

Pennsylvania



LICA

Since 1970

PENNSYLVANIA LICA WAS AWARDED CHAPTER OF THE YEAR AT THE NATIONAL LICA CONVENTION IN LAS VEGAS!



NATIONAL LICA CHAIRMAN BOB CLARK PRESENTED THE CHAPTER OF THE YEAR TROPHY TO PRESIDENT BARRY MUTZABAUGH JR, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JOANIE MICKSKY & HUSBAND DAN MICKSKY

A great big thank you to all our Associate Members who participated in our PALICA State Convention in February @ Toftrees Golf Resort. For those that presented information classes during the weekend, we very much appreciate you!!

- **BEG GROUP** – Joe Greco
- **BEST LINE EQUIPMENT LEASING**-Mike Smith, Nate Metzel, Kevin Miller, Jon Bartley
- **BRON (MATT CARTER) – SPONSORS OF ASSOCIATES NIGHT**
- **D.E. GEMMILL** – Colleen Gemmill
- **DIG PREVENTION CONSULTING** – Brenda Reigle/Lori Mendez
- **DRAIN TILE SAFETY COALITION** – Deanna Centurion and Travis Albers from TC Energy
- **EARTHRAIN – SMART CONSTRUCTION/ Gary Miller (SPONSORED LUNCH ON FRIDAY)**
- **GROFF EQUIPMENT** – Steve Latimer
- **PA ONE CALL – 811** – Erika Dominic
- **PRINS INSURANCE/Bruce Mosier & Dave VanEssen & Mike Zidek/UFG (SPONSORS OF THE CLOSING BANQUET)**
- **SHORQUIP SUPPLY INC**-John Francese
- **TOPCON SOLUTIONS STORE** – Cory Mason, Randy Miller, Brian Cervone

PALICA
775 Mercer Road
Greenville, PA 16125 **TO:**

Hello all,

First off, I would like to say thank you to everyone who helped make our State Convention a huge success. It was the best convention we have had in a long time. It was built and planned around the surveys that you filled out last year. Proof that your voices were heard. If you attended the convention, please fill out and return the survey to Joanie (one is located inside this newsletter you can mail or email to her). Even if you did not attend but have an idea of a topic to present and discuss, your input is always greatly appreciated.



Then two weeks after our State Convention, Dan, Joanie, Crystal & I headed to Las Vegas to attend the National Convention and ConExpo in Las Vegas. Everyone's hard work last year really paid off; PA LICA was named Chapter of the Year! Thank you again to everyone that worked so hard to help us achieve this award.

We have a lot of ideas and plans on the books for 2023, so get involved where you can. Upcoming events can always be found on our website and in the newsletters. Every little bit helps and gives you the opportunity to see what is going on with PA LICA. The 2024 State Convention will be held on the eastern side of PA due to construction at Toftrees Golf Resort in State College

Well, you have listened to me long enough. Please be safe out there and keep the dirt moving.

Thank you,

Barry Mutzabaugh Jr.

PS – The Board of Directors voted to donate 30% of our Scholarship Auction proceeds from the convention to the LICA Educational Foundation for Veterans and we were proud to present that check, to LICA CEO Jerry Biuso and the Executive Director of the Foundation, Eddy Mahen, in the amount of \$1700 during the Associates Night event at the National LICA Convention in Las Vegas in March.



WELCOME OUR NEWEST MEMBERS TO PALICA!

