



## SPRING MEETING AND GLOBAL CONGRESS ON PROCESS SAFETY RETURNS TO HOUSTON, APR. 1–5

**P**rocess safety and the latest developments in energy will dominate the proceedings when AIChE's 2012 Spring Meeting and 8th Global Congress on Process Safety convene in Houston, TX, Apr. 1–5. The conference, to be held at the George R. Brown Convention Center and the Hilton Americas-Houston, will feature a variety of long-established topical conferences, and an impressive selection of new programs — including the 1st International Conference on Upstream Engineering and Flow Assurance. The preliminary technical program grid appears after p. 48 of this issue (U.S., Canada, and Mexico copies only); the complete program, schedule of meeting highlights, and registration information are available at [www.aiche.org/spring](http://www.aiche.org/spring).

With transformational technologies and innovation rapidly changing the way chemical engineers view — and prepare for — the future, the Spring Meeting and Global Congress on Process Safety (GCPS) remain vital learning and networking opportunities for practicing engineers. Some 1,700 practitioners are expected to participate, representing industry, academia, and government agencies from around the world. In addition to the meeting's highly regarded topical conferences and the Global Congress's symposia on loss prevention, plant safety, and the Center for Chemical Process Safety's (CCPS) International Conference, meeting organizers are addressing the industry's changing needs with new and special events, including a Small Business Innovation Showcase co-sponsored by the



▲ The downtown Houston skyline, with Green Park in the foreground.  
Photo © Brandon Seidel

National Science Foundation. Attendees can hone their skills at the meeting's short courses, and young professionals will find sessions designed to enhance their competitiveness.

Many opportunities for networking have been integrated into the program, with receptions, social events, and exhibits rounding out the experience. In the exhibit area, attendees can enjoy inter-session coffee breaks, sponsored by Tracerco.

### Topical conferences — something for everyone

This year's Spring Meeting program has been organized into 150 sessions, across eight topical conference and special tracks. Long-established programs include the 24th Ethylene Producers' Topical Conference, the 15th Topical Conference on Refinery Processing, and the 12th Natural Gas Utilization Topical Conference, as well as topical conferences that address distillation, fossil energy utilization, and advances in sustainability. Another topical conference is devoted to Emerging Technologies in Clean Energy for the 21st Century.

Spring 2012 marks the debut of a new conference: the 1st International Conference on Upstream Engineering and Flow Assurance. Launched in 2011, AIChE's Upstream Engineering and Flow Assurance (UE&FA) Forum promotes the application of chemical engineering principles across the entire spectrum of upstream practice. Sessions will explore new frontiers in drilling and completion fluids; discuss state-of-the-art upstream and subsea processing technology and

equipment; identify flow-assurance-related risks in the front-end engineering design of upstream production systems, controls, and operability; and expand the knowledge base on shale gas. The UE&FA conference will be rounded out by two poster sessions, including a "Future Wave" session for graduate student research.

### Featured presentations

Following a Welcome Reception on Sunday evening, Apr. 1, the Spring Meeting formally begins on Monday morning, with a jointly sponsored Spring Meeting/Global Congress on Process Safety Keynote Address.



▲ Dolan

The keynote will be given by Michael J. Dolan, Senior Vice President at ExxonMobil Corp. In his talk Dolan, a chemical engineer himself, will explore the intersection of process safety and corporate responsibility. A continental breakfast will be available prior to Dolan's presentation.

A highlight of the Ethylene



Producers' Conference is a Monday morning panel discussion entitled "Ethylene Plant Transformation of the Petrochemical Industry." Company leaders from Chevron-Phillips, Dow, ExxonMobil, Sibur, and Braskem will explore the impact of shale gas on the marketplace.

Also on Monday morning, at the Fuels and Petrochemicals Div.'s Welcome Session, Joseph Powell, Chief Scientist at Shell, will identify opportunities for chemical engineers to sustainably meet future needs in fuels and chemicals in his presentation, "Future Fuels and Chemicals: Grand Challenges and Opportunities."



▲ Powell

Another noteworthy talk will be presented at the Industrial Leadership Keynote Luncheon on Tuesday, Apr. 3. Frank van Lier, Process Technology and Sourcing Team Leader at Lubrizol, will offer his "Musings on Management" — including how to hire and motivate good people to work together in successful global teams.



▲ van Lier

On Wednesday, Apr. 4, at the Natural Gas Utilization Topical Conference, a luncheon keynote address will be delivered by Yoshitsugi Kikkawa,



▲ Kikkawa

LNG Project Technical Advisor at Chiyoda Corp. Kikkawa will talk about the contributions of liquefied natural gas as an environmentally friendly energy source in Japan, and how that nation's industries have addressed the challenges (and reaped the benefits) inherent in the use of natural gas.

Yet another highlight is a new Small Business Innovation Showcase, to be held on Tuesday, Apr. 3. Sponsored by AIChE and NSF, this special forum and poster session will allow attendees to meet successful small-business leaders and technologists who are redefining the future of a wide range of industries, including bio-based materials, nanotechnology-enabling composites, renewables, and more.

## 8th Global Congress on Process Safety

Now in its eighth year, the Global Congress on Process Safety (GCPS) is the largest gathering of safety professionals in the world. A record number of attendees is expected to participate at the Apr. 1–4 Congress — which will focus on what process safety excellence will look like in 2020, and how industry and engineers can evolve to meet the challenges that lie ahead. Participants will explore new ways to avoid incidents, manage risk, ensure plant safety, and strengthen process safety management programs.

