

Barriers to Building, Part 5

Drinking-water, sewer infrastructure care, expansion vital to growth

Coordinated statewide grant program would help relieve the cost burden for municipalities.

By Paul F. Eno Editor

There's an invisible monster in the closet in many Rhode Island communities.

You're a developer with a great idea for a new subdivision. It's right where the community wants growth. You have the land, the zoning is right, and housing there is in demand. All your ducks are in a neat row. You're set! And that's when the invisible monster bursts out of the closet: drinking-water and sewer infrastructure that just isn't there.

In a major barrier to building in Rhode Island, drinking-water and sewer infrastructure that's too old,

has insufficient capacity, or just doesn't exist is holding back entire planned developments, village centers, redevelopment, and certainly the density they require.

It's a national problem.

"With each passing year, the nation's local governments are falling further behind in the effort to maintain and expand the infrastructure needed to keep communities vibrant and competitive," said the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) in its *Infrastructure Solutions: Best Practices from Results-Oriented States*, published in cooperation with the National Conference of State Legislatures.

"As the problems mount, they affect the ability of communities to sustain strong economies and provide amenities that contribute to a good quality of life."

The Rhode Island Builders Association and Grow

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FEATURED PRODUCTS AND SERVICES FOR MAY

Center Section

HOME SHOW COVERAGE AND PHOTOS

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This Old House to feature RIBA member

A South Kingstown home being built by Sweenor Builders Inc. will be featured during the 2017-2018 season by the hit PBS television series.

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Member wins Zero Energy Challenge

National Grid honors Demetrick Housewrights for Wakefield home in first-ever Zero Energy Challenge in Rhode Island.

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Education in the spotlight

RIBA members and their employees continue to benefit from tuition-free courses, including mandated continuing education.

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OSHA delays silica rule

OSHA has bumped enforcement from June to September.

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Home Show opener



Surrounded by officials, members of the trades, and career and technical students, Gov. Gina Raimondo, center, cuts the ribbon to open the 67th Annual Rhode Island Home Show on March 30th. Story and photos begin on page 7.

'This Old House,' RIBA member team up for 2017-2018 season

New construction by Sweenor Builders in Snug Harbor will be the show's 2017 New Idea House.

By Paul F. Eno Editor

When most people hear *This Old House*, they think renovation and restoration, right?

Well, that's far from the case when it comes to the hit PBS show's 2017 New Idea House, which happens to be "The Beach House at East Matunuck," a new construction being erected by none other than Rhode Island Builders Association member Jeffrey Sweenor of Sweenor Builders Inc.

The Rhode Island Builder found Jeff, his son, Ryan, and some of their crew at the South Kingstown site on March 29th.

"This Old House is involved in new

construction, too," Jeff explains. "They approached us about this project last summer. We do a lot of work, get a lot of exposure, and we do a pretty good job of promoting ourselves."

The folks from *This Old House*, now in its 38th season, certainly noticed.

"They said they like the way we do things, and they came to a couple of our jobsites," Jeff adds. "They said we're consistent with their brand."

In November, show host Tom Silva came to a Sweenor construction site on Ocean Road in Narragansett to film a segment on how to make a curved beam. That can be seen on YouTube at <http://www.sweenor-builders.com/sweenor-builders-receives-a-visit-from-this-old-house>.

Both *This Old House* and Wakefield-based Sweenor Builders are interested in supporting career and technical education (CTE), and Jeff and Ryan both attended the CTE support meeting, organized by RIBA, at the New England Institute of Technology (NEIT) on December 19th. Norm Abram of *This Old House* was one of the speakers.

As a matter of fact, Ryan, 23, is a student at NEIT.

Convenience by the sea

Located in the East Matunuck Farms subdivision at Snug Harbor, the 3,200 square-foot, three-story, shingle-style Beach House at East Matunuck will be the third annual New Idea House for the Emmy Award-winning television series. It will feature in several 2017-2018 shows, to be filmed beginning this spring. The home also will be highlighted in the October issue of



Jeffrey Sweenor, right, and son Ryan at the soon-to-be 2017 New Idea House in South Kingstown.

This Old House magazine.

Groundbreaking took place in January.

Built with weatherproof and energy-efficient materials, the house highlights outdoor living in this seaside setting: a deck, a wraparound porch, a patio and an outdoor shower. Inside, there's an open floor plan and three bedrooms, including a ground-floor master suite, a game room and a study.

The combination laundry and mudroom even includes a dog-washing station.

Project manager for The Beach House at East Matunuck is none other than Bruce Charleson, a longtime RIBA member

see *IDEA HOUSE* ...page 29

The Rhode Island Builder

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since 1951

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DEADLINES FOR THE JUNE ISSUE

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LOOKING AHEAD!

May 2nd: RIBA Monthly Board of Directors Meeting - 4 p.m. networking, 4:30 p.m. business meeting, RIBA headquarters, East Providence. RIBA members are invited to attend for informational purposes. For more information and to register, contact Elizabeth Carpenter, ecarpenter@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

 **May 5th: State-Mandated Continuing Education for Contractors - 5 Credit Hours** - Topics are Confined Spaces, Asbestos Awareness, Mold Awareness. *Details on page 19.*

May 8th-9th: OSHA 10-Hour Course - 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. each day at RIBA headquarters. Course is FREE for members and their employees with a \$40 materials/registration fee, \$125 for non-members with a \$40 materials/registration fee. For more information and to register, contact Sheila McCarthy, smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400. *Details on page 19.*

May 16th: 4-Hour Lead-Safe Refresher Class - RIBA headquarters, East Providence, 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. FREE for members and their employees, with a \$40 materials/registration fee. \$75 for non-members, with a \$40 materials/registration fee. You must pre-register for this class. No admittance without pre-registration and payment. To register, contact Sheila McCarthy, smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400. *Details on page 20.*

May 16th: Financial Resources for Growing Your Business - Presented by Independence Bank, RIBA headquarters, East Providence, 5 to 6 p.m. FREE for members and non-members. To register, contact Elise Geddes, egeddes@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400. *Details on page 20.*

May 18th: RIBA Breakfast, New Member Orientation, Open House and Networking Event - RIBA headquarters, East Providence, between 8 and 10 a.m. Participants may stay longer if they wish. This FREE event is held for new and current members who want to learn more about their member benefits and to meet the RIBA team. RSVPs requested. To RSVP or if you or your company would like to sponsor a breakfast, please contact Cheryl Boyd at (401) 438-7400 or cboyd@ribuilders.org.

May 18th: Presentation and Tour at Lighting & Design by J&K Electric - Sponsored by the Rhode Island Builders Association's Professional Women in Building Council, Lighting & Design by J&K Electric, 1253 Hartford Ave., Johnston, 6 to 8 p.m. Contact Lorena Voyer for more information: lvoyer@davittdesignbuild.com.