Contractor Members:

Brex Enterprises
Alicia Brentzel
2 Main Street, Ste A
Irwin, PA 15642
724-515-7073

Shaw Excavating LLC
Brian Shaw
262 Eakin Road
Harrisville, PA 16038
724-967-2161

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Earthbrain Smart Construction
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8510 Chippewa Road
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UPCOMING EVENTS for this year:

811 SHOWS & Ag Progress Days in State College that PALICA will have a booth at:

- Drexel brook Conference Center 5/16/23
 - Allentown Fairgrounds 5/18/2023
 - York Fairgrounds 6/15/2023
 - Nittany Valley Sports Ctr, State College 9/14/2023
 - **Ag Progress Days -August 8th-10th, @ the Russell Larson Ag Research Ctr in State College**
-
- PALICA PICNIC, BOARD MEETING & SCHOLARSHIP **PRESENTATIONS** @ the home of Dan & Joanie Micsky, 775 Mercer Road, Greenville, PA 16125 on Saturday, July 1, 2023- meeting at 4pm, dinner and a bonfire to follow. All food and beverages will be provided. Please bring chairs.
 - **DOT EVENT @ LCTI 6PM on 9/14/23 Lehigh County Technical Institute (DINNER INCLUDED)**

PALICA AWARDS HANDED OUT AT THE STATE CONVENTION



Nate Mentzel accepted the Associate of the Year award from President Barry Mutzabaugh Jr. for Best Line Equipment who were very helpful in supplying equipment for several DOT events held at Toftrees Resort.

Crystal Mutzabaugh was awarded Lady LICA of the Year from Nancy Micsky and Evelyn Cottrell for being a tremendous support to her husband, President Barry Mutzabaugh Jr.



RECAP FROM THE 2023 PALICA STATE WINTER CONVENTION IN

FEBRUARY

We started out with our board meetings on Thursday afternoon, followed by our pizza party meet and greet Thursday night with many first-time attendees.

Classes started bright and early Friday morning and went throughout the days on both Friday and Saturday. The Trench Box Building class below was a huge hit thanks to Monica Rakoczy & Carl Lamb



The ladies went to Taste Buds Kitchen to make a yummy brunch on Friday and attended a Sip n' Paint class on Saturday.



Our Associates Night's theme was "Welcome to our PALICA Hoe Down" and everyone enjoyed a great BBQ buffet and drinks. Thanks to all our Associates for coming out and to BRON for sponsoring the evening~



NATIONAL LICA JOINS OVER A 100 BUSINESS GROUPS CALLING FOR DEATH TAX REPEAL

In a letter being delivered to Congress today, National LICA signed on to support the Death Tax Repeal Act of 2023. Letter below:

We appreciate your work to lead the country towards a commonsense tax code that does not impose a destructive double or triple tax at death. We support full and permanent repeal of the federal estate tax for the following reasons:

Repealing the death tax would spur job creation and grow the economy. Many studies have quantified the potential job growth that would result from estate tax repeal. Last year the Tax Foundation found that the US could create over 150,000 jobs by repealing the estate tax. A 2012 study by the House Joint Economic Committee found that the death tax has destroyed over \$1.1 trillion of capital in the US economy – loss of small business capital means fewer jobs and lower wages. Lawrence Summers, former Secretary of the Treasury under President Clinton; Alicia Munell, member of President Clinton's Council of Economic Advisors; Joseph Stiglitz, a Nobel laureate for economics; and Douglas Holtz-Eakin, former CBO Director have all published work on the death tax's stifling effect on job growth and the economy.

The death tax contributes a very small portion of federal revenues. The estate tax currently accounts for approximately one half of one percent of federal revenue. There is a good argument that not collecting the estate tax would create more economic growth and lead to an increase in federal revenue from other taxes. A 2016 Tax Foundation analysis found repeal of the death tax would increase federal income taxes by \$145 billion over 10 years using a more realistic, “dynamic” economic analysis.

In addition, the death tax forces family businesses to waste money on expensive insurance policies and estate planning. These burdensome compliance costs make it even harder for business owners to expand their businesses and create more jobs.

A super-majority of likely voters support eliminating the death tax. Poll after poll has indicated that a super-majority of likely voters support repealing the estate tax. Typically, two-thirds of likely voters support full and permanent repeal of the death tax. People instinctively feel that the estate tax is not fair. A 2016 state poll by YouGov conducted in South Dakota showed 75 percent of voters supported repealing the estate tax.

