

AIWD

AIWD

**NEW MEMBERS
WELCOME**

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www.aiwdgroup.com

ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT WELDING DISTRIBUTORS

Thanks to these
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Thank you to these vendors who
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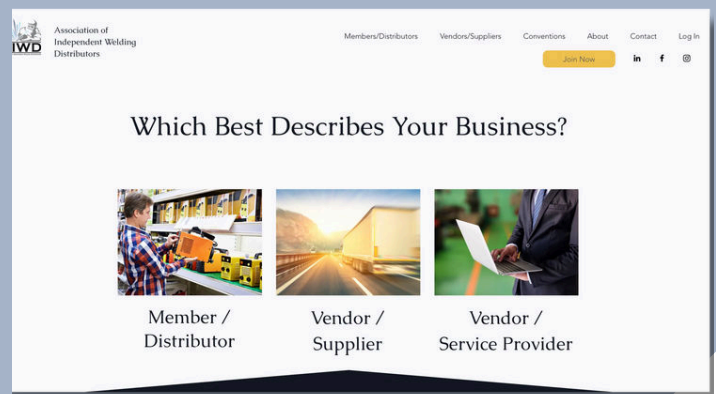
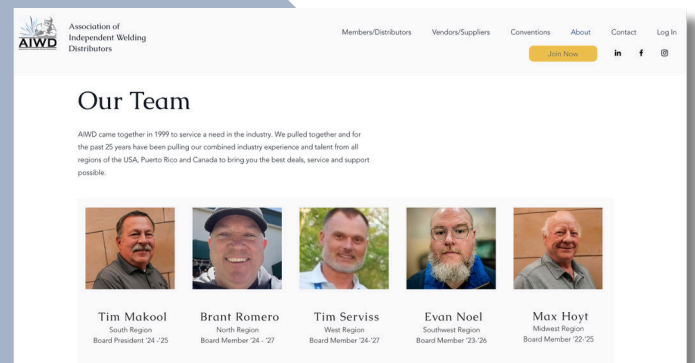
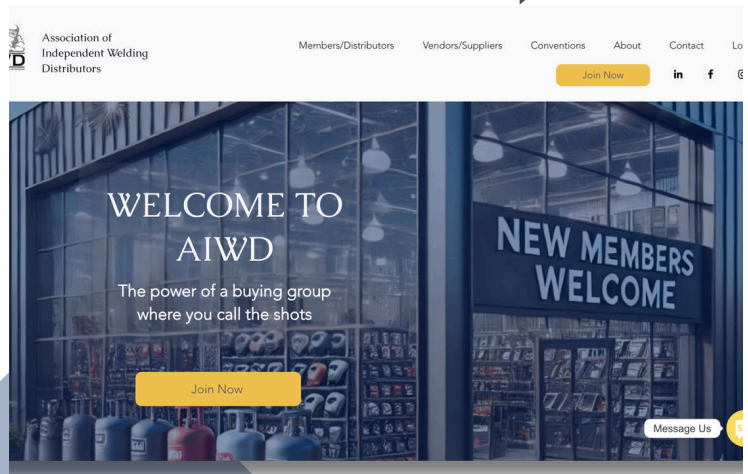


AIWD UNVEILS A FRESH NEW WEBSITE FOR 2025

Exciting news! The AIWD corporate website, www.aiwdgroup.com, has undergone a complete transformation to better serve our members, vendors, and visitors. As we step into 2025, we recognized the need for a modern, sleek design that enhances user experience and truly reflects the values of our organization. We are thrilled to introduce a fresh new look that is both visually appealing and highly functional.

AIWD Executive Director, Kelly Horton, collaborated with web designer and social media manager Ashley Beasley to craft a website that offers a clean, intuitive, and engaging experience. The updated design features a sophisticated color scheme of blues, whites, blacks, yellows, and greys, creating a seamless and visually striking interface. This transformation is designed to make navigation effortless for prospective members and vendors eager to learn more about AIWD and the benefits of joining our community.

One of the standout enhancements of the new website is the revamped Vendor List page. This page now includes direct links to all our valued vendor websites, making it easier than ever to connect with industry partners. Additionally, we have incorporated a collection of inspiring testimonials from our members, highlighting the positive impact AIWD has had on their businesses. As an added touch, we've included a gallery of fun and memorable moments from past AIWD conventions—perhaps you'll spot yourself in one of the photos!



