Our Members

BASF joined AltusGroup as innovation partner

BASF launched the ultra-low embodied carbon version of Neopor Graphite Polystyrene called Biomass Balance (BMB) at the 2022 American Institute of Architect's Conference. The biomass balance approach combines renewable feedstock with traditional fossil feedstock during production, allowing more fossil fuels to stay in the ground, protecting the environment and climate by reducing carbon dioxide emissions. In conjunction with Habitat for Humanity, Neopor BMB was showcased in a low-carbon concrete affordable home project in Will County, Ill.

Neopor comprises many small pockets of air within a polymer matrix containing graphite. The graphite reflects radiant heat energy like a mirror, increasing the material's resistance to the flow of heat, or *R*-value. Neopor GPS is in a unique class because it increases in *R*-value as the temperature outside drops.

Neopor's North America Business Manager Luis Espada said, "We are thrilled to partner with the AltusGroup to support lowering embodied carbon in buildings made of concrete to further reduce CO2 emissions in construction."
—Source: BASF

Euclid Chemical completes environmental product declaration for FRP products

Euclid Chemical has completed its first Environmental Product Declaration (EPD). The EPD reports on the impacts of four microfibers and one macrofiber used as concrete reinforcement.

Manufactured at Euclid Chemical's LaFayette, Ga., fiber production facility, PSI Fiberstrand Multi-Mix 80, PSI Fiberstrand 100, PSI Fiberstrand 150, PSI Fiberstrand F, and Tuf-Strand SF were analyzed for the report. The EPD helps quantify the environmental savings, or footprint, that can result when using or converting traditional steel reinforcement to Euclid Chemical's fibers.

An EPD is a communications document that provides transparent and third-party verified data about the environmental impact of products and services based on the results of a life-cycle assessment of a manufactured material. This enables comparisons between products fulfilling the same function.

The EPD was conducted in accordance with ISO 21930 as the core product category rule and is also compliant with the ISO 14025 standard. This was the first EPD for a reinforcing fiber product published through the National Ready Mixed Concrete Associate EPD program. The EPD is accessible to the public and listed as NRMCA EPD: 20080 Euclid Chemical.
—Source: Euclid Chemical

Northeast Precast announces change in its leadership structure

Northeast Precast LLC has announced that several long-standing employees have stepped into new leadership positions, effective June 1, 2023.


Lorie Ruga


John Ruga


Mark Gorgas


Justin Wigglesworth

Owners John and Lorie Ruga will continue to lead within the new roles of chief executive officer and chief operating officer, respectively. The new structure allows them to guide the company with an eye on the long-term future while allowing room for others on their executive team to play a more prominent role in day-to-day activities.

Mark Gorgas has stepped into the position of president of Northeast Precast after working for the past 20 years in various roles within the company. Long-standing employee Justin Wigglesworth was promoted to vice president to work directly with Gorgas in the new position. Previously, Wigglesworth led field operations and steel fabrication, with a steady presence in plant operations.
—Source: Northeast Precast LLC

Welcome to PCI!

Erectors

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Lang promoted to president of Tindall


Cheryl Lang

Tindall Corp. has promoted Cheryl Lang to the position of president as the company celebrates its 60th year.

Lang joined Tindall in 1990 as a controller. In 2006, she was named vice president and chief financial officer. She was promoted again in 2022 to the role of senior vice president of administration, where she was responsible for accounting and finance, human resources, safety, trucking, information technology, and marketing. As acting president, Lang will assume the duties of overseeing the day-to-day operations of the business.

Lang graduated from East Tennessee State University in Johnson City with a degree in business and earned a master's degree in business administration from Clemson University in South Carolina.

—Source: Tindall Corp.

