

# mica messenger

**MIDWEST INSULATION CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION**

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**VOLUME 55 NO. 04**  
**APRIL 2021**



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## **UPDATE ON MICA ACTIVITIES**

In the March issue of this newsletter, we published two Bulletin Updates on OSHA's response to President Biden's Executive Order directing OSHA to issue guidance with regards to workplace steps for employers to take to protect employees from COVID-19 that were written by our legal counsel, Gary Auman. The bulletins recapped some of the guidelines issued by OSHA. As a follow up to these articles, on April 13<sup>th</sup>, Gary presented a Safety Directors Webinar in conjunction with the Builders Exchange of Dayton that was co-sponsored by MICA and free to all member firms of MICA. In the webinar, Gary discussed the new National Emphasis Program and summarized the top ten areas cited by OSHA in 2020 and reviewed the comments made concerning them from Erin Gilmore, an assistant to

Robert Ketchum, the head of OSHA's construction directorate. We hope that you attended the webinar and found it of value to you and your company.

The MICA Board of Directors sponsored this educational opportunity for you, as one of the many benefits that comes with your membership in MICA. We will continue to offer these types of educational activities throughout the year. Another such activity is the annual "Best Practices in Safety" award. This award will continue in 2021. Gary and the Environmental & Safety Committee co-chairs have revised the application to encompass different aspects of your company's safety program. The revised applications will be sent to member firms in early May with a deadline for completion set for early June. This will give Gary time to score the applications prior to our fall business meeting. We will be recognizing the companies that participate in this award process at our October business meeting.

We are moving forward with the 9th edition of the MICA manual. The committee has been working diligently on this edition since 2016. The committee has added eleven new plates to the manual and a new section on flashing. The tables have been updated to reflect current ASTM and ASHRAE standards. We are also revamping our website capabilities so that the manual can be ordered using coupon codes that will allow individuals to gift the manual using the coupons. The committee has been "testing" the revised ordering process for any glitches. **We still anticipate the 9th edition to be printed in May with a June release date.**

We are planning for a "normal" fall business meeting in Omaha on October 14 & 15, 2021, at the Omaha Marriott Downtown. This will be our first meeting at a new venue in Omaha after an eleven-year run at the Embassy Suites. The Board is confident that you will find the Marriott to be a most accommodating hotel.

Thank you for your continued support of MICA, and we look forward to renewing our face-to-face relationships with you in October.

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## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

**TO: THE MICA MEMBERSHIP**

"The moment you realize how important time is, your perspective will change." - Unknown

I hope everyone had a Happy Easter with their families and friends. The week before Easter, my family went on our first vacation in over a year and a half. We went to Pensacola Beach, Florida. It was great to get away and get back to some sense of normalcy. The weather was great the first few days, but the last two were 43 degrees with 25 - 40 MPH winds. As I mentioned in my last message, March Madness is my favorite time of year, so I was excited to spend the day at the beach with my family and at night enjoy the NCAA tournament. The only problem with that was the resort we stayed at did not have CBS. I couldn't believe it! So, no basketball, but the time with my family was truly awesome.

This vacation was different because it was the first vacation we have taken where one of the kids couldn't go. Our son, Luke, had to stay home because of football and baseball. It made me realize how true the old cliché is that life goes by really fast!! It seems like last week he was fighting like hell not to take a nap and re-

fusing to be potty trained. Now he will be graduating next month and going into the trades right after that. The girls aren't far behind either. Just remember, it does go by fast so cherish every moment with your family. Tomorrow is not promised.

We are still planning on having our summer planning & Board meeting in early August as an in-person meeting. Rudy Nigl, our President-Elect, is working on a location. Hopefully everyone will consider attending because it would be great to see as many of you in person as we can. The safety applications should be going out soon, and I believe the plan is to present the awards at the October business meeting in Omaha. It would be great if the October business meeting is the most attended meeting MICA has had to date. I'm sure everyone is looking forward to ditching Zoom and getting back to in person meetings and conventions.

Stay safe and be healthy!

"Time is the coin of your life. It is the only coin you have, and only you can determine how it will be spent."