 **June 5th and 19th State-Mandated Continuing Education for Contractors - 5 Credit Hours** - Topic is OSHA Safety Review. *Details on page 20.*

June 13th: Developer/Subcontractor Meet & Greet with Rhode Island Housing - 5 p.m. at the Providence Marriott Downtown, 1 Orms St., Providence. This is a free networking event to connect affordable-housing developers and subcontractors with Rhode Island Housing and with each other. *Watch for more details.*

June 15th: Fourth Annual Networking Barbecue, Sponsored by Douglas Lumber, Kitchens, Home Center - 4-7 p.m. at RIBA headquarters. FREE for members and non-members thanks to Douglas, but registration is required. For information and to register, contact Elise Geddes at (401) 438-7400 or egeddes@ribuilders.org. *Watch for details.*

June 22nd: 8 Hour Lead-Safe Remodeler/Renovator Course - 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., RIBA Headquarters, East Providence. Course is FREE for members with a \$40 materials/registration fee, \$110 for non-members with a \$40 materials/registration fee. This course is required to obtain or renew a Lead Safe Remodeler/Renovator Certification, which is necessary for work in all pre-1978 buildings in Rhode Island. No admittance without pre-registration and payment. To register, contact Sheila McCarthy, smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400. *Details on page 21.*

June 22nd: RIBA's Professional Women in Building Council Meets - East Greenwich Yacht Club. Topic TBD. Contact Lorena Voyer for more information: lvoyer@davittdesignbuild.com.

More information, registration and payment for most RIBA events is available at RIBUILDERS.org.

 Indicates a RIBA-sponsored event.

 Designates a course eligible for Rhode Island state-mandated continuing education credits. Contact RIBA for confirmation.

S Class will be taught in Spanish.



David A. Caldwell Jr.

President's Message

Home Show teamwork shows RIBA strength

The 67th annual Rhode Island Home Show, this year incorporating the Garden and Flower Show, has concluded as a resounding

success. I had the opportunity this year to be fully exposed to the magnitude of this undertaking, and would like to reflect on a few thoughts about the Home Show and our association.

Historically, the Home Show is the Rhode Island Builders Association's signature event of the year in the state, and this year, huge crowds visited the Rhode Island Convention Center during the four-day event.

This year also saw RIBA absorb the Rhode Island Flower Show into the Home Show. Overall, our visitors expressed overwhelmingly positive feedback about the show.

What is truly amazing is the amount of work that goes into the planning and execution for the Home Show. Preparatory work takes place throughout the year and culminates with the show itself.

Starting with the Home Show Committee, the themes and ideas for the show are generated. Then the administration and logistics are planned. Finally, the plan must be executed. This is reminiscent

of mobilizing a military operation. Our staff at RIBA deserves full recognition for their efforts.

What is truly impressive is the voluntary participation of our members, without whom the success of the Home Show would not be possible. At literally every step of the process, RIBA members volunteered their time and specific areas of expertise. Whether it was planning the design of an exhibit, sending manpower to help build it, or providing a truck to pick up the last of the flowers during the cleanup, our members stepped up to the plate.

This reflects the *esprit de corps* in our membership, and I personally believe this directly contributes to the success of the enterprise. The energy and excitement generated by our members reflects positively on those who experienced the show. It is more than just the Rhode Island Home Show. It has become a "must see" event.

I thank all of our members for their assistance in making the 2017 Home Show a success. Any time something needed to happen, a RIBA volunteer was there to get the job done.

That says a lot about our members and our association, and bodes very well for the future as we continue to grow and expand on our successes.



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From the Board of Directors

Edwards: Know your state reps and be sure they know you

Also, Home Show attendance, revenues up, executive director says.

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

“You need to know your state representative on a first-name basis, and they should know you. That’s the way they’ll learn about your concerns.”

That was the advice from Rep. John G. “Jay” Edwards (D-Portsmouth, Tiverton), House majority whip, who addressed the Rhode Island Builders Association’s Board of Directors on April 11th.

“If your reps aren’t doing what you need them to do, you need to let them know,” said Rep. Edwards, a project manager for family-owned Carlin Construction Co., based in Old Saybrook, Connecticut.

“You are all small-business people. So am I. I came out of a family-owned construction company, so I understand your day-in-and-day-out operations, your needs and what you as a group are looking for,” said Rep. Edwards.

“I get calls from my constituents all the time.”

He discussed pending legislation that would affect small businesses and the residential construction industry.

“The only one who can make your position clear is you,” he said. “And be very clear on what you want. Don’t give them bill numbers: Be very specific.”

In thanking Rep. Edwards, RIBA President David A. Caldwell Jr. commented, “Among those in the General Assembly, Rep. Edwards is exceptionally knowledgeable about our industry.”

A lively question-and-answer session followed.

In other matters...

Executive Director John Marcantonio reported a very successful 2017 Home



Rhode Island House Majority Whip Rep. John G. Edwards, second from right, addresses the Rhode Island Builders Association’s Board of Directors on April 11th. Listening are Executive Director John Marcantonio, President David A. Caldwell Jr. and Secretary Timothy A. Stasiunas.

Show, with attendance up by 30 percent.

“Much of that had to do with the show’s great content, excellent marketing, and the addition of the Rhode Island Garden and Flower Show as an element in the Home Show,” Mr. Marcantonio said.

Revenues were up and exhibit space was sold out, he added, thanking the many members who helped before, during and after the show. Mr. Marcantonio singled out Home Show Committee Chairman Louis Cotoia for “carrying the weight and burden of putting most of the features together and managing hundreds of students.”

Mr. Cotoia cited Andersen Corp. and six supplier members for their support of the Home Show and of the career and technical education (CTE) students for the sake of workforce development. *Related story on page 12.*

“Andersen also is the primary sponsor for our CTE support this year. We had 240 students supporting Home Show setup on Monday (March 27th), 310 on Tuesday and over 340 on Wednesday,” said Mr. Cotoia.

Twenty-one schools were involved, six more than last year, he reported.

“This gave students and potential employers a chance to meet, work together and start building relationships.”

Past President Robert J. Baldwin and Mr. Marcantonio presented legislative and regulatory updates.

On the education front, the executive director stated that online courses would be fully operational by the end of April.

President David A. Caldwell Jr. informed the board about his and Mr. Marcantonio’s recent trip to the 2017 Atlantic Builders Convention, hosted in Atlantic City by the New Jersey Builders Association from April 4th through 6th.

“It was interesting to hear some of the same issues they face, along with some of their solutions and successes that we ourselves can build on,” Mr. Caldwell said.

“We also talked with builders from Pennsylvania, New York, Delaware and Maryland.”

In addition, there was a wide-ranging discussion about RIBA’s long-term planning.

RIBA members are invited to attend the public portion of the monthly Board of Directors meetings, which usually take place on the first Tuesday of each month at RIBA’s East Providence headquarters.

Please contact Elizabeth Carpenter at (401) 438-7400 or ecarpenter@ribuilders.org for more information.

Home Show draws big crowds, hundreds of students help out

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

The aisles were mobbed March 30th through April 2nd as the Rhode Island Builders Association presented the 67th Annual Rhode Island Home Show, which included the Rhode Island Garden and Flower Show. The event drew 30 percent more visitors than last year, initial reports indicated.

Exhibit space was sold out as the 2017 show featured some all-new, and many revamped, attractions, such as The Home Technology Experience, the 15-room Designers Show House, Landscape Solution Centers, the solar-powered greenhouse, and the first-time-ever Kitchen and Bath Showcase.