We appreciate the patience and support of our members as we transitioned to the new platform, ensuring all links and features function smoothly. Our goal was to create a website that not only meets the needs of our community today but also continues to serve us well into the future.

NEW MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENT

Please welcome our newest AIWD Member, located in the South Region in Rogers, Alabama!



Rogers Welding Supply

Member 986

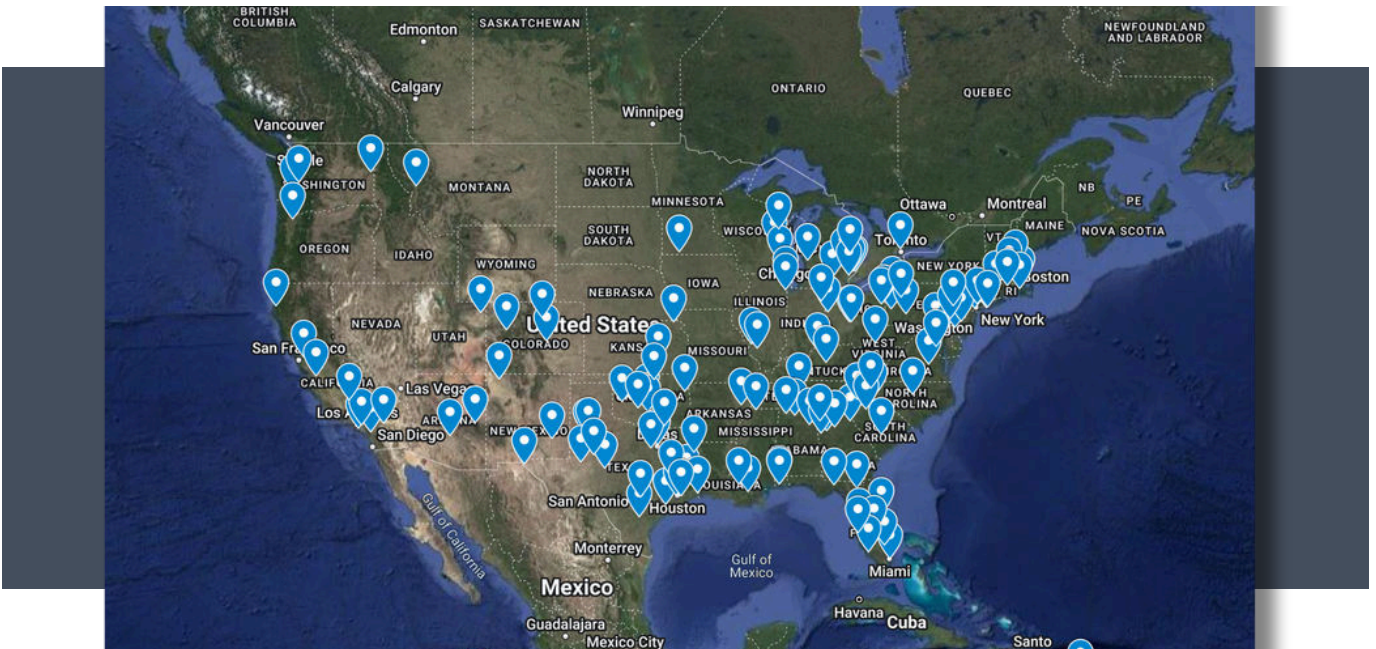
Troy Hill, Owner

210 West New Hope Dr.

Rogers, AL 72758

(479) 621- 8232

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AIWD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

South: Tim Makool
Board President 2024-2025
Kool Gas

North: Brant Romero
O2 Supply Co.

Executive Director
Kelly Horton

West: Tim Serviss
Action Gas & Welding Supply

Southwest: Evan Noel
Noel's Inc.

Operations & Events Director
Diane Calhoun

Midwest: Max Hoyt
Max's Breathe Easy Gases

P.O. Box 154
Statesboro, GA 30459
www.aiwdgroup.com

Treasurer
Connie Hoyt

HURRY!
—REGISTRATION—
ENDS MARCH 15

FOR THE
2025 AIWD
ANNUAL CONVENTION

RENO

The **pre-convention newsletter** posts **March 12**.

Vendors, submit your ads to
dcalhoun@aiwdgroup.com by **March 7** to be
included in our biggest issue of the year!

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

CUTTING COSTS WITHOUT CUTTING CORNERS

Association of Independent Welding Distributors



A Q&A on the Perks of Your AIWD Membership

Every type of business is looking for an extra edge right now. In fact, it's our hope that's part of why you're a member in the first place: a competitive edge to help you go farther.

