

## *Report from USA*

# Geotechnical and Foundation Engineering Societies and Industry Associations in the United States (Part 2)

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There are multiple geotechnical and foundation engineering societies as well as related industry associations based in the United States. Giken America Corp. and some of its employees, including the author, have joined these societies and have been participating in some committee activities. As the second article of the series on these societies, let us look at the Pile Driving Contractors Association (PDCA).

This U.S.-based industry association has the following motto since its inception.

“A driven pile is a tested pile!”

It was founded in 1996 by a group of pile driving contractors and related suppliers in the U.S., Canada, Mexico, and some other countries to have it represent the pile driving industry and to promote the use of driven piles, such as pipe piles, sheet piles, precast concrete, and timber piles.

PDCA’s webpage says, “The Pile Driving Contractors Association (PDCA) is an organization of pile driving contractors that advocates the increased use of driven piles for deep foundations and earth retention systems. To do this, we:

- Promote the use of driven pile solutions in all cases where they are effective.
- Support educational programs for engineers on the design and efficiency of driven piles and for contractors on improving installation procedures.
- Encourage and support research that will improve the reliability, usefulness, and cost effectiveness of driven piles.
- Give contractors a larger voice in establishing procedures and standards for the installation and design of driven piles.”

PDCA’s webpage: <https://www.piledrivers.org/about-pdca/>

Pile driving contractors can join the PDCA as contractor members, while material and equipment suppliers like Giken America Corp. can join as associate members and engineering consulting companies as engineering affiliates. The makeup of the membership is 35% contractors, 35% associates, and 30% engineering affiliates. The PDCA is primarily based on corporate memberships while it does have individual-based membership categories for interested individuals in academia, government agencies, retirees, and students although they are small in numbers. The members, regardless of which categories they are in, can join any of the following committees and participate in their missions on a volunteer basis (an applicant needs to follow a certain process to be admitted, however).

Associate Members Council, Communications, Contracts & Risk, Education, Membership, Safety & Environmental, Steel Sheet Pile, and Technical.

The author and some of his colleagues are active in the Associate Members Council, Steel Sheet Pile, and Technical Committees. As an example of the fruit of these committees’ activities, the Steel Sheet Pile Committee compiled three Sheet Pile Guides, i.e., “Sheet Pile Installation Guide”, “Steel Sheet Pile Corrosion Guide”, and “Retaining Wall Cost Comparison Guide”. Use the following link to purchase these guides at a nominal fee (free for members).

URL: <https://www.piledrivers.org/pdca-technical-library/sheet-pile-guides/>

In addition to the above-mentioned guides, one might be interested in checking the “Noise & Vibration Database”, “Hammer Database & Guide”, and other piling related information also available in the “Technical Library” section of its webpage. Most of them are free to access.

Chapters are geographically organized groups of the members for their local networking and pursuit of common goals for

the regions. The following Chapters are currently active; Gulf Coast, Northeast, Texas, Pacific Coast, and South Carolina.

The PDCA holds annual conferences and other seminars, such as “Annual Design and Installation of Cost-Efficient Piles Conference”, “Deep Foundation Dynamic Testing & Analysis Seminar” in collaboration with a dynamic pile testing equipment manufacturer, and “Contractors Foundation Institute’s Driven Pile Academy”, which was a classroom and hands-on workshop on safety and pile driving procedures of various pile driving equipment held as its inaugural event in April 2022.

In response to the COVID-19 global health crisis, in 2020 the PDCA quickly adapted to providing online education for its members and other industry professionals through Zoom with remote presenters. With the success of the online format, the PDCA has continued to offer webinar education, such as the ongoing “PDCA 2022 Value Driven Webinar Series”. The series focus on driven pile case studies, cost saving analysis, actual project conversion methods, job site safety, driven pile types & benefits, legalities to consider, etc. Non-members can attend the webinars for a nominal cost (free for members). The details can be found at the following link.

<https://www.piledrivers.org/conferences-and-events/pdca-2022-value-driven-webinar-series/>

The bi-monthly “PileDriver” magazine is PDCA’s official publication which is edited and distributed by a contracted publisher for PDCA members. See **Fig. 1** for the cover of a recent issue.

Additionally, there is a different industry association to represent contractors in the field of drilled shaft piles, auger cast piles, micro piles, etc. (ADSC).

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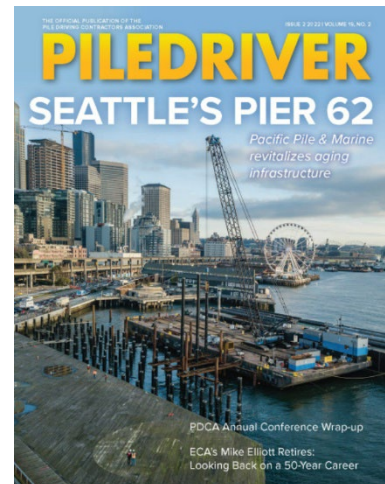


Fig. 1. The cover of PileDrive Magazine