

International Association of Geosynthetic Installers

# IAGI Newsletter

## A Note from IAGI's President - Carl Apicella

Wow, time flies; another busy year has passed and 2008 is already well on its way! This is my first letter as president of IAGI and I want first to say that I am proud to represent such a dynamic and growing organization. Also, I think it is important to thank all the people, too many to name, who have put in time and effort in assisting IAGI in becoming the successful 117 member organization that it is today. We have accomplished a great deal over a relatively short—and what seems like lightning-fast—period of time. Some recent highlights include:

- In 2007 we maintained a 95 percent membership retention rate with seven new members joining from countries all over the world.
- IAGI is continuing to market the Approved Installation Contractor (AIC) and Certified Welding Technician (CWT) programs to own-

ers and engineers. This marketing effort will increase to spread awareness of the importance of these programs within our industry.

- IAGI has awarded its first international AIC designation to DDT Liners in Australia. Congratulations to DDT on their recently achieved AIC status!
- 8 companies now have achieved the AIC designation and several more applications currently are pending.
- IAGI successfully launched the PVC Geomembrane CWT exam in January of 2008.

We have a lot of momentum moving forward in 2008 and we are looking forward to continuing to make the organization and the geosyn-



Carl Apicella IAGI President

thetic installer community stronger. IAGI will be presenting a training lecture at the GeoAmericas conference in Cancun, Mexico on March 5<sup>th</sup> and also is participating in the tradeshow portion of the conference. Please stop by and say hello to the IAGI staff if you are in town! Here is to a great 2008 and I hope everyone enjoys a safe and successful year!



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## 2008/2009 IAGI Board of Directors Officers Announcement

Members of the International Association of Geosynthetic Installers (IAGI) recently voted for IAGI's 2008-2009 Board of Directors. Candidates were nominated by the industry, and those elected will serve two-year terms on the IAGI Board of Directors.

The members elected to the Board of Directors include:

**Carl Apicella**, American Environmental

**Brian McKeown**, Clean Air and Water Systems

**John Heap**, Colorado Lining Systems

**"Demo" Dave Mc Laury**, Demotech Services Inc.

**Todd Harman**, Hallaton, Inc.

**Steve Daniels**, Geo-Synthetics, Inc.

**Bill Shehane**, Seaman Corporation

**Nicky Araujo**, Servicios de Ingenieria Geosintetica, S.A.

Apicella will serve as President, McKeown will serve as 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Heap will serve as 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President and McLaury will serve as Treasurer.

**Dennis O'Brien** will continue to serve on the Board as Immediate Past President.

The 2008-2009 IAGI Board of Directors will guide several exciting projects planned for the coming year, including increasing participation in the Certified Welding Technician

(CWT) and the Approved Installation Contractor (AIC) programs. The IAGI Board of Directors will be in attendance at the 2008 GeoAmericas conference March 2-5<sup>th</sup> in Cancun, Mexico. IAGI will host a General Assembly and a Training Lecture during the event.

For more information about the IAGI Board of Directors, contact Laurie Honnigford at +1-651-554-1895, e-mail [laurie@honnigford.com](mailto:laurie@honnigford.com) or visit [www.iagi.org](http://www.iagi.org).

## Get to know the IAGI Board

**Name:** Brian McKeown

**Current position:**  
1st Vice President

**Company of Employment:**  
Clean Air and Water Systems, LLC

**Years of IAGI membership:**  
Too many to count.

**Years on the IAGI Board:**  
Five Years.

**What book are you reading right now?**  
Designers with Geosynthetics Volume 1

**What do you like best about the work you do?**  
The challenge.



**What do you like least about the work you do?**  
The challenge.

**What is your greatest accomplishment?**  
Being married 27 years and counting.

**What computer program do you use most?**  
Windows Media Player.

**What is your greatest indulgence?**  
Budweiser.

**Beach or Mountain?**  
A mountain overlooking a beach.

**PVC or HDPE?**  
Depends on who I am talking to.

**Vanilla or Chocolate?**  
Budweiser.

**Three words to describe yourself:**  
Extremely Serious Businessman.

**What is the best advice for someone starting out in the geosynthetic industry?**  
Get a good lawyer, an honest accountant and a patient psychiatrist.

