

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**To: Manufactured home retailers, community operators, manufacturers and suppliers**

**Re: Affordable, shallow, frost free foundation design moves forward**

SBRA has started work on the development of an affordable foundation design that can be used in areas subject to frost. The design, referred to as a shallow, frost free foundation, is expected to cost thousands of dollars less than either poured concrete footings that extend the foundation below the frost line or concrete “floating” slabs; the foundation types recommended by HUD (Installation Standards, Section 3285) for use in frost prone areas.

The frost free design is based on a simple concept: if the home is installed in a manner that assures that the ground under the home is dry and will remain dry, the soil will not freeze. If the ground does not freeze, there is no need to install components intended to resist frost heave, such as concrete footings below the frost line. The concept follows from industry’s experience of installing millions of homes in the frost belt over decades with few problems.

Going forward, the plan is to complete the design in consultation with a nationally recognized engineering firm that will help develop and approve its use in frost prone areas. The goal is to deliver an engineer-approved shallow, frost free foundation design that can be used in all areas of the nation subject to frost. The pre-approved design will then be provided at no cost to retailers, community operators and manufacturers. We will also work with other engineers, responding to any technical questions they have about the design, paving the way for acceptance by local authorities having jurisdiction in states where frost is an issue. Of course, success is not guaranteed and not all of the technical issues that will be raised can be anticipated. Success with the engineering community, however, is expected to translate into the support of and approval by state regulatory agencies.

Unlike most other Alliance projects that are funded, in part, by public agencies, the shallow foundation effort is supported entirely by industry. To complete the effort, retailers are asked to make a one time contribution of \$250, community operators \$500 and manufacturers \$1,000. Suppliers are also being asked to contribute to the project. SBRA will own the design and supporting engineering analysis. Those contributing to the project by May 15, 2009 will receive the design for no additional cost approximately six months in advance of general distribution to the rest of the industry, as well as periodic project updates.

The initial research and plan for developing the shallow, frost free foundation design was carried out with support from 15 companies involved in manufactured home product supply and retail sales, and several state manufactured housing associations. The plan is available on the web at: [http://www.research-alliance.org/media/reports/Shallow Foundations Status Report Final.pdf](http://www.research-alliance.org/media/reports/Shallow_Foundations_Status_Report_Final.pdf).

There is no time like the present to improve the affordability of manufactured homes. Thank you in advance for supporting this important work. Please contact me with any questions.

Systems Building Research Alliance  
Emanuel Levy, Executive Director