The death tax is unfair. It makes no sense to require grieving families to pay a confiscatory tax on their loved one's nest egg. Far too often this tax is paid by selling family assets like farms and businesses. Other times, employees of the family business must be laid off and payrolls slashed. No one should be punished for fulfilling the American dream.

The negative effects of the estate tax make permanent repeal the only solution for family businesses and farms. Your legislation will help America's family businesses create jobs, expand operations, and grow the economy. We thank you for your continued leadership on this important issue.

(Signed by 130 Groups Representing Family Businesses)

Posted in [LICA News](#)



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- Gain Transparency on Job Sites



SAVE LIVES

- Reduce the Number of Accidents and Deaths
- Risk Mitigation and Loss Control
- Reduce Insurance Premiums

**AN INTERESTING PROSPECTIVE FROM OUR OUTGOING NATIONAL
LICA PRESIDENT CHRIS WAGNER in relation to:
*A class he attended from our safety speaker Monica Rakoczy.....***

In May I had the privilege of attending a PA 811 Safety Day. Along with Jerry Biuso, LICA CEO, and Eddy Mayen, Executive Director of the Veterans Educational Foundation, we manned a booth for PALICA to promote PALICA and the Foundation. A good day of recruitment and promotion became a great day as Monica Rakoczy of EnterTraining Solutions who gave the keynote presentation. If you have never attended one of Monica's safety training sessions, you are missing something.

Monica never does the typical boring session, and this day was no different. Minutes into her talk she made an unusual statement. She told us that she alone could not make our industry safe. She needed our help. Her premise was simple. A person could attend a trench safety program and leave without retaining much of the specifics. Yet if that same person were told a story about a trench collapse that one of us witnessed and explained why the trench collapsed, the inevitable injuries that occurred, the setback to the schedule, and the cost to the company, the odds that that person would never enter an unsafe trench again went to a million to one.

Monica was asking all of us in the room to be story tellers. To put away our phones and laptops and get personally involved with another person. I am pretty sure she was looking at me when she said, "All you 'old timers' (which she quickly changed to 'experienced people') need to tell your stories."

I thought about how true this is. Our industry has always been one based on the experienced handing down their knowledge to the newcomers. I also thought about how important this is to LICA. I, like all Presidents before me, have one primary goal, which is to increase membership and recognition of the LICA brand. I will repeat Monica's words. I need your help. Become a storyteller. We all have a story about why we joined LICA. A story about what we have gained from being a member. A story about how another LICA member helped us out of a jam. A story about lifelong friendships we have made across the country.

A story about how we have become a more profitable and safer company because of our membership in LICA. A story about why many of us decide to help run the state chapters and ultimately help run the National Association.

While I was speaking to a possible new PALICA contractor, I mentioned how PALICA was running a forklift certification course and if he were a member, he could save \$150, more than a third of the dues. This is not something one sees in the benefits list; not something he would know if I did not tell him. NJLICA recently ran a defensive driving course for free for its members. Several members brought their employees. The company would not save any money on its auto liability insurance, but the employees could save 5% on their personal policies.

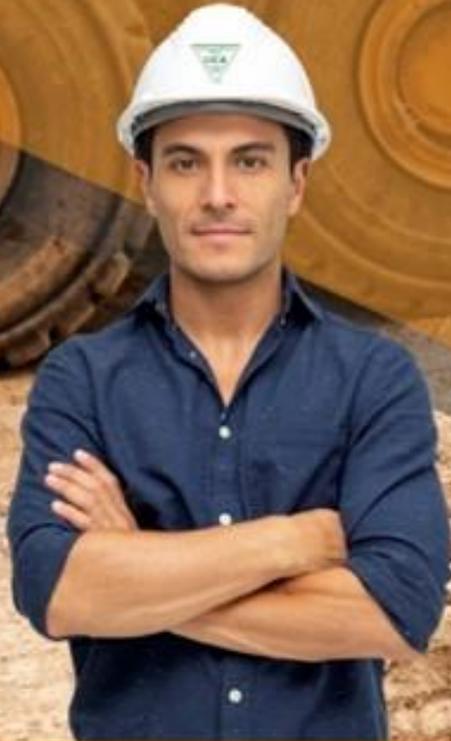
This is an incredible perk for an employee, but again not something listed in benefits. Both instances are of a story that needs to be told. This does not happen when a brochure is handed out, when a mailing is sent, when an email is sent, or when we simply ask someone to join LICA. There needs to be a story. A personal connection. A connection that needs to continue after you convince someone to become a member of LICA.