Andrawes to lead new transportation infrastructure research center at U of I


Bassem Andrawes

Bassem Andrawes, PCI member and professor at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, will lead a new research center with the goal of improving the durability and extending the life of transportation infrastructure by advancing the technologies used in precast concrete systems, thanks to a $2 million grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation to establish a University Transportation Center. The Transportation Infrastructure Precast Innovation Center (TRANS-IPIC) will be a consortium of five universities, including Purdue University, Louisiana State University, SUNY University at Buffalo, and the University of Texas at San Antonio.

"Deterioration of transportation infrastructure is a pressing national problem," Andrawes says. "We cannot address this critical problem without adopting transformative technologies that are specifically tailored for transportation infrastructure systems. Many of the emerging technologies such as nano and high-performance materials, robotics, and automated manufacturing sound exciting theoretically, but are faced with major practical challenges that hinder or prevent their application."

A major reason for this issue, he says, is the difficulty and high cost of incorporating these very delicate technologies into the construction site using conventional construction techniques. Providing a well-controlled manufacturing environment would significantly increase the feasibility of incorporating these new technologies in the delivery, maintenance, and management of transportation infrastructure.

Precast concrete is, by definition, manufactured in a controlled environment, so the path for introducing and implementing new technologies that can drastically and swiftly have an impact on the durability and service life of infrastructure is much more feasible and straightforward using precast concrete.

"A quite large sector of our transportation infrastructure is built or repaired using precast concrete—for example, bridges, tunnels, railroads, pavement, and ports—so deploying new precast concrete technologies will impact the durability of multiple modes of transportation," Andrawes says.

The new center will focus on the following three key research topic areas: application of new materials and technologies, construction methodologies and management, and condition monitoring and remote sensing. The research that TRANS-IPIC will offer will play a significant role in supporting the U.S. Department of Transportation's Strategic Plan goals including transformation, climate and sustainability, and safety.

TRANS-IPIC's mission is to leverage research innovation and strong industry support to foster research and education that focus on using precast concrete and its related technologies as an economic approach to provide a quick boost for the durability, safety, and climate adaptability of various modes of transportation networks in the United States through infrastructure repair or reconstruction. The consortium will address various aspects of precast concrete technologies, including materials, design, modeling, manufacturing, quality control, installation, operations, and condition assessment.

The research that will be carried out through the center will focus on a broad range of innovative topics pertinent to the advancement of the durability, resilience, and economics of precast concrete transportation infrastructure. TRANS-IPIC researchers will study the use of precast concrete–related solutions that are based on innovative and smart materials (for example, smart composites and metals) and novel emerging manufacturing methods that involve robotics and automated manufacturing (for example, three-dimensional printing, uncrewed aerial vehicles, and building information modeling) guided by big data analytics and artificial intelligence.

The center will also provide long-term solutions by replacing existing infrastructure with more-durable components that are built in a controlled environment with advanced durable materials, such as ultra-high-performance concrete, fiber-reinforced concrete, and fiber-reinforced polymers, and built more efficiently to reduce cost and carbon emissions and increase quality and productivity using advanced design optimization techniques such as topology optimization, innovative manufacturing methods, quality control technologies, and industrial operating processes.

The center will also work on developing a new generation of intelligent transportation infrastructure that has an innova-

tive built-in capability of self-condition assessment using smart materials and remote sensing.

U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg announced up to $435 million in grant awards for 34 university transportation centers. These awards are meant to assist the next generation of transportation professionals in making our roads, bridges, rail, shipping, and airspace more innovative, resilient, and equitable as well as help the American people travel more safely, quickly, and affordably. Funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, there will be five national, 10 regional and 20 tier one university transportation centers that will receive, respectively, $4 million, $3 million, and $2 million annually for five years.

For more information on TRANS-IPIC, visit https://trans-ipic.illinois.edu.

—Source: University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and U.S. Department of Transportation

PCI's newly certified plants and erectors

>> PCI recently certified the following plant. For an explanation of the certification designations, visit http://www.pci.org/Plant_Certification.

- Smith-Midland Corp. in Reidsville, N.C.: B2 and C2

Compiled by K. Michelle Burgess (mburgess@pci.org)