

## ASRE Merging with ASHAE

Although air conditioning involves refrigeration equipment, the “R” in ASHRAE normally refers to systems operating at temperatures colder than that normally used for air conditioning. These types of systems are used for food preparation and storage, pharmaceutical, chemical and petroleum processes, laboratory environmental chambers, and various industrial uses.

When the American Society of Refrigerating Engineers (ASRE) merged with the American Society of Heating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHAE) in 1959, there was a considerable amount of grumbling on the part of many members of ASRE. It was felt by many that the interests of the refrigeration engineer would be secondary to those of the combined societies. Before the merger, those who were members of ASRE even received letters from concerned members requesting that they vote against the merger. But the majority of the members of each Society, having faith in their officers’ ability to decide what was best for all concerned, end up voting in favor of the merger.

After the merger, nationally, many refrigeration engineers did, in fact, fall away and stop attending. There were many possible reasons for this such as a lack of refrigeration topics included in the Society publications, lack of programs on refrigeration at Chapter and Society meetings, and lack of refrigeration engineers in leadership roles at the top level of ASHRAE. ASHRAE tried to address this problem by creating an “R in ASHRAE Committee” in 1969. Its members were active in formulating plans to increase the recognition of, and interest in, refrigeration disciplines; thereby attracting manpower for training, and refrigeration-oriented engineers into active participation in the industry.

ASHRAE took a two-pronged approach to maximize its ability to develop refrigeration engineering solutions to meet the world’s demands: 1) Each ASHRAE Society leader was tasked to further develop every discipline, not just the ones they are most familiar with, and 2) ASHRAE Chapters members were tasked to continuously review and comment on the content of the handbooks produced by the Society.

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