

News

NATIONAL LIGHTING BUREAU

8811 Colesville Road / Suite G106

Silver Spring, MD 20910

Tel. 301.587.9572

www.nlb.org

John P. Bachner

john@nlb.org

301/587-9572

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEMA LIGHTING SYSTEMS INDEX JUMPS 5.2% IN FIRST QUARTER OF 2012, NLB REPORTS

Silver Spring, MD – The National Lighting Bureau (NLB) reports that first-quarter 2012 NEMA Lighting Systems Index (LSI) performance bested fourth-quarter 2011's by 5.2%, a gain that NLB Executive Director John Bachner characterized as “cause for optimism, especially in light of encouraging year-over-year data.” Bachner noted that year-over-year performance, while strong at 3.7%, was less robust than quarter-over-quarter performance because of “intervening quarterly fluctuations. Nonetheless, year-over-year and quarter-over-quarter performance, taken as a whole, is extremely positive.”

Established in 1998, NEMA's LSI is a composite measure of luminaires, ballasts, miniature lamps, large lamps, and emergency lighting shipped nationally and internationally from the United States by the 450 companies that comprise the National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA). Adjusted for the season and inflation, the Index uses 2002 data for its 100-point benchmark. View it at www.nlb.org/Index/.

Four of the five product categories considered by the LSI registered solid first-quarter 2012 gains compared to first-quarter 2011 performance; only emergency lighting posted a year-over-year shipment decline. NEMA International Economist Tana Farrington said that, while “aggregate lighting-equipment demand has improved appreciably since the recovery began, it still remains well below the levels observed during the previous

(MORE)

economic expansion. The still-tepid construction outlook implies lighting equipment output growth will lag in the near term. Housing is finally transitioning from trough to recovery, but forward progress will be slow.”

Farrington and Bachner concur that another two, three, or more years will pass before the nation’s pace of expansion returns to what it was pre-recession. In the residential market, “still-declining prices, large numbers of underwater homeowners, and a sizeable shadow inventory present persistent pitfalls to prompt progress,” Farrington said. Nonresidential construction also remains somewhat problematic, she noted, declining quarter-over-quarter in both the fourth quarter of 2011 and the first quarter of 2012. “Commercial construction, which includes offices and retail space among other types of buildings, had a particularly poor showing during the first quarter of 2012, sliding sharply, while manufacturing construction edged upward. We continue to expect overall nonresidential construction to struggle to gain traction during 2012 and 2013 as supply and demand fundamentals move largely sideways and fiscal austerity continues. Nonetheless, we expect commercial construction to register a solid recovery by the end of 2013,” Farrington concluded.

Established in 1976, the National Lighting Bureau is an independent, IRS-recognized not-for-profit, educational foundation that has served as a trusted lighting-information source since 1976. The Bureau is supported by the generous funding of its sponsors; professional societies, trade associations, manufacturers, and agencies of the U.S. government, including, among others:

- enLIGHTen America;
- GE Lighting;
- Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IES);
- Imperial Lighting Maintenance Company;
- interNational Association of Lighting Management Companies (NALMCO);
- Lighting Controls Association;
- Lutron Electronics Company, Inc.;

(MORE)

- Lighting Alternatives, Inc.;
- Magnaray;
- National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA);
- National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA);
- OSRAM SYLVANIA;
- Philips Lighting; and
- U.S. General Services Administration.

Obtain more information about the Bureau by visiting its website (www.nlb.org) or contacting its staff at info@nlb.org or 301/587-9572.

NEMA is a founding sponsor of the National Lighting Bureau and creator of the enLIGHTen America communications campaign (www.nemasavesenergy.org). NEMA members manufacture a wide range of products used in the generation, transmission, distribution, and control of electricity, as well as innumerable end-use products in addition to those used in lighting. Worldwide sales of NEMA members' products exceed \$120 billion.

#

