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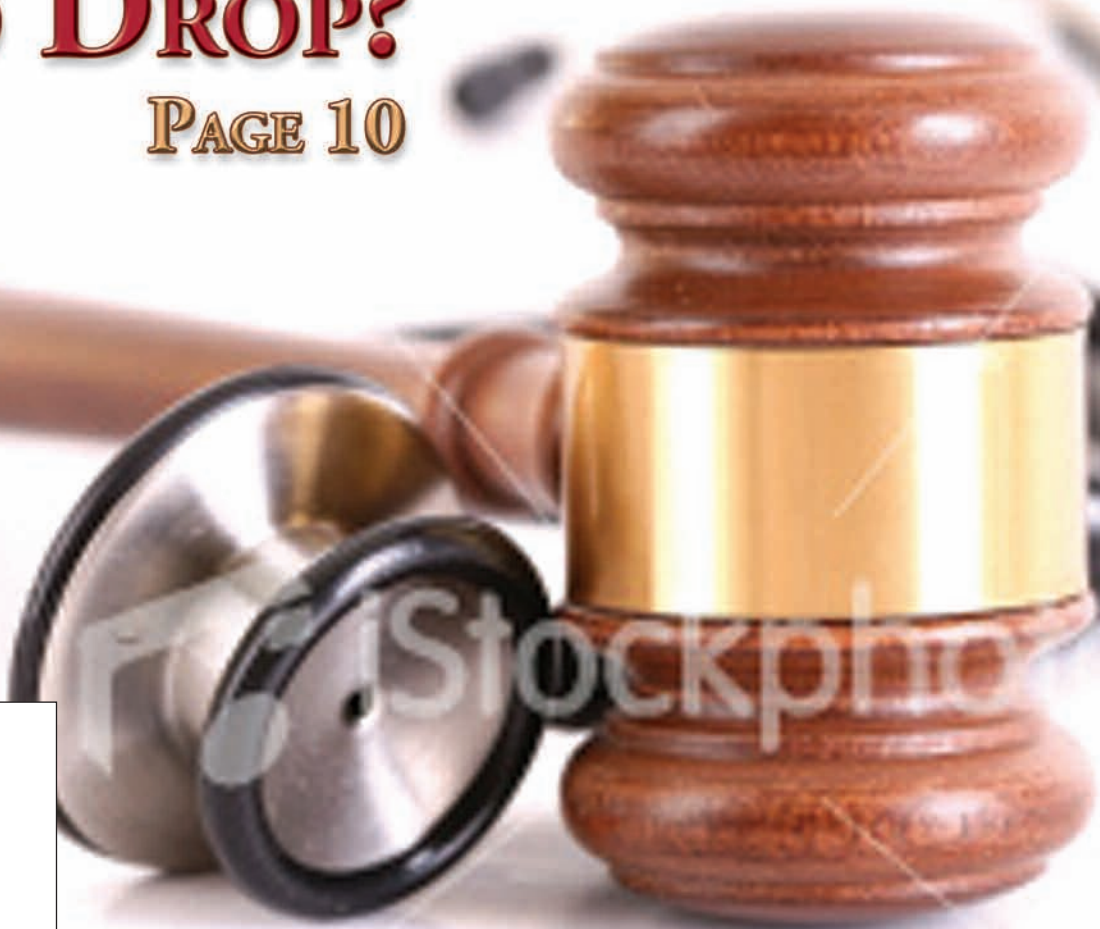
THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE FLORIDA
ASSOCIATION OF ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS

Volume 4 Number 2
SUMMER 2008



WORKER'S COMP RATES TO DROP?

PAGE 10



FAEC Fall 2008 Convention, Marco Island

DBPR Secretary Extends Renewal Deadline for
Construction Licensees Due to Tropical Storm Fay

Proposed Workers' Compensation Insurance
Rates Would Drop For 6th Consecutive Year

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PO BOX 180458, CASSELBERRY, FL 32718-0458
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As I sit here in my office during the tropical storm Fay looking out my window and watching the rain come down and listening to wind howl, I can't help but to think how lucky we are that this storm was not any stronger. Many of us and our neighboring counties are contending with massive amounts of water. Seems not all that long ago we were complaining about a water shortage!

