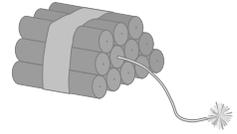


The Primer



Newsletter of the Golden West Chapter, International Society of Explosives Engineers
23633 Brewster Drive, Columbia, CA 95310

Volume 18

Spring 2007

Issue 2

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The Primer is published quarterly on the website of the Golden West Chapter of the ISEE and can be found at:

www.iseegoldenwest.org

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President's Message...

The Golden West Chapter

We have all talked about planning at one time or another. You might have planned out a family vacation, planned out a shot pattern or even planned your retirement. It is something that we often say we are going to do but it just never gets done to the degree that we intend. That is what happened to the Golden West Chapter. It was a shock to realize that it's been a long time since the Board did any actual planning. Typically things just went along without too many glitches because the drilling/blasting industry was moving along smoothly, the explosives manufacturing and supply business was changing globally but locally was stable and the equipment suppliers were introducing new products but as a general rule there were no significant changes being made. 2006 was the 9-11 for the Golden West Chapter.

Typically when the Board met the discussion was about what had happened during the previous period. The decisions that were made regarded plans that were already in motion. There was no real planning done.

As 2007 began we were faced with the need to do some "real" decision making. The new Board got together and made the decisions that are intended to make the Golden West Chapter important to this industry, its members, and to have fun in doing it. Changes were voted on to make the By-Laws relevant to current and future conditions. These will be presented to the general membership for a vote to put them into effect. The Board decided to use the changes as guidelines for running the Chapter until they are ratified. Plans were made!

There will be at least two technical meetings a year. The first is being organized by Jon Hill. It will be held May 19 at the new Atlas Copco facility in Pleasant Grove. The purpose of this meeting is to bring people up to date on their MSHA training.

(continued on Page 2)

The Primer

President's Message (cont.) ...

The Chapter is going to start the ISEE Blasters Training Program. This will require the efforts of a number of people and the decision has not been made as to how the program will be offered. It can be done as an intensive training course over a short period or presented in shorter segments taking up a longer period of time. The need is there for the Golden West Chapter to start to train the next generation of workers for our industry.

The Board has also extended an outreach program to former members to try to get them back in the fold. We are also looking at scaling back our social activities but would like to continue having a Summer BBQ and fishing trip. The BBQ might turn out to be a few hamburgers among friends and the fishing could just be a small dingy on the American River. The size of the function will depend upon how involved the members are.

The Board of Directors of the Golden West Chapter has every intention of making our Chapter the best in the business. This can be done only with the help of all of the members, sponsors and agencies. We will be calling you to get involved because we can no longer wait for things to happen, we need to make them happen. Please participate when you can, talk to others and encourage them to get involved. Together we are a strong voice for our way of life and livelihood but as individuals we are just another voice in the wilderness.

I look forward to working with all of you this year. If there are any questions or issues that concern you please feel free to call any of the Board members. Keep up to date from the great website that Wes Bender has put together. Look at other opportunities to get involved such as the SME or the NSSGA. See you at a meeting.

Bill Warfield

Chapter Activities - 2007

Spring Workshop	May 19th
Fishing Trip	July 14th
Barbeque	September 15th
Annual Meeting	November 10th

Deadlines for Primer Articles:

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Posting</i>
Summer '06	June 1st	June 15th
Fall '06	July 27th	August 10th
Winter '06	Sept 21st	October 5th



The Golden West Chapter Annual Spring Workshop

“A Blaster Safety Training Refresher”

Saturday, May 19th, 2007

Time: 8:00 a.m. - approximately 3:30 p.m.

Fee (payable at the door): \$25.00, includes lunch

Location: Atlas Copco CMT USA’s new facility at
7518 Pacific Ave., Pleasant Grove, CA 95668

To reach the workshop site, take Highway 70 (99) north out of Sacramento.
Turn right (east) on Riego Road and then left (north) onto Pacific Avenue.

Instruction will be by CALOSHA and MSHA qualified instructors
and will include personnel from Atlas Copco, Western Blasting
Technologies and Jon Hill. Certificates will be issued to attendees.

Contact person: Jon Hill at (209) 505-6983 or

jonhill@clearwire.net

The Primer

Chapter Board Meeting ...

January 22, 2007 - Synopsis of the first Board of Directors meeting for the new year:

A Board of Directors meeting was held January 22nd at Marie Callendar's Restaurant in Elk Grove. Participating were Bill Warfield, President; Jerry Fulghum, Treasurer; Carey Haughey, Secretary; Randy Spencer, Jonathan Hill, and Randy Messer, Directors.

The event schedule for 2007 was discussed and decided upon. Several changes to the Chapter Constitution and By-laws were discussed. These will be presented to the membership and voted upon at the annual meeting of Members in November. There was also considerable discussion concerning the Chapter setting up training classes using the ISEE Certification program. While it was felt that this would be a worthwhile endeavor, the cost of conducting the program would not be insignificant. Further discussion and planning will be needed before an official announcement of such a program by the Chapter can be made. It was agreed that continued efforts need to be made so that there will be good continuity in future Chapter Officers. Several minor decisions were reached to help streamline day to day Chapter internal operating procedures.

Editor's Notes ...

As we go to press, planning is well underway for the Chapter's Spring Workshop at the Atlas Copco facility in Pleasant Grove, north of Sacramento. More information is in the flyer on page 3 or can be obtained by contacting Jon Hill at (209) 505-6983.

The Chapter library will be moving to make it more accessible to the membership. When the move is complete, we will advise the Members. While on the subject of the Chapter library, if you have any explosives-related articles or books that you can donate to the library, please do so. It is an excellent way to convert them from dust-collectors to sources of information for the other members of the Chapter.