- Carl Sandberg, American poet

Sincerely,

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## **THE PASSING OF JON NELSON, PAST PRESIDENT OF MICA**

Last month, the MICA office was informed that Jon Nelson, MICA's 35<sup>th</sup> President in 1991 – 1992, passed away at his home in Florida after a lengthy illness. Most of you probably do not remember Jon, and his wife, Sharon, but they were staunch supporters of MICA and the insulation industry. During our many years with MICA, Cindy and I have developed a special bond with each of the past presidents. Jon was very straight forward with his approach to decision making. He would



gather the necessary information and then make the decision and move forward. We always knew what Jon was thinking because he would always tell us in an honest manner. Two memories come to our mind when we reflect on our time with Jon and Sharon; the crazy hat from our Board dinner at the Baldknobbers Show and his request for a 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary "ice sculpture" at our Welcome Reception. Jon will be missed.

Below are excerpts for his obituary:

Jon Wallace Nelson of Clearwater, Florida passed away ever so peacefully at Suncoast Hospice on Friday, March 5th, 2021 at the age of 84. Jon was born March 12, 1936 in Peoria, Illinois to Elmer and Ada (Schriver) Nelson. Jon earned a B.S. degree in Mechanical Engineering from Bradley University ('58) where he was an active member of the Theta Chi fraternity. Jon's pledge Dad introduced him to Sharon Gray ('59) and the rest is history! Jon and Sharon were married in Peoria on May 17, 1959 and lived and worked in Chicago and Peoria before moving their young family to Bettendorf, Iowa in 1964.

The highlight of Jon's engineering and sales career was serving as President of Taylor Insulation; an insulation contractor in the Quad Cities and Cedar Rapids. Jon fulfilled his dream of becoming a small business owner, dedicating his time and talents

to Taylor's team members and the company's continued growth and success. Jon was an active member and past president of MICA; Midwest Insulation Contractors Association, whose purpose was to continuously improve relationships, communication and business practices within the insulation trade. He treasured the camaraderie and lasting friendships with his fellow MICA members well into retirement.

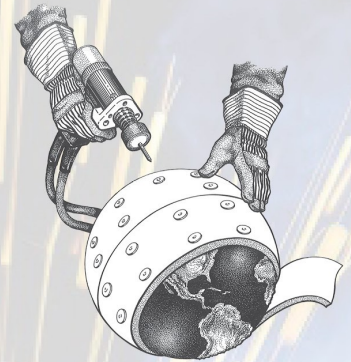
While living in the Quad Cities, Jon and Sharon were long time golfing members of Davenport Country Club who also enjoyed boating on the Mississippi River and spending time with their children and grandchildren. Jon's passion for golf and community involvement led him to serve on the Board of the Hardee's Golf Classic (prior to John Deere Classic) for many years before Chairing the Board in 1986. His love for the tournament led him back to the QC's for many years thereafter to continue volunteering during tournament week. He especially enjoyed hopping on a golf cart to deliver water and snacks to the on-course volunteers during hot summer days. It was no secret one of his favorite assignments was donning his green jacket and announcing the players' names as they approached the 18th green on Sundays.

Jon and Sharon retired to Florida's Gulf Coast in 1989 residing in East Lake Woodlands in Oldsmar and Heritage Springs in Trinity before joining the Regency Oaks senior living community in 2018. A Celebration of Life service was held Sunday, March 21, 2021. Cards of sympathy may be sent to Sharon and the Nelson family at their Florida residence; 2754 Regency Oaks Blvd., Apt. R111, Clearwater, FL 33759.

Those who wish to honor Jon's memory may make memorials to: American Parkinson Disease Association (APDA); Bayside Community Church of God, 3380 State Road 580, Safety Harbor, FL 34695; Edgewood Baptist Church, 2704 38th Street, Rock Island, IL 61201; and the John Deere Classic / Birdies For Charity Bonus Fund, 15623 Coaltown Road, East Moline, IL 61244.



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## **NORTH AMERICAN ENGINEERING AND CONSTRUCTION OUTLOOK**

Get the second quarter edition of FMI's comprehensive economic assessment for the U.S. and Canadian engineering and construction (E&C) industry. Download your copy for sector-specific insights and market takeaways from their website at <https://www.fminet.com/>. The report includes 2021 first quarter estimates and trends affecting the E&C markets for the second quarter.

