



AGGREGATE & READY MIX ASSOCIATION OF MINNESOTA

State Association of the Year Award Aggregate & Ready Mix Association of Minnesota (ARM)

One of the Aggregate & Ready Mix Association of Minnesota's (ARM) top priorities is expansion of the labor pool, including taking a more critical look at the interests of young people in the state and the perceptions of our industry that have been limiting candidates from exploring our careers. In 2022 ARM purchased a campaign titled "Let's Rock" from the IL Association of Aggregate Producers and expanded it to include ready mixed concrete. This campaign was further expanded in 2023 to add a social media campaign which includes a response form for more information. Those forms are then automatically emailed to all member producers that opt in to receive the leads. From August-December last year, the campaign resulted in 213 leads. This social feed is also engaged with information from the CIM program at South Dakota State University and Skate4Concrete as further ways to engage young people who may not otherwise see themselves in the concrete industry.

ARM further serves its mission with a strong emphasis on technology, innovation and advancement. Recent projects include work with the National Road Research Alliance to place 14 sections of concrete pavement constructed with optimized traditional materials mixes as well as alternative cementitious materials, which are showing excellent early results demonstrating the industry's immediate ability to deliver mixtures with lower embodied carbon.

The Minnesota legislature passed "Buy Clean" legislation in 2023 to mandate use of EPDs in the bidding process for state let projects. Initial draft bills would have directed the state to begin using EPDs in procurement almost immediately, which would have been very difficult to implement and could have resulted in rejection of bids on a large scale. ARM's early involvement in Buy Clean discussions, with support from NRMCA, positioned the organization to help guide the inevitable requirement and, just as importantly, to prepare producers for such a change. Early involvement with lawmakers and administrators demonstrated ARM's sincere attempts to find a process that works for all

parties, including producers. Without that leadership, ARM's members and others would likely be facing a new mandate developed with little or no industry input.

Pavement promotion in Minnesota is a collaborative effort. In 2023, ARM invited the Concrete Paving Association of Minnesota (CPAM), and the Minnesota Concrete and Masonry Contractors Association (MC&MCA) MCA to form a Joint Paving Committee for collaboration on pavement promotion, specifications and technology. So far, the primary focus has been on clarification and uniformity of standards and specifications. The Joint Paving Committee is currently proposing that the statewide flatwork specification be updated and more fully adopted across the state with the help of MnDOT.

Until 2023, it had been nearly a decade since Minnesota's concrete industry presented awards for excellence. ARM relaunched the Excellence in Concrete Awards program in 2023 by recognizing projects completed in 2022. The new program is focused on the best work done by industry customers, more so than on industry producers, as an effective way to encourage exploration of more concrete solutions.

ARM's education and certification program has long been a strength of the association. In recent years, more emphasis has been placed on leveraging this strength to accomplish broader industry goals. ARM offers 20 different certifications under the American Concrete Institute (ACI), Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) and NRMCA programs. During the '22-'23 training season, nearly 1,500 registrants went through ARM certification sessions. ARM recently began the process of adding the NRMCA External Flatwork Finisher Certification to its education and certification program. Premature surface deterioration was an issue throughout the region in 2022 and 2023. The addition of NRMCA certification is intended to minimize such future occurrences.