Organized by the Center for Chemical Process Safety (CCPS) and

AIChE's Safety and Health Div., the Global Congress on Process Safety integrates the coordinated sessions of three major conferences under one umbrella. At the 27th CCPS International Conference, attendees will examine topics such as hazard identification and risk assessment, human factors in risk management, and case histories and lessons-learned — including how to make the transition from "lesson" to "learned." The 46th Loss Prevention Symposium will bring together practitioners from industry, academia, and government agencies, with a focus on fire and explosion hazards, including an exploration of technical advances and best practices in the field. At the 14th Process Plant Safety Symposium, attendees will consider the future of process safety, regulatory impacts, and lessons learned from incidents and near-misses.

Several new sessions have been added to the Global Congress, including a day devoted to process safety challenges for small-scale production, including pilot plants and laboratory facilities. At the International Perspectives session, papers will be presented by Latin American authors (in Spanish and Portuguese) and by Chinese authors (in English). Also new this year is a Process Safety Management Mentoring (PSM<sup>2</sup>) Conference, designed to bring young engineers up to speed on process safety management culture and tools.

Laura Turci, Manager of the Global Congress, says that one of the

## BRING A YOUNG COLLEAGUE TO THE MEETING — AT A BIG DISCOUNT

AIChE members and employees of CCPS member companies have an opportunity to introduce young co-workers and industry newcomers to their first Spring Meeting and Global Congress on Process Safety for a significantly reduced fee. Attendees who register for the meeting can also register a colleague under the age of 35 who has not attended the meeting before at 50% off the regular registration rate. For details, visit [www.aiche.org/Conferences/SpringMeeting/byc.aspx](http://www.aiche.org/Conferences/SpringMeeting/byc.aspx).



main objectives of GCPS organizers is to reach the broadest and most diverse audience possible. "We are excited about growing the next generation of process safety experts, as we work to change the mentality surrounding process safety culture" says Turci. "As we receive new people, and open sessions to new languages, we hope to reach the widest possible audience and have the kind of impact that will improve process safety in plants around the world."

Several guest speakers are among the Global Congress's highlights. On Monday, Apr. 2, the GCPS Luncheon speaker is Patrick F. Loughlin, Vice

President of Environmental Health and Safety at Air Products and Chemicals. On Apr. 3, the luncheon features a presentation by The Honorable

Ms. Jessie Hill Roberson, Vice Chair of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board, who will talk about process safety at U.S. defense nuclear facilities. The luncheon speaker on Apr. 4 is Dr. T. J. Larkin, President of Larkin Consulting, who will reveal "Safety Communication's Three Big Mistakes: Too Much, Too Complex, Not Useable" — and offer suggestions on how to fix those problems.

For the benefit of Global Congress attendees with interests in manufacturing, the organizers are assembling a "virtual" manufacturing topical conference, incorporating manufacturing-themed sessions from the Congress's various process safety programs.



▲ Loughlin



▲ Roberson



▲ Larkin

### Follow the action online

AICHE will be posting updates from the meeting site on its social media channels throughout the Spring Meeting. News, photos, videos, and coverage of special events and keynote speakers will be available at ChEnected, AICHE's online community blog: [www.chenected.com/spring](http://www.chenected.com/spring); on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/chenected](http://www.facebook.com/chenected); and via Twitter feeds: @chenected. The hashtags are #AICHESpring and #GCPS.

### Register now

Register online for the Spring Meeting and Global Congress at [www.aiche.org/spring](http://www.aiche.org/spring).

CEP

## Sustainable Packaging Symposium, Apr. 3–5, in Houston

For the second year, AICHE's Institute for Sustainability will collaborate with Green Package, a knowledge exchange for sustainable packaging initiatives, to co-host the 2012 Sustainable Packaging Symposium. The symposium will be held Apr. 3–5 at the Hilton Americas-Houston, and will run concurrently with the AICHE Spring Meeting.

Organized around the theme of "Advancing Sustainable Supply Chains with Optimized Packaging," the event will bring scientists and engineers with cross-industry expertise in sustainability together with packaging professionals, to consider the role of optimized packaging as an essential component of a more sustainable supply chain. Presentations will cover the value proposition for the optimized package; data measurement and analysis tools, including total cost assessment; reducing retailer food waste; the key attributes that define a sustainable package; the technical underpinnings essential to sustainable package designs; and other topics.

Darlene Schuster, Executive Director of the Institute for Sustainability, says that the symposium will be valuable to sustainability and packaging professionals employed by raw materials manufacturers, brand owners, converters, suppliers, and retail professionals, as well as to the engineers and scientists who implement sustainable solutions.

"There is a real need to apply technically sound, robust best practices to develop functional, sustainable supply chains for products and their packaging," says Schuster. "Packaging is a critical value for the product supply chain, and the knowledge shared at this conference should lead to better decision-making."

In addition to technical sessions, the Sustainable Packaging Symposium will include keynote presentations, panel discussions, tabletop exhibits, and networking opportunities.

Information about the symposium, including registration and sponsorships, is available at [www.sustainable-packagingsymposium.com](http://www.sustainable-packagingsymposium.com).