

Steel Tank Institute Steel Plate Fabricators Association

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NEWS

FALL CONFERENCE SHOWCASES STRATEGIES FOR REDUCING FABRICATION COSTS 2005 CONSTRUCTION OUTLOOK FOR REFINING & PETROCHEMICALS & A TOUR OF A TEMPER LEVELING MILL

LAKE ZURICH, IL. – November 29, 2004 – The Annual Pressure Vessel Conference of the Steel Plate Fabricators Association, Division of STI/SPFA, kicked off on November 9 in Houston, Texas with 63 current and potential members in attendance. “Business is booming for many fabricators in the pressure vessel and special fabrication markets”, said Michael Kilkenny, President & CEO of Taylor Forge Engineered Systems in Paola, Kansas. “We would like to encourage more companies to get involved in STI/SPFA, especially in the area of ASME code representation and technical issues”, said Kilkenny, leading a discussion of additional services members would like to develop for this market segment.

Dale Beck, Strategic Accounts Manager for ESAB Welding & Cutting Products, reviewed operator training programs, and the importance of proper set-up and operation of the cutting machine to reduce the number and improve the quality of the cuts. Encouraging companies to request assistance from their welding suppliers, Beck noted that many times companies fail to provide consistent training after installation of new equipment, and later hires do not have the benefit of proper training in use of the equipment. Establishing an ongoing program helps to identify issues such as a minor repair to an automatic height control, which can dramatically improve the performance of the equipment and reduce costs.

John Doshier, Senior Director of Jacobs Consultancy Inc., created a picture of improved construction rates in key market areas, paralleling a projected 3.-3.5 % growth rate for the overall economy in 2005. Because the US must expand refining capacity by 1 million barrels per day to meet the demand over the next 10 years, business is projected to develop in the following areas:

- Coker projects in the US & world-wide over the next 5-6 years, to transform heavy oils into higher grade, light sweet oils
- Projects to extract oil from Canadian tar sands
- Liquified natural gas projects
- Coal & coke gasification projects
- The Alaskan Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Project is also expected to go forward

The Conference concluded with a tour of the IPSCO Texas temper leveling mill in Houston. Participants thanked Peter Vojvodich, Operations Manager, and Chris Ovsenar, Assistant General Manager of IPSCO Texas, for a fascinating look at plate operations.

The Steel Tank Institute and the Steel Plate Fabrications Association are Divisions of STI/SPFA, an association serving companies fabricating steel tanks, piping and pressure vessels for use in the petroleum, food, water and chemical processing industries. STI/SPFA provides training and certification, quality assurance inspections, develops industry standards and specifications, produces safety manuals, and serves as a liaison to regulatory and code authorities. For further information, contact Anne Kiefer at STI/SPFA, 570 Oakwood Road, Lake Zurich, IL 60047, Phone: 847/438-8265 Fax: 847/438-8766 E-mail:

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