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### ICF's: Innovative Building Material Reduces Energy Costs

Name a building material that is light-weight, offers 50% energy savings for building owners and allows for construction throughout the winter? Certainly something this innovative is cutting edge technology, right? Well, if you guessed Insulated Concrete Forms or ICFs, you're right! But new, hardly, ICF technology is almost 40 years old.

ICF's are poly-styrene concrete forms that are stacked as inter-locking blocks. Vertical and horizontal rebar are put in place and then concrete is poured into the cells. The forms stay in place and create a wall system needing no form stripping, perform at a value of R-40 or greater, and allow for down-sizing of HVAC systems.

On January 18th, 40 New Jersey architects and 15 contractors decided to see for themselves what ICFs are all about. At a recent Carpenter Workshop program hosted by NJCCT, design and construction professionals took part in a three-hour symposium covering product introduction, installation, bidding and estimating. During the event, the attendees learned about ICFs through a lecture/hands-on format led by the technical services staff of Manning Materials, distributor of NUDURA.

As reported by Carpenter Magazine (2002), industry experts predict that by 2010 there will be over 500,000 ICF housing units built in the United States. With the housing market already taking off, the commercial market is getting into ICF construction as well. Barnes & Noble, Bed Bath & Beyond and Harley Davidson, have all built large scale construction projects specifying ICFs.

"ICF's specifications are increasing at a rapid pace in the commercial market. Once we educate a client on the product benefits and they commit to ICF construction, we stay with them from concept and design through installation and project completion," said Phil Neff, vice president of sales & marketing at Manning Materials.

Also, committed to the ICF effort is the NJ Regional Council of Carpenters and their Union Contractor Employers. Currently there are more than 500 Union Carpenters trained in the installation practices of ICF construction. With increased training initiatives and a network of contractors adept at bidding and estimating ICF projects, both groups are prepared to take on the challenge of this new material.

To receive information or to sign-up for the next ICF technical seminar contact, NJCCT at 732-225-1300 or log on to [www.njcct.org](http://www.njcct.org)

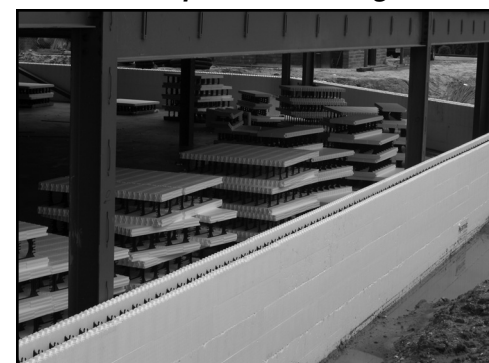
— Phil Cooney, Director, The New Jersey Carpenter Contractor Trust



*Architects and Contractors attending ICF Seminar*



*Union Carpenter installing ICFs*



*ICF forms for Harley Davidson Project*



*Hotel constructed using ICFs*