### **Key insights include:**

Total engineering and construction spending for the U.S. is forecast to end 2021 down 1% compared to up 5% in 2020.

Declines in 2021 will be led by decreasing investment in private nonresidential building segments, including lodging, office, commercial, and amusement and recreation. The impact will also extend into multifamily investment via mixed-use development along with reduced transportation, manufacturing, educational and religious spending.

Water supply is the only growth segment anticipated for 2021 year-end with rates more than 5%. Single-family residential, residential improvements and several other mixed public and private segments are expected to end the year with growth roughly in line with the rate of inflation, and therefore considered stable.

The latest Nonresidential Construction Index (NRCI) feedback suggests significantly increased optimism heading into the second quarter of 2021, at 54.4, up from 47.1 in the quarter prior. The index has for the first time in a year broken into expansionary territory, surpassing the growth threshold of 50, and suggests increased engineering and construction opportunities ahead.

## **U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR TO HOLD MEETING TO SOLICIT PUBLIC INPUT ON OSHA WHISTLEBLOWER PROGRAM**

WASHINGTON, DC – The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) will hold a teleconference meeting May 19, 2021, to solicit public comments and suggestions on key issues facing OSHA's Whistleblower Protection Program.

This is the seventh in a series of meetings on how the agency can improve the whistleblower program.

Open to the public, the meeting will be held from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. EDT via telephone. Those interested in joining or participating in the meeting must register by May 12, 2021. Call-in information will be provided to all registrants. There is no fee to register.

The agency is seeking comments on:

- How can OSHA better deliver its whistleblower services?
- What kind of assistance can OSHA provide to help explain the agency's whistleblower laws to employees and employers?

- What can OSHA do to ensure that workers are protected from retaliation for raising concerns related to the pandemic?

Materials may be submitted electronically at <http://www.regulations.gov>, which is the Federal eRulemaking Portal, or by mail. Written or electronic comments must be submitted by May 12, 2021. See the Federal Register notice for submission details. Comments must be identified with Docket No. OSHA-2018-0005.

Learn more about OSHA's Whistleblower Protection Program.

## **DODGE MOMENTUM INDEX POSTS GAIN IN MARCH**

HAMILTON, New Jersey – April 7, 2021 – The Dodge Momentum Index moved 1.7% higher in March to 151.4 (2000=100) from the revised February reading of 148.8. The Momentum Index, issued by [Dodge Data & Analytics](#), is a monthly measure of the first (or initial) report for nonresidential building projects in planning, which have been shown to lead construction spending for nonresidential buildings by a full year. According to the March data, the Index hit its highest level since the summer of 2018 as a result of an increase in institutional projects that entered the planning stage, and which came on the heels of a similar gain for the sector in February.

Overall, the Momentum Index for March 2021 was up 11% in total versus March 2020. While healthcare and lab projects continue to dominate institutional planning, March saw a more broad-based selection of project types including education and recreation buildings. Institutional building construction rose 14.0% from February, while year-over-year comparisons showed a 10% increase for the sector. Commercial construction, however, dipped 3.9% for the month due to a slight pullback in warehouse activity that other commercial projects could not make up for, though the sector showed a 12% increase from March 2020 in year-over-year comparisons.

There were 16 projects with a value of \$100 million or more that entered planning within March. The leading commercial projects were a \$400 million Facebook Data Center in Springfield NE and a \$350 million warehouse project in Shreveport LA. The leading institutional projects were the \$200 million Warhorse Casino in Lincoln NE and the \$163 million Inland Valley Medical Center in Wildomar CA.

Based on this data, March may signify that the public side of building construction is beginning to stabilize following the COVID-19 led pressure on state and local budgets and suggests a pickup in construction starts may occur as 2021 progresses.

## **DODGE MOMENTUM INDEX**

(2000=100, Seasonally Adjusted)

	Mar-21	Feb-21	% Change
Dodge Momentum Index	151.4	148.8	1.7%
Commercial Building	177.0	184.2	-3.9%
Institutional Building	119.7	105.0	14.0%

Source: Dodge Data & Analytics



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## **FUTURE MICA MEETING DATES**

**CANCELED** — 64th Annual Spring Convention — June 21 — 24, 2021, Hyatt Regency Coconut Point Resort, Bonita Springs, FL.