## TRI Offering Continuing Education Short Courses April 2-4, 2008

### Construction QA/QC for Compacted Clay & GCL Liner & Geosynthetic Installations

#### Attend and learn about....

- CQA Principles and Plans
- Field Tests and Observations
- How to maximize the benefit of destructive seam testing
- The installation of clay and GCL liners, geomembranes, geotextiles, geocomposites, geogrid and geopenances
- The seaming of geomembranes and geotextiles
- Leak Location Surveys and Newer CQA Technologies
- Demonstration of Geomembrane Seaming & Sampling Procedures

Each student will be allowed to sit for the Construction Quality Assurance-Inspectors Certification Program (CQA-ICP) exams immediately following the course. Construction QA of Geosynthetics can be a smooth addition to your Engineering Consulting and Design Practice. Each student will be provided a certificate of course completion, suitable for use in proposals and statements of qualifications for CQC/CQA work.

**Instructors:** Dr. Bob Gilbert, Sam Allen, Mark Sieracke

### Wednesday, April 2 CQA for Geosynthetic Installations

8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.  
Class and Lunch (provided)

5-6:30 p.m. Tour of TRI  
6:00-8:00 p.m. Texas BBQ  
Dinner (provided by TRI)

### Thursday, April 3 CQA for Compacted Clay & Geosynthetic Clay Liner Installations

8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.  
Class and Lunch (provided)

### Friday, April 4 Certification Exam

8:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.  
All students wishing to sit for the exam(s) MUST FIRST register for certification through the Geosynthetics Research Institute and pay the applicable fees directly to GSI. The phone number for GSI is +1-610-522-8440

### Location for both Courses and Exams:

TRI/Environmental, Inc.  
9063 Bee Caves Road  
Austin, TX 78733  
Phone: +1-512-263-2101

### Course Registration Fees:

Both Courses, 1 registrant per company.....\$750.00/person

Both Courses, 2 registrants per company....\$675.00/person

Both Courses, 3+ registrants per company....\$600.00/person

One course only, 1 registrant per company....\$450.00/person

One course only, 2 registrant per company....\$400.00

One course only, 3+ registrants per company....\$350.00/person

### GCI Exam Fees

One applicant per company  
\$35.00/person

2+ Applicants per company  
\$20.00/person

If you are attending BOTH Short Courses on April 2 and 3rd, certification is **complimentary**

For more information on the Short Course or to download the registration forms for the courses and exams visit [www.GeosyntheticTesting.com](http://www.GeosyntheticTesting.com)

**See Page Six for another TRI Short Course offering**

## Geomembranes FABRICATED

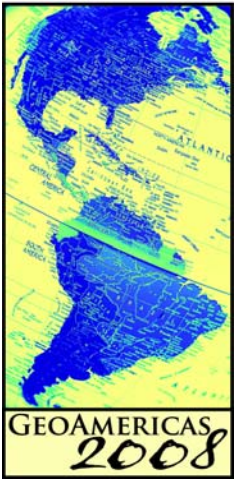


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## GeoAmericas 2008 update



IAGI is a Strategic Partner for the GeoAmericas Conference being held March 2-5, 2008 in Cancun, Mexico. IAGI will have a booth at the tradeshow Monday-Wednesday. Please stop by and see the IAGI staff during trade show hours at the IAGI booth. Register to win a one year complimentary IAGI Membership.

IAGI will host a General Assembly on Tuesday, March 4th at 6:15 p.m.

In addition, IAGI will be presenting a bilingual Training Lecture entitled "**Lo bueno, Lo malo y Lo Feo: Que Hace un Buen Instalador de Geomembranas?**" Presented by Todd Harman, Hallaton, Dr. Marco Araujo Leal, Soluciones Ambientales Integrales and Nicky Araujo, Servicios de Ingenieria Geosintetica, S.A." In English that translates to "The good, the bad and the ugly: What does good

geomembrane installation look like?" The course, presented in Spanish and English, will be held on Wednesday, March 5 from 2:30-4:00 p.m.

