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Chairman: Jim Townsend

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Over the years, NORA has spent a considerable portion of the budget for research and development and improving technology in the field. The future for the industry depends on our improving the product and developing new technologies that improve the living environment.

Our most significant project for 2008 is not a new piece of equipment, but instead is a way of evaluating technology. It is the development of an energy efficiency measure that will correctly assess the real energy consumption of a home for both heating and hot water. The oilheating industry has complained for years that AFUE does not work for our industry and that our equipment performs much better in the field, and that AFUE does not help choose between different pieces of equipment.

However, we all know that this development must be supported by our service professionals. Without the support of the technicians in the field, even the most important developments are meaningless. That is why NORA and the industry dedicate so many resources to technical education and oversight.

Over the past several years, NORA has invested approximately \$3 million dollars into its educational programming, and its certification program. The states through their NORA funds have invested another \$30 million. The service providers are considered to be our most important link to our customers, and we have invested in an effort to both improve the service provided to Oilheat consumers, and to ensure that all technicians understand the benefits of Oilheat.

As the efficiency measure develops, we are taking steps to ensure that it does reach the field. We want to have a workforce who has helped develop a usable consumer tool, and to address this we are having a workshop in conjunction with the service managers to discuss how a new efficiency measure can be integrated into the work of a service technician. When we release this, we encourage you to become familiar with this development and work with it as a field tool.

Additionally, we are beginning to finalize our web page for technicians. We believe that recognition of technicians and companies that have invested the time and resources in training is essential. We believe that it is important that customers recognize the time skill and effort necessary to be a quality employee in the oilheating industry. As this finalizes in the next couple of weeks, we believe that the industry and its service personnel will see it as a critical resource.