President’s Message

We just finished another Committee Week at ASCC headquarters in St. Louis. Every year over a three day period in May, most of our committees and councils meet to work on their goals and discuss and define new opportunities. We had a great turnout. I was happy to see a lot of familiar faces but even happier to see some new faces at our meetings. We have some new committee chairmen with lots of ideas for tackling the goals of our strategic plan as well as creating new goals to help move our association forward.

Some highlights: our Safety Council implemented a new Owner Safety Award. They will review applications, determine a winner and ASCC will make the inaugural award this fall at our Annual Conference. In addition, they discussed the new OSHA silica standard and made plans for educating and helping our membership comply with the new requirements. Our Technical Committee has undertaken the task of creating a Pre-construction Checklist for Polished Concrete, similar to our other checklists. Additionally they are making progress on research regarding achievable quality of finish for formed walls, in response to the new ACI 347 standard, and are scheduled to have a report by year’s end. Following our Membership Drive, membership is at all time high. Our Concrete Executive Leadership Forum and Annual Conference Committees finalized agendas and plans for our two upcoming events. These are just a few of the highlights of activities discussed during Committee Week. All of the committees are making great progress, and the list is too great for this short message.

All of these goals and achievements are not possible without the dedicated work of our individual members on each of the committees. I want to thank each of them for the time and resources they contribute. I also want to encourage you to become involved in a committee. Contact the ASCC office and they can get you started. It will be a tremendously rewarding experience for you and you will make lifelong contacts that will help in your business and personal life.

Executive Director’s Message

Just Mike

Congratulations to Mike Schneider, the newly anointed president of the American Concrete Institute (ACI). As with most organizations, there are a lot of members, but only a few ever lead the group. In the case of ACI, made up primarily of engineers and academics, its rare that a contractor is tapped for this seat.

What does this say about Mike? Nothing that we at ASCC don’t already know. As a past president, past chair of the Education and Training Committee, a director on the SRMC board and a member of several other ASCC committees, Mike is a constant presence. He is a leader when a leader is needed. He’s thoughtful, curious, kind, knowledgeable. I’ve turned to Mike numerous times when I’m unsure of where to go with something, and always receive well-tempered advice from a calm, considered place.

Already Mike has been able to give contractors a stronger position within the Institute by naming Bruce Suprenant to a seat on the Technical Activities Committee, Steve Lloyd

Welcome New Members

Artistic Concrete Group, Miami, FL
CG Schmidt, Inc., Milwaukee, WI
Felix Construction Co., New Carroll, OH
Giovanni Construction, Dickinson, ND
HD Supply, Norcross, GA
Kapp Construction, Inc., Springfield, OH
Rhino Concrete LLC, Pittsford, NY
Rotondo Construction Corp., Farmington Hills, MI
Smith, Currie & Hancock, Ft. Lauderdale, FL
Trio Concrete Construction, Avon, OH

Red = Sustaining Member
to Certification Programs, Don Marks to the Fellows Committee, Scott Anderson to the Financial Activities Committee, and me as chair of the Construction Liaison Committee. These positions provide contractors a stronger voice and a greater presence in ACI, something we’ve been striving for for quite some time.

As Mike leads ACI, speaking on the groups behalf, visiting chapters, representing the industry, weighing in on matters that will drive and determine our professional future, he is an ambassador, always, for the contractor. And a reminder to all ACI members and others of the important role of the contractor in our industry.

I’ve told Mike that I know everyone at ACI now looks at him differently, as the president of their organization. To me, though, he’s still “just Mike.” I’ve always had the utmost respect and admiration for him, and have no doubt he is one of the few who should fill this coveted ACI role.

Decorative Concrete Council

Critical Eye

After our team spent two days cleaning a jobsite, I was amazed by my perception of the overall project. As much as I have preached about the customer’s critical eye, I found myself slipping. In our industry aesthetics are everything, and it’s all in the eye of the beholder. The good, bad and ugly are all subjective. We set the tone with a clean and neat jobsite. Not only is this critical for safety and equipment, it’s the customer’s first impression. When a customer shows up on a jobsite that looks like a crime scene, they assume you murdered their decorative concrete. When their property and jobsite are clean, they assume you have an “attention to detail” culture. They perceive your craftsmanship to be at a high level. This confidence in your organization can make or break your bottom line.

