



Wisconsin Geothermal Association

April 2015

President's Message

First, let me say that it's an honor to serve as the President of the Wisconsin Geothermal Association. Following Mark Flock is a little intimidating, as I think he did a terrific job over the past two years. For that matter, I think all of our Presidents have done a great job bringing us to this moment in time.

I think we can agree that everyone is busy these days - both personally and professionally. So taking on something else - like a leadership role in an association - comes at a certain cost. We can't just create more hours in the day, so something has to give a little. But long before "something" has to give, "someone" has to make a decision to give the gift of their time, talent, and energy.

For the couple of years that I've served on the Board, I've come to appreciate that the WGA isn't just fortunate to have good business people in leadership roles, we have good people. Period! Best of all, I get that same feeling whenever I'm with people from our industry. When you're two percent of the market, you have to be a little humble. Still, I don't get the sense from anyone that they're satisfied with just two percent. You are an optimistic bunch. So that's what we have to work with - good people who are humble, determined, and optimistic. Frankly, I like our odds!

I think the Legislative Day in Madison last month was the perfect picture of who we are as an industry. We had a solid turnout for our first-ever event. Going to the Capitol can be confusing and not just because you can't tell north from south inside the building. Getting on the legislative map and getting a bill introduced and passed is complicated, but we're learning fast.

When we made a change in our association management team a few years ago, one of the reasons we made that change was because we knew we were going to be working with someone who could help us navigate the political map and help us craft our message to have the best chance of making gains. Many thanks to Jeff Beiriger for his work and even though she's not involved in politics so much, to Jane Wucherer too. Jane is the person who makes the magic



happen at the Conference and countless other programs, events, and tasks.

So we made some progress at the State level and at the same time, we were hearing some good news from our friends at GEO. GEO has been actively involved in political matters for some time now and they're trying hard to have tax credits extended and to have geothermal heat pumps included as a renewable resource at the federal level. They're close to having an amendment included in an energy-related bill and our peers in Minnesota are helping to make that happen by contacting one of their U.S. Senators.

Every day, WGA is working to earn your support. I think GEO is doing the same and deserves your consideration too. If you're not a member of both WGA and GEO, I encourage you to be part of both organizations. Like we learned in Madison, your voice really does matter. Your voice in concert with hundreds more matters even more. We simply have to work together to have an impact.

And finally, I hope you will look through this newsletter and discover that this association is on the move. So is our industry. Support our upcoming event and continue to reach out to legislators and local officials. As I recall, one of the lessons from our Legislative Day was "education before advocacy." In other words, you can't ask legislators to help you if they don't know who you are or what you do. With that in mind, check out the article about what Bosch is doing to promote a national Geothermal Day later this year. If you can find a way to plug into the larger efforts - of our manufacturers and suppliers, of GEO, and of the WGA - we all win.

WGA Holds Annual Conference

The WGA Annual Conference was held February 18-19 at the Holiday Inn Hotel & Conference in Stevens Point. We're happy to report that nearly 100 percent of participants rated the Conference as either "good" or "excellent."

Our opening keynote was provided by Jack DiEnna (right) of the Geothermal Initiative. Jack gave an informative presentation about the state of the industry but more than that, he challenged the industry to continue to push for a larger share of the market. He noted that the industry is making progress but that geothermal needs to be sold differently than it is today. Jack encouraged participants to learn everything they can and to become more engaged at the state and local level in an effort to build the geothermal market.



A total of 10 breakout sessions were held along with the Annual Meeting and a lengthy and important industry discussion about the Master Geothermal Installer program. Read more about that program later in this newsletter.

HOLD THE DATE

**WGA Annual Conference
February 24-25, 2016**

Holiday Inn Hotel & Conference Center
Stevens Point, Wisconsin

Thanks To Our Conference Sponsors!

Gold Sponsors



Silver Sponsors



BOSCH
Invented for life



EARTHLINKED
TECHNOLOGIES



MULCAHY



WGA Elects New Directors, Officers

At the conference, the following individuals were elected or reelected to three-year terms on the WGA Board of Directors:

Jerry Brown (Brown Heating & Cooling)
Rick McCutchin (Black-Haak Heating)
Bruce Walker (Wisconsin Well & Water Systems)

The following were elected Officers for the coming year:

President - Dan Walsdorf (Advanced Custom Geothermal)
Vice President - Jerry Brown (Brown Heating & A/C)
Secretary - Steve Scholz (EnerTech)
Treasurer - Dave Mitchell (Mitchell's Heating & Cooling)

Members joined in thanking Joe Dutton for his years of service as a Director of the WGA. Joe chose to not seek reelection as a Director. Mark Flock was also thanked. Mark served as

President for the past two years and will remain on the Board as a Director.



Master Geothermal Installer - Another Step Closer

At the Annual Conference, WGA introduced its plans to create a Master Geothermal Installer designation for those installing systems and loop fields. The designation as a "master installer" will require an individual to demonstrate experience, training, and industry involvement. In addition, individuals must pass an examination.