IAGI staff members Laurie Honnigford and Jilien Harvey will be in attendance and will be documenting the conference. Stay tuned for pictures and video on the IAGI website in March.

## IAGI Website Update

To increase brand recognition of the International Association of Geosynthetic Installers (IAGI) and to promote your membership in this association, we would like you to include the IAGI logo on your company's promotional outlets, including your company website.

When placing the logo on your site, we also ask that you include a link to the IAGI website – [www.iagi.org](http://www.iagi.org). We

have been working hard to update the IAGI site frequently, thus encouraging



visitors to click to the site often for new information. With your help, we can increase awareness of the great things IAGI and its

members are doing for this industry.

In addition to including the IAGI logo and link on your website, please remember to include the logo on your company's stationery, business cards, brochures, etc. You are a valuable member of this association – let industry professionals know that education and development are important to you by proudly promoting your membership in IAGI.

If you need an electronic file of the IAGI logo for your website, please contact Jilien Harvey at [Jilien@honnigford.com](mailto:Jilien@honnigford.com) or +1-651-554-1895.

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## DDT Liners is first to be awarded AIC International status

The International Association of Geosynthetic Installers is proud to announce DDT Liners from Queensland, Australia to be the first to achieve the designation of Approved Installation Contractor (AIC) Internationally.

Currently, IAGI has awarded the AIC status to seven companies within the United States and Canada. DDT Liners marks the first company to comply with industry standards

within the country of Australia to receive the AIC International Australia designation.

Companies that achieve the International designation may use the AIC status in any projects within their country.

The Mission of the Approved Installation Contractor program is: To establish criteria for recognizing the geosynthetic installation companies that meet a minimum level of professionalism, experience

and business practices. The program's goal is to promote growth in the geomembrane installation industry and promote better quality workmanship.

To learn more about the AIC program or to receive an application, please visit the IAGI website at [www.iagi.org](http://www.iagi.org) or contact the IAGI office at [iagi@iagi.org](mailto:iagi@iagi.org) or via phone +651-554-1895.



## Welders Obtain IAGI Certification

Congratulations to **CLI-ClearWater Construction** who sponsored Certified Welding Technician testing of their employed welding technicians. Colorado Lining also participated in being the pilot test for the **PVC Geomembrane Certified Welding Technician** exam that launched in January 2008.

IAGI developed a welder's certification program so installers could define standards of proficiency, recognize the knowledge, experience and skills of installers, and reward those who qualify with industry recognition.

Engineers benefit from IAGI's

Certified Welding Technicians (CWT) program because it verifies that the welders on their job have experience in welding. Additionally, they can specify that the polyethylene geomembrane welders are certified for the type of welding they will perform. The CWT program certifies welders for both extrusion and fusion welding methods.

For further information about the CWT or PVC Geomembrane Certified Welding Technician programs, contact Laurie Honigford, Managing Director, IAGI at +1-651-554-1895 or e-mail [iagi@iagi.org](mailto:iagi@iagi.org).





## How to create action in your E-mail Communications...Using e-mail to get Results, Respect and Recognition

IAGI will be implementing a new article in each newsletter that is a general business practice topic. We encourage your input or suggestions for topics that you feel are valuable to any industry.

Have you ever wondered when you send an e-mail how the recipient interpreted your e-mail? Have you ever accidentally sent an e-mail that was cc'd to a group of people it may have not been meant for? We all know that we send more e-mails than we make phone calls. E-mails are often misinterpreted and with these Action Steps provided by Sue Hershkowitz-Coore, CSP you may save a client, relationship with a co-worker or even a personal encounter.

### Action Step #1: Write from their perspective

Lead with the recipients motivation in mind.