Our spring convention was a real hoot. Good people, good times. We were all treated to a good mix of table top distributors and suppliers. And I want to thank each and everyone one you out there as it was not only numerous products and services, but it was also educational. It never ceases to amaze me how many new products are introduced at each of these table tops. The C.E.U. classes were well instructed by all and very informative. Oh yeah, the gambling was fun as well.

Our electrical industry at this point is— to say the least—very trying. These are the times we all need to reinvest in our businesses and re-invent the wheel. Take a good look at the needs and wants of your customers. The F.A.E.C. is a very

good organization to keep on top of the industry here in Florida with a good mix of contractors across the state. And these conventions are the best way to mingle with them to discuss many different aspects of the electrical industry. I personally have met a lot of people through this organization and have enjoyed the company of all.

Hope to see ya'll in Marco.

Ken Cross

FAEC BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP INCLUDE:

- A Voice in the Legislative Process through a full-time lobbyist in Tallahassee.
- An Annual "Spring Conference" & "Fall Convention" offering Continuing Education classes relative to license renewal.
- The official publication of FAEC — The "Contactor" bringing you up-to-date on association information and industry news.
- A Group Major Medical Insurance Program.
- A General Liability Insurance Program.
- An Annual Membership Directory.
- "Legislative Alerts" distributed throughout the session to keep you abreast of industry concerns.
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State Exemption For Employer's From The Sex Offender Registration And Notification Act (SORNA)?

By *Janice Ficarrotto*

The Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act (SORNA), which is Title I of the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006 (P.L. 109-248), provides baseline standards for states' sex offender registries. For any fiscal year after the period of implementation of the SORNA requirements, a state that fails, as determined by the U.S. Attorney General, to substantially implement SORNA shall not receive 10% of the funds that would otherwise be allocated for that fiscal year to the state under subpart I of Part E of Title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3750 et.seq.).

Section 114 of SORNA (U.S.C.16914) states, in part, that a sex offender covered under SORNA shall provide the following information to the appropriate official for inclusion in the sex offender registry: "The name and address of any place where the sex offender is an employee or will be an employee". However, Section 118 of SORNA (42 U.S.C. 16918) allows for a state to exempt from disclosure on the state's Internet registry of sex offenders "the name of an employer of a sex offender."

The U.S. Attorney General recently issued its final guidelines for implementation of SORNA. The guidelines state that one of the items on the list of informational items that jurisdictions must include on their public websites is "(t) the address of any place where the sex offender is an employee or will be an employee and, if the sex offender is employed but does not have a definite employment address, other information about where the sex offender works." (SORNA Guidelines, page 36). The inclusion of the name of the employer of the sex offender is optional or discretionary. (SORNA Guidelines, page 35). Section 111 of SORNA (42 U.S.C. 16911) states that the term "employee" includes "an individual who is self-employed or works for any other entity, whether compensates or not." (SORNA Guidelines, page 29).

FAEC has been contacted by the Florida Senate Criminal Justice Committee regarding an interim project brief for the Senate on fiscal, legal and policy issues relevant to implementation of SORNA in Florida. Florida's registry laws have never required registration or public notification of the address of a sex offender's employer. Some states do include employer address information, though concerns have been raised in other states and by critics of SORNA about

requiring the posting of employer address information. The argument in opposition to this requirement appears to be that employment helps to reintegrate sex offenders into the community, and makes them less likely to go "underground". It is argued that sex offenders already face daunting barriers to employment, so the posting of employer address information may make employers even less inclined to employ sex offenders because of potential public backlash against the employers. It is further argued that the requirement to post employer address information rather than employer's names is effectively a distinction without a difference because it is relatively easy to locate businesses by their addresses.

In order to help the Senate committee gather information from industry regarding this very important issue, they have contacted us to see what our member employers think.

Please take a moment to review this issue, and then send me a note advising of your thoughts. I want to inform you all that this issue has been addressed by your State Board of Directors and their position to the Senate Committee is to oppose the posting of employer's names and addresses. However, we do still want to hear from you and we will keep you updated in future issues of this publication.

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By Rick Watson, FAEC Lobbyist
& Legislative Counsel

Tallahassee Update

I've spent the summer interviewing legislative candidates and educating them on construction issues. Out of 160 legislators in the FL House and Senate, we'll probably have 30 new legislators. The Republicans are expected to continue their control of both chambers.

