

# URCA Viewpoint

WEBSITE: WWW.URCA.ORG

NEWS AND VIEWS FOR THE UNION ROOFER

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## Pre-installation Assessments of PV Solar Panels on Rooftops at Issue

According to the Washington D.C. based Center For Environmental Innovation in Roofing, residential and commercial rooftops “represent the most available, sustainable and secure real estate for new solar energy systems. “Approximately three-billion square feet of new roofs are installed on new and existing buildings in the United States each year.” Based on the aforementioned, one would assume that over the past few years the demand for solar energy roof systems would have created a new and viable market for C-39 contractors. Nonetheless, in spite of roofing’s dominate status as the primary receiving platform for solar energy systems, C-39 contractors are conspicuously missing from the list of CSLB “authorized” construction trades which can install PV units in California. Indeed, the C-39 roofing contractor must hold a “B” license in addition to the newly created C46 Solar license in order to perform solar installations. “Furthermore, California’s current prerequisites for the C-46 “Solar” license ignore the rooftop as the complex, engineered system it is.”

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## URCA Member Contractors Contribute to 2013 Q Award Property—The RedBuilding

Cohen Brothers Realty Corp. of California was awarded the prestigious Alliance for Quality Construction’s Q Award for construction of its Silver LEED Certified RedBuilding at the iconic Pacific Design Center. The new RedBuilding is the Pacific Design Center’s final component comprised of the 1975 Blue Building and 1988 Green Building in West Hollywood. Members of URCA were among several skilled union trades, which worked on the project. Jones & Jones was the General Contractor and the architectural design was provided by Cesar Pelli, FAIA, of Pelli Clarke Pelli.

Nearly 200 industry professionals attended the presentation ceremony held at the Pacific Design Center’s



*Left to right: Stuart Hein-Letner Roofing, Ron Johnston-URCA, Ed Smith-ULLICO, Brent Beasley-Local 220*

SilverScreen Theater. AQC Chair, Pam Ackrich introduced the many luminaries in attendance; former U.S. Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis, L.A./Orange County Building and Construction Trades Council Executive Secretary Ron Miller, Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, West Hollywood City Councilman John Duran, Cohen Brothers CEO Charles S. Cohen, Jones & Jones President Kevin

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*Pacific Design Center, West Hollywood, CA*





**Ronald D. Johnston, Ph.D.**  
*Executive Director*



**Paul Vanni and Carl Brown-AWS**  
*Consulting prior to the 2013 Q Award presentation.*

My best wishes to all for a very healthy and prosperous New Year.

The Association's Strategic Plan for 2013 centered on (1) diligent targeting and monitoring of legislative bills that had the potential of impacting our member companies and the industry as a whole; (2) a more robust compliance program; (3) a continuation and strengthening of our long-standing partnership with the Roof Consultants Institute of Southern California (RCISOCAL) and (4) developing a partnership with other industry trade associations to promote Solar (Photovoltaic-PV) rooftop installation.

2013 was a successful year for URCA's legislative program highlighted by Governor Brown's signature on two bills that the Association actively supported. AB 164 (Wiekowski) addressed Private Public Partnership (3 P's) projects, whereby a lease agreement between a governmental agency undertaking an infrastructure project and private entity must include both performance and payment bonds. SB 7 (Steinberg) prohibits a charter city from receiving or using state funding for a construction project if the city has a charter provision that authorizes a contractor to not comply with existing prevailing wage provisions on public works contracts. Moreover, through strong opposition from URCA and the American Subcontractors Association of California (ASAC), The Los Angeles Unified School District decided not to go forward with its sponsorship of SB 616 (Wright). This bill would have exempted LAUSD from the legal provision that requires a direct/prime contractor from providing a payment bond on a public works project involving an expenditure greater than \$25,000.

In an effort to eradicate a growing underground economy within the roofing industry, the Southern California Union Roofers Labor Management Trust targeted roofing contractors who have violated State labor law provisions. As a result of the Trust's compliance program, the CSLB, EDD, DWC and other State agencies have assessed violators of these provisions approximately one million dollars over the past five years. Furthermore, through the efforts of the Trust's legal counsel, two class action suits have been filed, one of which has been settled, the other still involved in litigation.

At the December 4, 2013 RCISOCAL Annual Membership Dinner, URCA received a plaque recognizing the association as the "Outstanding Sponsor" of RCISOCAL since its inception in 2003. Over the years URCA has been a sponsor of every major RCISOCAL event including educational programs and the annual golf tournament. Also, URCA's Executive Director received a plaque, which recognized him as a Chapter Charter member, as well as recognizing his service to RCISOCAL as the longest standing member of the Board of Directors 2003-2013.

Again, my best wishes for a great 2014. Our industry has been in an economic quagmire for the last four years and it is about time for some good news on the economic front. In a recent Los Angeles Times article, former Federal Reserve Chairman, Ben Bernanke stated that "factors that have kept the economy from accelerating appear to be abating," and he expected stronger economic growth this year. For the sake of our industry, I hope that he is prophetic.



