

EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS

A ROBUST RECYCLING PROGRAM FOR ROOFING SYSTEMS IN NORTH AMERICA

Presented by Rod A. Pfannenstiel • Reported by Steven Drennan

Rod Pfannenstiel is the vice president of Nationwide Foam Recycling, Inc. His main focus is to provide recycling services for large commercial roof replacement projects. He discussed various roof system materials that can currently be recycled. These included the following:

- Mechanically attached rubber membranes (EPDM)
- Mechanically attached plastic membranes (TPO, PVC)
- Foam insulations (polyisocyanurate, EPS, XPS)
- Composite insulations
- Stone ballast
- Concrete pavers

Also discussed were materials that cannot currently be recycled. The presenter believed that in five to seven years, these materials will also be considered recyclable:

- Asphalt roofing products (except shingles)

- Fully adhered single-ply roof assemblies
- Adhered insulation (adhesive or asphalt)

Pfannenstiel discussed sustainability, opining that for it to be a viable option, it must be simple and economical. Recycling currently exists throughout the U.S., but landfills are approximately 60% full of construction and demolition (C&D) materials, much of which is recyclable. The new International Green Construction Code (IGCC) is expected to require 50% of C&D to be diverted from the landfills.

Recycling companies can help the project teams (owner, consultant, contractor) with the logistics



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of recycling that have made companies shy away from participating in the effort. They can help consultants properly specify recycling as a requirement in the contract documents.

The presenter discussed a few possible items made from recycled roofing materials. They included picture frames, walk pads, artificial turf, and equipment supports.

He concluded with a short question-and-answer period and the following reasons why we need to

recycle: 1) It is the right thing to do for future generations and our planet, 2) it is easy to do, and 3) it can save money on larger-scale projects.