



**Metropolitan Washington Association of
Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors**

Newsleak

Message from the President — Buckey Davis



After 2 years, this month’s meeting will be my last as association President. It has been my honor and privilege to serve as the MWP/PHCC President. I have learned so much about the association, about the industry and about myself. I have enjoyed serving and look forward to continuing to serve on the Board of Directors and to help guide this association in a positive direction.

Please be sure to join us for our December meeting. We have a very important tradition in December. In addition to having a great training and holiday dinner sponsored by D & B, we practice the

Christmas spirit and give back to our community by donating money and new toys to children in need. This is one of my favorite meetings during the year and it is such a privilege to hand over money and toys to the U.S Marines that will be in attendance at our meeting. Please be sure to come and bring a new, unwrapped toy or money to our December meeting.

Also at the December meeting, we will be holding elections of our Officers and Board members for 2013. Please come and support the association.

And before I end, I don’t want to forget to wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and a Healthy, Happy and Prosperous New Year!!

Again, thank you so much for your support and encouragement over the last two years while I was President of this chapter.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 202-288-6300.

Calendar of Events

- December 6 - Meeting
 - ⇒ 5:00 -Board Meeting
 - ⇒ 6:00 -T-4 Training Seminar
 - ⇒ 7:30 p.m. - Dinner and General Meeting
- Jan 3 - Meeting

D & B Distributing Sponsors December Meeting

Join us for the last meeting of 2012 on Thursday, December 6, 2012 at The Holiday Inn in College Park, MD. D & B Distributing Co., Inc. is sponsoring the December Meeting. At 6:00 p.m., the T-4 Training given by Charles Smith of Bradford White, “Trouble Shooting Residential Water Heaters,” will provide you with the latest information available. You don’t want to miss it!

Following the training, the sponsor

will provide a complimentary upgraded holiday dinner at 7:30 p.m.

D&B Distributing has been a long-time supporter of the MWP/PHCC and always has a great meeting with a special dinner and door prizes.

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Join us and see how D & B can help your business!

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Marine Corps Toys for Tots Program



We are once again happy to have Toys for Tots at our December meeting and have the opportunity to brighten a child's day during the holidays. This has been a challenging year for so many and we are sure that the need for toys for children has increased. And by donating at the meeting you will be assured that your toys and/or donations will help children in the Metro Washington area. Donations are tax deductible and a tax receipt will be given upon request.

The mission of the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program is to collect new, unwrapped toys from October thru December each year and distribute those toys as Christmas gifts to needy children in our community. The Toys for Tots program wishes to play an active role in the development of one of our nation's most valuable natural

resources - our children; to unite all members of local communities in a common cause for three months each year during the annual toy collection and distribution campaign; and to contribute to better communities in the future. The program is a national effort administered locally; the community in which toys will be distributed is the same community in which they were collected. The success of the program relies on volunteer support and community involvement.

Over the 65 years of the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program, Marines have distributed more than 400 million toys to 188 million needy children. This charitable endeavor has made U.S. Marines the unchallenged leaders in looking after needy children at Christmas. Over its 19 year life

span, the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation has supplemented local toy collections with more than 81.3 million toys valued at more than \$487 million; plus has provided promotion and support materials valued at over \$6.3 million.

Please make this campaign a success by bringing a new unwrapped toy and/or monetary donation to the December 6, 2012 meeting. We collected \$2274 last year, an all-time record. Members from the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve unit will be in attendance to collect the items. We look forward to honoring them for their service to our country and to having each of our members participate in this worthy charity.

MWPHCC Election - 2013 Slate of Officers



We will be holding elections during our December meeting and hope that you will join us and support the association with your vote. Our officers work hard throughout the year to provide quality programs for the association and they are looking forward to serving you in the coming year.

If you are interested in serving as an officer or on the Board of Directors, please contact us and let us know. The following are the list of officers and Board of Directors to serve for the MWPHCC in 2013:

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President: Bill Royston
 1st Vice President Charlie Perkins
 2nd Vice President: Al Luke
 Treasurer: Mark Crooks
 Secretary: Buck Hudson
 Sergeant at Arms: John Barry
 Past President: Buckey Davis
 Auxiliary - Marcia Shapiro

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You Can't Be Santa Claus



“It can reinforce a sense of entitlement, resulting in employees expecting the bonus regardless of individual or organization performance.”

