013.

There is some anecdotal evidence that builders have been racing to municipal offices throughout Pennsylvania to obtain permits, though the most recent data from the U.S. Commerce Department show residential permits at the lowest level in 40 years.

While arguing that they do not oppose residential sprinkler systems but think the choice should be left to consumers, the builders have vowed to try again to have the code rolled back to 2006.

"Unfortunately, the added cost of this mandated safety feature just moves the dream of homeownership further out of reach for some Pennsylvania families," association president Joseph Mackey said. "We will be back [in Harrisburg] for the new session in January with permanent residential-sprinkler-relief legislation."

New Jersey has not adopted the residential-sprinkler code, although some municipalities have their own requirements.

Pennsylvania builders contend that state code has required hard-wired smoke detectors in new houses for years, "which provide a better-than-99-percent chance of surviving a home fire."

The builders association also maintains that consumers should decide whether they want the additional protection, saying that few have chosen the sprinkler option. The group cites a 2006 study by the National Association of Home Builders that said just 15 percent of all new-home buyers wanted sprinkler systems.

The Burn Foundation counters with a 2005 Harris Interactive poll of U.S. homeowners in which 69 percent of respondents believed having a fire-sprinkler system increased the value of a home.

The builders have received support from House Republican policy committee chairman Stanley Saylor of York County.

With the state housing market "beginning to recover from the worst recession in generations, imposing a

mandate of this size could set that recovery back months or even years," Saylor said.

Waters said the benefits of sprinklers far outweighed their cost. According to the Fire Protection Research Foundation, the national average cost to install a sprinkler system in a new house is \$1.61 per square foot, or \$3,656 for a house of 2,271 square feet.

"We ask [the builders] where they get their figures, but we can never get an answer," Waters said.

The builders say their numbers are based on data collected "from at least 25 Pennsylvania home builders with experience putting sprinklers in homes in our state."

The average cost of fire damage in a house without sprinklers is \$45,000, compared with \$2,100 in the same house with sprinklers, according to the Burn Foundation.

"Those who are pushing to have residential sprinklers deleted from the code are not responsible for fire protection in their communities, yet they are claiming themselves to be experts in fire safety," Waters said.

"They are advising elected officials, who are now responsible, to ignore the long-term impact that the installation of sprinklers can have."



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PGW's Landlord Cooperation Program

PGW's Landlord Cooperation Program (LCP) can help property owners avoid natural gas service liens on their residential rental properties. Enrollment also provides owners with information that may help keep gas service on at the property.

PGW files liens against residential, commercial and industrial properties, including residential rental properties, for unpaid gas bills. However, if you register your eligible property for and fully cooperate in the LCP, your eligible, tenant-occupied, residential rental property(s) will receive protection from gas liens.

Are all rental properties subject to liens for unpaid bills for gas service to the property?

- Yes, similar to unpaid Philadelphia water bills, a rental property may be lienied for unpaid gas service.

Who can enroll in LCP?

- Most of Philadelphia's licensed residential property landlords may be eligible – as long as the property and owner meets the LCP requirements.

What properties are not eligible for LCP?

- Commercial and industrial properties, properties with a single meter which are multi-premises, owner-occupied
- Properties and properties where the landlord is, or is legally required to be, the customer of record are not eligible for LCP.

Do I need a Department of License and Inspection rental license to enroll in LCP?

- Yes.

For more information, email the LCP team at lcp@pgworks.com or visit www.pgworks.com to enroll.



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Residential Sprinklers 101

From the PBA Web site – pabuilders.org

The 2009 International Residential Code was adopted and went into effect in Pennsylvania January 1, 2010

This code requires that all Townhomes have automatic fire sprinklers installed effective January 1, 2010. The requirement for the installation of fire sprinklers in one and two family homes went into effect January 1, 2011. The installation requirements for these systems are found in the 2009 IRC in chapter 29, P-2904, or in NFPA 13-D. The builder may choose which one to comply with.

There are no certification requirements for design or installation under P-2904, although there are design certification requirements under NFPA -13D.

Sprinklers are required in all living areas and basements.

Sprinklers are not required in some small closets and bathrooms under 55 square feet, or garages, attics and crawlspaces (unless they house fuel-fired appliances).