You'll have a chance to vote on a few constitutional amendments in November. Three of the amendments are being reviewed by the FL Supreme Court. One of the most controversial, the Tax Swap Amendment, has been removed by a circuit court judge as being too confusing and misleading. That amendment would reduce property taxes by 25% and replace the lost revenue with a one cent increase in the

sales tax and the elimination of other sales tax exemptions and exclusions. Most of the business community is opposed to the amendment because the fear of a sales tax on services. Those of you who were business 20 years ago remember what a nightmare the ill-fated and short-lived tax on construction services was. The court will rule before the November 4th election.

Speaking of the Florida Supreme Court, Governor Crist has an unprecedented four appointments to make for upcoming vacancies. Since the court only has seven justices, the Governor will be able to shape the high court for years to come. I've reviewed the applicants and have made a recommendation for the first vacancy to the Governor's General Counsel. We're all hopeful about getting a conservative jurist appointed.

The Legislature will hold its Organization Session on November 18th. The new Speaker of the House and President of the Senate will make their committee appointments before the end of the year. In my next update, I'll give you a snapshot of the construction and electrical contractor issues for the Regular Session which will begin March 3, 2009.


BE SURE TO VOTE ON NOVEMBER 4TH!



1681 N.E. 6th Ave.
Ocala, FL 34470

Bus: (352) 629-7991
Fax: (352) 368-6884

Rick Watson, Legislative Counsel 850-222-0000, 850-222-9059 (FAX)
for EAEC 850-591-4770 (CELL)
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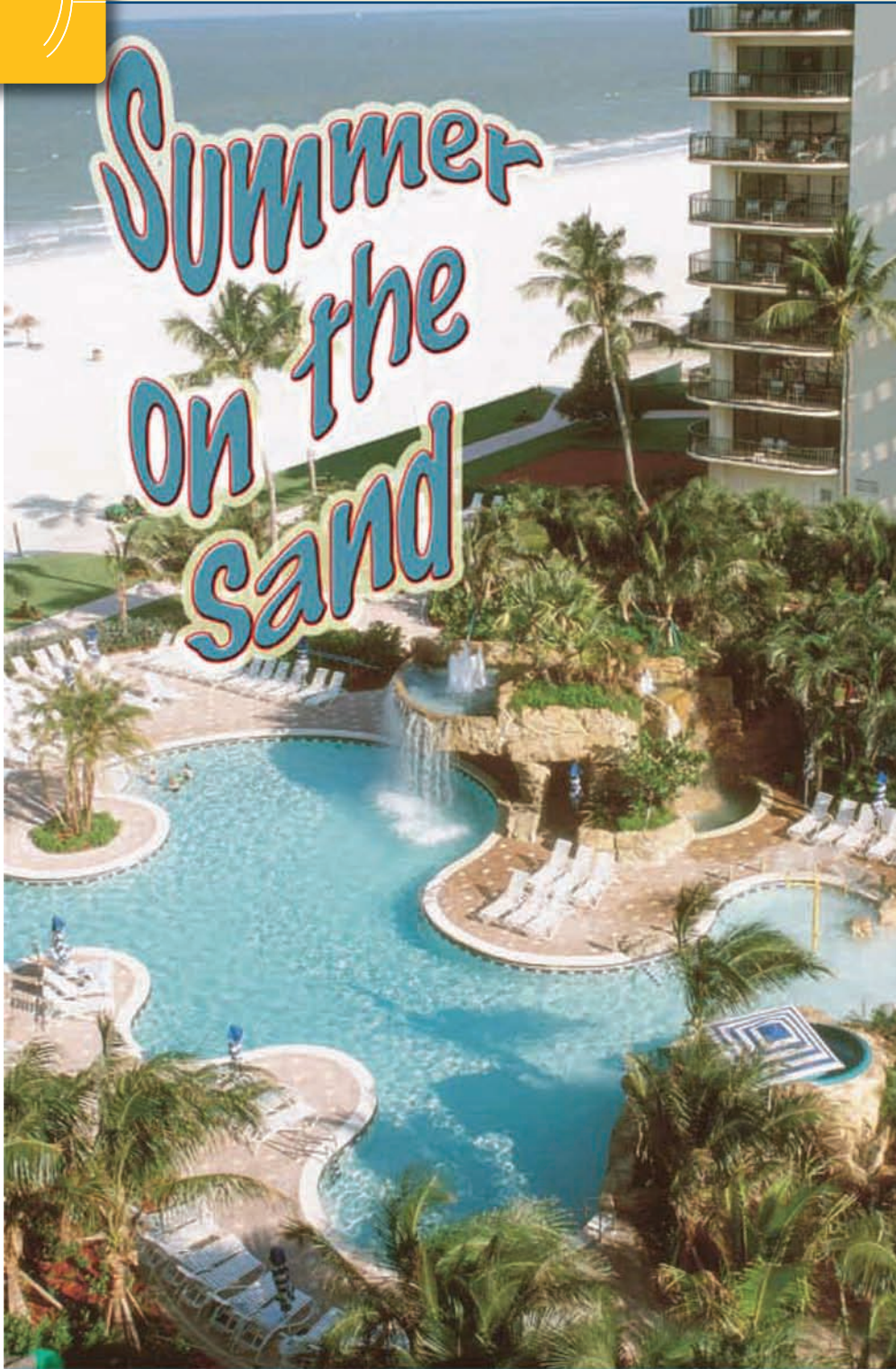
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OCTOBER 23-25, 2008