“We were starting from scratch with the Garden and Flower Show this year,” commented RIBA Executive Director John Marcantonio. “It will be growing as a Home Show category in the future.”

Mr. Marcantonio reported that Home Show attendance was up 30 percent, with new visitors drawn by the many fresh attractions.

Career and technical education (CTE) students from 21 schools and programs throughout Rhode Island constructed the primary exhibits and assisted with visitors during the show.

“We had 240 students supporting Home Show setup on Monday (March 27th), 310 on Tuesday and over 340 on Wednesday,” reported RIBA Secretary Louis Cotoia, who organized the operation. “Twenty-one schools were involved, six more than last year.”

Festivities opened with a ribbon-cutting on March 30th by Gov. Gina Raimondo, assisted by Secretary of State Nellie Gorbea and other dignitaries.

The serious work began days before, however, as hundreds of students, supervised by their instructors and contractors from the Rhode Island Builders Association, assembled segments of the exhibits they had built at their respective school workshops.



Norm Abram of This Old House, center, chats with Darin Silvia of YouthBuild Providence during Home Show setup at the Rhode Island Convention Center on Tuesday, March 28th. At right is RIBA Home Show Committee Chairman Louis Cotoia.



Visitors fill the aisles at the Rhode Island Convention Center on Saturday, April 1st, third day of the 67th Annual Rhode Island Home Show.

On the Tuesday before the show opened, participants received a visit from none other than Norm Abram of *This Old House* fame, who spent much of the morning touring the exhibits and consulting with students and instructors. Many of the adults told Mr. Abram that he had been their inspiration.

The *This Old House* organization has launched Generation Next to attract young people to join the residential construction trades and to support their education.

Watch for more information on this program in forthcoming issues of *The Rhode Island Builder*.

“It’s been very steady, with lots of good leads,” reported Thomas Kelly of Ecologic Spray Foam Insulation on Saturday, the show’s third day. “People are very interested in energy efficiency.”

RIBA thanks the Home Show’s many sponsors and partners! See the complete list on page 11.



The 67th Annual Rhode Island Home Show

The 67th Annual Rhode Island Home Show took place at the Rhode Island Convention Center from March 30th through April 2nd. Nearly 350 students participated in the setup, supervised by their instructors and RIBA contractors. Here they work on the 15-room Designers Show House.

Norm Abram of This Old House meets Instructor Michael Haynes of the Warwick Area Career & Technical Center.



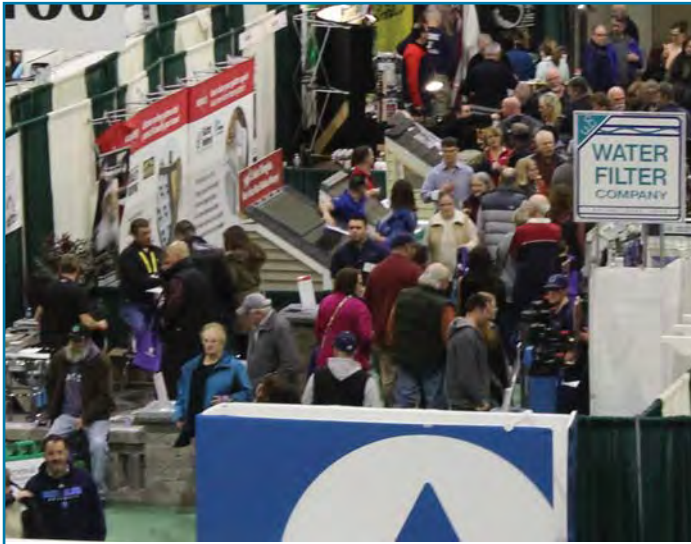
Students from West Warwick lay patio flooring tiles outside the Designers Show House on Home Show setup day number two, March 28th.



Horticulture students from Ponaganset High School prepare flower beds during Home Show setup.

During the second day of show setup, students from the Exeter Job Corps Academy assist students from the East Providence Career and Technical Center as they restore an old shed recovered from the woods of Rehoboth, Massachusetts, earlier this year. Freshly painted and decorated, the building became a "Farm Store."





▲
When the Home Show opens, crowds come pouring in.

Tom Kelly of Ecologic Spray Foam Insulation cultivates a few leads.



▼
Visitors browse the flowers in the Solar Greenhouse, built by students. ▼



Member wins Zero Energy Challenge



On day one of the Home Show, Stephen C. DeMetrick of DeMetrick Housewrights, center, was honored as winner of the first 2017 Zero Energy Challenge from National Grid. With him are William Dawson of Pawtucket Credit Union and Laura Rodormer of National Grid.

By Paul F. Eno Editor

In a first for National Grid's Residential New Construction Program, a home builder who went above and beyond has won the 2017 Zero Energy Challenge.

The builder: Stephen C. DeMetrick of DeMetrick Housewrights, based in Wakefield and a longtime member of the Rhode Island Builders Association. The award was presented during ceremonies at the Rhode Island Home Show on Thursday, March 30th.

"Our Energy Efficiency Program for new homes has been so successful that 45 percent of the new homes exceeded our baseline," said Laura Rodormer, energy efficiency senior analyst for the Residential New Construction Program at National Grid.

"So we established the Zero Energy Challenge for builders who wanted to be even better," Ms. Rodormer added. "This is the first award."

RIBA, Pawtucket Credit Union and Arnold Lumber Co. are among the sponsors for the Zero Energy Challenge, which encourages homes that literally use "net zero" energy for heating and electricity. The home Mr. DeMetrick recently completed in downtown Wakefield is "zero energy ready" because the solar panels still had to be installed as of March 30th.

"This program is a tremendous asset for my customers, providing up to \$4,000 in incentives," Mr. DeMetrick said. "For me, in business, it's an asset because it lets people know

see **CHALLENGE ...page 29**



The 67th Annual Rhode Island Home Show



▲ Earning their stripes at the Home Show as always are Lori Santiago and Sue LaSalle of Consolidated Concrete Corp.

◀ Congressman James R. Langevin visits the show on day four, with state Rep. Camille Vella-Wilkinson (D-Warwick), RIBA President David A. Caldwell Jr., and Executive Director John Marcantonio.



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The Residential Construction Workforce Partnership

And the members of our hard-working Home Show Committee!

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Andersen Excellence Dealers boost CTE

Arnold Lumber Co. first in line to support, attract future labor to housing industry

By Paul F. Eno *Editor*

“Two years ago, Bruce Charleson (then sales manager at Arnold Lumber) said to me, ‘We want you involved with the career and tech schools, the students, and the state Dept. of Education, because we recognize the importance of getting young people into the industry.’”

So says Louis Cotoia, who works outside sales for Arnold Lumber Co., the first Andersen Excellence Dealer in Rhode Island to answer the manufacturer’s call for suppliers to support workforce development in the state.

Why Lou? Because Bruce knew that he has a passion for seeing young people discover the residential construction industry, then find rewarding careers either with builders or suppliers.