Sprinklers are not required in additions to existing homes unless the home already has sprinklers installed in it. In this case, sprinklers must be extended into the addition.

The rate of flow and pressure required to operate the system will vary in every home by size of home, floor plan, room sizes, number of stories in height, elevation of home in relation to the water source, and the size of the supply line into the home.

Due to these numerous variables, the need for additional booster pumps, tanks, and supply line upgrades may occur in both homes supplied with municipal water, as well as those on private wells.

An average size home will require approximately 260 gallons of water over a period of 10 minutes (26 gpm x 10 minutes). If the municipal water supply, pressure, and service line can provide the required amount, no additional pump or tank would be required.

Likewise in a private well scenario, if a well-driller will certify the volume or reserve in the well to exceed the required amount needed, and the well pump and line can provide the flow and pressure, no additional booster pump or tank will be needed. (This scenario is not likely to occur in most private wells scenarios).

The only exceptions to these requirements are —

- Homes built under design or construction contracts executed on or before December 31, 2009. (These homes will be built to the 2006 code).
- One or two family homes built with a permit that was applied for on or before December 31, 2010.



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Member in the News



Neil Stein, Esq.



Debbie Riley

Neil Stein, Esq. and Ameer Farrell, Esq. of Kaplin Stewart Meloff Reiter & Stein in Blue Bell, Pennsylvania, presented a program at the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Design on the Delaware Conference on October 21, 2010. The program entitled "Legally Green: Law & Liability Summary for Sustainable Design" was presented jointly with David Schoenhard and Maki San Miguel Paulson of Wulff Architects. The program examined the business and legal risks in "green" design and construction and the techniques for mitigating those risks. Mr. Stein and Ms. Farrell have over 25 years of experience in representing the real estate, land development and design industries and they lecture frequently on the risks and incentives involved in green and sustainable development.

Vesta Energy Solutions LLC of Philadelphia PA was certified as a Woman-Owned Business Enterprise ("WBE") by the Office of Economic Development of the City of Philadelphia on

June 24, 2010. Vesta Energy Solutions is a regional wholesaler of Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning ("HVAC") products and options and solutions.

Vesta specializes in sustainable technologies and high-efficiency products. According to **Debbie Riley, President**, "Vesta Energy Solutions was started in 2009 because we recognized the market need for high efficiency HVAC expertise. With federal, state and local legislation that mandates and incentives the installation of high-efficiency HVAC systems, architects, engineers and mechanical contractors require experienced professionals to help them identify the right HVAC solution. Vesta has the sustainability expertise to provide that service."

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Whatever you did to attract qualified builders and interested contractors to this event, it worked! Please keep doing it. We'll be back in 2011!”

- Jeff Wright, National Sales Manager
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The Bright Side of Blight

By Diana Lind



EVEN in Philadelphia, with its 40,000 vacant properties and a quarter of its population living below the poverty line, the Kensington neighborhood still shocks. On a frigid afternoon, a prostitute lingers in the shadow of the elevated train tracks, waiting restlessly for customers. Husks of long-closed factories stand amid thigh-high winter wheat. Streams of garbage flow down the streets, as if both the people and the city government had agreed to forsake the effort of propriety.

In recent months, this neighborhood has also been terrorized by a killer who choked and raped his victims in the area's ubiquitous abandoned houses and vacant lots. If only these deserted places could be charged as accomplices to the so-called Kensington Strangler's three murders and two sexual assaults, and for aiding and abetting the drug use and prostitution that have caused so many of the neighborhood's problems. But the empty lots with their discarded furniture and ghetto kudzu and the weather-beaten houses with boarded-up windows won't be going anywhere soon.

It's been nearly 30 years since James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling published their broken windows theory, positing that the torn social fabric that allows for vandalism also encourages other kinds of crime and disinvestment in a neighborhood. The theory validated the inclination to improve the built environment first, in the hopes that once a sense of confidence has been restored other aspects of an engaged community will follow. And in places on the cusp of gentrification or economic recovery, like certain New York areas in the '90s, quality-of-life campaigns have been proven to clean up the streets and reduce crime.

