



THE 24TH DASMA FALL FORUM

Event features awesome location, fantastic speakers, and record-breaking attendance

By Vicki Jones, Editor

On Sept. 24-26, the Door & Access Systems Manufacturers Association (DASMA) hosted its 24th Fall Forum at the Marriott Courtyard in downtown Nashville. A record-breaking 58 attendees from 33 different DASMA member companies were represented at the event. This year was the first time the Forum was held in Nashville, and attendees expressed high praise for the new event location.

Nashville applause

90% of attendees who completed the post-event survey said that the location was “excellent.” One person said that “Nashville is ideal.” Another said, “Nashville was a great location close to restaurants and nightlife and had easy access to and from the airport.”

Other survey respondents appreciated that the Fall Forum location has changed the past three years. Previously, the event was always held in Chicago. “It’s nice to visit different destinations and see a variety of attractions,” a respondent said. Another stated that “These remote from Chicago events get better every year so please keep that momentum going.”

A full agenda

The 2024 Fall Forum included nine top-notch presentations from 11 different expert speakers, multiple DASMA active committee and division meetings, and several group luncheons and dinners. Based on the survey results, attendees felt that the agenda hit the mark and that the event exceeded expectations. “The presentations were relevant to the garage door industry and progress was made on important DASMA topics,” said a survey respondent.

“Good and relevant speakers. The duration of meetings was not too long or too short. I also appreciated the food, drinks, and snacks throughout the day” added another attendee.

In addition to the quality presentations, attendees appreciated the

collaborating and networking opportunities held throughout the event. “I liked the conversation with industry leaders,” said one respondent. “It’s always interesting to have dinner all together,” mentioned another.

“Fantastic presentations”

The presentations covered a comprehensive list of relevant and wide-ranging industry topics from a list of highly educated, decorated, and experienced speakers. DASMA Technical Director Dave Monsour said, “Once again this year, we were blessed to have speakers supremely qualified to address their topics. Many of them have been well-known in our industry for years.”

The event began with a presentation from Dr. Murray Morrison, the managing director of research of the Institute of Business Home Safety (IBHS). The “IBHS garage door wind performance research” seminar presented attendees with the latest research results on the wind performance of garage doors and discussed plans for the future.

Seismic research

Next, Dr. Tara Hutchison, an earthquake engineering theoretician and experimentalist at the University of San Diego (UCSD), and Dr. Saeed Fathali, vice president of structural risk and resilience with Nova Group, provided the “Ten story shake table seismic research” presentation.

Seismic requirements are increasingly relevant for DASMA member products. The Rolling Door Division has partnered with UCSD and is proposing a rolling steel fire door for their “ground-breaking” cold-formed steel ten-story shake table test in 2025. Hutchinson provided an overview of the testing.

What and why behind air leakage

President of the Holt Weston Consultancy Dr. Theresa Weston outlined “Air Leakage: What it is and why it matters for doors.” She explained the

continued on page 48



continued from page 46

history and reasoning behind the relevant provisions for and other building envelope components, as well as her assessment of trends and likely future performance targets.

U-factor test method harmonization

Michael Thoman, program director for the National Fenestration Rating Council (NFRC), provided the “U-factor determination for garage doors: Testing and simulation” presentation. He outlined how the proliferation of glazing options, types, and styles has increased the challenge of U-factor determination in garage doors. The NFRC has re-examined their approach to simulation with a goal to create harmonization between DASMA 105 and NFRC 100. Thoman explained the potential road map ahead and the potential benefits for our industry.

One attendee found the presentation “thought-provoking, especially since thermal performance is the most important issue of our time.”

Polystyrene basics

Dr. Todd Bergstrom, director of products for Atlas Roofing, provided a thorough overview of XPS foam with his “Molded expanded polystyrene basics and standard compliance” seminar. Bergstrom detailed polystyrene in its many iterations — from the manufacturing process to life cycle completion. He also highlighted insulation properties for the group. One attendee said, “I didn’t know that polystyrene is as recyclable as it is.”

Will Jarrell, executive vice president of Custom Formulated Products at NCFI Polyurethanes, then provided a companion presentation to Bergstrom’s. His “Polyurethane foam basics and standard compliance” overview covered polyurethane foam — including processing, applications, regulatory, and compliance — with a special focus on insulation properties.

Industry forecast

Newly appointed IDA President (and 20-year industry veteran) Bill Ernest discussed “Industry trends and their impact.” The presentation was the highest rated seminar of the event; the majority of survey respondents described the presentation as “excellent”.

Ernest drew on his extensive industry background and front-row seat to relevant efforts in order to provide a dealer’s perspective on key industry trends and an update on IDA and IDEA activities.

UL outlook

Steve Kuscsik, a principal engineer at UL Solutions, works with the door and access services industry to develop and maintain safety requirements for automatic door and gate operators and systems. With over 35 years of product safety experience, he helps manufacturers, code officials, Consumer Product Safety Commission, industry groups, and others to help bring safe and compliant products to the market.

Kuscsik has assisted DASMA for years in understanding, developing, and improving the UL Standard. In his “Entrapment Protection in UL 325: The requirements and the applications market outlook” presentation, he detailed the current entrapment protection provisions, explained the technologies involved, and demonstrated the practical effects for installations. He also provided a glimpse into current activity and proposals being considered that might influence the future of these requirements.

The confidentiality privilege

Event presentations ended with DASMA Legal Counsel Christina Pannos, who spoke about “Attorney-client privilege — When to pick up the phone: Legal advice vs. business advice.” Every person involved in the world of business is subject to concerns about the handling of sensitive, confidential, and privileged information.

Pannos outlined the ins and outs of what does and does not constitute protected communication with attorneys (and why). She also provided insight into one or two current “hot legal topics”.



Beneficial wind-down time

The high-caliber presentations and the additional DASMA meetings that took place during the three-day Forum were highly productive. Attendees also found the informal get-togethers, like the group dinners, extremely valuable.

The Forum featured three breakfasts, two luncheons, and one group dinner (held on Wednesday at Pucket’s Restaurant). The interactions and discussions had during the group meals were an integral part of the event.

Join us!

The Forum incorporates meetings and technical presentations geared to address both existing and emerging technical activities relevant to DASMA members. The event also provides professional engineers with an opportunity to obtain Professional Development Hours, which are required for license renewal.

The 2025 Fall Forum is scheduled for the last week of September. The exact date and location will be announced in the coming months. DASMA members are encouraged to attend and benefit from the expertise of the featured speakers and the opportunity to network with industry peers and technical experts. ■

Don’t miss out! Mark your calendars!
DASMA 2025 Fall Forum
Sept. 23-25, 2025 (Tentative)
Cleveland, Ohio