Wednesday, October 22, 2008

3:00-5:00 p.m. Registration & check in for early member arrivals. Members can stop by and pick up their registration packages and familiarize themselves with the hotel.

Thursday, October 23, 2008

8:00-5:00 p.m. Member Registration & check in. Members can stop by and pick up their registration packages anytime during the day.

3:00-5:00 p.m. Annual Board of Directors Meeting. This is the Annual meeting of the FAEC State Board of Directors. Open to all attending.

5:00 – On Open evening for visiting the Hotel’s five-star Restaurant or a walk on the beach.

Friday, October 24, 2008

8:00-5:00 pm. Registration Desk Open – Staff will be available to help with member check-in and questions.

8:30 a.m. Continental Breakfast Open for all attendees – enjoy a cup of coffee and a muffin before settling into the first class.

9:00-11:00a.m. CLASS I – ECLB # 0007279 “ALARM DISPATCH REDUCTION” 2 HRS Technical Credit – Good towards license renewal. Presented by Mike Fletcher, Alarm Association of Florida, who will provide an understanding of alarm dispatch reduction as outlined in F.S.#489,F.A.C. 61G6, ANSI CP-01, NFPA 72, NFPA 13 and NFPA 101.

10:30-10:45 a.m. Refreshment Break – Time for a quick “pick me up” with fresh juice, and coffee .

11:15-12:15 CLASS II – ECLB APPROVAL PENDING – “Lights, Lamps and Ballasts” presented by Allen M. Weiss, P.E., LC of SESCO Lighting, Winter Park, Fl. 1 HR. (T) Technical CE necessary for license renewal. Brought back by popular demand, Allen will present a review of Light Quality and definition, ongoing technological innovations along with an explanation of what light is, various ways to look at light, color temperature defined, warm vs. cool, types of lamps, lamp characteristics, fundamental lamp concepts, spectral power distribution curves (defined), incandescent lamps, including; what is incandescence? and the characteristics of



Annual Convention

October 22-25, 2008

Marco Marriott Resort & Spa

Marco Island, FL



incandescent lamps, definition of Halogen lamps, reflector lamps shapes, fluorescent lamps including T8 lamps, T5 lamps and compact fluorescent lamps, high intensity lamps including high pressure sodium lamps, metal halide lamps, mercury vapor lamps, low pressure sodium lamps, ballast basics, concepts and applications ending with a discussion of the impact of the Energy Policy Act of 1992.

12:15-1:15 Lunch Served – for all attendees along with a complete Legislative Synopsis of the 2008 session including a presentation of issues for the 2009 Session including FAEC’s Journeyman Licensing issue. Speaker is Rick Watson, FAEC 2008 Lobbyist and Mike Cauthen, FAEC Legislative Chairman.

1:30-4:00 “LET’S TALK”- A contractors networking session back by popular demand. An open, informal “roundtable” session for can did contractor discussion including issues such as labor, apprenticeship training, wages, etc. You are free to bring forth any issue you would like to discuss with fellow contractors.

THIS SESSION IS LIMITED TO CONTRACTOR OWNERS ONLY. Moderator, Mike Cauthen, FAEC Legislative Chairman.