Fall 2021 Annual Fall Business Meeting — October 14 & 15, 2021, Omaha Marriott Downtown, Omaha, NE.

2022 Winter Meetings — January 2022, TBD

65th Annual Spring Convention — June 19 — 22, 2022, Hyatt Regency Coconut Point Resort, Bonita Springs, FL.

Fall 2022 Annual Fall Business Meeting — October 13 & 14, 2022, Omaha Marriott Downtown, Omaha, NE.

68th Annual Spring Convention — June 16 — 19, 2025, Hyatt Regency Coconut Point Resort, Bonita Springs, FL.

## **MICA MEMBER ADDRESS/INFO. UPDATES**

Be sure to inform the MICA office of any changes or corrections to your listing for either the MICA Directory, e-mail correspondence or mailing address. **Even if you update your company listing on the MICA website, please inform the MICA office of the changes.** We try to be as current as possible with your help.

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**OSHA EXTENDS COMMENT PERIOD FOR PROPOSED RULE TO UPDATE HAZARD COMMUNICATION STANDARD**

WASHINGTON, DC – The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration has extended the comment period for the proposed rule to update the agency's Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) to May 19, 2021. OSHA extended the comment period by 30 days to allow stakeholders additional time to review the proposed rule and collect information and data necessary for comment.

Submit comments identified by Docket No. OSHA-2019-0001, electronically at <http://www.regulations.gov>, which is the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal. Read the Federal Register notice for details.

OSHA expects the HCS update will increase worker protections, and reduce the incidence of chemical-related occupational illnesses and injuries by further improving the information on the labels and Safety Data Sheets for hazardous chemicals. Proposed modifications will also address issues since implementation of the 2012 standard, and improve alignment with other federal agencies and Canada.

**TREASURY, IRS PROVIDE GUIDANCE ON TAX RELIEF FOR DEDUCTIONS FOR FOOD OR BEVERAGES FROM RESTAURANTS**

*Businesses can temporarily deduct 100% beginning Jan. 1, 2021*

WASHINGTON – The Treasury Department and the Internal Revenue Service today issued [Notice 2021-25](#) providing guidance under the Taxpayer Certainty and Disaster Relief Act of 2020. The Act added a temporary exception to the 50% limit on the amount that businesses may deduct for food or beverages. The temporary exception allows a 100% deduction for food or beverages from restaurants.

Beginning Jan. 1, 2021, through Dec. 31, 2022, businesses can claim 100% of their food or beverage expenses paid to restaurants as long as the business owner (or an employee of the business) is present when food or beverages are provided and the expense is not lavish or extravagant under the circumstances.

**Where can businesses get food and beverages and claim 100%?**

Under the temporary provision, restaurants include businesses that prepare and sell food or beverages to retail customers for immediate on-premises and/or off-premises consumption. However, restaurants do not include businesses that primarily sell pre-packaged goods not for immediate consumption, such as grocery stores and convenience stores.

Additionally, an employer may not treat certain employer-operated eating facilities as restaurants, even if these facilities are operated by a third party under contract with the employer.

More information for business seeking coronavirus related tax relief can be found at [IRS.gov](https://www.irs.gov).

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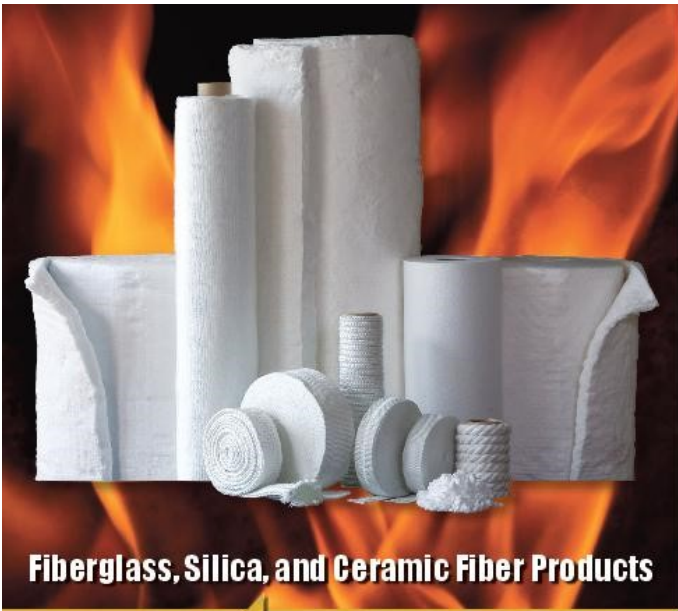
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## **2021 SECOND QUARTER CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY ROUND TABLE REPORT**

