Gear up for the 75th Annual LPI/ULPA Conference on Lightning Protection

Spring is right around the corner and so is 75th annual LPI/ULPA Conference on Lightning Protection, scheduled for March 14-17, 2007, at the Hilton Singer Island Oceanfront Resort in Singer Island, Florida. The 2007 conference will feature an exciting new educational program and agenda designed to enhance your knowledge and provide you with the very latest industry and educational information. Rooms have been booked at a special rate of $199 per night for LPI/ULPA members and conference attendees. Oceanfront rooms are $299, but all rooms have a partial ocean view. Reservations must be made prior to February 12, 2007. Please indicate the LPI/ULPA conference when making your reservations.

Hosted by Bonded Lightning Protection of Florida, conference plans include golfing on Wednesday and Saturday at the Fox Club golf course in Palm City (www.foxclubfl.com). On Thursday evening, our group will enjoy a ride on the Palm Beach Princess Casino. This gambling cruise will feature an enticing buffet dinner, casino action, live music, a nine-television sports bar with sports book betting and more! Attendees will also enjoy a cocktail hour with beverages and appetizers. More information about the Princess Casino can be found at www.pbcasino.com.

Make your plans today to join your friends and colleagues in Singer Island for fun-filled activities, networking and industry enlightenment. Your competitors are making their plans to attend, so don’t be left out in the storm. This conference will make a striking difference for your business and give you the tools and skills you’ll need to jump start your 2007 season.

The Hilton Singer Island
Oceanfront Resort
3700 North Ocean Drive
Singer Island, FL 33404
Telephone – 561-848-3888

Airports:
12 miles from Palm Beach International Airport
50 miles from Ft. Lauderdale International Airport
83 miles from Miami International Airport

For more information visit the LPI website at: www.lightning.org
Lightning Protection in the News with Proposed Legal Settlement

As a lightning protection professional, you are probably aware that lightning strikes can present hazards for mechanical systems. This hazard is often due to differences in potential between any non-bonded metallic system piping or independently grounded power or communication systems, since arcing may occur. Gas piping systems present a unique problem because they convey flammable fuel gas which may add to the fire hazard if any system components fail. What you may not be aware of, is that a product known as corrugated stainless steel tubing (CSST) used to transmit fuel gas, has been found to be susceptible to damage from arcing by direct or nearby lightning strikes. In some situations, lightning has created holes and cracks in the CSST, allowing gas leakages which can result in fire. In worse case scenarios, a slow leak can create a gradual gas buildup and lead to a catastrophic explosion.

The potential for lightning damage to homes and buildings with CSST has caused such concern that the Circuit Court of Clark County Arkansas proposed Settlement of a class action lawsuit to provide payment vouchers for lightning protection systems for persons and/or entities who own structures in the US, in which CSST was installed as of September 5, 2006. These vouchers are intended to defray some of the costs of installing a complete lightning protection system, or alternately for bonding and grounding of certain systems in a structure. The voucher values range from $200 to $2,000 toward the installation of a lightning protection system, and $75 to $160 toward bonding and grounding improvements. The Court will hold a Final Approval Hearing on February 1, 2007 to consider whether to approve the Proposed Settlement, award attorneys' fees and allow reimbursement of expenses.

Information about this issue has been circulated in the media and LPI also has information posted on its website. For more information on the CSST settlement, call 1-800-420-2916 or visit the website at www.csstsettlement.com.

Highlights from October Board Meeting

Last October, the LPI Board met for its meeting which was held in conjunction with the NFPA 780 Committee meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Highlights from the meeting included:

* Summary of Revisions to the LPI Website (see details on back)
* LPI is running a project to update and develop an Inspection Guide for review of lightning protection systems. There are several items needing further discussion for a formalized program, including who will be making inspection, visual versus tested inspection, and how LPI can assist with this process.

* LPI is pursuing development of a day or two seminar-style course on lightning protection over the next 6 month period. This will be designed as an in-depth look at NFPA 780.

* LPI is mailing a CD for A&E's with lightning protection information for specifiers, including specs, a risk calculator, brochures, tech letters, and a UL brochure. These will be going out in the next month to 1700 Architects & Engineers provided by member mailing lists.

* The Board of Directors authorized a new Insurance Technical Advisory Committee to provide support for efforts with the insurance industry. If you know of insurance professionals who are interested in serving on this group, please contact the LPI office.

* The Board is reviewing various sources to develop a Code of Ethics for LPI. This is an expectation of both specifiers and consumers for an organization like ours. We have a Board Subcommittee working to develop appropriate wording for circulation to the full membership for vote.
Media Report:
Recent PR & Promotional Events

LPI marketing and communication efforts continue to increase exposure for the industry and its members.