6:30-9:30 p.m. Annual Electrical Industry Awards Dinner and Entertainment – A fun-filled event with our First Annual Electrical Industry Awards recognizing members and projects for outstanding electrical installation throughout Florida. A special evening for members and guests.

Saturday, October 25, 2008

8:00-9:00 CLASS III – ECLB # 0000786 “Workplace Safety” 1 HR Safety CE MANDATORY for license renewal. A breakfast buffet for all attendees – enjoy a buffet breakfast while Lobbyist, Rick Watson, speaks to the issue of workplace safety and earn your mandatory safety credit while there.

9:00-10:00 CLASS IV - ECLB APPROVAL PENDING 1 HR. Technical CE necessary for license renewal. “A LEED Look at Healthcare”, Presented by Allen Weiss, P.E., LC of Sesco Lighting, Winter Park, Fl. Allen will present a comprehensive overview of what LEED is, how LEED applies to Healthcare projects, rating systems and categories, lighting points levels, lighting prerequisites, credit 1, credit 5, MR prerequisites, Credit 4.2, Credit 6.1, Credit SS-8, ASHRAE Table, Credit 8, concluding with innovation and design. If you don’t have any idea what the aforementioned “credit” designations are, then this class is for you!

10:00-10:15 Refreshment Break

11:15-12:15 CLASS V –ECLB #0000632 “Worker’s Compensation Update” 1 HR MANDATORY CE necessary for license renewal. Presented by Rick Watson, FAEC Lobbyist. A complete update on our Florida Worker’s Compensation program along with any proposed changes pending for the 2009 Legislative Session.

12:15-1:15 Lunch for All Attendees- An informal luncheon for all to enjoy while visiting with old friends and meeting new ones.

1:30-On FREE TIME TO VISIT PROPERTY, GO FISHING OR JUST ENJOY THE BEAUTIFUL MARCO ISLAND BEACH

In accordance with the American with Disabilities Act, those individuals requiring special accommodations or equipment during the meeting should contact headquarters well in advance of the meeting at 407-260-1511.

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DBPR Secretary Extends Aug. 31 Renewal Deadline for Construction Licensees Due to Tropical Storm Fay

In late August, Department of Business and Professional Regulation Secretary Charles W. Drago extended the license renewal deadline for all Certified Construction and Electrical and Alarm Contractor licensees by one month, from August 31 to September 30, due to Tropical Storm Fay's recent sweep across Florida.

"I understand that some of our licensees may have spent the past several weeks preparing for Tropical Storm Fay, evacuating their homes, and making storm-related repairs. By extending this renewal deadline, we are ensuring that our licensees have every opportunity to remain in compliance with state regulation," stated Secretary Drago.

Certified Construction and Electrical and Alarm Contractor

licensees who have not yet renewed will have until September 30. The extension of the renewal deadline will not affect the expiration date on the license, which will remain August 31, 2010. Licensees who have already renewed do not need to do anything.

Licensees must complete all required continuing education in order to renew their licenses. Any continuing education completed prior to renewal, regardless of whether the licensee renews on August 31 or September 30, will apply to the 2006-2008 license cycle. As long as the licensee completes all continuing education requirements for 2006-2008, any continuing education taken after renewal but prior to September 30 will apply to the 2008-2010 cycle.

The Department of Business and Professional Regulation's mission is to license efficiently and regulate fairly. The Department licenses more than one million businesses and professionals ranging from real estate agents, veterinarians, and accountants to contractors and cosmetologists. For more information, please visit www.MyFloridaLicense.com.

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Proposed Workers' Compensation Insurance Rates Would Drop For 6th Consecutive Year

Florida Insurance Commissioner Kevin McCarty announced in late August that he has received the latest rate filing from the National Council on Compensation Insurance (NCCI) for workers' compensation insurance rates due to become effective next year. The filing calls for an overall average rate decrease of 14.1 percent statewide, which would produce a savings of more than \$465 million for Florida employers.

If approved, the rate decrease would be the sixth consecutive drop since the Legislature passed sweeping reforms to the state's workers' compensation system in 2003. The cumulative overall statewide average rate decrease since 2003 would total 58.3 percent.

"These lower workers' compensation rates will have a positive impact on every segment of our marketplace," said Commissioner McCarty. "It is great news for business owners and their employees, because Florida employers are paying lower rates, and benefits are being delivered fairly and effectively. The reduction of fraud and abuse in the system is certainly paying off."

