

Insulation Outlook Magazine Writer's Guidelines

Insulation Outlook is the official publication of the National Insulation Association. *Insulation Outlook* strives to provide substantive, well-written articles on issues of interest to the mechanical insulation industry. The following are guidelines for articles, not editorial/opinion pieces.

LENGTH

For features, the preferred range is generally about 2,000 to 3,000 words. Shorter pieces are about 1,500 words. Sidebars, charts and photos are counted separately from the primary article.

PREFERRED FORMAT

- Save document in Microsoft Word 2003, PC format.
- With the exception of Word tables, provide each chart or graphic in a separate document. TIFF files are preferred, minimum 300 dpi. JPEG files also accepted. **Graphics should be saved or labeled with the desired caption.**
- Remove:
 - Hard returns, unless to indicate paragraph
 - Headers and footers
 - Multiple spaces or tabs used to line up type
 - Multiple columns

AUDIENCE

Our audience made up of over 11,500 subscribers in the industrial and commercial insulation industries. Almost 80% of them are insulation end users: mechanical engineers; plant managers and owners; insulation contractors; architects; specifiers; and facility and maintenance engineers. They are more than likely familiar with insulation concepts, but want more hands-on information. We strongly recommend that writers review the circulation charts and data (p.1-2) in the media kit to give them a better understanding of their audience

- Be evocative and descriptive. For example, to describe a humid day, you can say, “When I walked outside, it was humid and the air was thick.” Or you could say, “When I walked outside, I started breathing soup.” The first example states a fact; the second paints a picture.
- Pepper your article with your successes and trials, along with historical perspective.
- Many readers may also be experts on your topic, and NIA's Technical Information Committee (TIC) reviews all articles. Reviewers will not hesitate to contest what they consider misleading or incorrect information. Be sure to thoroughly research your topic and provide documentation within the article for any claims or assertions that may differ from commonly accepted principles within the mechanical insulation industry.

STRUCTURE

- Make each word count.
- Begin with a general overview of the subject (two to three paragraphs) and lead into a step-by-step review of the issue.
- Include a *suggested headline* and *subheads* to highlight significant sections.
- Present details as “bulleted” checklists, facts, figures and recommended actions.
- Use resource lists and sidebars for more information, models and samples.

- Articles that have a marketing bias will be rewritten or rejected. Please use generic terms and don't promote one product or brand and/or denigrate another.

STYLE

- Write in the active voice, putting your subjects before your objects. (Instead of writing, "The plan was approved by our department," write: "Our department approved the plan.") Avoid wordy "of" phrases. (Instead of writing, "The uses of insulation are many," write, "Insulation has many uses.") Active voice reduces excess words and gives writing momentum.
- Maintain neutrality. Don't promote one product or brand and/or denigrate another.
- Product and/or brand references should be avoided or kept to an absolute minimum.
- Avoid sales pitches—unless you wish to purchase advertising space in the magazine, in which case it is welcomed.
- If you wish to interview others, that is encouraged. For example, in an article about corrosion in cold environments or firestopping, you may want to talk to plant managers or facility engineers to find out how they handled those situations.
- Please spell out acronyms (ASTM, ASHRAE, etc.) on first reference.
- If necessary on technical articles, include footnotes.

ART

- Illustrations, such as charts, tables, graphs or photos, are welcome. If a chart or other item must run close to a particular segment of the article, please indicate this within the text of your article.
- Photos should be clear, sharp and have good contrast.

EDITING

Insulation Outlook uses a house style based on the Chicago Manual of Style. We make minor editing changes such as such as correcting grammar, eliminating bias, or rewording some sentences. Sometimes we need to rearrange paragraphs or delete sections that don't apply to our readers. We occasionally may edit for length, even if your article was within our guidelines. Technical editing is done by members of NIA's Technical Information Committee. They are given copies of the story and may make comments, suggest changes and ask for verification on items dealing with technical items. At your request, we'll fax you a copy of the edited version.

SUBMISSIONS

Please send by e-mail to editor@insulation.org in Microsoft Word format. If your files, such as graphics, are too large to send via e-mail, please mail us a CD with the list of files clearly marked on the disk. Please note we do not accept Mac files.

SEND TO

Julie McLaughlin

Director of Publications

NIA

12100 Sunset Hills Road, Suite 330

Reston, VA 20190

Telephone: 703-464-6422, Ext. 116

Fax: 703-464-5896

E-mail: jmclaughlin@insulation.org or editor@insulation.org