

Regional News

1135 Michigan Section



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On April 29, 2009, just over fifty of us converged on NSF International's beautiful headquarters in Ann Arbor, Michigan. NSF International, a not-for-profit public health and safety organization is the world leader in standards development, product certification, education, and risk-management.

Founded in 1944 as the National Sanitation Foundation, NSF is committed to public health, safety, and protection of the environment. NSF is a World Health Organization Collaborating Centre for Food and Water Safety and Indoor Environment. While focusing on food, water and the environment, NSF develops American National Standards, provides learning opportunities through its Center for Public Health Education, and provides third-party conformity assessment services while representing the interests of all stakeholders.

In addition to long-time services in Management Systems Registration, Food Equipment, Food Safety, Plumbing Pipes & Plastics, Mechanical Plumbing, Drinking Water Treatment Units & Additives, some new business areas include Toy Safety, Dietary Supplements, Vendor Quality, Pharmaceutical Services, and Sustainability. The primary stakeholder groups include industry, the regulatory community, and the public at large. NSF is widely recognized for its scientific and technical expertise in the health and environmental sciences. Its professional staff includes engineers, chemists, toxicologists, and environmental health professionals with broad experience both in public and private organizations. The NSF Mark is recognized for its value in international trade around the world and is respected by regulatory agencies at the local, state, and federal levels.

After his traditional meeting opening remarks, Patrick Butler of Robert Bosch, LLC, continued to stress the importance of NCSLI and the value obtained from membership. The networking and information sharing opportunities provide an invaluable resource for everyone involved. This really compliments the tangible benefits of NCSLI quite nicely.

Unfortunately, the meeting was slightly mistimed as the board of directors meeting was in progress during our meeting so Lloyd Baker



Michigan Section Group Photo

of Dynamic Technology provided the audience with a bit of slightly outdated material. Nonetheless, most of it was new to us. Lloyd continued on by reemphasizing the value, the NCSLI Workshop & Symposium provides as well as the ridiculously inexpensive price of the tutorials. Everyone present, who had ever been to the NCSI Annual Conference, concurred.

After a brief update from Heather Wade on what the Testing Lab Committee is working on, we continued on with Rob Knake of A2LA. Besides providing really great door prizes, he presented the "Top Ten Most Common Deficiencies" that the A2LA auditors come across. While this was not nearly as comical as the Top Ten list found on late night television, it certainly was informative. He gave all of us a look at some very common occurrences that all laboratories wrestle with.

As a last minute fill-in, Bill Gavaria of the Fluke Corporation took the reins and provided us an inside look at Fluke's new structure and strategy. He also talked about the new improvements to existing calibration products that we will see in the market in the near future. Bill concluded with an overview of Met/Cal @ Met/Track @ giving us a more detailed look at their differences and how they work together.

After the traditional group photograph, we enjoyed a hearty lunch that was provided by NSF International Strategic Registrations (NSF-ISR). Then, Heather Wade gave us an overview on NSF International which is summarized in the opening paragraphs of this article. Her presentation provided a nice segue into Doyle Barnes of NSF-ISR and the topic of international standards registration. With a few accrediting bodies in the house (not too mention the number of accredited laboratories), I expected this presentation to generate a little debate over the value of registration vs. accreditation, but the information was well received. Since calibration and testing laboratories are generally focused on accreditation, it was interesting to

learn about the many types of management systems registrations available. Doyle further pointed out that food safety and information security management systems registration are becoming increasingly popular.

Eric Seller of The Modal Shop discussed the nuances of accelerometer calibration. He was able to make good use of a laser pointer when explaining alignment problems for a laser interferometer calibration system. He also pointed out the sizable investment The Modal Shop has made in terms of time and money to obtain accreditation of their system. We also learned about transverse motion and its impact on the calibration of an accelerometer. Furthermore, he explained how air-bearing shakers virtually eliminate transverse motion. The topic of delay-dating and accelerometers came up and Eric stated that it depends on the stability of the material used in the accelerometer.

The meeting closed with some really great door prizes provided by the NCSLI business office, A2LA, and L-A-B. After that, several of us enjoyed a very well organized tour of NSF's impeccable laboratories. You could tell from each employee that they were quite proud of their facility and its capabilities.

Organizations such as Bosch, NSF, Dynamic Technology, The Modal Shop, Fluke, A2LA, Laboratory Accreditation Bureau, and the Modal Shop are the foundation of NCSLI. Each of these organizations, as well as the organizations of all the attendees, demonstrates their commitment to quality even in this tremendously volatile economic environment. They continue to provide resources and knowledge to encourage and ensure the future of the measurement community.

See you in the Fall...after the board of directors meeting!

Patrick Butler, Section Coordinator