Another mark in Lou’s favor: He was and is very active in the Rhode Island Builders Association, a leading platform for education in the industry for both current

see *ARNOLD ...page 26*



Rhode Island Builders Association Director of Membership and Education Cheryl Boyd displays a Certificate of Special Recognition given by Gov. Gina Raimondo, at left, to Louis Cotoia of Arnold Lumber Co., center, for supporting career and technical education. With them is RIBA’s John Bentz, another CTE supporter.

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Member Profile: Tom D'Angelo of The Terry Lane Co.

From regulator to regulatory watchdog

The 18th century French philosopher Voltaire (of all people) said: "Behind every successful man is a surprised mother-in-law." Had Voltaire been a contractor in 21st century Rhode Island, he might have said, "Behind every successful home builder is someone who knows the ins and outs of land use, along with the occasional surprised regulator."

Few members of the Rhode Island Builders Association have as much knowledge about the land-use climate as Thomas E. D'Angelo. In fact, Tom might rank among the great explorers and safari guides when it comes to navigating the tangled regulatory jungle.

"Dealing with Rhode Island regulations is always the biggest challenge. I've done big jobs and little jobs, and today it's mostly residential single lots. Depending on where it is, building one house can be just as challenging as a subdivision," says Tom, who characterizes himself as a "land-use facilitator."

His two enterprises are Chepachet-based Terry Lane Co. and Progressive Realty Group. Tom has been a licensed real estate broker since 1974, specializing in land and site selection and acquisition.

"We're land-use facilitators and real estate practitioners," Tom sums up. "We help people decide how to best use their land."

Tom works with engineer Robert F. Angilly Jr., RPE; and surveyor Francis P. Dimitri, PLS, to do land reviews, environmental consulting, soil evaluations, excavation work, septic systems, along with residential real estate and development.

One busy guy, Tom has served in one capacity or another on RIBA's Board of Directors since 1990; co-chairs, along with Timothy A. Stasiunas of The Stasiunas Companies, RIBA's Environmental Committee; and he has seats on the association's Legislative Committee and the State Wetlands and OWTS Task Force. He has served on the Commercial Appraisal Board of Realtors®.

Tom's unique background might help explain his current position as regulatory navigator *extraordinaire*. Growing up in Smithfield, he graduated from Lincoln Senior High School in 1967, then attended Northeastern University.

"In the late '60s and early '70s, the environment was a hot topic, so I thought I'd better study it," Tom recalls.

After taking environmental courses at Bryant College and the University of Rhode Island, Tom became a licensed soil evaluator



Tom D'Angelo enjoys life at the RIBA Clambake. With him is fellow RIBA member Susan Kelly of Fenix Real Estate.

and worked for the Rhode Island Dept. of Health which, at the time, was responsible for approving septic systems. In 1975, this jurisdiction passed to the Dept. of Environmental Management (DEM).

"So, I found myself working for DEM. If I'd stayed there, I might be director by now," Tom quips.

The big year for Tom was 1984. He was in Gloucester by then, and he decided to go into business for himself. That's when his Terry Lane firm was born. Tom's association with RIBA has been long and active. He joined in 1988.

"President Steve Hopkins recruited me for the Board of Directors in 1990, and I've been very active ever since," Tom states.

"To me, RIBA's advocacy program and the way the association monitors and deals with regulations is of tremendous value."

He also takes advantage of RIBA's tuition-free courses for members, especially the ones now required to fulfill state-mandated continuing-education for contractors, and DEM licensing.

"RIBA helps me stay informed on septic-system regulations, flood-plain and FEMA issues and much more. Of course, between my business and my involvement on those RIBA committees, I'm in the middle of those issues myself!"

For many years, Tom served on RIBA's DEM Task Force. One sobering memory is of that group's meeting on Sept. 11, 2001.

"I remember that morning well. It was the last day of our meetings about some revised regulations. Someone came in and told us what happened."

What does the future hold? "Well, I could have retired by now. But things are busy and that's the way I like it!"

The Terry Lane Co.

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Manter returns to National Lumber



Michael Manter

National Lumber is pleased to announce the return of Michael Manter as vice president of millwork.

"This is Mike's 34th year in the building materials industry, and his well-rounded knowledge of the industry has allowed him to assess the big picture in an organization to accomplish the goals of that business and his own," a company statement said.

Mr. Manter began work in a lumberyard at the age of 18. Over the years, he has driven trucks, done outside sales, and managed and run lumberyards. Previously, he was National Lumber's inside sales manager, then specialty sales manager.



RIH reports best year ever

Rhode Island Housing (RIH) has announced that 2016 was its biggest year in more than 40 years of mortgage lending, while 2017 is shaping up to continue that momentum, the agency said at its Annual Homebuying Breakfast on March 21st.

RIH said it helped more than 1,600 Rhode Island families buy homes in 2016.

"We are thrilled to announce that 2016 was our strongest year ever, with an all-time annual record of 1,625 first mortgages funded," said RIH Executive Director Barbara Fields.

Last year, RIH first mortgages increased 29 percent over 2015 and, so far in 2017, they outpace 2016 by over 39 percent.



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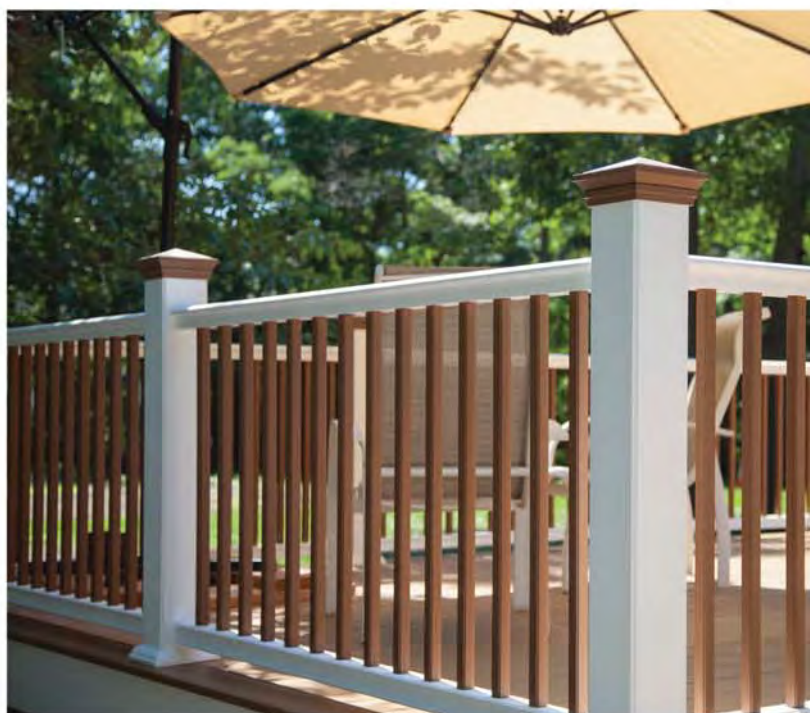
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Continuing Education for Contractors

Courses headlined in **RED** on the Education Pages qualify for state-mandated continuing education requirements for contractors. All contractors in Rhode Island must take five credit hours of continuing education within 24 months of their next renewal date.