Prior to the legislative reforms, the state of Florida consistently ranked No. 1 or No. 2 in the country for the highest workers' compensation rates; however, post-reform, Florida has dropped out of the top 10 rankings.

NCCI, which produces and files rates for insurers in many states, said the rate decline was primarily due to a significant drop in claims frequency and a reduction in the costs of claims.

A rate hearing on the filing will be scheduled by the Office of Insurance Regulation in October, and the rate change would be effective for new and renewal business as of January 1, 2009.

The law passed in 2003 instituted provisions for enhanced fraud compliance and revised permanent and temporary disability definitions. It also set new parameters for attorney and physician compensation and improved dispute resolution procedures, in addition to making many other improvements to the system.

The Florida Office of Insurance Regulation (Office) has primary responsibility for regulation, compliance and enforcement of statutes related to the business of insurance and the monitoring of industry markets. Business units within the Office are organized based on regulatory expertise and include the areas of life and health, property and casualty, specialty lines and other regulated insurance entities. It is within the Office that the mission of public protection is implemented through regulatory oversight of insurance company solvency, policy forms and rates, market conduct performance and new company entrants to the Florida market. For more information about the Office, please visit www.flor.com. If you would like to review and compare homeowners insurance rates in Florida, go to www.shopandcomparerate.com.



RICHARD WATSON
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS CONSULTANT

108 E. JEFFERSON ST., SUITE C.
TALLAHASSEE, FL 32301
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GROUNDING VERSUS BONDING

By Mike Holt, NEC Expert

Part 9 of 12: Isolated Grounding Systems

When is an isolated ground appropriate, and what are the rules?

Decisions on when and how to use an isolated ground (IG) involve design issues you can't resolve based on the NEC alone [90.1(C)]. Before you try to resolve those issues, you must understand what an IG is—and is not.

An IG is not an arrangement whereby you drive a ground rod into the earth and use that as your sole grounding connection. In fact, doing this violates 250.4(A)(5), which requires you to establish an effective ground-fault current path. The IG concept probably arose from misunderstandings of neutrals and of the differences between grounding and bonding—certainly, this “isolated ground rod” idea did.

So, what is an IG? To answer that, we turn to IEEE-142, 5.5.54. The basic design involves setting up a bonding system (for a given circuit or set of circuits) and keeping that electrically isolated all the way to the service equipment or source of a separately derived system.

Initially, designers also kept the grounding (earthing) system separate from the source grounding (earthing) system. They would drive separate ground rods for these systems and not bond them back to the source. They mistakenly thought this would result in “separate” grounding systems—the “isolated” one being “clean” compared to the “main grounding system.”

But we know that such a practice tries to defy Ohm's Law, Kirchoff's Law, several NEC references, and basic physics. Rather than solve a “dirty ground” problem, this arrangement creates serious safety and operational problems. Thus, you have no choice but to bond that “separate” ground rod system back to the source after all. So, an “IG” is actually a “separately insulated bonding conductor to the power source”—not a separately isolated grounded one.

An IG system is sometimes designed with an independent counter-poise ground (ground rods) that is bonded to the equipment grounding (bonding) conductor). The NEC recognizes this independent grounding connection to the earth as a “supplementary electrodes.” According to Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) studies, a supplementary electrode is useless and its presence could actually create a condition where sensitive electronic equipment could be damaged by lightning.

Because a supplementary electrode does not fulfill any of the NEC-required functions, you don't have to bond it to the building grounding electrode system, nor do you have to size it per 250.66, and you don't have to make it comply with the 25 ohm resistance requirement of 250.56 [250.54] (Figure 1).

You cannot use the supplementary electrode as the effective ground-fault current path required by

250.4(A)(5) and 250.4(B)(4). By definition, this supplements—but does not replace—NEC-required electrodes. Do not confuse the requirements for *supplementary* electrode [250.54] with the requirements for the underground metal water pipe *supplemental* electrode [250.53(D)(2)].

An example of a supplementary electrode is a ground rod installed next to a machine tool. Such an electrode serves no electrical purpose. Yet, some equipment manufacturers *require* independent electrodes. They insist that their equipment be electrically isolated from the structure's electrical system [no equipment grounding (bonding) conductor].