Become a storyteller. At the coffee shop, at a meeting where new potential members are present, at a field day, at the equipment dealer, anytime you run into a contractor. Thousands of stories are told at National Meetings. I know we all love to tell them. Anyone who has come to know me knows I live to tell stories. Take your stories outside of LICA. Hand down your reasons for being a member. and do not forget to hand down how to be safe at the work site both to LICA members and anyone on your sites. Become the voice of LICA and safety. Help Monica and me do our jobs.

**Chris Wagner
President National LICA**



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SEPTIC TANK MYTHS LINGER – reprinted with permission from **Onsite Installer Magazine – January 2023--Jim Anderson & Dave Gustafson**

Every so often we have homeowners or even septic professionals ask us what needs to be done to enhance or improve bacterial action in the septic tank. Most often these questions arise either around the startup of a new system or after the tank has been pumped. As a septic professional we're sure you also get these questions — along with legitimate questions about the long-term operation of the system you install.

It is always interesting to us how some of the myths or misinformation gets incorporated or discussed right along with best practices, making it hard sometimes to sort out the facts from fiction. Recently we saw a video broadcast on local TV stations where a wastewater professional discussed how homeowners should protect and maintain their septic tanks.

The video started with the professional highlighting that it was important to have your septic tank checked on a 3-5 year basis. He stated the tank should be pumped and inspected on a regular interval. This would remove the solids and offer the opportunity to inspect the structural condition of the tank, such as for the presence of cracks or corrosion. He mentioned downstream problems due to restrictions or blockages that may be present and the importance of having and maintaining the effluent screen at the outlet baffle. So far, so good! All items we would all agree are important.

Say no to garbage disposal

The next topic covered was that extra water delivered to the septic system can cause it to be overloaded. It was rightly pointed out that leaky toilets or faucets can deliver a lot of water over time, which just may be enough to push a system into failure. This is an area where the homeowner can really help by making sure leaky fixtures are repaired or replaced as soon as possible. Consistent hydraulic overloading is one of the quickest ways to cause system failure.

To check toilets, it was suggested that adding food coloring to the supply tank can indicate if the toilet is leaking if the homeowner raises the question. Again really good advice for a homeowner, particularly if they are new to septic systems.

A recommendation was made to avoid using a garbage disposal for all the reasons we talk about in our classes and column. More water is added, more solids are added to the system, some solids added are harder to break down and others are harder to settle — all of which leads to the need for more frequent maintenance and checking. The best way to avoid these problems is not to have a garbage disposal. **(con't next page)**

SEPTIC TANK MYTHS LINGER - CONTINUED

Next up was how important it is to make sure the bacteria in the tank are healthy and working to break down the organic waste material. The expert mentioned that repeated use of harsh chemical additives can upset bacteria in the tank, making it operate less efficiently again resulting in increased maintenance. Examples of harsh chemicals include drain cleaners, antibacterial products, medications, laundry bleach and other bleach-containing cleaning products. A big thumbs-up; very important! Keep those bacteria working.

Wait for it...

Then the punchline came from the service provider being interviewed: “One of the best things a homeowner could do to promote the health of their tank was to add a quart of buttermilk to the tank every month.” What? Where does this come from? It’s one of those myths that somehow gets started somewhere and gets passed along word of mouth until it’s so ubiquitous it must be true.

