



Metropolitan Washington Association of Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors

Newsleak

Calendar of Events

- December 5 - Meeting
 - ⇒ 5:00 - Board Meeting
 - ⇒ 6:00 - T-4 Training : Water Heaters
 - ⇒ 7:30 - Dinner and General Meeting
 - January 9** - Meeting
- **Note: This is the 2nd Thursday of the month

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Message from the President — Bill Royston



It is hard to believe that we are already getting ready to say goodbye to 2013. As the year comes to a close, so does my first year as association president. I have learned a lot while leading this organization and I have to say what I've enjoyed most, is working with our members that donate their time and efforts to make this a strong and thriving chapter.

As an association, we have accomplished many things this year - provided quality trainings to our members, students, techs and mechanics; held a successful fishing trip and golf tournament, where we collected donations for the Susan G Komen for the Cure Foundation; helped repair homes for Christmas in April, PG County and Rebuilding Together, Washington, DC;

showcased our profession to thousands of children and their families with various hands-on exhibits at the Big Build at the National Building Museum and of course last but not least, we'll be collecting toys and monetary donations at our meeting this month for the U.S. Marine Corps Toys for Tots Program. We've also worked really hard this year to provide the best information on the changing trends in the industry, rebate programs and best practices to our members.

In continuing with providing the latest information for our members, we will have a representative from WSSC at our general meeting this month. They will be discussing the recent move to strictly enforce the installation of a liner in an exterior wall chimney (preferably a stainless

steel liner) when a new gas water heater, gas boiler or gas furnace is installed.

There is no grandfathering for this code enforcement. You can read more about this on page 2 of this newsletter and be sure to attend our meeting on Thursday, December 5th to learn the most accurate information on this important topic.

I want to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and Happy Holiday to all!

If you have any ideas, suggestions or questions you can always feel free to contact me at 301-808-6800.

MWPHCC December Meeting Sponsored by D & B Distributing

Join us for the last meeting of 2013 on Thursday, December 5, 2013 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 Herbert Harvey, will be on "Trouble Shooting Jetglas Water Heaters." They 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 Co. has been a long-time supporter of the MWPHCC and always has a great meeting with a special upgraded dinner and door prizes.

D & B Distributing Company, Inc. is a family owned and operated wholesaler doing business for more than 30 years in Maryland, DC and Virginia.

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Strict Enforcement of Outside Chimney Venting Restrictions

In their latest newsletter, WSSC sent out a special announcement regarding the strict enforcement of outside chimney venting restrictions. Additionally, we will have representatives from WSSC at our December general meeting to discuss this issue.

Here is the article from the WSSC Regulatory Services Group, Master Plumber & Master Gasfitter Newsletter from their November 2013 issues.

Special Announcement:

Strict Enforcement of Outside Chimney Venting Restrictions

In most applications where space heating appliance(s) (furnaces and boilers) are served by an "outside" masonry chimney, the chimney will require the installation of a listed liner when any of the existing

appliances served by the chimney are replaced. According to the sizing charts contained in the **2012 International Fuel Gas Code (IFGC), outside chimneys cannot be utilized "as is" unless a minimum of 300 - 400 Thousand Btu's are connected.** A water heater(s) may be connected to outside chimney providing two conditions are met: 1.) There is not a space heating appliance connected; 2.) The internal cross sectional area of the chimney does not exceed seven (7) times the area of the smallest connected draft hood. Refer to 2012 IFGC code section 504.2.9 and Tables 504.2(3) & 504.2(6) for single appliance venting; refer to code section 504.3.20 and Tables 504.3 (6a), 504.3(7a) & 504.3 (6b),

504.3(7b) for multi appliance venting.

These IFGC code sections and tables have priority over less restrictive manufacturers installation instructions including those touted as having "chimney friendly" alternatives.

Important Safety Message:

Be sure to remove all accumulations, each and every time, from the base of chimneys and vents (dirt pockets), prior to placing any equipment into service. This applies to all inside and outside chimneys, which qualify for continued use, as well as metal vent systems. Always check the integrity of the whole venting system.