This dangerous practice violates 250.4(A)(5), which prohibits the use of the earth as an effective ground-fault current path. If the metal enclosures of sensitive electronic equipment were isolated or floated as required by some equipment manufacturers, dangerous voltage on metal parts would remain from a ground fault (Figure 2).

You can isolate a metal raceway (containing circuit conductors for sensitive electronic equipment) from the electrical equipment it supplies by using a nonmetallic raceway fitting located at the equipment. However, the metal raceway must contain an insulated equipment grounding (bonding) conductor to provide the effective ground-fault current path to the power source [250.96] (Figure 3).

To IG or not to IG?

The idea behind an IG system, is that by bonding equipment with an insulated equipment grounding (bonding) conductor to the power source, you prevent contaminating equipment on one circuit with electrical noise from another circuit. If you have a noise problem and want to fix it by installing an IG, keep in mind that the theory and evidence supporting such an approach are thin at best. When all else fails, you could try an IG and see what happens.

Computer circuits are prime candidates for the “install IG receptacles first, ask questions later” approach. But, the results are more cosmetic than substantial and tend to mask underlying problems.

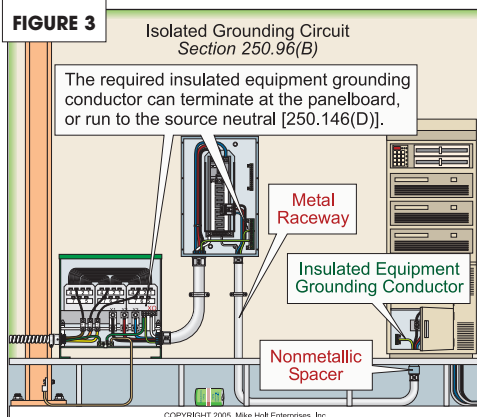
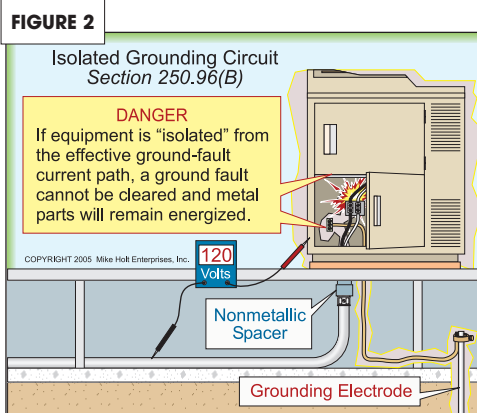
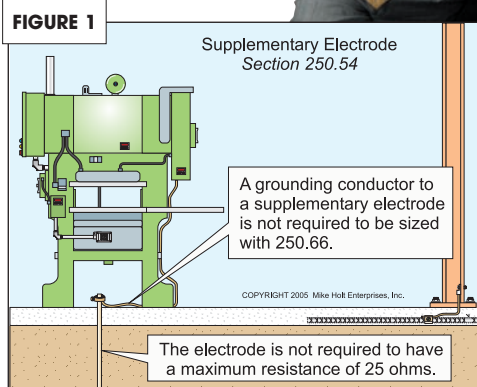
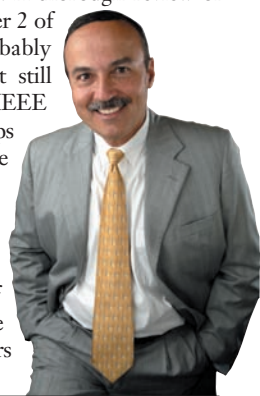
In most cases, an IG is a waste of money. IEEE 1100, Powering and Grounding Sensitive Electronic Equipment (Emerald Book) states, “The results from the use of the IG method range from no observable effects, the desired effects, or worse noise conditions than when standard equipment bonding configurations are used to serve electronic load equipment [8.5.3.2].”