Think about this for a minute though. Let’s just say we have a household that uses 300 gallons of water per day. Over a 30-day period, that is equivalent to 9,000 gallons of liquid. Adding a quart of anything just based on sheer volume of wastewater generated is literally like a drop in a bucket and will have no effect on bacteria in the tanks, especially since the suggestion was that it would provide necessary food for the bacteria. In 9,000 gallons of wastewater, there is plenty of food for the bacteria; they do not need any additions.

This fits in with a couple of other myths we still hear, but a little less often than in the past. “To start up a new tank, I should add some dead meat to provide something for the bacteria to eat until the tank starts to work.” Dead meat could be in the form of chickens, leftovers from locker plants etc. The bottom line is bacteria present in sewage from the house will be more than enough to get the tank started.

Another myth is, “I should leave a few inches of sewage in the bottom of the tank when it is cleaned so the tank can get started again.” There are sufficient bacteria carried in the incoming wastewater and left over in the tank even after a thorough pump out to get the tanks started again. However, the tank should not be washed or disinfected, a question some homeowners have asked their service provider.

We are sure you have your own set of myths you encounter, but there is no substitute for proper operation, inspection and maintenance of a tank to keep the system working as intended.





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THIS IS THE SURVEY PASSED OUT DURING THE CONVENTION-IF YOU DID NOT ATTEND, SOME OF THESE QUESTIONS WON'T PERTAIN TO YOU---PLEASE ANSWER ALL THOSE THAT DO. ANY INPUT WILL BE USED TO STRUCTURE NEXT YEAR'S CONVENTION SO PLEASE GIVE UP YOUR THOUGHTS ON WHAT YOU'D LIKE TO SEE FOR TOPICS AND CLASSES PRESENTED IN 2024. EMAIL THEM TO: PENNSYLVANIALICA@GMAIL.COM or by REGULAR MAIL PLEASE.

2023 PALICA WINTER CONVENTION SURVEY-PLEASE FILL OUT& RETURN

1. If this is your first time attending a PALICA convention, or if you've attended in the past, what were some of the topics you liked the best and why?

2. Were there any topics you didn't find interesting or didn't pertain to your line of work?

3. What topics would you like to see covered next year at the convention?

4. If this is your first time, would you come back again and why?

5. Did you find the social aspects of the weekend a good opportunity to get to know others and relax after a day or classes?-(feel free to elaborate)

6. If you would like to sit on any of our committees or on the board of directors, please let us know which ones and if you'd be available to attend 4-5 meetings a year (usually on a Saturday late afternoon).

7. Did the cost of registration provide the value you expected and/or received? (please explain)

Name: _____ Date: _____



Basics of Evaluating Mound Systems for Real Estate Transactions

by Todd Stair with permission from Onsite Installer

When evaluating any onsite system, always start by collecting any records of the system (plan, soil test, etc.) from the local regulating agency. This aids in making your report more accurate. Include whatever documents you find with your final report to your customer.

There are those who will run water into the system as a step in the system evaluation, but I caution not to do so. The most important reason is there is already a court precedent saying that the act of running water into the system caused the failure. The regulatory agency that required water be run into the system lost in court. So don't go against a court precedent. The second reason is there isn't any uniformity nor rationale for how much water to run in a system. It won't be emulating 24-hour usage in any way, as most systems are designed based on max use in 24 hours.

Start at the tanks. If the covers are exposed, are they locked? Any exposed covers should be locked to prevent unauthorized access (i.e. protect curious children from falling in). What is the condition of the cover and risers?

Septic tank

As with all onsite evaluations, note the level in the septic tank prior to pumping. DO NOT allow anyone to pump the tank prior to you observing the level in the septic tank. You want to make certain you know if the level is normal (bottom of outlet pipe,) high or low prior to pumping.

A mound system should also have a pump or dose tank or chamber after the septic tank or septic chamber. If you have a high level, is the level also high in the next chamber or tank? Or maybe there is a blockage between the two. Low level is an indication that the system could have recently been pumped, or the tank might not be watertight such as a crack.

