



Looking back on a great year for PMD

By any objective measure, 2006 was one of the most successful years in the history of PMD.

In addition to achieving an important policy victory, further elevating PMD's visibility on Capitol Hill, and providing enhanced networking and educational opportunities for members, PMD adopted important structural adjustments to ensure the organization's success continues.

PMD helps beat back ACGIH threat

The year began with a major policy victory for our industry: the announcement by the American Conference of Government Industrial Hygienists (ACGIH) that it was withdrawing its proposal to substantially reduce the Threshold Limit Value (TLV) for CaCO₃. If adopted by ACGIH, the standard would have reduced recommended exposure levels for CaCO₃ and imposed unnecessary costs on PMD members and their customers.

Mark your calendars for PMD's 2007 Spring Meeting

PMD's Spring Meeting will take place in San Francisco on Feb. 27, 2007 in conjunction with NSSGA's Annual Meeting. Look for more information in the coming weeks.

If you have ideas for speakers or topics you would like to see on the agenda, or if there are issues you think should be on PMD's radar screen, be sure to drop us a line at caklein@potomac-law.com.

PMD joined with the National Lime Association and the International Minerals Association-North America in 2005 to file comments urging ACGIH to withdraw the proposal. PMD members also brought the issue to the attention of lawmakers on Capitol Hill. We believe that these activities (combined with the lack of evidence that CaCO₃ poses any health threats!) led ACGIH to back down on its proposal.

Ruddell testimony elevates PMD visibility, nonconsensus standards issue on Capitol Hill

Despite the decision by ACGIH to withdraw the CaCO₃ TLV, House Workforce Protections Subcommittee Chairman Charlie Norwood (R-GA) was concerned enough by what he heard from PMD and other groups about ACGIH's activities to hold a hearing in April. The hearing focused on the use of nonconsensus standards like ACGIH's by the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

PMD Vice Chairman Jim Ruddell (Franklin Industrial Minerals) testified at the hearing on behalf of PMD and NSSGA. Ruddell expressed concerns that groups like ACGIH do not permit public participation in their deliberations and thus opposing views are not formally considered during the TLV development process. Ruddell briefed subcommittee members about ACGIH's activities with regard to CaCO₃ and crystalline silica. He also urged support for legislation to encourage the development of voluntary consensus standards by industry.

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Subsequent to the hearing, Chairman Norwood introduced legislation to prohibit OSHA and MSHA from using nonconsensus standards. PMD has since formally endorsed Chairman Norwood's bill (see below.)

Industry leaders listen, discuss, and take action at PMD Annual Meeting

PMD's Annual Meeting in Denver on Sept. 12 received rave reviews from attendees. In addition to a networking dinner the night before the meeting, highlights included presentations by:

- Tom Turney of T2 Leadership about organizational strategic planning;
- Mike Darragh of CSX Corporation and Erik Bohn of Omya, Inc. about the challenges facing railroads and strategies for dealing with rising transportation costs;
- Kadri Dagdelen of Colorado School of Mines about the looming shortage of qualified mining engineers;
- Christian Klein of Obadal, Filler, MacLeod & Klein, PLC about the 2006 congressional elections; and
- John Hayden and Gary Walter of NSSGA about recent developments in the areas of environmental and workplace safety regulation.

PMD Exec Committee reconstituted

As part of the meeting, PMD's Board also took several important steps to strengthen the organization. The Board reconstituted the Executive Committee, which under the PMD Bylaws is charged with "the management of the Division between meetings of the Board of Directors." In addition to PMD Chairman Reed Sherar (Columbia River Carbonates) and PMD Vice Chairman Ruddell, the 2007 Executive Committee members will be Bob Baker (Huber), Joel Zazyczny (IMERYYS), Matt Graves (Oldcastle), Doug Townsend (Oglebay Norton), and Jim Reddy (Omya, Inc.)

Dues to increase by \$2,000

Recognizing that PMD's increased activity level is putting additional demands on NSSGA, PMD's parent organization, the Board also approved a \$2,000 dues increase. Under the plan, PMD dues will increase from \$3,000 to \$5,000 in \$1,000 increments over the next two years.

PMD weighs in on Workplace Safety and Health Transparency Act

At the Denver meeting, PMD continued its foray into the public policy process. PMD Secretary Christian Klein briefed the group on proposed legislation that would prohibit the use of nonconsensus standards by OSHA and MSHA. PMD Board members signed a letter to Chairman Norwood endorsing his bill, known as the Workplace Safety and Health Transparency Act (HR 5554). The letter has since been hand-delivered to Norwood's staff by NSSGA lobbyists. The Board also directed PMD staff to undertake a member survey to identify other government affairs issues of common concern.

Severinghaus honored

As part of the Annual Meeting, PMD's Board adopted a resolution honoring Ben Severinghaus, a long-time PMD leader who recently announced his retirement from Franklin Industrial Minerals. The resolution read as follows:

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Whereas Ben Severinghaus of Franklin Industrial Minerals was one of the founders of PMD; and
Whereas Severinghaus has been a leader of the pulverized calcium carbonate industry for more than half a century; and

Whereas Severinghaus towers in his stature and accomplishments for the industry and the association;

Now therefore be it resolved that the Board of PMD congratulates Severinghaus upon the occasion of his retirement from Franklin Industrial Minerals, thanks him for his lifetime of service to PMD, confers upon him the status of honorary lifetime member of PMD, and wishes him the best of luck in his future pursuits.

Severinghaus will be formally honored by his colleagues at PMD's Spring Meeting in San Francisco next February.

Members hail meeting as success

Feedback about the meeting was almost universally positive. One attendee commented that he found the "point and counterpoint" format of the transportation presentations "very educational". Another said that he enjoyed the meeting's networking dinner, which "provided an opportunity to see old friends and meet the new faces." Another said that he particularly enjoyed the simple opportunity to sit down with colleagues and have an "open and frank discussion" about the challenges facing the industry.

It's been a great 2006 and PMD is looking forward to an even better 2007. Enjoy the holidays!