Current Chair of the NFPA Technical Committee

This report provided an update of NFPA 780, including changes to expect in 2007. Some of the changes we will see in the next NFPA standard edition include semantics changes to incorporate new wording. (For example, “electrodes” becomes the new wording to replace “ground terminals.”) Other changes include:

- conversions to metric terms
- clarifications regarding use of aluminum, strike terminations and provisions to strengthen bonding requirements.
- re-write and significant revisions of specific sections (shallow topsoil, surge protection, watercraft, stacks and annexes i.e. tree protection, risk assessment and a new annex section to address wind turbines.)

In summary, John Tobias stressed that NFPA 780 is undergoing changes affecting installation requirements and will be addressing several emerging issues and new findings. While the NFPA committee intends to go beyond reacting to submitted comments (there are 133 proposals currently in the review process), John encouraged members to submit proposals and participate in the standards process. Information on the NFPA ROP text can be accessed at www.nfpa.org.

IEC TC 81 Lightning Protection Status Report

Presented by Mitchell Guthrie, Senior Electrical Engineer and Independent Consulting Engineer

Our group received an update on the
Implementation of a Strategic Plan for LPI

In May 2005, the LPI Board and some additional members met in Kansas City for a brainstorming session to move the organization forward through development of a strategic plan. A strategic plan states where the organization would propose to be in a 3 to 5 year period, and sets out actions to achieve those goals. The group took a hard look at the 50-year old organization with a new management team to assess the short term future. A good strategic plan builds on strengths, addresses weaknesses, exploits opportunities, and acknowledges threats from both personnel and organizational standpoints. The Board of Directors of the Lightning Protection Institute has adopted the following tenets of strategic planning to move the organization forward in the next 5-year period.

**Vision**

LPI will operate from an office in Missouri. LPI will have revenues of $250,000 and operate within budget. LPI will contract with a management company for an Executive Director and 2 staff positions, along with consultants for specialized functions. LPI will offer support services and products for member use to develop lightning protection in construction markets. LPI will be technically advanced and offer improvements in programs. LPI will expand safety by growth of information services to decision makers and new marketplace contacts.

**Mission Statement**

LPI designs and develops information resources on complete lightning protection systems for consumers & specifiers. The LPI markets products to members for use in the construction industry. The focus is to develop the total market for lightning protection through promotion of National Standards with supporting loss data, experience from past design, and new information from research.

**Organization Values**

LPI operates in accordance with the highest standards in all relationships with customers, suppliers, and Standards authorities in the construction industry. LPI will foster a climate to encourage innovation and diligence for its Board of Directors, members, and contracted staff.

**Organization Objectives**

1. To expand the information to potential customers aggressively and offer member support services to further this effort.
2. To become the leading authority on safety through complete lightning protection systems in the construction marketplace.
3. To expand the size of the lightning protection market through education, additional specifications, and member revenues.

**Goals** (by the year 2010)

- All Architectural and/or Engineering offices in the U.S. will use LPI as their information source on lightning protection.
- Double the dollar value of lightning protection specified on construction projects.
- Have mandated lightning protection in place at 3 national organizations.
- Create the “information warehouse” structure for lightning protection education and research.

**Programs 2005**

- Provide LPI member seal for drawings
- Provide technical support items on LPI website
- Revise LPI program charges
- Research Florida building code requirements for national process duplication
- Create program for all LPI member companies contact A&E firms each year
- Assess response & stat gathering for published events on the internet
- Consolidate members A&E databases

**1st Quarter - 2006**

- Create design standard for buildings requiring Lp., and target 3 national organizations to require Lp. (FL model)
- Obtain current insurance loss data and post it to LPI website for use
- Provide professional presentation training to membership for A&E calls at annual conference

**Programs 2006**

- Publish 10 articles in trade publications
- Display in national trade shows - 3 per year
- Educate targets on Lp. requirements & inspection standards (FL model)

**Programs 2007**

- Piggyback LPI Conference with AIA National Conference

**Programs 2008**

- Collect research on efficacy of Lp. per U.S. Standards
- Publish professional document - “21st Century System”

**Programs 2009**

- Inform total customer base of loss statistics & science of lightning protection

**Programs 2010**

- Specific mailing program to all A&E

**Additional Program Development**

- Fund research in lightning protection
- University sponsored presentation of papers on lightning protection

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1st Annual LPI Membership Contest

The LPI office has been working hard to provide our membership with information, literature, promotional tools and industry support. At the Dallas conference the LPI held a contest to ask members to communicate five benefits provided by their current LPI membership, along with five benefits that they would like to receive in the future. We received over a dozen contest entries from members who shared their thoughts and ideas. The winning entry came from Guy Maxwell with Maxwell Lightning Protection, who went the distance to give us eight ideas for future consideration. Thank you to all who entered our contest and congratulations to Guy for submitting the winning entry which entitles him to free registration fees for the 2007 LPI/ULPA conference.

LPI member, Chad Reeves participates in the membership contest.
Media Report:

Recent PR Highlights

LPI marketing and communication efforts continue to pay off with several media placements that have increased public exposure for the LPI and our industry.

Few highlights of recent stories that have spotlighted lightning protection and the LPI:

LPI provided editorial assistance and was cited and referenced throughout this article which was featured on the front page of the Home-Style section in the “Ask the Expert” column.

NecDigest Feature Story – October, 2005 Issue
“Fire on High” was a six page feature article with color photos all about lightning protection. Published bi-monthly by NFPA, NecDigest has a circulation of 75,000 quarterly. The magazine is geared toward management-level executives and decision makers in the electrical industry—exactly where we want our news to be!

