

IEQ-GA – Presidential Column (May, 2020)

Like most of you worldwide, I have been spending a lot of time indoors in my home over the last two months in order to help ‘flatten the curve’ of the number of hospital stays and deaths due to COVID-19. During these difficult times, it is always important to remember those who have passed away and have left behind their bereaved families, as well as their colleagues and friends. I myself have one colleague in New York City who became ill with the disease, and spent a lengthy time in a hospital. I am glad to state that he is now recovering and doing much better. All of the members of the organizations that comprise IEQ-GA wish to express our condolences to those who are grieving at this time. Our members also want to express our best wishes to all those who are recovering from COVID-19.

Since the beginning of the outbreak, IEQ-GA and its member organizations, as well as the many researchers, doctors, practitioners, and contractors who are members of these member organizations, have been working diligently on all aspects of the pandemic. They have served on Committees, Project Teams and Task Forces throughout the world to provide expert scientific and technical comments and opinions about the many issues that need to be addressed while combatting COVID-19. One example is Dr. William Bahnfleth who is the Chair of ASHRAE’s Epidemic Task Force, and he is also ASHRAE’s representative to IEQ-GA. There are many other volunteers from IEQ-GA’s member organizations that are participating in fighting the coronavirus in all aspects of the pandemic.

IEQ-GA has also assembled a COVID-19 Task Force chaired by Jaap Hogeling, IEQ-GA’s Secretary/Treasurer. The Task Force has been meeting frequently in the past month to discuss the indoor environmental quality issues involved with the pandemic and its aftermath. The Task Force has worked to place pertinent information on IEQ-GA’s website, where there is a webpage specifically dedicated to addressing concerns about COVID-19. This webpage includes a series of Questions & Answers (Q&A) that are intended to help anyone who has concerns about COVID-19. There is also an IEQ-GA Position Statement regarding the airborne transmission of the coronavirus (<https://ieq-ga.net/resources/position-papers/>).

A list of the member organizations that have issued technical information about various aspects of addressing COVID-19 and its aftermath is also on this webpage. These documents from the member organizations are all available for download from IEQ-GA’s website (<https://ieq-ga.net/covid-19/information-center/>). Please let others know that the IEQ-GA website is where the latest information on COVID-19 will become available as soon as possible. IEQ-GA wants to keep the webpage on COVID-19 up to date. Please

contact IEQ-GA (<https://ieq-ga.net/contact/contact/>) with any pertinent info that can be placed on the IEQ-GA website and its webpage on COVID-19.

We at IEQ-GA encourage the sharing of scientific and technical documents that can help 'flatten the curve' over the next period of time until a vaccine is available for the virus. IEQ-GA and its member organizations stand ready to assist with the development and distribution of these documents as appropriate to its member organizations and all those needing guidance on addressing issues related to COVID-19 coronavirus.

Again, the upmost thought of myself and all of IEQ-GA is with the victims of the virus to date, and those still recovering. It is considered likely that there will be additional outbreaks and a second wave of illnesses and deaths due to COVID-19. The member organizations of IEQ-GA stand ready to provide expert assistance and advice as needed to address the continuing issues of the pandemic.

Donald Weekes, President of the IEQ-GA