Viva Las Vegas!

Gearing Up for 2005 LPI/UPA Conference

Plans are set for the 2005 Conference at the Sahara Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada, Wednesday, February 23 through Sunday, February 26th. Be sure to make your room reservations early and ask for the special ULPA/LPI room rate of $79.95. This room rate is guaranteed until January 21, 2005 only—so call reservations today at 888-696-2121, if you haven’t reserved your room yet. This year’s conference destination is sure to be a hit, so don’t miss out on the fun and excitement the Sahara Hotel and Casino has to offer. When it opened its doors in 1952, the Sahara Hotel and Casino set the standard in Las Vegas for entertainment, featuring the era’s most celebrated performers, including Ann Margret, Johnny Carson, Tina Turner and even the Beatles. The hotel boasts 1,720 classically-styled guestrooms and suites decorated in a Moroccan motif. Spacious guestrooms include comfortable accommodations with a variety of television-viewing options. The hotel also features a gazebo-covered spa, circular fountains, live entertainment in the Casbar Theatre Lounge and the Congo room and convenient room service from 6 a.m. until midnight, daily.

Information-packed Agenda

In addition to the exciting Las Vegas surroundings, this year’s conference promises to provide a wealth of information for ULPA and LPI attendees. We have a full agenda planned with industry reports from Underwriters Laboratories and the National Fire Protection Association and speakers who will update our group on a wide range of topics, including: American Institute of Architects Continuing Education Course presentation, IEC review, Air Terminal Placement findings, Lightning Engineering Models, Update on Lightning Research at the University of Florida Test House, NFPA Grounding Research Project and Promotional Tools for Marketing Lightning Protection.

Testing Discounts

LPI Certification testing will also be available on-site at the conference with four LPI-proctored testing sessions scheduled for individuals seeking Journeyman, Master Installer, Master Installer Designer and Designer Inspector certification. Testing sessions are scheduled as follows:
1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. Friday, February 25th
3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Friday, February 25th
8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. Saturday, Feb 26th
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Saturday, Feb 26th.

Each testing session is two hours in length and one certification test is allowed per session. Pre-registration through the LPI office is required. To register, contact the LPI office toll free at 1-800-488-6864, by fax at 1-816-676-0093, or by email at LPImain@stjoelive.com.

Individuals planning to test, may want to take advantage of dis-
State Farm Features Lightning Protection On Website

Many LPI members have inquired about how they can receive copies of the lightning protection brochures that State Farm used to print. In researching this request, I have learned that the company has discontinued distribution of many of these types of brochures (including the lightning protection and surge protection brochures), and instead now provides information on these topics on its website.

Consumer information about lightning protection and surge protection is now available under several sections on the State Farm website at www.statefarm.com.

The website has devoted a wealth of information to lightning and surge protection, which can be accessed under the “prevention & safety”, “business personal property”, “electrical hazards” and “natural disasters” sub-sections. The Lightning Protection Institute is also referenced along with Underwriters Laboratories as a contact agency for follow-up information with regard to lightning protection and qualified contractors. This is a marketing plus for LPI members that helps keep our contractors in the spotlight and one step ahead of the non-member competition.

NFPA 780 pre-ROP Meeting Summary

by Mitch Guthrie

NFPA 780 held a pre-ROP meeting on November 30th – December 2nd, 2004.

Several items of interest were presented to the committee including:

- The LSA research program at Camp Blanding
- Lightning protection for intrinsically safe zones
- IEC lightning protection requirements for wind turbines
- Proposed strike termination device locations for “vulnerable” building areas

UL’s representative provided an update on the status of the use of TVSS devices in lightning protection applications and the status of the revision of UL 95 and UL 96A. Reports were also shared on the API Phase One research effort, as well as the proposed IEC TC 81 requirements for grounding, use of rebar as a down conductor, protection of tall structures,

Media Report: Off Season Publicity Update

Our recent public relations and marketing efforts executed in conjunction with an editorial news service seemed to have paid off for our industry. The attached story continues to receive pick-up all across the country in local papers and web-based feature story outlets. Our media service has forwarded nearly 100 clips of this story from newspapers in the following twenty-one states: PA, CA, CT, GA, MI, KY, MA, OK, VT, OH, CO, NY, WI, NC, MN, NJ, IN, DE, WV, MO, and TX. Total newspaper readership for this story is estimated at 9,369,756, which does not reflect the other web-based media outlets that we know about.

(Atlantic City Weekly, and Colorado Springs Gazette). The shelf life for this story has also been great, with our first placement printed in August and follow-up distribution throughout the months of September, October and November. What a great thing to have consumers reading about lightning protection in our off-season months!