If the tank has a normal level, are there any signs that the system had a high level at some previous time, such as toilet paper on top of the baffle or on top of an effluent filter? A tank that has maintained normal levels will be very dark on the walls below the normal level line and quite clean above the normal level line. Are there signs above the normal level line that water has been above normal at some time in the past?

After noting the level in the tank, next have the tank pumped. What is the condition of the tank, the baffle, the effluent filter? Do not ever enter a tank for an evaluation as it is a dangerous confined space. A thorough evaluation will include use of a mirror on a long pole and a powerful spotlight to observe inside the tank. If the tank is shallow enough, I always turn on the flash on my cellphone camera, reach my arm in and take lots of pictures I can look at closer on my desktop.

Pictures are important and would make excellent support for your final report. I've had pictures of a severe crack in a tank. The owner called a different pumper who said there wasn't a crack. When I sent the picture to all involved the other pumper admitted never looking in the tank. I cannot recommend pictures enough. My current phone is three years old and has over 25,000 pictures on it. If there is more than one septic tank or a two-chamber tank, repeat the above for each tank or chamber. **(con't on next page)**

Pump or dose tank

Follow all of the above for the pump tank but remember, the pump tank has a different 'normal' level. Pump tanks in most cases will have two float switches hanging inside, one for the pump on/off and one for the alarm. Level should be below or at the lowest float switch.

There are differing thoughts on this but pump this tank dry also. If you don't there is no way you will accurately be depicting the actual condition of the tank.

If you can safely trip both floats without entering the tank using a long-handled tool, confirm each float performs its function: one turns on the pump and one activates an alarm. Is there a filter in the pump tank? Your report should make note of any filters and that they and the tanks themselves require regular maintenance. Are the electrical connections made outside the tank in a watertight box?



Make sure all manholes are securely replaced and locked for safety. This is so vitally important that I highly recommend either having a line right on your field notes that manhole covers were securely replaced and locked and/or take an 'after' picture of every evaluation you do showing the manhole covers were properly and securely replaced before you left the site.

The mound

If possible, have somebody else trip the pump float before the tank is pumped dry while you are standing at the mound. Watch for signs of any effluent surfacing at grade or flowing to the surface of the ground from the mound. This would be considered a failed system if that occurs.

Whether or not you see water gushing out of the mound while the pump is running, walk the entire length of the mound. Walk on top and walk the long sides. Failure of a mound occurs when a clog or biomat is mature enough to restrict water flow to such a point that water flows out of the mound to the ground surface. You will typically see failure of a mound about halfway up the (long) sides typically (but not always) along the downslope side. I've seen effluent coming out of the top and ends of mounds as well. If water is coming out of a mound to grade or to ground surface, the system should be considered failed unless it can be proven that the water you are seeing is due to a broken pipe or fitting. In that case it is still in failing condition until the broken pipe or fitting is repaired and it can be shown that water no longer comes out of the mound when the pump is on.