Five Credit Hours: Confined Spaces, Asbestos, Mold

May 5th

WHEN: Friday, May 5th, 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

WHERE: Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914

COST: FREE for members and their employees, with a \$15 materials/registration fee. A \$150 charge for non-members and a \$15 materials/registration fee.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One week before class. No admittance without pre-registration and payment.

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Sheila McCarthy at smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Confined spaces, asbestos awareness, and mold awareness will be the subject of this course.

You must pre-register for this course. There will be no admittance without pre-registration. Payment is due upon registration. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.

Lunch is included.

For complete details on Rhode Island's continuing education requirements, see page 2 of our January 2017 issue.



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OSHA-10 Course

May 8th-9th

WHEN: May 8th and 9th, 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. each day.

WHERE: Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914

COST: FREE for members and their employees with a \$40 materials/registration fee, \$125 for non-members with a \$40 materials/registration fee.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One week before class

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Sheila McCarthy at smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

This course is intended for safety directors, foremen and employees. It highlights the areas of major safety concerns for anyone on a jobsite.

Each person completing the course will receive a copy of the OSHA Standard 29 CFR Part 1926 and an OSHA-10 certification card.

Everyone working on a municipal or state construction project worth \$100,000 or more must have this card, including anyone involved by contract to provide goods or services on the jobsite, not including people delivering materials and supplies/products to a construction site. Fines can range from \$250 to \$950 per offense.

You must pre-register for this course. There will be no admittance without pre-registration. Payment is due upon registration. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free.

Lunch is included.



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Four-hour lead certification refresher course

May 16th

WHEN: Tuesday, May 16th, 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

WHERE: Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914

COST: FREE for members and their employees, with a \$40 materials/registration fee. A \$75 charge for non-members and a \$40 materials/registration fee.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One week before class. No admittance without pre-registration and payment.

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Sheila McCarthy at smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

This is a four-hour Renovation, Repair and Painting (RRP) Rule refresher class with Scott Asprey of Risk & Safety Management, for contractors who have their lead renovator/remodeler certification and whose certificate is up for renewal.

The class will review lead-hazard controls and update attendees on any changes to state or federal regulations. You must pre-register for this class. In addition, a photo is required for your certificate. Please send a head shot only, similar to a passport photo.

E-mail the photo smccarthy@ribuilders.org at least five days before class to allow for processing. There will be no admittance to the class without pre-registration, this pre-registration photo and payment.

Participants must provide proof of employment with member company upon registration for class to be free.



Financial Resources for Growing Your Business

May 16th

WHEN: Tuesday, May 16th, 5 to 6 p.m.

WHERE: Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914

COST: FREE for members and non-members.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One week before class.

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Elise Geddes at egeddes@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Presented by Independence Bank, a member of the Rhode Island Builders Association, this informal workshop on securing financing will be led by Independence Bank President A. Catanzaro.

The workshop is intended specifically for small-business owners who are looking for ways to grow their businesses.

Topics to be discussed will include:

- Assessing your business's needs
- Access to capital
- Where the business plan fits in
- The application process
- Loan size, schedule and terms
- Clarification of fees
- Understanding credit
- Other technical support resources

The workshop is free, and members and non-members are welcome.

Refreshments will be served at 4:30 p.m.



Five Credit Hours: OSHA Safety Review

June 5th, June 19th

WHEN: Monday, June 5th and 19th, 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

WHERE: Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914

COST: FREE for members and their employees, with a \$15 materials/registration fee. A \$150 charge for non-members and a \$15 materials/registration fee.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One week before class. No admittance without pre-registration and payment.

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Sheila McCarthy at smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

Join instructor Scott Asprey for an "OSHA Safety Review" to improve your knowledge and compliance, and avoid accidents and costly fines, as the Rhode Island Builders Association presents five credit hours of state-mandated continuing education for contractors.

Subjects to be covered in this course will include a review of jobsite safety rules, fall protection, ladders and scaffolding, and confined spaces. You must pre-register for this course. There will be no admittance without pre-registration. Payment is due upon registration. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free. Lunch is included.

For complete details on Rhode Island's continuing education requirements, see page 2 of our January 2017 issue.



8 Hour Lead-Safe Remodeler Course

June 22nd

WHEN: Thursday, June 22nd, 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

WHERE: Rhode Island Builders Association headquarters, 450 Veterans Memorial Pky #301, East Providence 02914


COST: FREE for members and their employees, with \$40 materials/registration fee. \$110 for non-members, with \$40 materials/registration fee. Lunch is included.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: One week before class. No admittance without pre-registration and payment.

FOR INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER: Contact Sheila McCarthy at smccarthy@ribuilders.org, or call (401) 438-7400.

This course is required to obtain or renew a Lead Safe Remodelers/Renovator certification, necessary for work in all pre-1978 buildings. This course covers the EPA's Renovation, Repair and Painting (RRP) requirements in Rhode Island and Massachusetts.

A written exam is given at the end of the course. A passing grade allows attendees to apply for licensing through the Rhode Island Dept. of Health and the EPA. Pre-registration and a photo are required for your certificate. This must be a head shot only. E-mail it to smccarthy@ribuilders.org at least five days before the class.

No admittance without pre-registration and the photo. Payment is due upon registration. Participants must provide proof of employment with a member company for the class to be free. 

RIBA reserves the right to limit the number of attendees from a single company at courses taught on-site.

For all courses, employees must provide proof of employment with a member company upon registration for class to be free of tuition charges.



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RIBA advocacy is a great member benefit, but your help is vital



Steven Carlino

One of the greatest benefits of belonging to the Rhode Island Builders Association is the legislative advocacy program.

Members are aware that our committee and many RIBA members (hopefully all!) are involved in communication with their state and local lawmakers on issues that concern our industry.

Some members might not realize that this advocacy goes far beyond our State House.

Thanks to RIBA's affiliation with the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), there is mutual support on state and national issues that affect all our businesses.

Every member of RIBA is automatically a member of NAHB, with the long list of added benefits that brings.

Coupled with other member benefits, NAHB's legislative advocacy throughout 2016 provided members with a combined value of \$7.38 billion, or \$5,950 per housing start in 2017.

In 2016, the NAHB advocacy team leveraged the association's power to get pro-housing measures passed in Congress, challenge regulations that do more harm than good, and level the playing field against

powerful interests that could do lasting damage to the housing industry.

NAHB also serves as a resource for RIBA's own advocacy by providing a huge number of industry information sources, housing statistics and legal advice, along with the annual NAHB Legislative Conference. *Related story next page.*

NAHB works constantly to keep us all informed. For more information, visit NAHB.org.



Roland J. Fiore

RIBA's Legislative Committee

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NAHB slates Legislative Conference for June 14 in Washington

Members of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), representing many state and local home builders associations, from around the nation, will be on Capitol Hill on Wednesday, June 14th.

Participating members will meet with their respective congressional delegations to discuss issues of vital interest to the home building industry.

The Legislative Conference is a highlight of the NAHB Midyear Board Meeting, to take place from June 13th-17th this year, marking NAHB's 75th anniversary.

The day will begin with registration at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, beginning at 6:30 a.m.