What a difference a quarter makes! The second quarter 2021 CIRT Sentiment Index rose to the highest on record, gaining 43%. The Design Index showed similar gains, up 29% from the first quarter. Learn more about what executives in the top engineering, construction and design firms are thinking in our latest survey of CIRT members. You may download the report from the FMI website at <https://www.fminet.com/special-reports/2021>.

### **Powerful Insights from the Construction Industry Round Table**

For the second quarter 2021, we polled CIRT members on key metrics such as backlog, cost of labor and productivity. Within the report, these results were compared to those collected during second quarter 2020. Respondents were also asked to identify a variety of top economic risks and policy or regulatory concerns for the year ahead.

The first quarter of 2021 results show signs of stabilization and some amount of recovering confidence for both the Sentiment Index and the Design Index. The Sentiment Index increased slightly from last quarter, from 54.2 to 55.5, and the Design Index remained constant at 64.8. Both suggest continued and improving demand in the future. This stability is reflective of the cautious optimism for the year ahead, especially compared to the significant economic losses experienced through 2020. Looking ahead, reduced political uncertainty, beginning phases in deployment of multiple coronavirus vaccines, a second round of government stimulus and improved owner/client confidence will all contribute to heightened expectations.

For first quarter 2021, we polled CIRT membership on various internal metrics, including backlog, firm capacity and hiring goals. Within the report, these results were compared to those collected during first quarter 2020. Current issues questions

also asked respondents to identify a variety of top economic risks and policy or regulatory concerns for the year ahead.

Backlog responses were split almost perfectly into thirds, with 33% of participants having backlogs under 12 months, 31% with backlogs spanning the next 19 months or longer, and a slight majority (35%) having backlogs in the 12–18-month range.

A majority (59%) of survey participants reported capacity greater than 80%, with most (38%) estimating capacity between 81% and 90%. The remaining 41% estimate capacity at 80% or lower, with a large portion (28%) operating at 70% capacity or lower.

Hiring goals were split evenly between those increasing their hiring targets and those keeping hiring goals about the same (both groups at 36%). The remaining 28% of respondents indicate somewhat lower (19%) or significantly lower (9%) hiring goals for the new year.

The most frequently selected economic risk factors for 2021 include the ongoing slowdown (62%), project delays and cancellations (53%), uncertainty about project funding (50%) and increasing competition (43%).

The most frequently selected political or regulatory concerns include federal infrastructure funding (55%), renewed aggressive regulatory policy (50%), coronavirus response (47%) and tax policy (45%).

Among the industries represented by CIRT’s member base, lodging, commercial, heavy civil and transportation, office and education work are projected to experience the biggest short-term declines across both the design and construction industries. The design industry’s long-term view of project growth remains positive, with every sector tracking above 3.0. The construction industry’s long-term view is similarly optimistic, with just one sector tracking below 3.0 (office).

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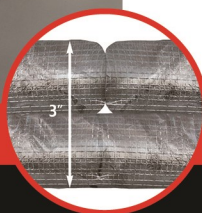
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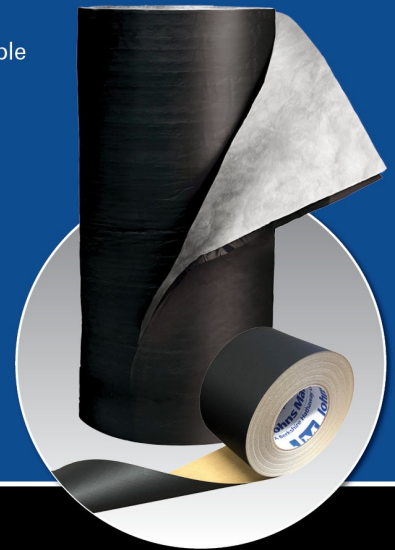
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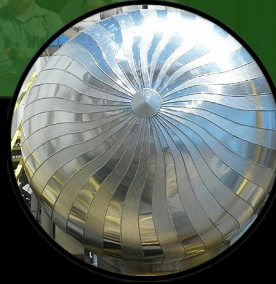
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## **CONSTRUCTION STARTS INCREASE IN MARCH, BUT RISING MATERIAL PRICES COULD HAMPER RECOVERY**