In the same spirit, we as leaders in the decorative industry should pride ourselves on having a critical eye for details. I write this because of my own shortfalls. When we let the customer set the expectations, we open ourselves up to a low standard. In all times we should drive our team for the highest standard. We should engrain into our culture high value and high personal expectations that supersede that of our customers. When we let schedule, lackadaisical customers and other outside influences affect our standards we become the competition. Let the competition have selective standards while we knock it out of the park.

As much as we might not enjoy picky customers, with the right attitude we can grow because of them. We can all get a great job out of the average customer, but how much better does it feel to beat that critical eye of the tough architect? How revitalizing is it to hear “smashing” or “brilliant” from the insane, over-the-top perfectionist?

Pricing and Profit

I track trends and issues related to decorative concrete through the use of many social media platforms. While social media allows groups of non-competing contractors to share ideas and resolve problems, I am seeing a disturbing trend as it relates to project pricing. Contractors pose questions such as “What should I charge for 2,000 sqft of metallic epoxy?” or “What is the going rate for polished concrete?” Not only is this in violation of the Sherman Antitrust Act, but it shows a deficiency in the knowledge of their own business costs. Only you and your company’s historical work can help you determine your final price. Overhead, labor, and profit will differ in every company. Contractors ignoring the basic business practice of building a historical job reference cannot, and will not be successful. True costs must be known, and target profit amount or percentage has to be a part of every estimate. Technical skills are only a part of successful contracting. The ability to price properly and create a profit are essential for survival.

Safety & Risk Management Council

Energy Drinks and Hot Weather – A Potential Fatal Combination

Energy drinks have increased in popularity and are jumping off the shelves around the nation and across the globe. These drinks, however, can present a significant health hazard, and should be avoided. While they boost your energy for a short time, the “crash” and potential health hazards are not worth the risk.

Here are some frightening facts associated with energy drinks:

Some contain as much as 207-286 mg of caffeine per serving

- 240-286 mg of caffeine equals about 10 cups of coffee
- An average of 25-40 mg is a typical range for soft drinks such as Coca-Cola or Mt. Dew
- Caffeine speeds the heart rate and raises blood pressure
So, what seems to be the problem?

Normally, the body’s way of cooling itself is by letting heat escape through the skin, and by evaporating sweat (perspiration). If the body does not cool properly or does not cool enough, the person may suffer a heat-related illness such as heat stress or fatal heat stroke.

When energy drinks are consumed dehydration can follow quickly. Rather than having the desired effect of rehydrating the body, the diuretic effect of these drinks accelerates the loss of body fluids.

Energy drinks should not be confused with sports drinks. Sports drinks such as Gatorade, Powerade, and Allsport, are formulated to supply optimal amounts of carbohydrates and electrolytes for endurance exercise, to help rehydrate. Energy drinks can cause dehydration which puts a strain on the heart.

Generally, electrolyte replacement is not needed during short bursts of exercise since sweat is approximately 99 percent water and less than 1 percent electrolytes. Water, in combination with a well-balanced diet, will restore normal fluid and electrolyte levels in the body. However, replacing electrolytes may be beneficial during continuous activity of longer duration, especially in a hot environment.

GUIDELINES FOR STAYING HYDRATED

For exercise or physical exertion lasting less than 1 hour:

- Plain water works just fine and is cost effective.
- If the flavor of a sports drink is more appealing, that’s fine, too. Just remember, sports drinks are not calorie- or cost-free.
- Recommended drinking two glasses of water to one glass of sports drinks, NOT energy drinks.

For extended periods of exercise or for physical exertion lasting 1 hour or more:

Sports drinks containing carbohydrates and electrolytes help prevent dehydration and restore important minerals lost through perspiration, and they produce better hydration than water. Recommended to drink one glass of water to one glass of sports drink, two water to one sweet tea/soda.

HOW MUCH FLUID IS ENOUGH?

During physical activity, fluids are lost through the skin as sweat, through the lungs during breathing, and in the urine. Replacing those fluids is important when engaging in any type of physical activity, whether setting forms, pouring concrete or stripping forms. Experts agree that consuming adequate fluids before beginning a physical activity is a must. Consuming fluids throughout physical activity is also important.

So how do we know if our bodies are adequately hydrated? Don’t rely on thirst as an indicator of your body’s need for fluids. By the time you’re thirsty, you’re already dehydrated! In fact, as we age, thirst becomes an even poorer indicator of the body’s fluid needs.