Indeed, as gentrification has slowly crept northward in Philadelphia, Kensington residents have gained some

hope from a newly branded arts corridor, a few rejuvenated parks and street improvements, all thanks to the efforts of an invaluable local community development corporation. But this scattershot approach has failed to create the kind of holistic change needed in this neighborhood – or its counterparts in St. Louis, Cleveland, Detroit and Baltimore.

Many cities have also sought to transform undeveloped lots into green space and urban agriculture. It's a natural fit and, again, in Kensington a full city block has been converted from an industrial brownfield to an admirably active farm. But land-based strategies that try to reinvent this vacant lot or that blighted ground do little to stem the larger social trends that created the spatial problem in the first place.

Philadelphia, like many Rust Belt cities, was so deeply hurt by the loss of manufacturing that began in the 1950s that it has yet to recover. Gone were the jobs that even high-school dropouts could leverage to achieve stable lives, and with them went the housing stock. Today, we are left with a city where the number of jobs requiring postsecondary education has grown, while more than 60 percent of Philadelphia's adults read at a sixth grade level or below, creating a miserable mismatch that leaves both employers and the unemployed in need.

That's why any plan to mitigate the vacant property crisis must not only include innovative urban planning, but also try to restore employment opportunities. We need to literally build jobs on neglected and undeveloped land.

There are a number of organizations in Philadelphia that provide models for dealing with vacancy and joblessness as intertwined problems. For example, the Job Opportunity Investment Network, a public-private partnership, supports workforce training programs that have a hyperlocal impact.

One such program is the West Philadelphia Skills Initiative, which provides low-skill residents with intensive education and then matches graduates with jobs at the prestigious universities and medical centers within walking distance of their homes. While the jobs help people leave poverty behind, they ensure that the new wealth created remains in their neighborhoods, helping stabilize these downtrodden communities.

Continued on page 9

The Latest News on Code Reform/Sprinkler Legislation

“Consumers simply don’t want sprinklers and it should be their decision. The Pennsylvania code process is broken and we need to make it right so that this doesn’t continue to happen.”

Lou Biacchi, Executive Vice President of the PBA



As you are all probably painfully aware, state mandated residential sprinkler requirements took effect January 1, 2011. What this means is that all new homes will require sprinklers in all living areas and basements. For those building an addition to their home, sprinklers are only required if the existing home already had sprinklers – then the addition would need to have sprinklers as well.

Water flow and pressure that are required to run a sprinkler system will vary in every home by size of home, floor plan, room sizes, number of stories in height, elevation of home in relation to the water source, and the size of the supply line into the home. Due to the number of variables, the need for additional booster pumps, tanks, and supply line upgrades may occur in both homes supplied with municipal water, as well as those on private wells. For these reasons, costs will vary on an individual basis.

It’s Up to the Consumer

The Pennsylvania Builder’s Association (PBA) believes this is a private property issue and should be the consumer’s choice – NOT a government mandate. Sprinklers are a good thing IF the consumer chooses to pay for the additional protection. It is safe to say that the cost involves thousands of dollars for the sprinkler system alone. If a holding tank and pump are required, there will be an additional cost. Of course, ongoing maintenance is a factor. What the PBA knows for certain is that consumers feel the cost of the sprinkler system is enough for them to NOT build a home.

Taking Action

The PBA will be introducing a new bill in the upcoming legislative session to remove the sprinkler mandate and change the process by which these new codes are adopted in the future. On January 24, legislators found a co-sponsor memo on their desks from State Representative Donna Oberlander (R-Clarion/Armstrong) and Senator Jake Corman (R-34th district) asking them to co-sponsor

their bill. Once they have signed co-sponsors, the legislation will be introduced and given a bill number.

At this time, the PBA is asking its members to reach out to their local representatives and senators and urge them to co-sponsor this legislation. This issue already has a lot of momentum on the hill, but they need your support and participation.

The legislation will accomplish three key objectives:

- Remove sprinklers & other excessive provisions from the code
- End the automatic adoption process
- Make the future construction code process more thoughtful & deliberative

According to Lou Biacchi, Executive Vice President of the PBA, mandating fire sprinklers in Pennsylvania is not only unjustified, but it is not economically sound and it is a serious detriment to affordable housing. “Consumers simply don’t want sprinklers and it should be their decision. The Pennsylvania code process is broken and we need to make it right so that this doesn’t continue to happen.”

