

Looking into the property lens hoping for a better future

By Tiffany Woods

Entities across all sectors have felt the increase in property insurance rates in the last several years and the trend is not slowing. Property insurers are continuing to feel the impact from global hazards such as wildfires, winter storms, and hurricanes. WCIA markets the property program annually to various insurance carriers diligently looking for the best coverage and costs for our members. To assist in making the WCIA Property Program more attractive to carriers and the member's property schedules more accurate, WCIA has included property appraisal services for scheduled locations valued at or above \$225,000. However, with the continued hardening property market and our own property loss history it is still difficult to find affordable property coverage in the current market. To increase the confidence in our property program to property insurers and to help members mitigate potential future property losses, WCIA has hired Hartford Steam Boiler Inspection and Insurance Company (HSB) to perform onsite loss control engineering and thermography services.

Members that currently participate in the Equipment Breakdown (aka Boiler and Machinery) policy from HSB are familiar with their name and the work they do conducting boiler inspections and certifications. The property loss control and thermography services that HSB will conduct onsite are different than the boiler inspections. WCIA is going to have select member properties surveyed over the next five-year period using thermography and property loss control professionals focusing on wastewater treatment facilities, electric substations, and other high valued and/or high-risk locations. Individual members will not be invoiced for these services. Instead, the approximately \$150,000 WCIA anticipates spending on these inspections annually will be absorbed by the property assessments and will assist WCIA in obtaining/retaining affordable property coverage from the carriers.

Another service that HSB offers to WCIA members is their TOGA[®] analysis of insulating fluids used in most transformers. By analyzing the fluid, the reliability of the transformers and attached equipment are increased, in addition the analysis is performed *without* having to remove the equipment from service. The TOGA[®] analysis is not part of the scope of the thermography and property loss control surveys; however, when the HSB professionals are onsite they may discuss the TOGA[®] analysis if they see your entity would benefit from that additional service. The TOGA[®] analysis would be done at a different time and there would be an individual charge to the member for the service. The cost is very low and would be fully explained ahead of time with the member. Members interested in this service may also reach out to Tiffany Woods at tiffanyw@wciapool.org for more information and the associated cost, and an analysis can be set up for the member.

What is HSB thermography service? HSB infrared surveys are used to find abnormal or unexpected temperatures indicative of problems with equipment using thermographic color technology. This technology will predict when equipment is operating outside of normal parameters. HSB's color reports highlight areas on equipment where anomalies are found and the estimated costs to repair. A qualified HSB thermographer reviews each report and provides interpretive and consultative advice to WCIA members.

What is an HSB Property Loss Control Survey? HSB provides independent, WCIA member focused consulting services for hazard and risk identification, risk-analysis, protection system evaluations, and risk mitigation strategies. The surveys may include: a general tour of the facility; a review of existing property hazards, including natural hazards and external exposures, and loss prevention management programs; a visual inspection of the location's various fire suppression and detection systems; and a review of recent test records of fire pumps and public water supplies (if available). Also, digital exterior photographs of each building at location.

When will our locations be visited? Who will we work with at WCIA and HSB? The onsite visits started at the end of July 2023. Individual members will be contacted by Tiffany Woods via email with a list of locations, suggested dates, and the HSB contacts. As this project progresses, WCIA hopes to put together a longer schedule so you are aware of the month and year your locations are anticipated to be surveyed over the next five years. WCIA will also try to coordinate things so your assigned Risk Management Representative has an opportunity to be onsite during the inspection to answer your questions and to shadow the HSB professionals, who have years of experience in these key fields, to gain further knowledge to help all members mitigate their property losses.

Will we see the results of the onsite visit? Yes, HSB will discuss things with the member while onsite and answer any questions. After HSB creates the reports, they will be provided to WCIA. Tiffany Woods will then email the reports to the Delegate/Alternate contacts. WCIA is also saving the reports in Origami attached to the specific property location. The Thermography Year and Loss Control Inspection Year fields will be populated by WCIA on the property schedule so members can see when specific locations have been visited.

Do we have to act on what is found during the inspection? Currently, WCIA is not going to force members to comply with recommendations based on the findings of HSB. It will always be in the member's best interest to mitigate potential future property losses by implementing what is recommended. If there are any critical recommendations, WCIA will work with the member and HSB to fully understand why those recommendations are being made and the best way forward to implement those changes.

Please feel free to reach out to Programs and Information Technology Coordinator Tiffany Woods at tiffanyw@wciapool.org or (206) 687-7905 with any questions.