### Q Award Continued

Jones, Ullico President & CEO Edward Smith, RedBuilding project sub contractors and union representatives, and others.

URCA member company Courtney Inc. provided the water-proofing and faced a few challenges due to water entering the structure's basement parking areas during construction as a result of heavy rainfall. With the RedBuilding near



Left to right, John Duran-West Hollywood Councilman, Charles S. Cohen-Cohen Brothers Corp. of CA, Zev Yaroslavsky-Los Angeles City Councilman

the Wilshire corridor, methane abatement was also an issue. These were challenges not unusual with a demanding project such as the RedBuilding.

The roofing system was constructed by URCA member company, Letner Roofing. Letner, supported by materials manufacturer, Sika Sarnafil was confronted with a very difficult roofing project.

Spanning on and off for a year, Letner installed a new 60,000 square foot roofing system with an added slope and a Sika Sarnafil PVC cool-roof. Throughout this expansive project, Letner and Sika Sarnafil endured a series of design issues. Working closely with the architect, Pelli, they overcame these issues to complete this project in a timely and professional manner. Indeed, Letner's superintendent, Ramón Garcia and his

crew were undoubtedly second-to-none when it came to coordinating and completing this project. Kevin Jones speaking for General Contractor, Jones & Jones stated, "Union workers take professional pride not only in the quality of their work but also the process of building, including safety, coordination, communication, making deadlines, making inspections, keeping schedules, submitting paperwork, compliance with statutory requirements. Quality takes hard work."

Jones visited glass manufacturers around the world to create the exact shade of red glass to match Mr. Pelli's specifications. Through a four-sided silicone glazing system, the curtain wall, 100 percent solid red frit glass combined with a 50 percent dot and 75 percent dot pattern creates the solid red appearance of the RedBuilding's exterior.

Los Angeles/Orange County Building & Construction Trades, Ron Miller, told the audience "This is an award for visionary work, and man – what a vision this is. Trades members proudly point out buildings like this to our families from our cars and say, 'Yeah, I worked on that,' just like plastic surgeons comment on the stars they worked on as they take the stage at the Oscars."

Former U.S. Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis praised the RedBuilding's technological and green innovations, union skill and support for apprenticeship programs. "I'm a strong believer in project labor agreements and would like to see more of this," She said.

The project's \$165 million price tag funded by Ullico, Inc.'s J For Jobs program that invests union pension funds in all-union construc-

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### Solar Continued

Consequently, negative economic and structural consequences have followed inefficient pre-installation assessments of solar PV solar panel units placed on existing rooftops. In response, URCA has partnered with the Roofing Contractors Association of California (RCAC) and the Roof Integrated Solar Energy (RISE) to form a Solar Task Force. The mission of this task force is to develop a well documented "White Paper," which will be submitted to the CSLB in the hope of persuading the agency to promulgate a new roofing contractor solar installation license. It should be noted that the task force is not advocating a new license that would supersede the mandatory



requirement for a state certified licensed electrician to perform the electrical system tie-in; rather, it is advocating that the installation of a solar system can drastically alter the sustainability, performance and warranty of an existing roof system; hence, a professional roofing contractor should be involved in the solar installation process.



**Q Award Continued**

tion projects. Ullico president and CEO Ed Smith said from the stage, “Ullico is just a conduit – it’s the Trades members’ money that makes this possible. They’re the greatest skilled craftspeople in the world.”

LA County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky said, “This recession has been devastating for the men and women in the building trades. Their unemployment rate is still way too high. How do we address that? With projects like this. The construction industry is the backbone of our economy. When the construction worker does well, the economy does well.” West Hollywood Councilmember John Duran, said his community was proud of the structure and “will always use union labor on any such job here in the future.”

Stuart Hein, Senior Project Manager and Secretary Treasurer of Letner Roofing Company said, “When I stand back and gaze at how the white roof contrasts the red roof with the steep slopes on it, I am

speechless at the sight of this work of art. With the Pacific Ocean to the West, Palos Verdes to the South, and Hollywood Hills to the North, I am pleased to be a part of this prestigious structure.”

AQC’s Q Award is given annually for outstanding contributions toward the attainment of quality union construction within the building industry of Southern California. Recipients of previous Q Awards have been Providence Holy Cross Medical Center, Los Angeles Unified School District’s Robert F. Kennedy Community Schools, the LAPD Police Administration Building, Nokia Theatre at LA LIVE, The Home Depot Center, Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall in Orange County, The Walt Disney Concert Hall and Our Lady of the Angels Cathedral.



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**The mission of the Union Roofing Contractors Association is to promote quality construction utilizing highly trained and skilled employees. The URCA is dedicated to the highest standards of professional integrity.**

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