Important Revenue for Pennsylvania

Homebuilding is an important and sizable segment of the state’s economy and is vital to recovery.

Data from the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) indicates that housing represents approximately 15 percent of Pennsylvania’s gross state product. A study out of the Philadelphia region states that construction of 1000 single-family homes generates \$25.6 million in local income, \$3 million in taxes and fees for local governments, and nearly 450 local jobs. Impact will vary across the state, but this demonstrates the positive effect of the industry on our economy.

Continued on page 11

The Bright Side of Blight

Continued from page 7

Roots to Re-Entry enrolls convicts in a horticulture vocational and life-skills training program that, upon their release, leads to landscaping jobs. Part of the training includes growing organic food that is donated to Philadelphia's neediest, showing how this work can nourish impoverished neighborhoods.

Such programs can teach residents the skills they need to reimagine the urban voids they encounter every day. Cities, in turn, should partner with neighborhood groups to determine the most suitable abandoned buildings and lots for development, luring companies and projects that would employ newly retrained residents.

Strategies that deal with vacant spaces by generating new paths to employment aim to do more than fixing broken windows ever could. They seek to change the dynamics of the local economy by creating better communities, not just prettier ones, where abandoned properties are viewed as job sites rather than crime scenes waiting to happen.

Diana Lind is the editor at large of the magazine Next American City and a 2011 Van Alen Institute fellow.

Habitat Opens Restore



The ReStore is a resale outlet that sells reusable and surplus building materials to the public. Most ReStores focus on home improvement goods like furniture, home accessories, building materials and appliances. ReStores accept donated goods which are sold to the general public at a fraction of the retail price. Every penny that the ReStore earns goes right back into Habitat's fund to build more houses.

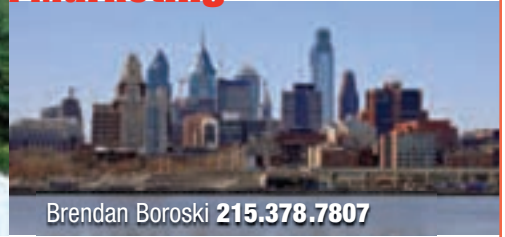
More than ever, Habitat is focused on increasing sustainability within the organization, in the communities they serve and in the greater Philadelphia area. The ReStore helps to keep these donated items out of landfills, making Habitat a greener organization.

What can you donate to ReStore? Appliances in working conditions and less than 10 years old. Air conditioning and heating unit less than 5 years old. Windows and doors. Hardware. Bathroom fixtures and vanities. Tools, flooring products and much more.

The ReStore will retain Habitat's 501(C)(3) status so that all donations will be tax deductible. To discuss donations, contact Corinne O'Connell at Habitat Philadelphia at 215.765.6000 x22 or corinne@habitatphiladelphia.org

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Thank you

Habitat for Humanity Philadelphia wishes all of the BIA members a Happy New Year. We appreciate your continued partnership and support through the BIA's annual holiday party. This past year, BIA membership contributed \$660 to support the work of Habitat Philadelphia. Please be assured we'll put every penny to hard work to continue building and empowering families to achieve homeownership. Working together, we are transforming lives and our City.

Habitat Philadelphia is excited for projects on our horizon in 2011. We're wrapping up two new construction houses in West Philadelphia and will break ground on four new construction homes in the Point Breeze neighborhood in the end of March. Also on deck this year is opening our ReStore - think thrift store for building supplies and homes goods. If you are interested in supporting any of our construction projects or ReStore, please do not hesitate to contact Corinne O'Connell at Habitat Philadelphia at 215.765.6000 x22 or corinne@habitatphiladelphia.org.