Metal Architecture Magazine – March 2006 Issue
“Lightning Protection in Compliance with Safety Standards” spotlighted lightning protection on a full-page, along with color photos and a lightning protection system outline. The magazine is published monthly and is targeted to architects, engineers and professionals aligned with the metal construction industry.

Networking Exposure Continues to Pay Off—Again!
Last spring, LPI explored a networking opportunity with the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) which resulted in a joint press release to promote lightning safety. LPI received huge exposure from this press release in various publications around the country. The latest placement we’ve seen for this press release is on the UL website. Networking relationships such as this truly help promote our identity and goals to new audiences. LPI is currently networking with Michael Utley and the NOAA Lightning Safety Awareness team in hopes of establishing another valuable ally for promoting industry news and information.

Feature Articles on Lightning Protection
Editors are taking a liking to LPI’s feature articles on lightning protection and are saving space for our information and news in their magazines and newspapers. Here are a

Pre-Conference Press Release
The above press release was issued in conjunction with our March conference. It cleared the newswire on 3/14/06 at 9:05 a.m., eastern time. We are pleased to report that this press release publicizing our conference and guest speaker, Michael Utley, received national newswire pick-up on several major news outlets, including: AOL Business News, DallasNews.com, DentonRC.com – Texas News feed, Inside TXBiz.com, Yahoo!, Collin County News, MDA’s Industry News Daily, NHCC News Headlines, Fox 5 News Las Vegas, Kron 4 News On-Air & On-line. The gross impressions represented here are enormous, and it’s important to remember that the editorial “endorsement” received through a news story such as this, carries a lot of value with readers.

necdigest
Conference (Continued From Page 1)

status of current actions underway by the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) Technical Committee on Lightning Protection (TC81). The presentation reviewed the status of each of the five parts of the IEC document and reported the results of the February 2006 Working Group meeting. Mitch also discussed changes in terminology and use of acronyms, the status of the IEC 62305 and what’s next in terms of the Maintenance Teams “MTs’” which will be addressing and providing updates on outstanding issues. Further information on Mitch’s report can be found at: www.ani.org or www.iec.ch.

“I Survived”
Presented by Michael Ules, lightning strike survivor and founder of Struckbylightning.org

This presentation provided our group with new insights into lightning, lightning safety and the science behind the lightning strike. A NOAA spokesperson for lightning safety, Michael is an acclaimed presenter and motivational speaker who delivers his dynamic safety programs to groups across the country. Struckbylightning.org manages an extensive lightning database that is truly one-of-a-kind. Michael’s energetic presentation added an exciting and entertaining element to our conference program. The LPI hopes to work with Michael and his NOAA contacts on upcoming projects in connection with National Lightning Safety Awareness week in June.

Triggered Lightning Testing of the Performance of Grounding Systems
Presented by Brian DeCarlo, Electrical Engineer and Research Assistant, University of Florida’s International Center for Lightning Research and Testing (ICLRT)

This presentation provided an update of the two-year study of the “lightning test house” in Camp Blanding, Florida which has been equipped with a real-world lightning protection system and subjected to triggered lightning. (The ICLRT is the only facility in the world where lightning is artificially initiated from natural thunderstorms on a regular basis for the purpose of studying its physics and effects.) Specific testing data was shared which revealed that the configuration of the 2004 lightning protection system performed better than the configuration of the 2005 system. The need for surge protection devices was also verified through the testing. Further information about the ICLRT test house can be found at www.lightningsafetyalliance.com.

Underwriters Laboratories Program Update
Presented by Karl Keijp, UL Lightning Protection Service Business Manager and Rich Bouchard, UL Lightning Protection Supervisor

Our UL representatives provided a review of the UL Master Label Certificate program and an update on UL96A changes that will be seen in the upcoming revised edition, including changes in language terms and specific vs. general definitions. The upcoming UL document has been reorganized to follow the NFPA document more closely in terms of language, terminology and improve the flow of information. Additional lightning protection program news was shared with regard to: UL University certification classes, IAAI inspectors, upcoming website changes, and the 5-year Warranty Program for certificate renewals. For more news on ULs lightning protection program, visit the UL website at: www.ul.com/lightning.

Bonding, Grounding & Lightning Protection for Cellular Telephone or Microwave Radio Sites
Presented by Dan McMenamin, International Telecommunications Consultant

This presentation provided an overview of the principal elements of grounding, bonding and lightning protection for the telecommunications remote environment. Applications and requirements for cell sites, microwave sites, telephone switching centers and towers were reviewed. An overview of grounding standards, including antenna feed grounding and power plant grounding, soil testing procedures, bonding criteria applications, safety requirements and trouble-shooting for problem scenarios was also provided. Issues stressed in the presentation, included: the importance of safety, adhering to client’s grounding standards, asking questions on the site, knowing the full ramifications prior to disconnecting grounds and being sensitive to “safe time” requirements or work operations to take place during specific off-hours.

Panels of Experts
This year’s conference also featured two separate panel presentations hosted by industry professionals. “Hot Issues” hosted by Mitch Guthrie, John Tobias, Steve Humeniuk and Bud VanSickle touched on topics such as equipotential bonding, surge suppression, NEC code clarifications and risk management vs. risk assessment. Phil Youtsey hosted a panel featuring presentations by Kim Dillon, Heath Howe and Todd Vought who discussed the ins and outs of promoting lightning protection “lunch & learn” sessions to the engineering and architectural community. Both panels provided valuable information and prompted interesting group discussions.