

# The future is bright for green concrete


One of the best things I get to do at PCI is visit members at the region and chapter levels at the meetings being held around the country. It is a fantastic opportunity for me to hear from members about what is going on in their area and with their businesses in a smaller setting than at the PCI Convention or PCI Committee Days. It's also a chance for me to get feedback on PCI programs and how we can continue to find ways to provide value to our members.

Carbon footprint and the impact of the built environment is increasingly something PCI members are being asked about. It is certainly front of mind for the next generation. At a recent meeting of the PCI Illinois/Wisconsin chapter, we were treated to just how important by a remarkable presentation by two Girl Scout troops from the Madison, Wis., area. Completely on their own, these remarkable young people chose concrete as the one area they felt could make the most difference to the environment. They learned what we already knew—that concrete is the most used material in the world after water—and that concrete creates significant carbon dioxide emissions, mostly through the production of cement.

The scouts proceeded to show a fantastic film, including a music video, that described the many ways we can lower concrete's carbon footprint in a simple, engaging, and technical way. They even describe environmental product declarations (EPDs) for concrete and its constituent products. It is a really great nine-minute primer on what the issues are and what we can do with concrete as owners, designers, and builders. The upbeat video doesn't deride the concrete industry. Rather, its message is that modern society depends on concrete and when we use it we should keep trying to lower the impact on the environment. We'll be posting these on the PCI website, but I encourage you to take a look at <https://tinyurl.com/GirlScoutsforGreenConcrete> and <https://tinyurl.com/LowCarbonConcreteMusicVideo>.

When you see what these girls have put together, I think you'll agree that our future is bright indeed.

The videos mention EPDs, and PCI has an industrywide EPD for structural precast concrete. EPD's are good for five years, and our current EPD expires in 2024. To renew, we need to again gather data for an entire year from as many PCI-certified plants as possible beginning this coming January. Look for information coming from PCI in the weeks ahead for guidance on the data we'll need to collect as an industry. Specifiers are asking for EPDs in more and more projects, and it will continue to grow. We need to be prepared as an industry to meet the need.

As we head toward the holidays and the end of the year, PCI members will gather with friends and family. I'm always amazed at the number and depth of friendships that PCI members have with each other. Thanks to our members and staff for all you do for PCI. From our PCI family to yours, happy holidays and a safe and happy New Year to you and yours! 



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