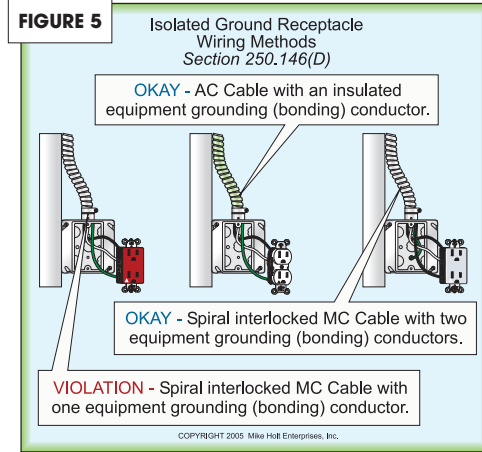
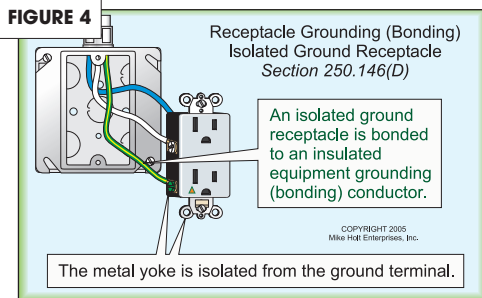
Usually, an engineer can prevent or solve noise problems simply by following best practices and industry standards for electrical installations. Unfortunately, some engineers discover this after trying the IG approach and finding out they have the same problem they started with.

Before you decide an IG will solve your problems, ensure your electrical infrastructure follows

Chapter 3 wiring methods. A thorough review of your system against Chapter 2 of the NEC would probably resolve any problems that still remain. If not, various IEEE standards provide more steps you should take before going the IG route.

One reason for considering an IG is excess noise on a sensitive circuit. Such noise is more likely to be of a higher amplitude on the current-carrying conductors





sion? Draw the circuits out, and see what you think. Except for some anecdotal accounts, we have scant evidence that an IG cures any problems. But, as Chapter 5 of IEEE-142 points out, the IG can make existing problems worse while creating new ones. So very few systems may benefit from an IG, and few—if any—require one.

But what about the various accounts of existing installations where problems disappeared once an IG was installed? Can't we draw some conclusions from those real-world results? In many cases, these IG installations are part of a larger bonding system repair project—so, we don't know exactly what fixed the problems. It's possible that IGs did cause symptoms to subside at a given facility—but as IEEE-1442 points out, IG tends to mask problems rather than fix them.

If you decide to try IG, beware of the slippery slope it may put you on. Of the IG systems that are properly designed, few are installed correctly and even fewer are properly maintained. On top of everything else, engineering opinions differ as to what is a proper design.

Some IG guidance

So, what does this mean for you, if you think an IG may solve your power quality problems? For starters, there is no standard design you can adopt. However, there are standards you can refer to for guidance on the basic principles and requirements involved. Begin with the NEC and IEEE-142.

What about IG receptacles? By design, these have the grounding terminal insulated from the metal mounting yoke. Therefore, you must connect the grounding terminal of an IG receptacle to an insulated equipment grounding (bonding) con-

ductor that provides the effective ground-fault current path to the power source winding [250.146] (Figure 4).

IG receptacles must be identified by an orange triangle located on the face of the receptacle [406.2(D)]. Sometimes the entire receptacle is orange, with the triangle molded into the plastic face in a color other than orange. IG receptacles installed in nonmetallic boxes must be covered with a nonmetallic faceplate, because a metal faceplate cannot be bonded to an effective ground-fault current path [250.4(A)(3)].

IG receptacles require additional attention to wiring methods. For example, the outer metal sheath of interlocked Type MC cable isn't listed as an equipment grounding (bonding) conductor [250.118(10)]. Therefore, you can't use this wiring method to supply an IG receptacle unless the cable contains two equipment grounding (bonding) conductors. However, you can use interlocked Type AC cable containing a single insulated equipment grounding (bonding) conductor, because the metal armor of the cable is listed as an equipment grounding (bonding) conductor [250.118(8)] (Figure 5).

Now that you are familiar with what an IG is and what some of the requirements are, you will probably think twice before installing one. Your first thought should be about whether your installation conforms to the NEC and related standards. Before you attempt to fix any problems by installing an IG, look very carefully at industry standards, best practices, and conformance issues. If your installation is in conformance, your second thought should be about how to correctly design, install, and maintain that IG.

than on the ground circuit. So, careful attention to wire separation and routing will do far more for you than "isolating" bonding connections will ever do.

Another reason for considering an IG is the idea you are going to "design out" any chance of picking up noise through the ground (bonding) connection. Because your IG must eventually tie into the grounding system, it's not really isolated after all. It's just "separately routed." Is the idea that you are accomplishing something by doing this just an illu-

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