BIA Calendar of Events

2011

March

Thursday, March 3

Sales and Marketing Meeting
11:00 - 12:30pm
1600 JFK Blvd., 11th floor

Monday, March 14

Government Affairs Meeting/Fix It Coalition
11:30 - 1:00pm
One Logan Square
(Marvin Cominsky Center at Blank Rome)

Wednesday, March 23

Board of Directors Meeting
11:30 - 1:00pm
30 South 17th Street, 19th floor

April

Thursday, April 7

Sales and Marketing Meeting
11:00 - 12:30pm
1600 JFK Blvd., 11th floor

Monday, April 11

Government Affairs Meeting/Fix It Coalition
11:30 - 1:00pm
One Logan Square
(Marvin Cominsky Center at Blank Rome)

Wednesday, April 27

Board of Directors Meeting
11:30 - 1:00pm
30 South 17th Street, 19th floor

May

Monday, May 9

Government Affairs Meeting/Fix It Coalition
11:30 - 1:00pm
One Logan Square
(Marvin Cominsky Center at Blank Rome)

Wednesday, May 25

Board of Directors Meeting
11:30 - 1:00pm
30 South 17th Street, 19th floor

June

Wednesday, June 8

Phillies vs. L.A. Dodgers
Food and Drink - Suite Patio 5:30pm
Game Time 7:05pm
Citizens Bank Park

Wednesday, June 22

Board of Directors Meeting
11:30 - 1:00pm
30 South 17th Street, 19th floor

July

Wednesday, July 27

Board of Directors Meeting
11:30 - 1:00pm
30 South 17th Street, 19th floor

September

Wednesday, September 21

Annual Housing Conference
1 - 5pm
Down Town Club
6th and Chestnut Streets

Wednesday, September 28

Board of Directors Meeting
11:30 - 1:00pm
30 South 17th Street, 19th floor

October

Wednesday, October 26

Board of Directors Meeting
11:30 - 1:00pm
30 South 17th Street, 19th floor

November

Wednesday, November 23

Board of Directors Meeting
11:30 - 1:00pm
30 South 17th Street, 19th floor

December

Thursday, December 8

Holiday Party

Save The Date



Make plans to join the BIA when the Phillies take on the Dodgers, **Wednesday, June 8**. We'll start on the Suite Patio at 5:30 with food and drink. First pitch is at 7:05 p.m.

The Latest News on Code Reform/Sprinkler Legislation

Continued from page 8

Smoke Alarms Make Sense

Mandating sprinklers in new homes does not address fire protection in older homes where the vast majority of fires occur. Pennsylvanians would be better served by a requirement that all homes (new and existing) have operational smoke alarm systems.

Data shows that there is a 99.7 percent chance of surviving a fire in a home with an operating hard-wired smoke detector, which are a nationally recognized code and cost about \$500.

Technological innovations in building techniques introduced in recent decades make new homes safer. These include: fire-blocking partitions in attics and fire separation walls between garages and homes; improved electrical wiring methods (more outlets, circuit breakers, and large gauge wire); and interconnected hard-wired smoke detectors.

If you are going to be in the company of a local representative or senator while attending a builder event, a chamber or community event, or if you are meeting with a legislator directly, please let the PBA know by contacting Jill Pento at jpento@pabuilders.org. Governmental Affairs happenings change often – sometimes hourly - and there may be timely and specific talking points they can provide you with to keep you as informed as possible when meeting with key players in legislation.

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New Board Members

Brian Emmons is the Division Assistant Vice President for Toll Brothers Philadelphia City Living Division. His responsibilities include managing the day to day operations for Toll Brothers Philadelphia Market. Brian a graduate of Purdue University worked for a commercial real estate development company in Lafayette Indiana for 10 years prior to joining Toll Brothers.

Carrie Nase, Carrie's practice at Fox Rothschild focuses on representing developers, educational institutions, builders and property owners in connection with real estate matters, including transactional, zoning and land use issues. A graduate of Temple University and its law school, she has been selected as a "Pennsylvania Rising Star" by *Philadelphia Magazine and Law & Politics Magazine* (2006, 2007, 2008). She is a resident of Conshohocken.

Martin Jay Tackett, AIA (Jay) is a center city resident and Principal Architect and Tackett and Company, Inc., based in center city. He is a graduate of Penn State and has his master's degree in architecture from Yale University. He served six years on the Board of Trustees of the Foundation for Architecture and has been a guest critic in architecture and design at Penn State, Columbia, Temple, Ohio State, Philadelphia University and Drexel. His firm won the Gold Seal Award for the renovation of the 22-story Fountains at Logan Square in 2002 and the Vice President's Golden Hammer for the EPA regional headquarters.