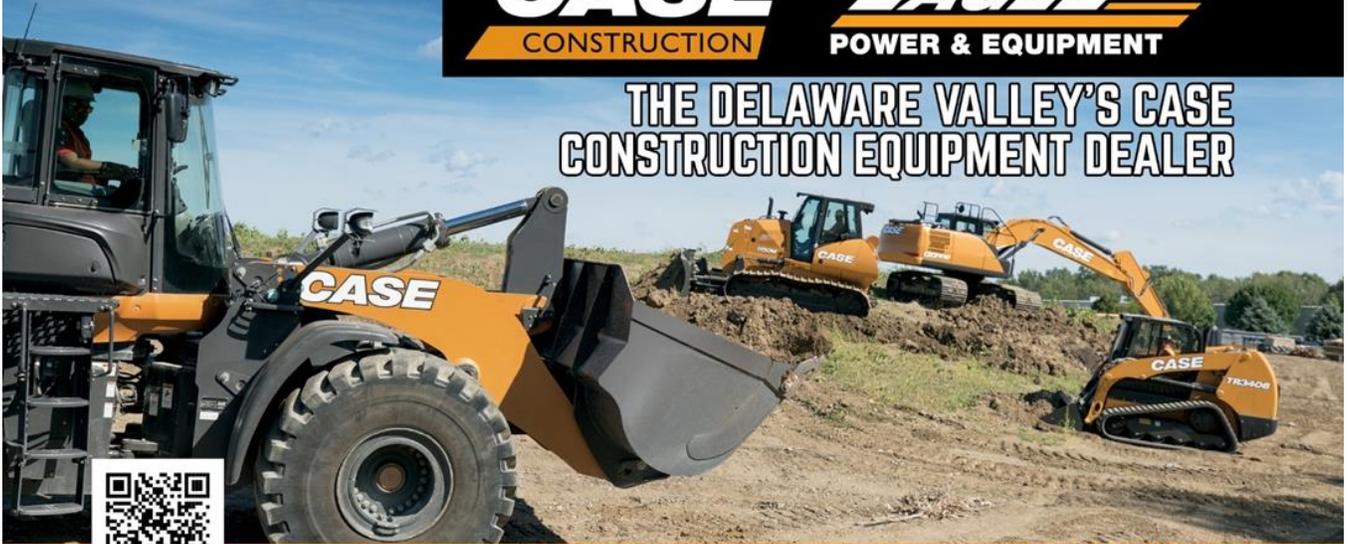
There should be observation pipes on the mound. Note whether there is water observed in them or if they are dry. Water in observation pipes is not in itself a failure. Water in observation pipes is merely an indication that a biomat has matured to the point that it is slowing the water's rate of infiltration into the mound. If the mound has flush out valves, the system evaluation is a good time to flush the laterals before the pump tank is pumped out.

Make certain your report is accurate and thorough. Never skew your report based on whether your customer is a buyer or seller. No matter who your customer is, the report should be a thorough, honest depiction of what was observed. ■

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Want to offer your employees quality health care benefits at an affordable price? The Land Improvement Contractors of America has partnered with World Insurance Associates to bring you the Association/Affinity Group Health Plan for companies of all sizes. Now you can offer your employees the best health plans available at exclusive rates. And it's fast and easy to enroll!

QUALITY PLANS AND PROVIDERS

Our program gives you and your employees access to top national providers and benefits.

- Exclusive program offers a First Health PPO and a reference-based pricing plan utilizing PHCS Network
- Unlimited major medical coverage for groups of all sizes
- Nationwide network of doctors and pharmacies
- ACA compliant plans
- Monthly enrollment on the first of each month

COMPETITIVE RATES AND BENEFITS

You can choose among multiple plan designs to ensure the right fit and budget for your company.

- Deductibles ranging from \$1,000 to \$7,350
- Monthly rates as low as \$340 for a single employee
- Monthly rates as low as \$1,020 for a full family—regardless of age and size of family
- Premiums locked in until October 1, 2023

EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE AND SUPPORT

You can leverage our expertise before, during, and after your plan is implemented.

- Experienced team guides you through the process
- Fast and easy steps to get enrolled and insured
- Secure online questionnaire protects your employees
- Ongoing personal support for claims and billing

THREE EASY STEPS TO START SAVING TODAY!

STEP 1

Send World Census and current invoice

Employees Complete online questionnaire.

In only 10 minutes, you and your employees can complete our online personal health questionnaire. The online form is secure, encrypted, and HIPAA compliant.

STEP 2

Review and choose plan.

Choose the plan that is right for your employees and complete the group contract and ACH form.

STEP 3

Get enrolled and receive ID cards.

Contact Rachel LaChance to get your questions answered and to submit completed documents. Employees will receive their ID cards directly.

Our experienced team is always available to help at any point during the process.

Call or email today to learn more about the program and savings.

Vince Basciano | 973-871-1512
vincentbasciano@worldinsurance.com

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BEYOND DEDICATED.

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You've worked hard to construct a reliable business.

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