



For Immediate Release

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ERA Leadership Visits the National Renewable Energy Laboratory

Organization Intensifies Research on Energy Efficiency

Washington, DC, May 4, 2016 – As part of ERA’s overriding goal to ensure that EPDM products are used in the most energy-efficient manner, ERA leadership visited the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), based in Golden, Colorado this spring. The visit is part of a continuing series of visits to and collaborations with state-of-the-research facilities, highlighted last year by a visit to Oak Ridge National Laboratory to witness their research facilities that put roofing systems to the test in a broad range of simulated climatic conditions.

The visit to NREL enabled ERA leadership to get an inside look at NREL’s “creative answers to today’s energy challenges.” NREL’s 327-acre campus is a living laboratory, committed to sustainable operations, with the main campus boasting multiple on-site renewable energy installations.

“We want our customers to know that EPDM is one of the most sustainable roofing products used today by the construction industry, with long-term performance up to or exceeding 40 years. We also want our customers to be aware of recent developments that can help inform their roofing decisions: research shows, for instance, that fully adhered systems can deliver up to eight-percent energy savings when compared to a mechanically attached roof,” said Ellen Thorp, Associate Executive Director of ERA. “And we want our customers



to know that EPDM can be used in a variety of systems to achieve energy efficiency. For instance, the EPA recently included ballasted EPDM roofing systems on its Energy Star website, stating that ballasted EPDM roofing systems ‘are a very effective means of significantly lowering the roof top surface temperature similar to reflective roofing products.’” Lowering roof top surface temperature can help lower air conditioning costs which are predominate in warm southern climates.

The NREL Research Support Facility, designed to be a model for new office building construction, makes widespread use of recycled and repurposed materials. The building incorporates energy-efficient components such as daylighting and natural ventilation. The rooftop photovoltaic system, installed next to a system with a white EPDM membrane, was of special interest to the ERA group, and could prompt research into the efficacy of black and white reflective EPDM membrane and solar systems in a range of climates. Weinberg Commons, an Apartment Building project in Washington DC, uses photovoltaic systems on its roof with black EPDM membrane as part of its successful efforts to pursue Passive House (PH) certification, the most stringent energy standard for buildings in the world.

“The combination of sustainable EPDM and PV systems may be a new approach to energy-savings,” said Thorp. “ERA will be following this emerging trend and delivering specifics about its benefits to the roofing industry.”

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The EPDM Roofing Association (ERA) is the first trade association solely representing the manufacturers of EPDM single-ply roofing products and their leading suppliers. ERA provides technical and research support to the public and the construction industry, and communicates the longstanding attributes, consistency and value proposition of EPDM rubber membrane roofing materials.