**HAMILTON, New Jersey — April 16, 2021 —** Total construction starts rose 2% in March to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$825.3 billion, according to [Dodge Data & Analytics](#). A solid gain in nonresidential building starts fueled the March gain, while growth in residential starts was minuscule and non-building starts fell outright. The Dodge Index rose 2% in March, to 175 (2000=100) from February's 172.

"The March increase in construction starts is certainly welcome news following the past three months of decline," said Richard Branch, Chief Economist for Dodge Data & Analytics. "Construction will continue to improve as the year moves on. However, just as the pandemic is beginning to loosen its grip on the economy, logistical problems and the rapid escalation in material prices have stepped in as the primary risk to the construction sector. These issues may restrain opportunity in the coming months, causing the sector's recovery to lag that of the overall economy."

Below is the full breakdown across nonbuilding, nonresidential, and residential construction:

**Nonbuilding construction starts** fell 7% in March to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$186.7 billion, following a sizeable gain in February. Miscellaneous nonbuilding sector (-43%) and environmental public works (-11%) led the decline, whereas the utility gas plant and highway and bridge categories rose 39% and 2% respectively.

For the 12 months ending March 2021, total nonbuilding starts were 10% lower than the 12 months ending March 2020. Highway and bridge starts were 3% higher on a 12-month rolling sum basis, while environmental public works were up 8%. Miscellaneous nonbuilding fell 19% and utility/gas plant starts were down 36% for the 12 months ending March 2021.

**The largest nonbuilding projects to break ground in March** were the \$1.2 billion (1.1 GW) Sanborn Solar Facility in Mojave CA, the \$525 million Azure Sky (350 MW) wind farm in Throckmorton TX, and the \$425 million Double E Pipeline, a 135-mile pipeline between Eddy County NM and Waha TX.

**Nonresidential building starts** rose 13% in March to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$235.3 billion. Institutional building starts rose 15% during the month fueled by gains in education, recreation, and public buildings. Commercial building starts increased 11% thanks to healthy gains across all commercial sectors. Manufacturing starts, meanwhile, lost 52% in March after strong levels during the previous two months.

For the 12 months ending March 2021, nonresidential building starts dropped 28% compared to the 12 months ending March 2020. Commercial starts declined 30%, institutional starts were down 20%, and manufacturing starts slid 56% in the 12 months ending March 2021.

**The largest nonresidential building projects to break ground in March** were a \$306 million Amazon, Inc. warehouse in Maspeth NY, the \$300 million Ball Corp. Aluminum Can factory in Pittson PA, and the \$288 million TCCD Northwest Campus Redevelopment in Arlington TX.

*(Continued on page 27)*

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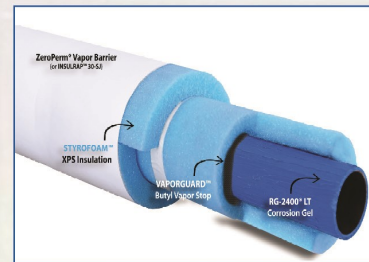
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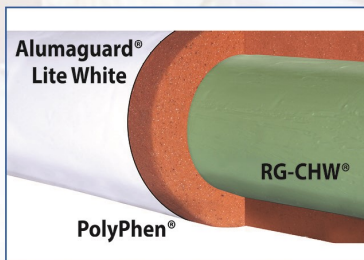
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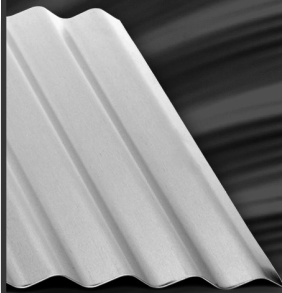
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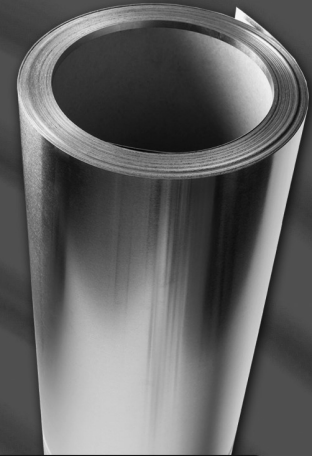
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(Continued from page 23)

