

LPI Release: Lightning Protection Inspection Program Heralds Record Growth

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PALM BEACH, FL, March 12, 2014 – Home and business owners smart enough to own a lightning protection system have always had the option of having it independently inspected after it was installed. Today, an independent inspection requirement for lightning protection systems is part of many new construction specifications. That’s a positive trend for consumers, and a safety success story the Lightning Protection Institute proudly hailed at its recent annual conference.

“The Lightning Protection Institute (LPI) and United Lightning Protection Association hosted their annual conference in Palm Beach, Florida, recently. The attendees included lightning technicians, engineers and contractors, along with manufacturers of lightning protection systems. And, the big news was the explosive growth in LPI’s Inspection Program (LPI-IP).

“Since the program was reenergized in 2011, the number of system inspections has grown nearly 200 percent. LPI-IP provides on-site inspection services, follow-up reports and the issuance of certification for lightning protection systems that comply with nationally recognized safety standards of LPI, National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and Underwriters Laboratories. The LPI-IP Program is accepted in MasterSpec® as a quality control inspection option.”

“Lightning protection installers are using LPI-IP’s Inspection Program as an added value for their customers,” said Tim Harger, LPI-IP program manager. “They see it as a badge of their quality workmanship, which raises the standards and gives building owners even greater comfort in their safety from lightning strikes.”

“The LPI-IP Inspection Program offers three certification options:

- Master Installation Certificate for complete structures,
- Reconditioned Master Installation Certificate for structures that had a previous certification expire, and
- Limited Scope Inspection in which only a portion of a structure has lightning protection, such as a cooling tower.

“The Reconditioned Master Installation Certificate is about to see a surge, said Patrick Dillon, of Florida-based Bonded Lightning Protection. “A certification is good for three years, and since it’s been that many years since we’ve seen inspections take off, many building owners who certified in 2011 take the proactive step to schedule a re-inspection,” said Dillon.

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LPI-IP certificates carry a three-year expiration date to complement the NFPA three-year code review process and keep pace with new technology. More information is available at the LPI-IP website at www.lpi-ip.com.

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A lightning strike on an unprotected building can be catastrophic. In 2012, insurance claims for lightning losses for homeowners averaged \$6,400 per claim—a 25 percent increase over the previous year. However, lightning is a force of nature that can be reckoned with, notes Harger. And, lightning protection is reliable, affordable and getting better all the time. While commercial buildings and public facilities, such as schools, hospitals and public venues, have required lightning protection systems for years, inspecting system components after installation is now becoming almost routine. Ensuring that a system also carries an inspection certificate brings additional peace of mind and greater assurances that damage from lightning strikes is prevented.

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The LPI is a not-for-profit, nationwide group founded in 1955 to promote lightning safety, awareness and protection education. The organization provides a certification program to qualify competence in lightning protection installation, design and inspection. The LPI offers a list of certified contractors across the United States. Visit the LPI web site, www.lightning.org, for more information about lightning protection.

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