There will be a morning briefing at the



hotel, headquarters for the NAHB Midyear Board Meeting, on key issues. There will be a guest speaker as well.

After a day of Capitol Hill office visits and meetings, the Legislative Conference concludes with an evening reception back at the Wardman Park.

NAHB's Legislative Conference alternates with Bringing Housing Home™, when our builders, remodelers and trade partners meet with their members of Congress in their home legislative districts. Bringing Housing Home returns in the spring of 2018.

For details on participating, contact Michael Blake Bezruki, (202) 266-8542 or e-mail mbezruki@nahb.org.



OSHA delays silica rule

National Association of Home Builders

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) announced on April 9th that it will further delay the enforcement of the crystalline silica standard that applies to the construction industry.

Originally scheduled to begin June 23rd, enforcement is now set to begin on September 23rd.

OSHA stated in a press release that the delayed implementation is "due to the unique nature of the requirements in the construction standard" and that it will conduct "additional outreach and provide educational materials and guidance for employers."

However, the rule will continue to be challenged by NAHB and its fellow members of the Construction Industry Safety Coalition (CISC).



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Eric Beck

Chief of Groundwater and Wetlands Protection, RIDEM

Born and raised in Rhode Island, Mr. Beck is a civil engineer, licensed as a professional engineer. He attended Merrimack College, where he studied civil and environmental engineering. He was been with the Dept. of Environmental Management (DEM) for 27 years, and has been involved in developing and implementing a broad range of regulatory programs. For the past 17 years, he has supervised the Rhode Island Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (RIPDES) Program. Most recently, Mr. Beck has helped develop and implement the state's Storm Water Design Manual and has coordinated DEM's Office of Water land-development permits. He assumed his current post in March.



THE BUILDER: What are the major issues in Rhode Island when it comes to groundwater and wetlands?

BECK: One of the unique things about New England in general and Rhode Island in particular is that our groundwater, our streams, lakes, ponds and Narragansett Bay are very interconnected. So, DEM is working across many fronts to promote a healthy bay and healthy communities.

Rhode Island is a gorgeous place to live, and we host many visitors, over 7 million last year. Like our residents, they enjoy our clean water and coastal habitats. So keeping our state an attractive place to live, visit, work and play demands that basic needs be met. This includes availability of clean water, places to recreate and a good economy. Our families rely on it.

That's what keeps us busy!

THE BUILDER: Will your division assist with training for related fields: RIPDES, soil erosion plans and permitting, stormwater, OWTS, etc?

BECK: Training and education are among the most important things we can do to improve implementation of our programs. We have many existing training programs, and I plan to work diligently to maintain those and to build on them when I can. As your readers are probably aware, DEM and the University of Rhode Island (URI) cooperatively provide training on the onsite wastewater treatment system (OWTS) issues.

I'm coming from dealing with the Rhode Island Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (RIPDES) and the new storm water rules. I was involved when the new storm water design manual was released in 2011, and we did some training.

There's a similar program for storm water training (for municipal officials) that's funded by the state Dept. of Transportation

and administered by URI. Couple that with the URI program for OWTS designers, inspectors and maintainers, and we hope to potentially develop similar training and professional development opportunities for storm water contractors.

My predecessor here at DEM, Brian Moore, has moved to DOT, and he's now in charge of that program. So, between the two of us, we can work with other state agencies and our higher-education institutions to develop a program that provides many training opportunities.

I'll continue to provide training presentations to real estate professionals, and stakeholders like the Rhode Island Builders Association, as needed. But I'd like to strengthen that by working with Ron Gagnon, DEM's chief of technical and customer assistance, to pursue additional avenues for training and to provide clear and precise guidance that will help streamline our processes here.

THE BUILDER: Will you work to fulfill an age-old dream of our readership: To make regulations consistent, clear, precise and predictable?

BECK: That's a goal I'm very familiar with. Working with the Office of Regulatory Reform (ORR), beginning some five years ago, it's been a big focus of ours. Certainly, when we issue new regulations or reissue existing ones, that goal is primary for us: To make them clear, precise and predictable.

We want regulations to be understandable to the public as well as to the practitioner. In the RIPDES program, I was actually studying ways to do that. There's actually some pretty good guidance on that from the EPA.

They've demonstrated that you're able to get better compliance with fewer words! If people understand the regulations, compliance increases, and people can more easily do their jobs more efficiently, so it serves us all. So being clear and predictable serves not only the practitioners but also the agencies.

So this certainly is one of my goals, not only in regulations but in producing the types of guidance and outreach we provide, internally and externally.

THE BUILDER: Do you intend to keep plan review turnaround times to a minimum?

BECK: That's a great question, and that's something we want to focus on. Our work with Gov. Gina Raimondo's Lean Government Initiative has been ongoing. DEM has made amazing progress over

see *INTERVIEW...next page*

www.ribuilders.org

INTERVIEW...from previous page

the last five years to improve our customer service and to sharpen our own internal practices. I'm a strong proponent of lean government and of using those tools to better execute our jobs.

I've been lucky enough in the past to have staff who embraced that concept of lean government and lean initiatives. So I've been able to learn quite a bit about how that could be implemented. And I look forward to bringing that into the rest of the our Office of Water Resources, where there might not have been as much exposure to it. It starts with good planning at our end.

For example, in one of our recent projects, we used the lean process to streamline construction permitting. We consolidated our application forms for four programs into one. That sounds simple, but it makes managing these programs easier, and it certainly makes life easier for the applicant. It's been a huge success for the department, and I plan to continue that work.

One strength I bring to this program is performance-based permitting. That means we try to streamline applications and reviews, making the permit conditions clear and predictable, then measuring the results over time. So I'd like to see my people in the field more, interacting with customers as these projects are built, so we can assure that the permits we issue are effectively carried out.

Direct contact in the field goes a long way toward educating our customers and applicants.

THE BUILDER: Staffing issues have much to do with turn-around times. As the economy improves and the number of plan review applications goes up, do you have the staff to handle them in a timely manner?

BECK: That's something I'm still getting my hands around, what our numbers are. But we're working with the Dept. of Administration across the board here at DEM, developing systems to track our performance internally, so we can see how well we're doing.

Right now, our backlogs are manageable and our times are good across all five of our permitting programs. Staffing is always a concern, but as we adopt some of these internal processes and become clearer in our application, our work will improve just by eliminating waste and duplication.

In her budget this year, the governor did add two positions in Water Resources, noting how important it is to keep our programs well-staffed. So far, so good.

THE BUILDER: Will your division consider property owner rights and economics in making decisions?

BECK: Yes, to the extent the regulations allow. Economic considerations are usually built into the regulations, and we clearly have to be sensitive to that.

Personally, I'm sensitive to property rights, the cost of compliance and the cost of doing business. It comes down to responsible government, and balancing economic considerations with environmental stewardship is among the key building blocks to responsible government.

THE BUILDER: Do you see the need for better maintenance and expansion of the current drinking water and sewer infrastructure as one way to protect groundwater and wetlands?

BECK: Yes, but I'd add one more piece of infrastructure to that list: storm water drainage. We need to look at all three of these pieces of infrastructure in the same way because they're all interconnected, as are our water resources.