Urine Color Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urine Color</th>
<th>Possible Meaning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clear</td>
<td>Good hydration, overhydration or mild dehydration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pale Yellow</td>
<td>Good hydration or mild dehydration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bright Yellow</td>
<td>Mild or moderate dehydration or taking vitamin supplements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange, Amber</td>
<td>Moderate or severe dehydration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea-Colored</td>
<td>Severe dehydration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most reliable indicator of hydration status is your urine. If your urine is dark and there’s not much of it, you’re dehydrated and should increase your fluid intake. Drink fluids until your urine is pale yellow/clear and plentiful. In general, drink as much fluid as you can comfortably tolerate both before, during and after exercise. Frequently drinking small amounts usually works better than drinking a large amount once or twice.

If you are physically active for a duration of 1 hour or more, a cool drink of water may feel satisfying, but water turns off your thirst before complete rehydration occurs. Water also turns on the kidneys prematurely so you lose fluid in the form of urine much more quickly than when drinking a properly formulated sports drink. This is because the small amount of sodium in a sports drink like Gatorade—no more than what is in an equal size glass of milk—allows your body to hold onto the fluid you consume rather than losing it through urine. So, if you are participating in longer durations of physical activity, you might want to choose a sports drink or salted snack before the activity.

Note: If you have high blood pressure or other medical conditions requiring you to limit your sodium (salt) intake, consult your physician before using sports drinks or other salted foods.
**Rounding for Specification Compliance**

**When is 24.88 equal to 25?**

The project specification required a specified overall value (SOV) for floor flatness of 25. F-numbers were measured within 72 hours in accordance with ASTM E 1155-14 “Standard Test Method for Determining F<sub>F</sub> Floor Flatness and F<sub>L</sub> Floor Levelness Numbers.” Unlike most ASTM standard test methods, this one does not state the significant digits to which the measured value is to be reported. The manufacturer’s floor flatness measuring device typically reports the values to the nearest hundred.

On this project, the F-number test device recorded the floor flatness output as 24.88. The test lab used this output and reported that value in its inspection report to the Government Owner. The owner determined the concrete contractor was not in compliance with the floor flatness and demanded the concrete contractor pay for all floor preparation costs when the floor installer arrived on site six months later.

Obviously, the change in floor flatness with time contributed to the floor installer’s surface preparation cost. The design team had not engineered the floor to remain flat with time. The floor installer submitted a change order to the Government Owner for the surface preparation costs. The Owner then backcharged the concrete contractor the entire surface preparation cost because they were not in compliance with the floor flatness specification. The floor flatness was 24.88 and not 25 and was therefore not in compliance by “0.12”.

There are two issues with the Government’s argument. First, if the concrete contractor does not meet the specification, they are only liable for the incremental cost of remediating to specification. If 24.88 does not meet the specification, the concrete contractor would only be liable for the cost to increase the floor flatness 0.12, not the entire cost.

Second, the floor flatness specifications are provided as a whole number with no decimal or following zeros. Thus, the measured value should be rounded to determine compliance with the specification. ASTM addresses rounding for specification compliance in ASTM E29-13 “Standard Practice for Using Significant Digits in Test Data to Determine Conformance with Specifications.” This document outlines methods clarifying the intended meaning of specification limits with which observed values or calculated test results are compared in determining conformance with specifications.

**Add this issue to your pre-construction checklist. Rounding for specification compliance should be done in accordance with ASTM standards.** Otherwise, you might be fighting over a measured F-number that misses the specified value by 0.12 in.

**Safety Week 2016**

ASCC members (from top left clockwise): Baker Concrete Construction, Christman Constructors, Inc., STRUCTURAL, Charles Pankow Builders and Barton Malow Co. held special meetings, training and activities during Safety Week, May 2–6.

**HOT LINE QUESTIONS**

**CONCRETE CONSTRUCTION**

800-331-0668

Ward Malisch–wmalisch@ascconline.org

ASCC members have access to these toll-free numbers for assistance.

**SAFETY & INSURANCE**

866-788-2722

asc@ascconline.org

Todd Scharich–tscharich@ascconline.org

**DECORATIVE CONCRETE**

888-483-5288

**Webinars begin at 3:00 p.m. CST**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 10, 2016</td>
<td>Construction Modeling with Baker Concrete</td>
<td>Trevor Gronseth, Trimble</td>
</tr>
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Members no charge. Non-members $35; MC, Visa, Amex only. Call 866-788-2722 to register.