### Action Step #2: Represent yourself as the professional you are

"Companies have gotten slicker at communication...not necessarily better. Organizations are producing huge volumes of 'toxic communication'—that consume time and confuse employees." Bill Quirk

- \*Use standards of grammar and punctuation
- \*Spell Check
- \*Exclude Emoticons (smiley faces, frowns or winks)
- \*Reread. Reread. Reread

### Action Step #3: Attend to details

"It's as hard to unsend a bad e-mail as it is to unspread butter!" Sue Hershkowitz-Coore

- \*No "oops" E-mails

- \*Attach first
- \*Check "to" line
- \*Avoid using the "Recall" function
- \*No shouting or whispering (Caps locked or all lower case)
- \*Don't do Reply to All
- \*Eliminate "sneaky" bcc-ing

### Action Step #4: Craft your subject line

"Customers pay only for what is of use to them and gives them value. Nothing else constitutes 'quality'." Peter Drucker

- \*Craft your subject line
- \*Summary of message
- \*Make the first word an information word for the reader
- \*Point forward
- \*Change your subject line when subject changes
- \*Stop the thread! (Don't let the same subject or e-mail string run too long)

### Action Step #5: Respond to the issue, not the emotion.

"Take the high road!"

- \*Accept the limitations of e-mail
- \*Be Safe and Smart
- \*No jokes
- \*Nothing C.R.L. (crude, rude and lude)
- \*Write for hidden readers

### Action Step #6: Be Fresh!

"The difference between the almost right word and the right word is really a large matter—it's the difference between the lightning bug and the lightning." Mark Twain

- \*Eliminate Outdated Stuff!
- \*Be friendly, not familiar
- \*Beware of the following phrases:  
*Enclosed please find*

*I would like to thank you  
Please feel free to call-  
Needless to say  
It is evident that  
Just to thank you  
Thanking you in advance  
More than happy to*

Additional tips for proper email communication:

- \*Realize that "it was just a joke" isn't a defense to a harassment lawsuit
- \*Create a friendly, polite out-of-office Auto Reply e-mail message. If you use an Auto Reply mechanism, write it like you care about your reader. Ask yourself: Does my auto reply message convey a professional and positive image? Does it represent me well in my absence?
- \*Close the loop on all significant issues raised in writing: If information is requested of you, provide it promptly or notify the person of any delays. If an action is requested in writing, and the resolution is not reflected in writing, the company runs the risk that its actions may later be mischaracterized. Words Make a difference: within ethical boundaries, present information in the most neutral and positive manner possible. "I can't do that until Friday" can be written as "I can get that done for you Friday."

Look for Sue's newest release just out in January 2008 published by Prentice Hall "**How to Say It to Sell It: Key Words, Phrases, and Strategies to Build Relationships, Boost Revenue, and Beat the Competition.**" Visit [www.SpeakerSue.com](http://www.SpeakerSue.com) for articles, on-line assessment and more books.

## Do More Than Lead by Example—Put your Ethics Commitment in Writing

By: Matthew Cass

July 30, 2002: a date that changed the rules of corporate accountability. Created in the wake of corporate scandals, the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 marked a turning point in the way American businesses operated. Some even see it as the most significant change to U.S. securities laws since the New Deal in the 1930s. One of its changes is a requirement that public companies disclose whether they have adopted a code of ethics and other disclosures regarding such code. While compliance with Section 406 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act is voluntary for privately held companies, some have chosen to follow the spirit of the law by adopting and disclosing their own codes of ethics. Some publicly held companies have also started requiring their private service providers and suppliers to do the same.

What does all of this mean to subcontractors? In the three years following enactment of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, numerous, well-publicized instances of unethical behavior surfaced all over the construction industry, prompting one top official at the U.S. Justice Department to note that:

*It's pretty clear that the construction industry generates the most business and corruption cases in the United States. Locally based companies know each other, and if they all get along, they can make more money. It's a pattern that occurs all over.*

Mandatory or not, Sarbanes-Oxley's rules of corporate accountability quickly began to shape perceptions within the construction industry, especially with respect to the law's code of ethics concept. In the 2004 FMI/CMAA Survey of Construction Industry Ethical Practices, conducted by management consulting firm FMI in conjunction with the Construction Management Association of America (CMAA), 95 percent of respondents said that they agreed with the idea that industry associations should take a leadership role to help ensure ethics codes are available.