**Residential building starts** increased by less than one percent in March to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$403.3 billion. Multifamily starts rose by a brisk 33%, while single family starts slipped 9% lower.

For the 12 months ending March 2021, total residential starts were 6% higher than the 12 months ending March 2020. Single family starts gained 14%, while multifamily starts were down 14% on a 12-month sum basis.

**The largest multifamily structures to break ground in March** were the \$329 million 1629 Market Street mixed-use project in San Francisco CA, the \$287 million Schuylkill Yards West Tower in Philadelphia PA, and the \$242 million National Urban League mixed-use building in New York NY.

**Regionally**, March's starts rose in the West, South Central, and Northeast regions, but fell in the Midwest and South Atlantic regions.

**DYPLAST PRODUCTS HAS JOINED THE KINGSPAN GROUP**

Kingspan Insulation LLC, a subsidiary of the Ireland-based Kingspan Group plc which is the global leader in high-performance insulation and building envelope solutions, has successfully completed the acquisition of Dyplast Products LLC. Dyplast Products will join the North American region of Kingspan's Insulation Division.

Dyplast has established itself as a market leader in multiple in-

dustries and applications including energy / LNG, petrochemical, pharmaceutical, refrigeration, cold storage, and construction, among others. The Dyplast acquisition will serve as a platform for Kingspan to develop a technical insulation business in North America that combines Dyplast's firm foundation with the advanced capabilities Kingspan has globally.

Former CEO of Dyplast Products LLC, Ted Berglund said, "When I decided to sell Dyplast, one of my main considerations was to find a buyer that would continue Dyplast's commitment to excellence and offer the Dyplast team an exciting future. Kingspan met and exceeded those expectations. I am very excited about the future and look forward to working with Kingspan as a strategic advisor."

Moving forward, the Dyplast Products business will be led by Vincent Fuster, who will serve as the General Manager. Vincent expressed his enthusiasm by stating, "Our teams are very excited to embark on this journey! Together, we will build an even stronger organization focused on customer needs, delivering results, and solidifying our relationships. The best decision we have made was to partner with Kingspan to drive growth, to build enthusiasm and to keep producing the finest products, as we have always done."

Managing Director of Kingspan Insulation LLC, Doug Crawford, added "We are thrilled to welcome Dyplast's talented employees to the Kingspan family and look forward to strengthening the partnerships Dyplast has established with its business partners. The combination of these businesses will be powerful. I am excited and optimistic about the path ahead and look forward to working closely with Ted and Vincent to take our collective business to new heights."

Sometimes the best amenities are the ones you don't see

For nearly 30 years, our fire-rated enclosure systems have been providing peace of mind, while quietly protecting our customers' lives and investments. From our DryerWrap™ products - extensively used throughout multi-family housing ductwork - to our FastWrap™ XL products - ideal for commercial kitchen exhaust and ventilation ducts - more people trust the FireMaster™ family of products to hold the line.

## FastWrap™ XL



- Fire rated up to 2192°F (1200°C)
- 1 to 2-hour UL rated for kitchen exhaust ducts
- Won't age, become brittle, or shrink
- Zero clearance to combustibles
- Meets ASTM E84 smoke/flame rating
- FastDoor™ XL panel provides liquid-tight grease duct access for easy maintenance

## DryerWrap™



- UL and ULC listed for 1-hour protection inside rated wood frame construction
- Flexible, 1/2-inch thick optimizes installation costs and space
- Tested on 30 gauge, 7-inch round and 26 gauge 10- x 4-inch rectangular duct
- Improved safety with applications specific testing



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