Jonathan Taylor is President and CEO of Modular Manufacturers Group LLC, based in Glenside, PA., a builder of modular homes and authorized dealer of modular homes in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland and Washington DC. He was previously President and CEO of Atlantic Partners, Ltd., an international marketing company; and the family-owned Taylor Lock Company with factories and clients worldwide. He is also a Glenside resident.

Don't Forget – Your PA One Call is Free

A huge benefit BIA members enjoy is the PA One Call fee that's covered by PBA dues. It's easy. When you receive the One Call invoice, (fax 215.233.9132 or mail 1735 Market St., Ste. 432, Philadelphia, PA 19103) your unpaid invoice to the BIA. We'll handle the rest. Remember – don't pay the invoice, just send it to us.



Exclusive Offer For PBA Members From Energy Plus

After a careful review, PBA decided to offer a customized electricity savings program from Energy Plus, an electric supplier. PBA members who switch to Energy Plus will receive Cash Back for enrolling their home or business. If members enroll a residential account, they will earn a \$25 Activation Bonus AND 3% Cash Back rebates on the supply portion of their annual electricity bills. If members enroll a commercial account, they will receive a \$50 Activation Bonus and annual 5% Cash Back rebates. That's a significant savings just for turning on your lights using Energy Plus as your electric supply company!

The best part is that nothing about your electrical service will change! Your local utility will continue to deliver your electricity, read your meter, handle service emergencies, and mail your statement. You'll be earning cash back and saving money, while enjoying the safety and reliability of your current service. All you need is an electricity service address in Pennsylvania. There are no costs to enroll, no monthly fees associated with your account, and no cancellation penalties.

Energy Plus provides electricity to both homes and businesses throughout Pennsylvania so you can sign up all of your electricity accounts. Enroll your business and your home, and your staff members with Energy Plus today!

NAHB Associates



Over the past two years the NAHB Associates have created multiple sources to communicate with social media being the main growth for contact. NAHB Associate leadership would like to invite associate members to join so you can stay up to date with news, education and expanded networking opportunities.

Local HBAs are always looking for new, or improved, ideas, for fund raising, special events, advocacy as well as a more engaged membership. These communications can only help the local become more successful and it will truly help the associate's "industry awareness" and translate that awareness into better relationships with builders.

Visit nahbassociates.blogspot.com

The 1,000,000th Bradford White ICON System™ Water Heater!

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Watch for the installation of the 1,000,000th Bradford White ICON System water heater. Our lucky homeowner will get \$100 water heater installed (standing fee, along with the full complement of ICON System Accessory Package). Visit www.bradfordwhite.com for full details!

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Member Spotlight



Debbie Riely

President
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Did you know that more than 25 percent of energy consumed in the United States commercial buildings is used for heating and air-conditioning? Because HVAC systems comprise a large part of building operating costs, improved energy efficiency in this area brings with it significant financial advantages along with environmental benefits. The efforts of manufacturers, contractors, engineers, utilities, and government laboratories and agencies have resulted in improved HVAC efficiency.

Philadelphia-based Vesta HVAC Solutions was established in 2009 because it recognized the market need for high-efficiency HVAC expertise. With federal, state and local legislation that mandates and incentives the installation of high-efficiency HVAC systems, architects, engineers and mechanical contractors require experienced professionals to help them identify the right HVAC solution. Vesta has the sustainability expertise to provide that service.

BIA member Debbie Riley, the company's president, leads Vesta's operations and is directly involved in its sales and marketing efforts. Riley, who earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communications from Syracuse University has a background in sales, marketing and public relations. She was in pharmaceutical sales for ten years before joining her brother in their family business, Riley Sales, where she focused on business-to-business sale of high efficiency HVAC equipment.

Riley started Vesta two years ago as a regional wholesaler organized to distribute high efficiency energy products and provide solutions. The company specializes in sustainable technologies and high-efficiency products. Subsequent to her graduation, Riley has continued her education with industry and technology related courses including Green Advantage – Environmental Certification, Advanced Blue Print Training, IREC-accredited Solar Photovoltaic training, and IGSHPA- accredited Ground Source Heat Pump training.