The need for better infrastructure maintenance is clear and present. I hope not only to encourage that but to address it through better education and outreach to municipalities.

When it comes to storm water and drainage, we've entered into consent agreements with Providence and Warwick to identify, maintain and, in some cases, retrofit or upgrade their existing drainage systems. This is a high priority for clean water. We're also working with the Water Resources Board and the drinking-water suppliers. Quality is definitely a focus for us.

We've been working with Newport to protect their reservoir quality. Nearly 70,000 Rhode Islanders rely on that drinking-water supply. We've been working with the Dept. of Health (DOH) to monitor these waters too. That's important so the suppliers can see what infrastructure improvements they need.

Very shortly, we'll release an assessment of Rhode Island's wastewater treatment facilities and their vulnerability to climate impact. That's a very important study, and it includes recommended adaptive strategies to upgrade these facilities. This is a big expenditure for these municipalities.

We'll work closely with the governor and other partners to identify funding sources for this important work.

THE BUILDER: That brings us to the serious money that will have to be found. Our own research indicates that close to \$1 billion will be required to maintain and upgrade Rhode Island's current drinking water and sewer infrastructure, never mind expand it or deal with the storm water drainage factor. Do you see any realistic way of funding all this?

BECK: Rhode Island, to our advantage, is well positioned to leverage federal funds, as they become available, with our state revolving loan fund and our Infrastructure Bank. We have the Clean Water Action Fund also.

Historically, the federal government hasn't made large investments in local infrastructure, but, given this need, that might change, and we'll take advantage of that.

We're quite proud of the Green Economy Bond, approved by voters in November. That includes \$3 million for storm water mitigation. We plan to get requests for proposals out later this year. And there will be matching grants to support green infrastructure and other projects. Businesses are eligible to apply.

We also have the \$3 million flood-mitigation grant this year. That will involve flood-plain improvements, reconnecting streams that have been disrupted, improving culverts and more.

More realistic ways to fund, though? A good question. I was reading some of the documents from our Statewide Planning Division on water and sewer utilities. The State Guide Plan for water quality has a lot of good information. Part of that indicates the levels of funding we have for sewer and water infrastructure.

Looking across New England when it comes to utility rates for this, we're on the low side. We've kept costs down. But when it

see **BECK** ...page 26

ARNOLD...from page 12

and future contractors. Lou was already serving on the RIBA Board of Directors and was known for his good ideas about how to support career and technical education (CTE).

Today, he is RIBA's secretary, chairs the Home Show Committee, and serves on the Education and Workforce Development Committee. He is a key player in the Residential Construction Workforce Partnership (RCWP), an industry workforce-development coalition with RIBA as its hub.

"There are few young people coming into the industry," Lou says. "Almost every employee you meet has been there for 20 or 30 years, and many are retiring. The folks at Arnold Lumber realize that this is a crisis, and they've given me the time and support necessary to do something about it."

Getting the show on the road

For the past two years, then, Lou and Cheryl Boyd, RIBA's director of membership and education, have been traveling to schools all over the state, talking about careers in residential construction with the students, teachers and guidance departments.

"Frankly, their jaws all hit the floor when we tell them what these trades pay," Lou reports. "So by getting the pipeline set up



Louis Cotoia of Arnold Lumber Co., along with RIBA's Cheryl Boyd and Betty Bernal, visits juniors at Central Falls High School on April 12th to talk about careers in the residential construction industry.

in these schools and by getting these students interested, we're helping the industry, business and the economy."

On April 12th, Lou and Cheryl, along with RIBA Latino Outreach Coordinator Betty Bernal, were at Central Falls High School, talking with the juniors.

"We spoke to each group and engaged them with empowering video presentations, for an hour each," Lou says.

"It looks like we have students ready for work in entry-level residential construction jobs, who are graduating, and looking for full- and part-time jobs in the industry!"

Lou and his team plan to visit schools statewide over the next month, promoting construction careers and encouraging students to use the RCWP online Jobs Bank (*related story next page*) to build and post their resumes.

Arnold Lumber Co. is among six Andersen Excellence Dealers, including Coventry Lumber; Douglas Lumber, Kitchens & Home Center, National Building Products, Riverhead Building Supply and United Builders Supply, are working directly with the state's several CTE programs to provide materials and logistical support for hands-on projects that will help give students the skills they need for high-paying careers in the residential construction trades.

Look for another featured dealer in our June issue.

BECK...from page 25

comes to our drainage infrastructure, there aren't many realistic ways to fund that. We're looking at grant funds and sources of that kind, but that investment could be a challenge.

We know what we're up against when it comes to drinking water and sewer, but it seems that we have a way to go when it comes to storm water drainage infrastructure.

THE BUILDER: How do you see home building being affected by groundwater and wetland issues in the future?

BECK: Builders should be aware that we're working on revised freshwater wetlands regulations. These will strengthen wetlands protection but also streamline the permitting process.

The big factor that will help the regulated community involves our two-year project with ORR and the secretary of state to recodify all our regulations. And DEM has a lot of regulations!

So what recodifying means to the public is that, instead of having to go on our website, download regulations and read through them, the secretary of state has given us a two-year deadline to recodify so the regulations can be online, where people can go to a website, search easily and see all links.

This will be a significant improvement in terms of communication. The output will be transparent, clear and available. It will make life easier for the builders.

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Jobs Bank jumps to 235 candidates, 545 employers

Hitting a new high in April, the online Jobs Bank at www.RCWPJobs.com continues to grow, showing that there are many more jobs available than there are skilled workers to fill them.

This all means that better skills training is needed, along with incentives for those with skills to stay in Rhode Island so they can build careers here.

As of April 11th, 545 employers (up from 537 in March) and 235 job candidates (up from 217 in March) had signed up for free accounts at www.RCWPJobs.com. There were 59 jobs posted (up from 53 in March and 58 in February, but down from 65 in January), indicating that some job candidates who are available are being hired.

The Jobs Bank is a tool created by the Residential Construction Workforce Partnership (RCWP), with the Rhode Island Builders Association as its hub.



"Members interested in hiring students don't want to miss out and should quickly post jobs and/or search the resumes for entry level candidates," said Cheryl Boyd, RIBA's director of membership and education.

"School will be out soon, and the seniors are looking for jobs," Ms. Boyd added.

Whether you're an employer or a job seeker, sign up for a free account at RCWPJobs.com. For more information, contact Ms. Boyd at (401) 438-7400 or cboyd@ribuilders.org.



NAHB: Labor shortage the top concern for builders in 2017

National Association of Home Builders

More than four out of five builders expect to face serious challenges regarding the cost and availability of labor throughout 2017, according to a recent survey of members that ran in the monthly NAHB/Wells Fargo Housing Market Index.

The questions asked builders about the problems they confronted in 2016 and expect to face through the remainder of this year. Topping the list is the cost and availability of labor, a significant issue for 78 percent of builders in 2016.

A full 82 percent expected this to remain their No. 1 issue in 2017.

This is a problem that has been steadily gaining steam over the past few years. To put it in perspective, just 13 percent of builders rated labor issues an important concern in 2011, followed by 30 percent in 2012, 53 percent in 2013, 61 percent in 2014 and 71 percent in 2015.