LPI members who are interested in receiving clips from papers in their locations, can contact Kim Graziano at LLpco@aol.com.
UL’s Maintenance Program Coincides With Unprecedented Hurricane Season

State Farm, the largest U.S. property-casualty insurance company, estimated that the unprecedented hurricane season of 2004 will cost the company about $3.6 billion. According to National Underwriter Magazine, the estimate includes auto, homeowners and some commercial business. The largest number of the claims, 272,000 were for homeowners coverage.

Allstate, the second-largest property-casualty insurer in the U.S. cited hurricane losses to about $1.1 billion after taxes and reinsurance.

If any of these tag-team hurricanes packed a punch to your lightning protection customers' homes or businesses, a maintenance check of their systems might be in order. In the best of weather conditions, routine maintenance of the lightning protection system provides customers with the best means of protection, but the after effects of a hurricane can necessitate immediate attention. Hurricanes can leave structures with flashing torn from roof anchorages, tile and siding damage and smashed chimneys and rooftops from uprooted trees. In most situations, post-hurricane repairs, and routine maintenance of lightning protection system are minor; but they can translate to busy work weeks for LIPI contractors in off-season, winter months.

By providing maintenance programs for their customers, LIPI members can offer an important service. A maintenance program will ensure that age, mechanical damage, or modifications to structures do not degrade the lightning protection systems. This quality control service will also comply with recent changes to the UL Master Label Certification program, which now requires maintenance inspections to maintain the integrity of the UL certificate. (See UL memo at right for more information.)
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counted exam rates (50% off per test), which are available at the conference.

The Lightning Safety Alliance (LSA) will present a special session on Saturday, February 26th at 10:00 a.m. for those LSA members interested in becoming authorized presenters of the LSA Continuing Education program for AIACES credit. Pre-registration with the LSA office at 1-800-833-3253 is required for participation. The LSA is a non-profit business league, with membership that includes, lightning protection manufacturers, installers and designers. The LSA’s mission is Lightning Safety, which is accomplished through the group’s education efforts, its active support of lightning research, media campaigns, lobbying and information gathering.

Every Night’s a Party!!!

Don’t miss out on this year’s conference fun. If you’re still not sold on the educational aspects of our Vegas conference, here are a few more fun facts about the Sahara to tempt you...

- Check out the three modern hotel towers, featuring 1,720 guest rooms and suites, directly located on the Las Vegas Strip.
- Did we mentioned over 85,000 square-feet of Moroccan-themed Las Vegas casino action?!!!
- What about the three performing arenas, including the Sahara Theater that showcase top Las Vegas show!
- There’s more...ACTION-packed entertainment featuring SPEED & Las Vegas Cyber Speedway!
- Last, but not least—you’ll enjoy the finest cuisine, featuring the NASCAR Café, House of Lords and Las Vegas’ best buffet. All bets are on that this will be a conference to remember, so take advantage of the special ULPA/LPI room rates and make your reservations today!

The Lightning Protection Institute

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and mesh-type strike termination devices.

Several specific issues were brought up for group discussion and it was determined that the present requirements sufficiently stated the intent of the committee. Such issues included the problems associated with grounding system installations in urban locations, restrictions against the use of reinforcing steel as down conductors, and the requirement that the interconnection of the lightning protection system ground terminals and other grounded media shall be in the form of a ground loop conductor for structures exceeding 18 m (60 ft) in height.

There was also significant discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of substituting the material of some specific significant metallic enclosures for the main conductor currently required to connect roof conductors with air terminals installed on these enclosures. There was no specific resolution of this issue. Doug Franklin (Thompson Lightning Protection, Inc.) was tasked to consider the development of an ROP for consideration by the TC. Comments or recommendations with regard to this issue should be addressed to Doug or your committee representatives (Bud VanSickle or Dennis Dillon for LPI, or Terrance Fortfleet or Steve Humeniuk for ULPA).

Several task groups were also formed to study specific issues. These include:

- Modelling Task Group
- Surge Protection Task Group
- Task Groups to investigate the transfer of mast and overhead wire protection methods to Chapter 4
- Draft text to explain why IEC 62305-3, 5.2.3 requirements do not apply to US installations
- Revise recommendations on personnel safety
- Develop a proposed new annex on Protection of Electronic Facilities

Finally, it was agreed that the committee should consider a few more risk assessment factors than are currently addressed in Annex H (NFPA 780-2004). A task group was established to further study this issue. The group will report its findings at the next NFPA 780 pre-ROP meeting.