

## Flashings

### More homes earn ENERGY STAR® rating

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the number of homes meeting its ENERGY STAR standards in 2006 exceeded 12 percent in 15 states. The 15 states are: Alaska, Arizona, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Iowa, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Texas, Utah and Vermont.

Nearly 200,000 homes in the U.S. earned the ENERGY STAR rating in 2006, bringing the total number of ENERGY STAR-rated homes to about 750,000. These homes are estimated to have saved their owners \$180 million by saving more than 1 billion kWh of electricity and 100 million therms of natural gas.

Homes that earn ENERGY STAR ratings must be independently verified as meeting EPA's energy-efficiency guidelines. These homes are at least 15 percent more energy-efficient than homes built to meet the 2004 *International Residential Code* and include additional energy-saving features that typically make them 20 to 30 percent more energy efficient than standard homes.

### Report summarizes review of regulations

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) has released *Reexamining Regulations: Opportunities Exist to Improve Effectiveness and Transparency of Retrospective Reviews*, a report documenting a need for more public participation and transparency in federal agencies' review of existing regulations.

The report focuses on federal agencies' implementation of the Regulatory Flexibility Act, section 610, which mandates that agencies examine their existing regulations and measure the regulations' impact on small businesses. The report indicates that agencies' implementation of section 610 often lacks clear standards, has insufficient public participation and inadequately communicates results to stakeholders.

The Small Business Administration's Office of Advocacy has developed the small-business Regulatory Review and Reform (R3) initiative to address the issues raised in GAO's report.

"The GAO report makes it clear that federal agencies need to do a better job of reviewing existing regulations," says Thomas M. Smith, the Office of Advocacy's chief counsel for advocacy. "The Office of Advocacy's R3 initiative will help them do that. At more than \$1.1 trillion per year, the cost of complying with the volumes of federal rules and regulations exceeds the per-family cost of health care. We owe it to small businesses to try to streamline, update and reform those rules to minimize their cost."

NRCA is using R3 to combat the recently released Department of Homeland Security immigration regulations.

More information about the Office of Advocacy's R3 initiative can be found at [www.sba.gov/index.html](http://www.sba.gov/index.html).

### Workers' compensation payments decrease

According to [Workers' Compensation: Benefits, Coverage and Costs, 2005](#), a recent report by the National Academy of Social Insurance (NASI), U.S. workers' compensation payments for medical care and cash benefits for workers disabled by workplace injuries or diseases declined in 2005. The decreased workers' compensation payments in 2005—the most recent year with data—reflect large declines in California's workers' compensation payments resulting from reforms enacted in California during 2003 and 2004.

U.S. workers' compensation payments decreased 1.4 percent to \$55.3 billion in 2005. California's workers'

compensation payments decreased 12.2 percent. Because California accounted for almost 20 percent of national benefit payments in 2005, its payment decrease altered national trends. Outside California, workers' compensation payments rose 1.7 percent.

NASI's report tracks trends since 1989 in workers' compensation benefits and employer costs relative to total wages of workers covered by the program. The full report can be accessed at NASI's Web site, [www.nasi.org](http://www.nasi.org).

## Office of Advocacy updates FAQ section

The U.S. Small Business Administration's Office of Advocacy has updated its Web-based Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section to include updated information regarding small-business owner demographics, health care questions, regulations and procurement. The updated information states there are about 26.8 million small businesses in the U.S.

The Office of Advocacy's FAQ section is updated annually and contains information for use in communications, such as speeches, news releases and articles.

The Office of Advocacy's FAQ section can be viewed at [www.sba.gov/advo/stats/sbfaq.pdf](http://www.sba.gov/advo/stats/sbfaq.pdf).

## Report may underestimate construction gains

According to the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC), the Bureau of Labor Statistics' (BLS') Aug. 3 payroll report may underestimate nonresidential construction's contribution as a job creator.

"Seasonally adjusted total construction employment dipped in July and was down 53,000, or 0.7 percent, compared with July 2006," says Ken Simpson, AGC's chief economist. "But this total hides the rigorous growth in nonresidential construction that is occurring."

Although other official reports show nonresidential construction spending rose as much as 15 percent from the second quarter of 2006 to the second quarter of 2007, BLS' report shows nonresidential job gains of 1.5 percent in BLS' three nonresidential categories—nonresidential building, specialty trades, and heavy and civil engineering—during the past 12 months.

"At least part of this discrepancy probably lies in the mislabeling of workers as residential specialty contractors," Simpson says. "Industry contacts tell me there are subcontractors doing commercial work who formerly concentrated on residential work. If their companies still use their former industry codes, the workers will be miscounted as staying in the residential specialty trade industry."

