

ENERGY EFFICIENCY GETS A GREEN LIGHT AT NECA 2008

By Beth Margulies, NECA Director

According to a recent report from the American Institute of Architects (AIA), programs designed to encourage more environmentally friendly building construction have grown by 400 percent in cities since 2003. The movement toward more green building has gained considerable momentum as politicians, city officials and builders focus on the degree to which buildings and their construction contribute to greenhouse gases. Buildings currently account for nearly 50 percent of all greenhouse gas emissions, and the design and construction of green buildings will have a significant impact on the effort to reduce these emissions.

This report and many others like it are a clear indication that green building is the leading trend shaping construction and design these days, and the 2008 NECA Convention and Trade Show in Chicago, Oct. 4-7, is making sure that electrical contractors have the tools to help their customers meet their own green building goals, whether in achieving LEED certification, making buildings more energy efficient, or using renewable energy technology in their construction projects.

This year's NECA convention and trade show once again will focus on green building and the exciting opportunities that exist in this market for electrical contractors – critical for our industry since the primary driving force behind this shift are the customers themselves. As convention fuel costs continue to rise, they have become more educated about the alternatives such as solar, wind, and biomass, and they want these energy-saving options for their buildings.

However, the installation and use of these alternative methods of power generation take specific skills and awareness of a wide array of new products. Gaining this knowledge is essential to remain competitive in these rapidly expanding markets, and at NECA, we're committed to making sure our contractors have access to the hands-on training, education, skilled workforce and product information necessary to meet these needs.

The "Green Alley" at the NECA trade show will feature the most significant gathering of alternative energy technologies specifically for electrical contractors. Also on site will be the manu-



NECA invites you to party with your peers at the pier in Chicago on October 4-7.

facturers of the latest energy-efficient products that are becoming increasingly important to your environmentally-minded customers.

The 2008 NECA Show will also offer special technical workshops on the latest green technologies, such as:

- Greenbacks from the Green Movement: Profit Opportunities for Electrical Contractors
- Small Wind Systems
- Benefits and Applications of Electric Submeters in the "Green Facility" Environment, and
- Fuel Cells: Real World Use

Live demonstrations of solar installations will also be held right on the Show floor.

And new this year, NECA is teaming up with the U.S. Green Building Council to offer a pre-convention workshop, LEED for New Construction Technical Review Workshop. This full-day program is designed for those who have a basic knowledge of LEED and want to delve deeper into the technical require-

ments of the rating, and the building certification process as well as other implementation strategies. NECA's training partner, the National Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee (NJATC) is also offering an informative pre-convention workshop, Business Development Opportunities in the Solar PV Market. This one-day course targets electrical contractors interested in the business opportunities existing in the exciting field of solar photovoltaic (PV) system installations.

Other green-focused, pre-

Convention workshops include: Lighting Controls: Go Green and Save Green, which educates you about the myriad of today's lighting control options in the "Green" lighting market; and Energy Solutions for Commercial and Industrial Lighting Design, PW-6, that focuses on an energy-savings approach to lighting design.

At NECA, we've made a conscious decision to help our member electrical contractors meet the demand for buildings with less negative environmental impact. It's a demand that is overdue, and we are pleased to be a part of our country's new energy future.

NECA is the voice of the \$130 billion electrical construction industry that brings power, light, and communication technology to buildings and communities across the U.S. NECA's national office and 119 local chapters advance the industry through advocacy, education, research and standards development. For more information, visit www.necanet.org.