Code Consultant’s Corner

In this issue of Tank Talk, STI interviews code experts Marshall Klein and Jeff Shapiro on the International Fire code.

Q: Can you tell our readers how the International Fire Code is revised?
A: The International Code Council develops a calendar establishing a new code cycle. In the case of the IFC, proposals to revise the 2009 version had to be submitted by June 1, 2009. All the proposals are published and distributed for review.

Testimony is made upon each proposal in front of the IFC Committee at a hearing that took place in Baltimore between October 24 - November 11, 2009. The Committee approves, denies, or modifies each proposal. The ICC publishes the Committee actions and again distributes them.

The public can then submit comments to modify or change the Committee’s action. Comments are again published by the ICC, with public testimony given at a second Hearing. This hearing took place in Dallas, TX on May 19-20, 2010. The action desired by the commenter is subject to approval by the ICC Members. Only Code officials can vote.

Q: Were there any important challenges submitted for the Dallas Hearing involving petroleum storage systems?
A: Yes, one item of considerable interest pertained to emergency venting inside buildings. A code official from Seattle, WA submitted a change to no longer require the e-vent to be piped outside of a building if the product stored was a combustible liquid such as diesel or heating oil. The Committee approved the proposal in Baltimore, but a comment was submitted suggesting that this would be an unsafe situation with Class II liquids, such as diesel.

Q: What happened?
A: With UL 2085 listed protected tanks storing Class II liquids inside buildings, the Code official testified that insufficient vapor pressures would develop during a two-hour pool fire to initiate the operation of the emergency vent.

A consultant for the Steel Tank Institute testified that a bigger safety issue could develop if the emergency vent pipe was routed a long distance within the building and the pipe diameter was not appropriately increased in size in order to prevent back pressures from developing within the tank during a substantially long pool fire. Another consultant testified that these buildings would be sprinklered. As a result, the IFC Membership in Dallas voted to reject the comment that was submitted. The next version
of the IFC will allow the e-vent of such systems to vent within a building.

Q: Were there any other items of interest to our readers?
A: Another comment overturned the IFC Committee’s action on a proposal that would have severely hampered the use of existing petroleum equipment storage and dispensing systems for fuel blended ethanol. And a comment to synergize the IFC with NFPA 30A on the use of flame arrestors and pressure vacuum breather vents was withdrawn at the last moment. The Committee’s action in Baltimore satisfactorily expanded the use and requirements of these pieces of equipment.

Q: Any final comments?
A: The code process is very dynamic. You must be fully aware of the code officials’ knowledge and their discussions before you even consider making a change or testifying. Anyone can comment, and comments can quickly persuade the officials to vote in ways that you did not anticipate. So do your homework, be involved, and be on top of your game if you want to modify the Code.

Thank you.

Steel Recycling at New Meadowlands Stadium in NJ

The New York Jets and New York Giants will kick off their 2010 seasons in a new sports complex. EPA Acting Regional Administrator, George Pavlou, has said that the stadium is a blueprint for new sports venues.

The New Meadowlands Stadium is said to be among the greenest venues in sports thanks to a partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the New Meadowlands Stadium Company that incorporated environmentally friendly materials and practices into the construction and operation of the site.

The stadium website outlines several such practices, including a Construction Materials Reuse Program. Steel recycling statistics reported are noteworthy and include:

- 22,000 tons of scrap utilized in the manufacturing of the structural steel for the new stadium.
- 2,280 tons of scrap used in the manufacturing of the rebar installed for the new stadium.
- All 8,000+ piles for the new stadium are manufactured from post industrial steel scrap or salvage from unused piles from the petrochemical industry (16,000 tons).

The efforts at The Meadowlands underscore the current emphasis on sustainability, recycling and green practices.

Recent steel energy usage and production figures confirm that steel is a material of choice and that the industry has made considerable strides in reducing energy use.

The American Iron and Steel Institute (AISI) reports that the U.S. steel industry has reduced its energy intensity per ton of steel shipped by
For the month of April 2010, U.S. steel mills shipped 7.07 million net tons, according to AISI. This represents a 7.7 percent decrease from the previous month (March 2010) and a 74.6 percent increase from tonnage shipped during the month of April 2009.

Register Now for SP001 Aboveground Tank System Inspector Training Course, Week of August 9

Thousands of aboveground tanks will require periodic inspection because of revisions to the USEPA SPCC rule.

Set aside the second week in August for this AST Training Class in Chicago. Details are available here for the upcoming session. Please note that an early registration rate applies through July 5, 2010. Sign up today and save.

EPA REVISED Short List - Potential Changes to UST Regulations

STI/SPFA has posted the May 2010 Revised Short List of Potential Changes to UST Regulations to its website. The document indicates the current list may change as the regulatory process continues. A proposed rule may be published in the winter 2010.

Chemical Safety Board - Videos Warn of Tank Hazards

The Chemical Safety Board (CSB) is reportedly concerned about the recent surge of accidents at oil and gas production sites across the U.S. and has undertaken a national campaign to teach young people about the dangers of being in close proximity to unsecured sites.

An educational video called, "No Place to Hang Out," was produced as part of that effort and chronicles the tragic story of two Mississippi teenagers who were killed in October 2009 in an oil tank explosion.

The CSB has produced many safety videos for industry on a variety of topics. One recent video, "Seven Lessons to Prevent Worker Deaths During Hot Work in and Around Tanks," is an excellent resource for employees that perform welding, cutting and other hot work around tanks that contain flammable liquids.

Growth in ACT-100 UST Capacity

ACT-100 UST capacities have increased over 75 percent on average during the past 20 years, as reflected in the graphic below.
Twenty Year History
Average Gallonage of ACT-100