## DETAILS

### Don Kennedy

President of Don Kennedy Roofing Co. Inc., Nashville, Tenn.

#### What is the most unusual roofing project you've performed?

A roofing showroom. It consisted of more than 135 different steep-slope samples, 18 low-slope samples, a variety of flashing configurations (two chimneys, one brick/stone wall and a bay window), gutter and siding samples, and several ventilation systems.

#### Why did you become a roofing contractor?

I have always enjoyed the construction business. I started out in residential construction and remodeling, but the demand for quality roofing kept calling, so we changed our focus to full-time roofing. I have enjoyed the excitement and challenge of the industry.

#### What was your first roofing experience?

Helping a friend reroof his house. During that day of fun, I met our first roofing company employee, and more than 30 years later, Gilbert Davis is still a vital part of our company's operations.



**Kennedy and his family**

**What are your favorite items on your desk?**

A family photo; a picture of the Star Wars® character Yoda with the phrase "There is no try, only do"; and my Staples® Easy Button.

**What do you consider your most rewarding experiences?**

Seeing people grow, learn and take pride in what they do and who they are. People want their families to be proud of them; if we can contribute to this end, that's exciting.

**What is your biggest pet peeve?**

When people don't take pride in what they do.

**What was your first job?**

Mowing lawns.

**What is your favorite vacation?**

Family vacations in Hawaii.

**What are the most challenging aspects of your job?**

Growing our business, setting quality and worthwhile goals, and developing the plans to achieve them. Also, training our employees and creating an atmosphere that gives them pride in what they do.

**What do you consider a waste of time?**

Watching TV and walking the dog.

**What are your best and worst habits?**

My best are a regular exercise program and seeking better ways to do things. My worst is organization. I'm envious of organized people.

**What is your favorite stress reliever?**

A quiet evening with my family at home on our deck sitting by the fire. It just doesn't get any better.

**If you could invite any three people to dinner (dead or alive), whom would you invite?**

Jesus Christ, Solomon and my dad.

**What is your roofing industry involvement?**

I am an [NRCA](#) board member and a member of the Tennessee Association of Roofing Contractors and Greater Nashville Roofing Contractors Association.

**People would be surprised to know...**

I don't like to keep score when I play golf; it makes the day much more enjoyable.

**Business travel costs have increased**

According to the American Express Business Travel Forecast, business trips in North America cost about \$46 more than they did in 2006. This price increase can be attributed to increased fuel costs and business travel demands and reduced airline capacity.

The average national business trip costs about 4.5 percent more than it did in 2006, and the average international business trip costs about 4.6 percent more.

To help keep the cost of business travel down, American Express suggests buying airline tickets at least two weeks in advance. Buying tickets at the last minute usually means paying more. Also, track your spending by keeping receipts and organizing your records. Taking a small notebook on trips will allow you to log the time, date and amount of every purchase.

Source: Adapted from *First Draft*, August issue

## Make e-mails count

E-mail can be a fast, efficient way for managers to communicate with employees—if it is used correctly. To make sure your e-mails get your point across, remember these tips:

- *Keep e-mails brief.* E-mails should be no longer than one page. Edit your messages, and delete extra words.
- *Write messages with bulleted points.* When employees read messages on computer screens, they are more likely to retain the information if it is broken into bulleted points.
- *Use the subject line to inform employees what an e-mail is about.* Like a newspaper headline, an e-mail's subject line should catch your readers' attention and give them specific information.
- *Always spell check your e-mails.* E-mails with numerous spelling errors can appear to lack credibility.
- *Encourage questions.* E-mail is an interactive medium, and when you send an e-mail to all employees, make sure they know it is OK to respond with questions.
- *Keep e-mails to a minimum.* Your employees probably get many e-mails each day. E-mail only when necessary so you don't add to inbox clutter.

Source: Adapted from *Communication Solutions*, sample issue

## New contract documents available

The ConsensusDOCS industry model contract documents have been released. Developed jointly by Associated Specialty Contractors Inc., the American Subcontractors Association Inc. and The Associated General Contractors of America, the contract documents are intended to benefit the construction industry by providing model contract language drafted with industrywide participation.

The contract documents pertain to design-bid-build, design-build and construction risk management and include a document addressing the use of information in electronic formats. The ConsensusDOCS contract documents are intended to save all involved parties time and money by eliminating the need to renegotiate one-sided contractual terms.

To request a copy of the ConsensusDOCS contract documents or for more information, contact Anne Schroeder, NRCA's director of marketing operations, at (800) 323-9545, ext. 7547 or [aschroeder@nrca.net](mailto:aschroeder@nrca.net).

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