Most employers intend to use bonuses to attract and retain top talent, but whether or not this intention translates into success may very well depend on what an employer means by “bonus.” End of the year bonuses distributed by the boss while walking around like Santa Claus may have a very different result than an annual incentive bonus tied to performance.

Handing out money to employees is a motivator, right? Not necessarily. Consider the following disadvantages of playing Santa Claus.

- It can reinforce a sense of entitlement, resulting in employees expecting the bonus regardless of individual or organization performance.

- Playing Santa could result in unrealistic expectations. This can result in a disappointed unproductive workforce if the budget doesn't allow for a bonus or if the bonus falls short of what employees have come to expect based on prior years.

- Employees may “pre-spend” what they believe will be their bonus and could find themselves in hot water.

Linking Bonuses to Performance

Many employers are turning away from “Santa gifts” and toward a tool that allows them to attract and retain top performers in the organization – incentives tied to measurable performance.

Employers may find that this can be quite a culture shift, but with the proper executive support,

planning, communication, and execution, it can be a powerful tool that helps the organization achieve its objectives.

How Can We Afford Incentives?

Incentives are different than bonuses, as they are typically based on an employee exceeding a set goal. If the employee is simply meeting the basic expectations of the job, then they are not contributing anything more than expected to the company's profitability and therefore there is no reason to pay any incentive.

However, by exceeding (measurable) expectations, that same employee is adding value or unexpected profits to the company. It is fair for the company to retain a portion of those profits in excess of expectations, but the rest should go back to the employee as an incentive to continue those efforts and expand on them. In this manner, the incentives are paid out only from the money the company would not have had if the employee had not done the extra work to earn it for the company.

One Approach – Individualized Goals

Consider the following when implementing an incentive program tied to measurable performance results.

Each employee and their manager should work together to set goals: Managers and their employees should work side by side to create goals that are linked to company objectives to give each employee an opportu-

nity to contribute to organization success. Use SMART goals: goals that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-Oriented.

Whenever possible, tie individual employee goals to the organization's strategic objectives. Getting the employee's agreement on the goals and measurements increases buy in.

Once goals are set, talk about them: Goals discussions should not be a one-time event, discussions should happen throughout the year. Managers should set time aside at least quarterly to discuss employee progress toward goals. This is a great opportunity to offer positive as well as developmental feedback.

Communicate: Make sure employees understand the link between their performance and their incentive.

Formally review each employee's performance against expectations and use this information to differentiate between employee bonuses: When writing a performance appraisal, managers should consider the employee's position description and responsibilities as well as performance results relating to established goals. Managers should be sure to ask the employee to write a self-evaluation and consider it when writing the appraisal.

Continued on Page 5

You Can't Be Santa Claus *continued*

Continued from Page 4

This will offer an objective, well-rounded look at each employee's contribution and will serve as the basis for the incentive bonus.

A Different Perspective – An Employee Created System

Another approach that may be considered is allowing the employees to create their own plan. In this scenario, the owner and employees create a system that determines how the incentive pool is funded – typically a percentage of profits beyond that which was budgeted.

Then a committee of employees creates the rules by which the overall incentive pool of money is distributed among the employees. A point system is developed where employees can earn extra "shares" of the bonus pool based on actions that funnel money into that pool - such as beating sales goals, customer compliments, beating completion deadlines, etc. At the end of the year (or quarterly), the incentive pot is paid out, with employees holding a larger number of shares receiving more cash.

Because the distribution of the incentive funds is determined by the

employees themselves, it removes the "management vs. employees" feelings from the process. If someone feels the system isn't fair, then they can get on the committee and add their input to the process.

Another advantage to this system is that this can also help employees do more peer-management. If a fellow employee is doing things that are negatively affecting the available bonus pool for everyone, chances are they will be encouraged to move along by their co-workers. This can help the company to weed out bad employees who look great in front of management, but are slacking off when they think nobody is watching.

The key here is that every factor for earning points must be examined for ways it could be manipulated or abused to rack up points while hurting the company. For example, completing a project early by working in an unsafe manner cannot be rewarded. It may take a while to work out the kinks, but this type of system can lead to better teamwork as employees pressure each other to grow the incentive pot (and thus their share of dollars) as big as possible.

Conclusion

While it may be more *temporary* fun to walk around like Santa Claus and hand out bonus checks, an effectively designed incentive bonus has the potential to have *long-term* individual employee and organizational performance improvement impact - the kind of positive impact even a jolly old elf would endorse.