"I chose to specialize in sustainable solutions because the sale of these products requires its own focus due to dynamic, changing and growing nature of the industry, especially in the Philadelphia market," explained Riley. "I enjoy the opportunity to match clients' needs with the right sustainable solution. I like being involved in the entire project with my clients, from the blue print to the delivery of the product at the job site. The industry continues to develop new products, giving me the opportunity to learn and bring these products to my clients."

Riley establishes the strategic direction of the company and is responsible for its overall performance. One project that she really enjoyed working on was introducing a high efficiency window to the company's product line. This project allowed Riley and Vesta to expand beyond its HVAC roots and establish itself as a weatherization resource.

Riley was a leader and early adapter in sustainable solutions when that was an emerging market. Now that that trend has established itself and has become a way of doing business, Riley continues to lead the Philadelphia market in identifying the next opportunity or trend. "Working with a network of green associations, manufacturers and clients, I am able to bring to market emerging technologies."

Riley is a member of numerous associations including the Delaware Valley Green Building Council, New Jersey Green Building Council, Green Mechanical Association, Sustainable Business Network, Building Industry Association, Green Building Certification Institute, and the Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations (PACDC).

A lifelong resident of Whitmarsh Township, Riley enjoys hiking and biking and spending free time with friends and family. As far as the future goes, Riley plans to continue to be an ear for the industry, bring new products to new markets and have fun along the way. "Our customers are happy to work with us because they know we are experts and that we care about them individually. We are easy to do business with."



The Holiday Party on December 8th was a big success. Special thanks to Naval Square for hosting and to our holiday party sponsors.

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MaGrann Associates Opens New Office at Navy Yard



MaGrann Associates has announced its office expansion to the Philadelphia Navy Yard.

MaGrann Associates has over 30 years of building science experience in the residential, multifamily, and light commercial industries. It provides green building certification and consulting; utility and government sponsored energy efficiency program management; multifamily

and light commercial audits; as well as design and engineering services.

“The expansion to The Navy Yard seemed appropriate since the U.S. Department of Energy Innovation Hub for energy-efficient building is being established right in our backyard. This gives us the chance to help keep the Greater Philadelphia region on the map as a leader in green and energy efficient building technology,” said Rich Selverian, MaGrann Associates CFO/COO and Business Director.

MaGrann Associates will offer its services in green building, energy efficiency program management, and multifamily and light commercial auditing at its 3,500 square foot office at The Navy Yard. The building, One Crescent Drive, owned by Liberty Property / Synterra LP, is green certified as a U.S. Green Building Council LEED Platinum building, furthering MaGrann’s corporate standard for energy efficiency and sustainability.

The Philadelphia Navy Yard office will be MaGrann Associates’ fifth office – joining its other operations in Pittsburgh, Pa.; Louisville, Ky.; Columbus, Ohio; and Moorestown, NJ.

Cohen Seglias Launches New Construction Blog

Cohen Seglias Pallas Greenhall & Furman, PC has announced the launch of its second blog, Construction Law Signal, (www.constructionlawsignal.com). Published by the firm’s Construction Group, the blog is a tool for those operating in the construction industry looking for the latest information about construction projects, news and legal developments affecting their business.

“Things change at a rapid pace in the world of construction and clients need a resource that matches that pace,” said Edward Seglias, Vice President of Cohen Seglias and the blog’s Executive Editor. “The firm’s Construction Group currently provides clients with updates on various issues impacting the construction industry through our quarterly newsletter, Construction in Brief, but the blog allows us to alert clients to changes that could affect their business as they occur,” he concluded.

Construction Law Signal has already covered such topics as:

- Pennsylvania Supreme Court Declares Insurance Defense Costs May Not Be Reimbursable
- Recent Developments in the Comprehensive Health Care Reform Law
- Delaware Wind Farm Assembly Suffers Setback but Long Term Confidence in the Project Remains High
- Safety Standards for Natural Gas Wells Approved

The firm’s first blog, Federal Construction Contracting Blog, provides legal information and resources to federal contractors and subcontractors.

For more information, please visit www.cohenseglias.com

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