Feedback from a lengthy discussion at the Conference helped the planning committee tweak its concept before formally introducing it later this year. Once introduced, individuals will have the opportunity to pull together required information and submit an application which, if approved, would qualify the individual to take the examination as early as the Annual Conference in 2016.

Those who meet all of the requirements of the Master Installer program will be able to display logos similar to these and will also be recognized on the WGA website.

Make this a goal for you and your company! Look for more information soon and for applications to be available later this year.



WGA Holds Legislative Day

On Thursday, March 19, a group of nearly 20 people from the industry gathered in Madison to learn about the legislature, lobbying, and the key issue for the industry today: leveling the playing field between geothermal and other renewable technologies. (Two of our participants - Dan Walsdorf and Matt Werdeo of Advanced Custom Geothermal are pictured at right in front of the Capitol.)



Specifically, the group looked at a proposed change to the state statutes that would allow for geothermal heating and cooling to be recognized as a renewable energy resource. The change requested by WGA addresses an issue with the current statutes that only recognizes those technologies that generate electrical energy as being renewables.

Feedback from the meetings was excellent and we've heard back from one or two legislators and a representative from the Public Service Commission regarding our request. It's too early to tell what will come of our efforts, but there's no question that progress was made. One of the key components of lobbying is industry education and by that measure, the day was well spent. Nearly a third of all legislative offices were visited in that one day and visited by constituents rather than a contract lobbyist.

Whether you were there or not, there is a role for everyone in this battle. As successful as our single-day effort was, the discussions need to continue and they need to expand to other districts. If you'd like to know more about some of the things you can do to help deliver the message about the geothermal industry, give us a call at (888) 782-6815.

GEO Continues Work At Federal Level

GEO has been attempting to get ground source heat pumps included in the federal definition of clean energy. To that end, they have agreed to an amendment to the Portman/Shahen bill which they are hoping to have co-sponsored by U.S. Senator Al Franken. In a meeting held with Franken's staff last week, a question was asked regarding the number of businesses involved in the geothermal industry on the state. Our friends at the Minnesota Geothermal Heat Pump Association have already provided an answer and are in the process of calling and emailing Senator Franken's office to encourage him to introduce the amendment.

Heat Exchange Drilling Licenses Required As Of April 1

As a reminder, the drilling of vertical heat exchange drill holes after April 1, 2015 will require a heat exchange drill hole license to do this work. Installers are advised to check that their driller has the required license. Licenses are not required for all loop field installers, only vertical drill holes below 25 feet.

License examinations were given over the first three months of this year and currently there are 34 licensed drillers in the State. Additional licenses will be granted in the coming months as more drillers demonstrate their qualifications for taking the required examination.

Forms and instructions for geothermal drillers are being issued by the DNR. In order to address additional issues that may arise, the DNR has asked to include a geothermal driller on its NR 812 Advisory Code Council. Bruce Walker has been appointed to that Council as a representative of the WGA.

Bosch Working To Promote Geothermal Day

The folks at Bosch are working to increase overall awareness of the geothermal industry, kicking their efforts off on Earth Day (April 22) and continuing them through National Energy Month this October. Find out more about their initiative by visiting the newly-created website for the campaign at www.geothermalday.com.

WGA Continues Outreach Efforts

WGA had its booth and volunteers at the Better Buildings Better Business Conference in Wisconsin Dells in mid-March. While the B4 Conference is always excellent, this year's event was even better because it was a joint event with the Wisconsin Builders Association. Not only was attendance up, but the audience for our message was bigger and more receptive than before.

Next up? An outreach event at Oshkosh Truck in Oshkosh. The company holds an annual Sustainability Fair and employees asked if representatives from the WGA could come back to help further spread the word about the benefits of geothermal heating and cooling.



We're Thinking Golf Already!

The warmer days of the past few weeks have us thinking about golf, so we're pleased to tell you that our Annual Golf Outing is coming up soon! Look for details about registration and sponsorship in the next few weeks. In the meantime, you can learn more about The Castle Course at Northern Bay by clicking [HERE](#). This is a fun golf course that features seven replica golf holes. This could be your chance to test your luck at Augusta, Bay Hill, TPC and Firestone on the same day and without leaving Wisconsin. Best of all, you can do it while networking with your peers and supporting the industry.

**WGA Annual Golf Outing
Tuesday, July 28
Northern Bay Golf Resort
Arkdale, WI**



GEO Ride - Hold The Date!

The Annual GEO Ride will be held on Friday, June 5. Details to follow. Plan now to join us on this open air ride. If you don't have a motorcycle, a convertible will do. And if that doesn't work either, just roll down a window. The key is to come out and enjoy a ride/drive through Wisconsin, lunch with your friends and peers, and a tour of a geothermal install.



Wisconsin Geothermal Association
P.O. Box 833
Germantown, WI 53022
P 888/782-6815 | F 888/287-4116
www.wisgeo.org