As a partner of Association of Independent Welding Distributors, Savings4Members exists to help make hitting your business targets easy. By partnering with our group and hundreds like it, Savings4Members has built a cooperative network entirely focused on connecting members with powerful scale, cost-cutting benefits, and a full team to help you take advantage. With this in mind, we talked to *Veronica Pratt, Senior Account Relationship Manager* at Savings4Members to learn how members can cut costs without cutting corners by making the most of every tool available, including their membership.

So, how can members access their member benefit programs?

V.P.: It's very easy. Members can visit their AIWD page or talk to your AIWD Savings Consultant, Rebecca Lanaville (603-628-2388)

or email at rlanaville@savings4members.com. In addition to monthly email updates on new, updated, or recommended perks - our Savings Consultants will also check-in from time to time to see how we can help. So be on the lookout! Every member should know, our team is your team. And we've grown our Savings Consultant Team in the last year to ensure there's always someone available to help you make the most of membership. A large part of that also means ensuring they're all awesome people who are happy to help make the process painless.

Are there certain types of members that should be using your service?

V.P.: Honestly, no. Your AIWD benefits can make an impact whether you're a large company or small and family-owned. With over 20+ cost-cutting opportunities, there really is something for everyone.

(Continued next page...)

CUTTING COSTS WITHOUT CUTTING CORNERS

Savings4Members | Association of Independent Welding Distributors

For some members, that means saving money on everyday expenses like office supplies and uniforms. For others, it's cheaper fuel for company vehicles. But one benefit I encourage every member to start with is credit card processing, and the reason is pretty simple. Because with our close partnership with CardConnect AIP, every member can know with complete certainty that they're getting the best possible rate. Getting started with that is really easy too, all a member needs is a copy of their most recent processing statement. Last year, the average member saved over **\$20,300 in processing fees** - so these can really add up.

What common misconceptions prevent some members from taking advantage?

V.P.: We hear all the time that members don't have time to look into their benefits or that they already have the lowest offering. What's great about our service is we have a team here to do the legwork for each of them. Another common misconception we hear from members is about their vehicles. AIWD members have access to some incredible fuel discounts for fleets. Often, we hear, "I don't have a fleet - just a few trucks." But that's more than enough to qualify and you can get a nice discount on every single drop of gas.

How should members learn more about the benefits available through their AIWD membership?

V.P.: If you're a member and you haven't done it yet, visit your AIWD Savings Page - aiwd.savings4members.com. It's easy to access your benefits, see what programs you're already taking advantage of, and any next steps required. Also, follow Savings4Members on our social channels, Facebook and LinkedIn, to stay updated on the latest news.



About Veronica Pratt, Senior Account Relationship Manager

For over a decade, Veronica has made it her mission to listen, learn, and lead while working with member-businesses of all sizes from a wide variety of national cooperatives, buying groups, associations and franchises. As Savings4Members' Senior Account Relationship Manager, Veronica works directly with members of America's best organizations to connect them with the powerful value of the Savings4Members network.

SAVINGS4MEMBERS™
Powered by People. Driven by Purpose.

About Savings4Members

Savings4Members has been partnered with AIWD since 2021 providing substantial savings to members. Savings4Members works with dozens of purchasing cooperatives, buying groups and associations across many different industries to supply members with significant cost savings on services and products, they use every day. With easy access to over 20 categories of discounts and a team that handles the details for you, Savings4Members helps navigate which member benefits are most beneficial for you and your business.

Training & Compliance

The following articles were contributed
to the AIWD Buying Group by

Insurance / Risk Advisory / Employee Benefits

HORTON

A red horizontal line with a slight upward curve on the right side, positioned below the word "HORTON".

THE IMPORTANCE OF ANNUAL FIRE ALARM TESTING BY A CERTIFIED 3RD PARTY

by The Horton Group

Ensuring the safety of a building and its occupants is a top priority for property managers and business owners. One of the critical components of this safety is the fire alarm system. In an emergency, a fully functional fire alarm system can be the difference between life and death. However, simply installing these systems is not enough; regular maintenance and testing are essential to ensure they operate correctly when needed most.

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 72's National Fire Alarm and Signaling Code, fire alarm systems must be inspected, tested, and maintained regularly. While NFPA 72 does not specifically require a third-party, it does mandate that testing must be conducted by a qualified and authorized person or company. To ensure objectivity, many organizations, including ours, recommend using a third-party professional. This ensures the system's components are functioning correctly and in compliance with fire safety regulations.