### ASA Unveils 'Model Code of Ethics'

Speaking at the ASA Leadership Forum 2006 in Providence, R.I., 2006-07 ASA President Stephen Rohrbach, CPC, president of F. A. Rohrbach Inc., Allentown, Pa., asked participants: "What do we need to keep our own ethical standards high and help those with lower standards raise them? We need the right tools, and that's where ASA comes in." At the forum, ASA approved the "Model Code of Ethics for a Construction Subcontractor," which was developed by ASA's Task Force on Ethics in the Construction Industry.

Created to help subcontractors comply with the letter and the spirit of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, ASA's model code contains language that subcontractors can adapt to address 11 areas of ethical concern:

competition; qualifications; standards of practice; conflicts of interest; public safety; service providers and suppliers; employees; public information; compliance with laws; image of the construction industry; and internal procedures.

While ASA's model code contains language useful to any business developing a code of ethics, it also addresses ethical concerns specific to the construction industry. For example, the code includes language addressing the practices of "bid shopping" and "bid peddling"; the ability to perform contracts; job site safety and working conditions; prompt payment of service providers and suppliers; and the image of the industry.

More than a reaction to Sarbanes-Oxley, the model code of ethics is a continuation of several ASA ethics and professionalism initiatives carried out over the past 40 years. Most specifically, it expands on ASA's "Professional Standards of Practice for Construction Subcontractors," which ASA adopted in 1986. These standards encourage responsible conduct through adherence by subcontractors to standards "representing subcontractor obligations which also are sound business practices that prove to be in the enlightened self interest of prudent subcontractors."

### Integrating the Code Within Your Business

Corporate ethics is about how people make choices, run their

## Do More Than Lead by Example—Put your Ethics Commitment in Writing

### Continued

businesses, and what kind of services or products their businesses provide. However, it is also about how ethical principles are codified and enforced. Therein lies the importance and value of ASA's model code of ethics. Since ASA's code is only a model, it is important to take the time to fill in the details to establish your company's own code of ethics.

ASA's goal is for contractors and suppliers to adapt the code to their own needs and use it as a means of creating a dialogue within their companies to improve ethical behavior, and from that dialogue, to create change. To help subcontractors tailor the model to their companies, ASA's model code contains fields where they can enter their respective company names, as well as the names and titles of specific individuals who will be entrusted with overseeing implementation of and compliance with the company's code.

Given that the tone and culture of most companies are set at the top, to begin tailoring the code of ethics, decide what values and behaviors are important for the company. The method used in making this decision (e.g., collaborative, authoritative, legacy-based) will depend on the company culture. These values and behaviors may include:

\*Competing fairly for contracts and avoiding any practice that might be construed

to be in violation of the letter or spirit of antitrust laws.

\*Adhering to accepted "standards of practice" with respect to performing contracts, providing materials and services, and serving customers.

\*Avoiding conflicts of interest — and establishing specific procedures for internal disclosure.

\*Assuring the safety of employees, others' employees on the job site and the general public. (This includes compliance with OSHA and all safety laws and regulations.)

\*Interacting with suppliers in an equitable manner, and using honesty and integrity in dealing with customers.

\*Complying with federal, state and local laws governing working conditions, payment practices, and equal employment opportunities.

\*Making truthful public statements and disclosures.

\*Complying with other laws and industry standards, and avoiding self-interest at the expense of others.

\*Upholding the image and standards of the construction industry.

\*Establishing internal procedures to assure compliance with the code of ethics.

Examine the model code of ethics and modify the language to reflect these values and behaviors.

Once the code was created, a subcontractor would want to hold formal or informal interactive education sessions to dis-

cuss the meaning of the code with employees. Since the code enunciates general principles of values and behavior, not specifics, these internal sessions would provide the opportunity to discuss how the code applies to specific instances of behavior the company hopes to encourage or discourage through the code's implementation. Create a dialogue with employees during the sessions, and the list of discouraged behaviors will likely grow to include:

- Falsifying time, quality, quantitative, or statistical reports.
- Padding expense accounts.
- Taking longer than necessary to do the job.
- Hiring undocumented (illegal) workers.
- Pilfering company materials and supplies.
- Concealing errors.
- Doing personal business on company time.
- Giving gifts or favors in exchange for preferential treatment.
- Not reporting violations of company and industry standards.
- Badmouthing people in your own business.