After a rather rocky go of it last year, the Chapter seems to finally be back on track. Membership has climbed to a current total of 59 members. I'm sure there are a few more people in the explosives community (or related groups) in our area who would benefit from membership in the Golden West Chapter. Check around you and see if there are people that we should be inviting to join. You can download an application from the website, or you can contact Carey Haughey for one.

We are still looking for good articles or ideas for articles. Let me know if you have something you would like to present or a subject that would make an interesting or informative article. I'll help you get it into print. (If you don't help us with this, you'll be stuck with old re-runs!!) My contact info is on the cover page.

'til next issue,
Wes Bender



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Feel free to contact any of the following Officers or Board Members if you have any questions, concerns or comments regarding the Golden West Chapter or the ISEE.

Bill Warfield, President	(916) 782-2275
Duane Niesen, Vice President	(530) 432-1617
Carey Haughy, Secretary	(209) 533-0127, extension 23
Gerald Fulghum, Treasurer	(916) 481-1421
Jon Hill, Board Member	(209) 505-6983
Randy Spencer, Board Member	(209) 785-4996
Randy Messer, Board Member	(530) 741-0873
Keith Peterson, Board Member	(707) 647-2240
Wes Bender, Board Member	(520) 648-3581

Shakin' It Up ...

with Wes Bender

How many of you approach a blasting project and, rather than have a comprehensive damage control plan in place, cross your fingers and hope that everything goes smoothly? You have probably taken steps in your blast designs to assure that you won't cause damage to some nearby structure, but what are you doing to protect yourself against the PERCEPTION that you might be causing damage? The following dissertation is more intended for construction projects where you have probably become the homeowners' latest nuisance, but will only be there temporarily. Some aspects of it, however, could apply to quarries or other fixed operations.

Your damage control plan should be project specific, but should approximate the following:

1. Identify potential problem areas surrounding the project site, both structural and human. This would start with a cursory review of the area, but will probably entail a comprehensive pre-blast survey. The radius to be surveyed will vary, but should include at least those structures where the vibration and air overpressures will be strongly felt.
2. Determine the conditions that exist prior to commencement of blasting. The pre-blast survey may disclose some precarious situation that would require you to exercise more caution in your nearby blasts. If your people are properly trained to conduct pre-blast surveys, that will work. If not, you should enlist the assistance of a third party to do the survey. Remember, a poor pre-blast survey is actually worse than none at all. Saving a few dollars now and then paying out thousands later is not good economics.
3. Address the concerns of nearby residents through a good informational presentation. Most homeowners don't have experience with blasting or blast effects (other than Clint Eastwood movies) and may very well have concerns for their own safety and the safety of their homes. If the situation warrants, a meeting should be held and a presentation made that explains: (a) the reason for the project, (b) that blasting will be necessary, (c) what the residents can expect to hear and feel from the blasting, (d) the specific blasting signals that will be used, (e) that the blast effects will be recorded and (f) that pre-blast surveys will be conducted. Knowledgeable persons should be in attendance to answer questions. There should be a handout that explains all of the above and includes phone numbers to call if there is a problem or if they have any questions. The person or company who will be conducting the pre-blast surveys should be introduced. The main thrust is to educate the neighbors, but an added benefit is that it tends to put their minds at ease and establishes a good rapport. Properly done, such a meeting can greatly reduce the potential for problems with neighboring residences. Another opportunity to conduct good public relations occurs during the course of the pre-blast survey. The same informational sheet that was used in the meeting should be distributed in the course of the survey.

Shakin' It Up (cont.) ...

4. Schedule the blasting to reduce the impact on the surroundings and to take advantage of any existing sources of noise, vibration or other conditions that might mask the effects of the blasting. As long as safety considerations can be met, blasting should be scheduled to occur during times of maximum human activity, rather than times of extreme quiet. In those situations where only one or two blasts are going to be needed on a project, it can be very beneficial to provide a safe viewing location and invite neighboring residents to view the events. They will appreciate the fact that they were included and will also gain a better understanding of the blasting process.

5. Use modern blasting techniques to minimize adverse blast effects and document them well. Keep up with new technology as it develops. Stay in touch with your explosives supplier(s) so that you are aware of new products. Design your blasts to minimize the impact on the neighbors. The job is not complete until a comprehensive Blast Report is filled out, signed by the blaster and filed away for future reference. This document is a key item in protecting you from future claims.

6. Use the proper blasting signals, not only to comply with regulatory requirements, but also to help prevent startling nearby residents.

7. Record the blast effects at as many sites as is deemed prudent. The recording should be done with factory-calibrated seismographs specifically intended for the purpose. Always record air overpressures in addition to ground vibration. In those situations where there is considerable adversity to the project and damage claims are anticipated, third party monitoring should be accomplished. Records from blasting seismographs, when combined with the written blaster's report, provide excellent tools for evaluating the potential for damage from blast vibration of air overpressures, and may mean the difference between a good defense and a false damage claim being paid.

8. Respond to complaints in a timely manner and investigate them thoroughly. An adequate process for handling complaints should be established. Neighboring residents should know who to call if they have a concern or complaint, whether or not it involves a claim of damage. In all instances, document all the details reported by the complainant. For minor complaints, responsible, knowledgeable contractor personnel might conduct the investigation. It would be advisable to have a qualified forensic investigator look into claims of damage, however. Prompt investigation is advisable. Correction of the problem, if it was indeed caused by the blasting, should also be handled promptly.

Yes, taking the above steps will cost you some of your hard-earned profits, but they should also help you keep from giving more of that profit to someone who saw you as an easy target for his home improvement program.

Don't take chances. Make sure your damage control program not only considers proper blast design, but also includes provisions to protect you from false damage claims.