Feature Articles on Lightning Protection

LPI is seeing continued success with editors running our feature stories and news articles on lightning protection. Here are a few highlights of recent stories that have spotlighted lightning protection and the LPI:

LPI Grant Notice on Newswire

Our press release titled, “LPI Grant Seeks Research Proposals for Lightning Loss Data” cleared the newswire on 10/30/2006 at 9:15 a.m. and was picked up on several major news outlets including, AOL Business News, Yahoo!, PR Newswire, The NFPA Journal, Construction News Home Industries, Public-issues.com and several others. Our media monitoring service reported 289 media accesses from around the U.S. which included three consumer periodicals, three newspapers, one radio station, two television stations, two trade periodicals, seven online/web services and two other non-specific journalists. It’s clear that our industry news is getting the media’s attention!

NFPA Journal November/December 2006 issue — Section Forum Stories

As a NFPA member, Kim Loehr recently applied for and received certification as a “Building Fire Safety Systems Section” member. This membership provides an opportunity for web articles and feature stories through the NFPA Forum Section. Kim’s first two submissions to the NFPA Forum were published in the November/December 2006 issue of the NFPA Journal and on the NFPA Journal Website.

Insurance Industry Buzzes about Lightning Protection

We’ve got their ear…over the past few months we’ve seen a notable increase in newspaper and website articles about property damage on the rise, due to lightning. Insurance entities like the Insurance Information Institute, The Hartford, The Travelers, Nationwide Mutual, and State Farm have all released significant statistics and data about lightning claims in recent years. Several insurance companies have gone on the record to recommend lightning protection in their news releases and offer information on lightning protection systems on their websites under consumer prevention and protection sections.

“What’s happening is an extremely powerful force that should never be underestimated,” noted Maggie Griesing, vice president of loss control for the Hartford. (The Loss Control team helps the company’s underwriters and claims professionals evaluate risk and also assists customers to identify and control risk that can create losses.) “Often people think ‘it won’t happen to me.’ We hope this data will alert home and business owners to take some simple but necessary measures to safeguard themselves, as well as their property and belongings,” added Griesing.

When making their recommendations for prevention, Griesing and her Loss Control team are specific with their advice, “a lighting protection system installed in accordance with UL and NFPA guidelines” is the first item on their consumer tips list.

As this is an area where we continue to see significant progress, LPI will continue its efforts to gain increased support for lightning protection within the insurance industry.
Checkout the LPI Website

If you've accessed the LPI website lately, you've noticed the wealth of information that our site now includes. Recent changes and additions to the website in 2006 include: Economic Consequences of Lightning, Leon the Lightning Lion Poster, LPI Strategic Plan, Pipe Bonding references, 2006 & 2007 Trade Show Schedule, presentations from the 2006 Annual Conference, and additional information on non-compliant systems. Effective in July 2006, the LPI Web provider began providing statistics on hits to our website. LPI receives 10,000 to 20,000 hits per month! We expect to receive comparative information as we cycle through the year's activity. New website additions that LPI plans to pursue for 2007 include:

• MEDIA section to highlight copies of news releases, articles and a link to Kim Loehr's email address for media contacts and inquiries.
• MEMBER'S ONLY section for specialty items not associated with our general site information.
• SHOPPING CART section for ordering products directly over the internet.
• CHILDREN'S PAGE to include specific information on personal safety, hosted by "Leon the Lightning Lion."
• SPEAKER's BUREAU for availability of presenters on subjects associated with lightning protection.

Check out our site at www.lightning.org!

Member Reminder - the LPI office also updates member information as received, so call or email LPI for revising your member information.

2007 Trade Show Season

The LPI is making plans (pending booth availability) to take our lightning protection message on the road and exhibit at these and other upcoming trade shows, scheduled for 2007:

TBD / Pending booth availability:
American Institute of Architects (AIA),
May 3-5, San Antonio, TX

NFPA World Safety Conference & Expo,
June 3-7 in Boston, MA

Construction Specification Institute (CSI),
June 20-22 in Baltimore, MD

International Facility Management Assoc,
Oct. 24-26 in New Orleans, LA

TBD: IBHS Annual Conference on Property Loss Reduction
Nov. 17-18, Tampa, FL

The Lightning Protection Institute
Saving Lives & Protecting Property Since 1955
25475 Magnolia Drive • P.O. Box 99 • Maryville, MO 64468
Tel: 660-582-0429 • Fax: 660-582-0430 • 1-800-488-6864
Email: LPI@lightning.org • Website: www.lightning.org