This content was developed for the PHCC Educational Foundation by TPO, Inc. (www.tpo-inc.com). Please consult your HR professional or attorney for further advice, as laws may differ in each state.

The PHCC Educational Foundation, a partnership of contractors, manufacturers and wholesalers was founded in 1987 to serve the plumbing-heating-cooling industry by preparing contractors and their employees to meet the challenges of a constantly changing marketplace. If you found this article helpful, please consider supporting the Foundation by making a contribution at <http://www.phccfoundation.org>.



Christmas is not a time nor a season, but a state of mind. To cherish peace and goodwill, to be plenteous in mercy, is to have the real spirit of Christmas.

-- Calvin Coolidge



We look forward to sponsoring the
MWPHCC Meeting on December 6th!

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Watch Out For Holiday E-Mail Scams by Susan Tompor

“Do not click on links or attachments in e-cards and other holiday greetings from unfamiliar senders.”



More and more, the holidays can feel too much like a money grab. And it's not just your kids who are finding new ways to get your money. Con artists are cashing in on feelings of good cheer, too.

- The shipping scam. An e-mail pops up saying that "Your parcel has been returned to the UPS office nearest to you." It asks you to click on the link to provide a mobile number. It has a tracking number.

Susan Rosenberg, public relations manager for UPS in Atlanta, said UPS is not going to send an e-mail asking for a cell phone number out of the blue. Scam artists may phone you to say UPS is waiting to deliver a package but needs your credit card. She said UPS may send official notification messages on occasion but an official UPS e-mail is rarely going to include attachments. A representative will always provide a tracking number, which you can use on the UPS website. See www.ups.com/fraudprotection. Send suspicious UPS e-mail to fraud@ups.com.

- Don't be scammed if you get a call about computer tech support.

Boots Halstead, 80, took a call from a man in late summer who told her that he was from a software firm. He warned her that her computer had malicious software loaded onto it. "He said it would be dangerous for me to use my computer and it was hacked," she said.

Halstead, who lives in Lansing, told the man to call back when her daughter was home. Unfortunately, the daughter who knows more about computers found the man's warnings believable. She logged into the computer, spent some time following the

man's directions and then he asked for her credit card number.

That's when the daughter realized it was a scam. She did not give the credit card number. She later paid a legitimate outfit to clean up the computer mess created during her encounter with fake tech support.

The Federal Trade Commission announced a crackdown last month on six alleged tech support scams. Thousands of consumers were allegedly tricked into paying for removing bogus viruses. Scammers were charging \$49 to \$450 for services.

- Don't let the Grinch steal the spirit of giving. Scammers create fictitious charities, including "Sandy Scams."

Fake victims of disasters attempt to use social media to dupe generous people. The same is true around the holidays. Don't donate to unknown individuals who need help buying gifts and post their financial troubles online.

- Be careful if you get a so-called text from your bank.

Plenty of people sign up for bank text alerts, but scam artists are texting, too. Experts warn that scam artists imply the message is urgent and you must take action before your account is disabled. Call your financial institution before giving any information or clicking a link.

- Yes, Virginia, scammers can wear red suits, too. The Better Business Bureau warns consumers to stay away from any e-mails that involve Santa -- especially if Santa is asking for your bank

account information.

Multiple domain names are registered to the name Santa Claus. Limit personal information children share. And make sure there's no adult content on the site or via links. During past holiday seasons, some consumers complained of being duped after paying \$45 for a phone call from Santa.

More Details: Watch out for scams

- If you're traveling during the holidays, the BBB says be wary of unexpected "cancellation" notices via e-mail or text. Some scam artists use them to trick you into clicking unsafe links.

- Do not broadcast your travel plans online. Crooks can use Facebook to find empty homes.

- Know who you are dealing with when shopping online. Try out a phone number before you order to see if you would actually get a service representative.

- Bankers suggest using one dedicated credit card for online purchases to monitor statements and spot discrepancies.

- Don't save time by shopping or banking online if you are working out of an unsecured Wi-Fi network at an airport or hotel.

- Be ready for the regular seasonal flurry of "hacking holiday e-cards," according to the BBB. Do not click on links or attachments in e-cards and other holiday greetings from unfamiliar senders. Get those spam filters ready.

Season's Greetings!

Thanking the MWPHCC and its Members for your Support throughout 2012!
We wish you a Wonderful Holiday Season & a Prosperous New Year!



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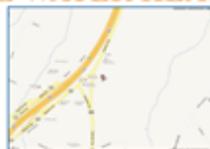
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