National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) economist Ashok Chaluvadi provides more analysis on the labor shortages in his recent Eye on Housing blog post.

Visit <https://nabnow.com/2017/01/top-concern-for-builders-remains-unchanged-in-2017>.



Students win big at SkillsUSA event



Dereck Penta of the Warwick Area Career and Technical Center, left, displays his gold medal and certificate for taking first place in the SkillsUSA Rhode Island 2017 Carpentry Competition. With him is bronze medal winner Cristian Lopez of the Providence Career and Technical Academy (PCTA). Silver medal winner Carlos Ferman of PCTA is not shown. The competition took place at the New England Institute of Technology on March 10th. Awards were presented on April 4th.

BARRIERS...from page 1

DRINKING WATER INFRASTRUCTURE:



Smart Rhode Island (GSRI) are among the groups that have teamed up to identify and address the problem of inadequate infrastructure

in the state.

John Flaherty, GSRI's deputy director, summed up the problem: "When it comes to growth, there's a disconnect between what communities are aiming for and their ability to deliver on the infrastructure needed for it," Mr. Flaherty told *The Rhode Island Builder*.

"Many communities throughout the state have gone through the difficult task of determining what they want for their long-term growth and where they want it. But they've stalled because they're unable to attract the private investment because there's insufficient drinking-water and sewer infrastructure, even in some urban centers."

The situation in Massachusetts is somewhat different, however.

"Attleboro was able to overcome just such a situation, thanks to an infrastructure investment supported by the state," Mr. Flaherty explained.

The city had targeted the area near its railroad station for residential growth, but the sewers were very old and lacked the capacity. Thanks to a grant from the MassWorks Infrastructure Program, however, the sewers were upgraded. The resulting seven-story residential development is now 100 percent occupied, according to Mr. Flaherty.

"The same developer now plans a 200-unit development in the same area," he said.

How to pay for it?

If Rhode Island could come up with a similar program to MassWorks, it might go a long way toward banishing that invisible monster. In fact, there are companion bills in the state House and Senate to do just that, Mr. Flaherty said.

Improving drinking-water and sewer infrastructure in Rhode Island, and how to pay for it, will be among the topics at the Innovative Approaches to Investing in Infrastructure to Support Community & Economic Revitalization Forum, sponsored by GSRI, to be held at the Rhode Island Convention Center on May 5th. Among the speakers will be MassWorks Program Director Erica Kreuter.

For Rhode Island, the funding issue won't be easy. In a 2013 state-by-state study, the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) said that Rhode Island needed an investment of at least \$428 million over the subsequent 20 years just to keep its drinking-water infrastructure in line with federal standards, never mind expanding it to accommodate growth.

Rhode Island does have some funding sources for these system upgrades and expansions, including the EPA's State Drinking Water Revolving Fund Program and the Rhode Island Clean Water Finance Agency (RICWFA).

A huge and complex task

There are over 2,600 miles of sewer lines in Rhode Island,

many of them over a century old. They provide service to all or parts of 30 of the state's 39 cities and towns. There are 19 major wastewater-treatment facilities, purifying roughly 100 million gallons of human and industrial sewage every day.

In long-established urban areas like Providence, sewer infrastructure can date back to the 1890s. A comprehensive assessment of the age of sewer lines wasn't available as of this writing.

The Dept. of Environmental Management (DEM) estimated last year that over \$340 million will be required simply to maintain or restore existing systems. Among the immediate issues when it comes to sewage and stormwater disposal is the existing capacity: It's not enough to contain the frequent overages that result in closures of Narragansett Bay and even coastal areas to swimming and fishing.

There is no central plan to maintain and upgrade these wastewater systems.

"There are 19 different facilities plans, and they have never been compiled into a master list," said Susan Kiernan, deputy chief of Surface Water Protection for DEM's Division of Water Resources. "The municipal systems have needs surveys, where towns prioritize sewer projects they're actively working on. But they're not obligated (to have them). They have to get approval (from DEM) to build them but they don't have to tell us what they're planning."

Projects to extend sewers generally require DEM review and approval.

"At least 12 communities have identified the potential need to expand sewers to targeted areas," Ms. Kiernan said. "Warwick is the most active by continuing its phased implementation of sewer in the Greenwich Bay area and other portions of the city."

Add stormwater to the mix

Eric Beck, the new chief of Ms. Kiernan's division at DEM, said the state's infrastructure needs go beyond drinking water and sewers.

"I would add a third need: better stormwater infrastructure," Mr. Beck said. "The need for better infrastructure maintenance is clear and present. I hope not only to encourage that but to address it through better education and outreach to municipalities."

See the in-depth interview with Mr. Beck on page 24.

A true barrier to building

Meanwhile, until adequate funding sources are found, municipalities bear most of the burden for drinking-water and sewer maintenance. And the costs of even a minor expansion to accommodate growth can be difficult.

"A major concern is the ability of municipalities to maintain infrastructure that might be installed in association with a subdivision or new development," said Warren Town Planner Kate Michaud.

"While the initial construction costs are paid for by the developer, there is often little or no excess capacity in public works budgets for long-term needs," Ms. Michaud said.

"Planned preventive maintenance is not a popular topic, but it's my opinion that it needs to receive more attention on the municipal level in general. The common argument is that we can't pay to maintain what we have, so why build more?"

Watch *The Rhode Island Builder* for more on this issue.



IDEA HOUSE...from page 2

and a past director. Also working on the house is Union Studio Architecture & Community Design, along with Denise Enright Interior Design.

Open house planned for July 15th

The house will be complete by July 1st, according to Jeff, and there will be an open house on July 15th. Jeff maintains ownership of the house and will sell it after the production and promotion are complete.

By September, *This Old House* plans to have an online information center about the house, including a style guide, video tours, photo galleries, and tips from project participants on energy efficiency and universal design.


"When you work on a project like this, there are sponsors, but it's not like you get everything for free, but you do get many fine items at discounted process," Jeff explains.

RIBA supplier members involved

Among the RIBA member suppliers involved with the project are Andersen Corp. and Arnold Lumber Co., according to Jeff.

As of this writing, sponsors included Alliance Laundry Systems,

American Standard, AZEK, Caesarstone, GAF Roofing, Clopay, GCP vycor enV-S, Hayneedle.com, House of Antique Hardware, Icynene, LifeSpan, Olympic, Panasonic Ventilation, Select Comfort, Simpson Door Company and Walpole Outdoors.

Watch *The Rhode Island Builder* for more information as the project continues. 

CHALLENGE...from page 9


what we're doing and what we're selling."

Except for some imported windows, the house was standard-built with materials from local suppliers, Mr. DeMetrick explained.

During energy-efficient new construction, major renovation or retrofitting, National Grid provides technical expertise for contractors, especially when it comes to insulation, sealing and inspections, according to Ms. Rodormer.

"National Grid also educates the homeowner so they know how a house actually works," she stated.

Builders who achieve a zero-energy home win \$500, she said.

For more information on National Grid's energy-efficiency programs for contractors and homeowners, visit <https://energy.gov/savings/national-grid-electric-residential-energy-efficiency-incentive-program>. 



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