

USA: New US Solar Heating and Cooling Alliance

Submitted by [Baerbel Epp](#) on February 26, 2013



A strong voice for the solar thermal industry: that is the aim of the new US Solar Heating and Cooling Alliance (SHC Alliance), a division of the Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA). SEIA announced the new elected board in a press release on 19 February 2013. The US Solar Heating and Cooling Council which governs the SHC Alliance consists of five persons. First, there are Chairman Mike Healy from Skyline Innovations (left), Vice Chairman Matt Carlson from Sunnovations (middle) and Treasurer Eileen Prado from the Solar Rating and Certification Corporation (SRCC). The other two positions will rotate and are currently held by Les Nelson, International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials (IAPMO), and Ole Pilgaard from Heliodyne. Only the chairperson and vice-chairperson, however, occupied formal positions within SEIA, another press release stated in January 2013.

Photos: Sunnovations, Skyline Innovations, SRCC

“The SHC Alliance is a re-branding of the Solar Heating & Cooling Division of SEIA, which has existed for around 20 years,” explains Les Nelson. “The goal is to attract new members and re-invigorate industry participation in SEIA, which has been better known for its advocacy of solar electric technologies.” Indeed, the last years have seen hardly any representatives from the solar heating and cooling industry on the board of SEIA. The rather expensive seats were mostly taken by representatives from the photovoltaics and concentrating solar power sector.

The new five council members are well-known solar thermal specialists. Mike Healy is the Director of Market Development and Government Affairs at [Skyline Innovations](#), a fast-growing solar thermal finance and development company based in Washington D.C. In October 2011, the company picked up a USD 30 million investment budget from WGL Holdings, whose leading subsidiary is Washington Gas.

[Matt Carlson](#) is CEO of the Virginia-based solar thermal system supplier which developed a so-called [geyser pump](#) that allows completely self-regulating systems.

Carlson also supported the US initiative [Solar Thermal Advantage](#), whose aim was to raise public awareness of solar thermal by presenting case studies in different magazines and newspapers.

Eileen Prado became [Executive Director of the SRCC](#) in summer 2010 to “help SRCC grow as a business”. She has improved the efficiency of the organisation and [expanded its services](#).

Les Nelson was Chairman of SEIA’s Solar Heating and Cooling Division for many years and in this position, he was also a member of SEIA’s Board of Directors. Today, he is Director of the IAPMO in California.

Ole Pilgaard is President of Heliodyne, a California-based manufacturer of collectors and storage tanks. He is originally from Denmark and was President of the European Solar Thermal Industry Federation (ESTIF) between 2003 and 2007.

“This is now the time to really get involved,” Katherine Stainken, Policy Specialist at SEIA, said during the USH2O conference call in January after announcing the call for nominations. “With the Alliance, we would like to serve the best for the solar heating and cooling sector”. The plan is to hold one SHC alliance conference call every month and an in-person SHC Alliance meeting every year. The objectives of the SHC Alliance are:

- Catalyse a common vision and raise awareness among all stakeholders - including policymakers, potential customers, investors and financiers
- Serve as the coordinated go-to voice on industry issues to ensure stakeholder interests are protected
- Energise the industry through collaboration and funding of collective priorities
- Take action to successfully maintain and develop markets for solar heating and cooling businesses

More information:

SEIA Solar Heating and Cooling fact sheet: <http://www.seia.org/research-resources/solar-heating-cooling>

US Solar Heating and Cooling Alliance: <http://www.seia.org/about/seia/special-initiatives/us-solar-heating-cooling-alliance-division-seia>