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I recently wrote to update you on SBRA's work in developing a low cost foundation/support system design that can be used in areas subject to frost.

With the HUD installation standards now in effect, homes placed in frost areas are required to be placed on a frost resistant foundation. HUD offers two examples of frost resistant design: floating slabs and footings (usually concrete) run below the frost line. Both options cost thousands of dollars more than the standard home set used today reducing, in many cases, what the homebuyer can spend on the home itself. Engineering a solution for each home site would also be expensive.

SBRA is working on an alternative, one that is close in design and cost to a traditional foundation or support system. The development effort includes the following steps:

1. Develop a design and construction specifications, along with supporting engineering analysis for an affordable, frost-free, shallow foundation solution. The specifications, drawings and related information will be prepared by a nationally-know engineering firm with extensive experience in foundation design.
2. The engineer's design and specifications will be adapted for inclusion by manufacturers in their installation manual. This information, along with the other foundation guidance in your manual, will provide a complete design that can be used in frost areas. The design will be engineer-stamped and can be used in every state with frost areas.
3. Along with the design, manufacturers will also receive supporting technical information that the DAPIAs will need to substantiate the building science and approve the frost-free design. We will be available to respond to any questions raised by the DAPIAs.
4. Once the design is adopted by manufacturers, we will work with the states in gaining acceptance of the design by the local authority having jurisdiction.

Conducting the effort costs money. Previously we indicated that funding would be requested of manufacturers, retailers and community owners. This created some confusion. Instead, we are limiting the funding requests to just manufacturers. Manufacturers could then provide the frost-free design to their customers on whatever basis they choose.

To participate in the project and receive the design and supporting engineering analysis requires a sponsor contribution of \$2,000 to help offset project costs. To be considered a sponsoring manufacturer, funds must be received no later than Tuesday, June 30, 2009. After the June 30 deadline, the cost of the design and supporting materials will increase to \$8,000.

To support the effort, please send a contribution for \$2,000 to the Systems Building Research Alliance, 2109 Broadway, Suite 200, New York, NY 10023. I will keep you abreast of developments.

I encourage you to participate in this effort and get involved early in the work. Please contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emanuel Levy', is written over a horizontal line.

Emanuel Levy, Executive Director  
Systems Building Research Alliance