Why Annual Testing is Crucial

No one wants to be caught in a situation where the building is on fire and the alarms fail to go off. Fire alarms consist of many components, including detectors, control panels, and notification devices, each of which needs to work together seamlessly in an emergency. Over time, dust, debris, and even wear and tear can impair their functionality.

Regular annual testing ensures:

- **Detection Reliability:** Sensors, detectors, and other monitoring systems (such as CO2 or specialized environmental detectors) may degrade or become blocked over time, reducing their effectiveness.
- **Early Warning:** Properly functioning alarms provide critical early warning, giving people more time to evacuate.
- **Compliance:** NFPA 72 sets clear guidelines, and compliance with these codes can protect property owners from liability.

Insurance Requirements: Many insurance companies require proof of regular fire alarm testing for coverage purposes.

- Additionally, while monitoring companies may be responsible for alerting emergency services in case of alarm activation, it is ultimately the property owner's responsibility to ensure the alarm system functions properly and meets all legal and insurance obligations.

What Happens During Annual Testing?

A qualified and authorized third-party certified professional will typically:

1. Inspect all components of the fire alarm system, ensuring they are free of damage or obstruction.
2. Test the functionality of the entire system, from individual detectors to the main control panel.
3. Verify system signals are correctly sent to the central monitoring station, ensuring emergency services will be contacted in case of a fire.
4. Document all findings and ensure any deficiencies are corrected immediately.

This testing provides peace of mind, knowing that when the unexpected occurs, the fire alarm system will work as intended, offering early warnings and potentially saving lives.

Final Thoughts

Maintaining a working fire alarm system is not just a matter of safety; it's a legal and insurance requirement. Ensuring your building's fire alarms are tested annually by a qualified and objective professional, as outlined by NFPA 72, helps prevent potential disasters and ensures compliance with fire safety regulations. Don't wait until it's too late – schedule your annual fire alarm system test today. Additionally, consider testing other critical monitoring systems, such as fire suppression, CO2, or other specialized sensors, as part of your safety protocol. For more detailed requirements and guidelines, refer to the NFPA 72 standards to ensure your fire alarm system is always up to code.

INCIDENT INVESTIGATION AND ANALYSIS: CONDUCTING AN EFFECTIVE INVESTIGATION

The goal of an accurate and thorough incident investigation is not to place blame, but to determine the true cause of the incident and make changes that reduce the chances of similar incidents occurring in the future.

Make sure your investigation includes each of the phases below to assure that your team has every opportunity to uncover all root causes.

Responding to the Incident

- Check the scene for hazards to yourself and others.
- If you can do so safely, control hazards or remove people from the hazards.
- Respond to medical needs: if necessary, summon help by calling emergency medical services (EMS) and/or provide first aid to the level you are trained.
- Secure the area if necessary to prevent further injury or disruption of evidence.
- Contact the appropriate personnel, such as supervisors, management, or emergency responders, after injured parties are medically stable.
- Start preserving evidence that may be needed for the investigation, including photographing or isolating evidence that may not be able to be removed from the scene.

Gathering Information

- Include both management and employees in the investigation. Multiple perspectives are invaluable.
- Make sure that the investigation team includes or has access to technical expertise in safety, engineering, operations, or any other subjects that might be helpful.
- Focus on finding causes for the issue rather than assigning blame.
- Collect as much data as possible by interviewing personnel involved in the incident (including witnesses) and documenting the entire incident site (i.e., with photographs or video). The more information you have, the easier it will be to see the big picture.



Analyzing the Data

- Look for root causes. A root cause is a factor that underlies other contributing causes and that could eliminate recurrence of the problem if it is addressed.
- Rather than just focusing on the actions of the people involved in the incident, try to consider the organization as a whole and whether there are any weaknesses in the current procedures that may have contributed to the incident.
- Using multiple methods of data analysis, such as Ishikawa (fishbone) diagrams or the Why Method, can help uncover root causes that may have been missed using only one.

Determining Corrective Actions

Once all root causes of the incident have been determined, recommend corrective actions that can help minimize or eliminate the chances of reoccurrence.

- Be specific in your instructions for what each action entails and how it should be implemented.
- Assign responsible parties to ensure that the corrective actions are completed and a time frame for completion.
- Keep your recommendations constructive and objective.
- Clearly point out instances where human error is a cause, but avoid recommending disciplinary actions, which should be handled by Human Resources.
- Outline a follow-up plan to assure that actions are implemented correctly and work as planned.