The list of encouraged behaviors will likely include truth-telling, praise for accomplishments and enforcement of company policy, adherence to legal and industry standards, etc. Feedback from this dialogue with employees will also help management prepare for future revisions of the code.

**Continued on page 10**

## Do More Than Lead by Example—Put your Ethics Commitment in Writing

Continued

### Communicating the Code: An Ongoing Process

In order for a subcontractor's code of ethics to become part of company culture, the discussion about ethics and the company's code must be ongoing. Assign your human resources department (or whichever part of the company handles such duties) with supporting the code of ethics, i.e., communicating its meaning and requirements to current and future staff members. Company leadership should ensure that human resources managers have a complete understanding of the company's code through appropriate consultation.

Armed with that knowledge, managers should periodically promote the code through ethics training and/or workshops. Collaborate with the HR department on the development of such programs. Leading by example will only go so far. It's imperative that a company's leadership make a commitment to the company code by providing input on its implementation, not just its concept. Without that input, the code will become virtually worthless. By committing to change, the subcontractor will provide its employees with more reasons to believe in it, and its customers with more reasons to trust its work.

Ultimately, subcontractors are accountable for protecting their companies' reputations and assets. For private businesses, that accountability is voluntary — for now. That may change as public pressure for corporate accountability continues to grow. In 2007, the federal government, the largest construction owner in the world, proposed re-

quiring contractors and subcontractors with \$5 million and larger contracts to have written codes of ethics and ethics compliance training programs. ASA's model code of ethics is a tool to help you meet the business challenges of today and, more importantly, tomorrow. Don't lose a job or scramble at the last minute to create a code of ethics when you don't have to.

Matthew Cass is ASA's manager of communications. He can be reached at [mcass@asa-hq.com](mailto:mcass@asa-hq.com) or +1-703-684-3450, Ext. 1317.

For more information on, or to download, ASA's "Model Code of Ethics for a Construction Subcontractor," visit [www.asaonline.com](http://www.asaonline.com).

Ethics Resource - Order Online or Call FASA's "Developing a Corporate Ethics Policy" multimedia CD-ROM contains an audio-visual recording, a media player to install on your computer, and installation instructions. The cost is \$65 for ASA members and \$95 for nonmembers. Order this resource online through FASA's Contractors' Knowledge Depot at [www.contractorsknowledgenetw.ork.org](http://www.contractorsknowledgenetw.ork.org) or call toll-free +1-888-374-3133.

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### Ten Things That Owners and Management Can Do To Foster Improved Ethics

1. Create climate of inquiry.
2. Provide communications channels to raise issues.
3. Teach others how to raise issues without making them defensive.
4. Teach managers how to listen without going nuts.
5. Provide training for management, staff, vendors, suppliers.
6. Publicly commit to being an ethical organization in management directives, memos, staff, vendor, and subcontractor meetings.
7. Talk with staff at all levels — frequently, candidly.
8. Build ethical conduct into corporate systems
9. Establish an ethics committee.
10. Choose to live your values.

## Eight IAGI member companies have achieved AIC status



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Geosynthetic Installers  
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Installation companies interested in applying for what will become an engineer specified designation, AIC, can find complete program details and a submittal form online at [www.iagi.org](http://www.iagi.org).



### **AIC Mission Statement**

*To establish criteria for recognizing the geosynthetic installation companies that meet a minimum level of professionalism, experience and business practices. The program's goal is to promote growth in the geomembrane installation industry and promote better quality workmanship.*

**American Environmental Group LTD**

**Atlantic Poly Liners, Inc.**

**Clean Air and Water Systems, LLC**

**CLI-ClearWater Construction**

**DDT Liners-Australia**

**Environmental Fabrics**

**Layfield Environmental Systems LTD**

**Taylor Geosynthetics Inc.**