OSHA COMPLIANCE FOR EMPLOYEES

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires all employers and workers to comply with occupational safety and health standards. You have rights under OSHA, but you must also follow all of the OSHA rules and regulations as described in your employer's safety policies and procedures in addition to following your organization's other safety requirements and associated training.

Rights

- You have the right to report all injuries and illnesses to your employer.
- You have the right to know and understand about the hazards in your workplace, including both chemical and physical hazards. You also have the right be protected from those hazards.
- Your employer must communicate chemical hazards to you through a written hazard communication program that includes training, proper GHS labeling, and easy access to hazard information, such as safety data sheets (SDSs).
- You must also be trained in your employer's program to protect you against physical hazards and know what safe work practices are expected from you.

In addition to training, you should have access to information on:

- The safety and health hazards in your work area.
- Precautions you need to take.
- What you must do if you are involved in an accident or exposed to toxic substances.
- A copy of the OSHA standards and other rules, regulations, and requirements.
- A copy of your employer's written program pertaining to OSHA standards.
- Exposure monitoring that pertains to your work.
- Your own medical records.
- Safety data sheets (SDSs) for hazardous chemicals in your workplace.



Responsibilities

Be an active participant in your own safety.

- Arm yourself with the information you need to keep yourself and others safe.
- Be actively engaged in the completion of all required safety and health training.
- Read the OSHA Employee Rights poster and other safety postings at your worksite.
- Follow your employer's safety and health policies and procedures.
- Comply with any applicable OSHA standards.
- Wear the prescribed personal protective equipment (PPE).
- You have the responsibility to report all injuries and illnesses to your employer. This should be done in a timely fashion to allow for prompt interventions and corrective actions. In addition, seek prompt medical attention.
- Report hazardous conditions and safety issues to your supervisor. Ideally, try to recommend corrective actions (and correct the issues if they are under your control) rather than just reporting issues.
- If you observe someone working unsafely, tell them about it in a nice, positive manner.
- Clean up your work area regularly with good housekeeping practices.
- Cooperate with OSHA compliance officers who are conducting inspections if they inquire about conditions at your jobsite.
- Respond honestly to OSHA compliance officers if they stop to interview you.
- Accompany the OSHA compliance officer during the inspection walk around if you are designated by your union or worker association.
- If you have any questions or concerns regarding known or possible hazards in the workplace, ask your supervisor.

WINTER PREPARATION

In cold, wet conditions, common dangers include slips and falls, as well as vehicle accidents. Taking simple precautions can prevent accidents and injuries.

Preventing slips:

Areas that may become slick and require extra caution include stairs, ramps, tile floors, parking lots and metal parts of equipment.

- Have an excellent snow and ice removal program in place.
- Place non-skid floor mats and caution signs in slippery, high traffic areas.
- Use traction devices that strap onto shoes when conditions require them.
- Use the right shoes. Anti-slip soles are essential. Shoe soles need to have thin cuts, often called siping, that disperse water and grip the ground.

Driving safety:

- Slips can happen when entering and exiting your vehicle, so be cautious. Use a three-point stance when getting in and out of your vehicle. Use a grab-bar or doorframe for stability.

- Be aware that the vehicle itself can lose traction, causing uncontrolled skids.
- When roads are slick, slow down, leave extra following distance between yourself and other cars and do not make sudden vehicular movements.
- If you begin to skid, turn the wheel in the direction you want the vehicle to go. Ease your foot off the accelerator, and do not hit the brakes.
- Know the weather conditions you will encounter and plan ahead.
- Inspect your vehicle for proper tires and other winter driving gear.
- Be sure that chains and cold weather gear are on board and ready for use.
- Assume that roads, bridges and exits are icy, and be ready for them.
- Keep lights, windows and mirrors clean. This is especially important in low visibility situations such as darkness, ice or fog.
- If pulling over due to an emergency, increase your visibility to passing traffic. Activate the vehicle's hazard warning lights, wear your safety vest, set up a warning triangle or flares and assume that ongoing traffic does not see you.

Remember, ice is twice as slippery at 30°F as at 0°F.



This form documents that the training specified above was presented to the listed participants. By signing below, each participant acknowledges receiving this training.

Organization _____ Date: _____

Trainer: _____ Trainer's Signature: _____

Class Participants:

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____

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