MWPHCC Election - 2014 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 so we can add you to our slate of officers.

The following are the list of officers and Board of Directors to serve for the MWPHCC in 2014:

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Toys for Tots Program - MWPHCC December Meeting



This month at our December meeting we will participate in our annual tradition of having the U.S. Marine Corps Toys for Tots program. This is an important tradition for our chapter and we look forward to collecting a large amount of toys for needy children in our area. This year has continued to provide financial challenges for so many and we are sure that there is still a considerable need for toys for children in so many families. 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 mailed to you following the meeting.

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 66 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 5, 2013 meeting. We collected \$1184 last year. 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.



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Disaster Preparedness

Human nature—the tendency to believe that a natural or man-made disaster will never occur—often undermines the clear-headed work needed to create a business continuity plan. In a study done earlier this year by Staples, less than half of small businesses said they were prepared for severe emergencies.

Each year, lack of disaster preparedness takes a severe financial toll

on small businesses. Meanwhile, with solid planning, a business owner can protect both financial and human capital, developing an organization resilient enough to withstand any kind of threat.

SBA has partnered with Agility to offer business continuity strategies at its “Prepare My Business” website. To sign up for future webinars or to access past webinars and get

additional preparedness tips visit www.preparemybusiness.org.

The SBA provides disaster recovery assistance in the form of low-interest loans to homeowners, renters, private nonprofits and businesses of all sizes. To learn more, visit www.sba.gov/disaster.

The MWPHCC would like to wish all of our members a
Safe and Happy Holiday and a Prosperous New Year!



Thank you for making 2013 a successful year and we look
forward to serving you in 2014!

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Shapiro & Duncan's Apprentice wins 3rd place at PHCC Connect

PHCC National held its 2013 convention in Las Vegas, NV from October 16 - 19th. This year was the first time they held an HVAC Apprenticeship Contest. The contest provides top HVAC apprentices who have successfully won the competition at the local level with a unique opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in a practical, hands-on event that is fun and exciting. A portion of the contest was hosted by the College of Southern Nevada's HVAC program in Henderson, Nevada.

Shapiro & Duncan, Inc. (long-time member of Metro Washington PHCC)

sent Robert Monroe to compete in the contest. Robert Monroe was encouraged by his co-workers and supervisors to participate in the contest based on his high level of skill and excellent job performance working in Shapiro & Duncan's HVAC Service Department. Robert has been with the company for 3 years and is a 4th year apprenticeship student.

Apprentices who participated in the competition had to complete 6 stages:

Stage 1: Brazing assemble mock up refrigeration system piping

Stage 2: Pressure leak test demonstrate recovery, vacuum.

Stage 3: Written test.

Stage 4: Taking reading superheat, sub cooling, on an operating system.

Stage 5: Electrical Diagnostics.

Stage 6: Assemble component into a functional circuit.

There were 24 participants in the HVAC Apprenticeship contest and we are very proud to announce that Robert Monroe won 3rd place. Congratulations to Robert and Shapiro & Duncan!



Robert Monroe of Shapiro & Duncan competes and receives 3rd place at the HVAC Apprenticeship Contest at the 2013 PHCC Connect Convention in Las Vegas, NV.

Show Customers Their Tech is On The Way



"... create a simple text or e-mail to send to the customer when the tech is on the way to their home for service"

There are two customer concerns that have been around since the beginning of time. The first concern has always been "I wonder if the tech will show up on time?" The second issue, which is growing, is security.

When someone knocks at the front door, a person's initial reaction usually isn't, "I bet it's my neighbor bringing me a piece of warm homemade pie!" It's usually, "I wonder who that is. I wasn't expecting anyone," followed by a bit of concern about going to the front door at all. Personal security has become a huge issue in America and is only magnified when someone is knocking at your front door.

One of the things that has changed over the past 10-15 years is technology. Today nearly everyone has a cell phone, iPad or both. E-mails, texts and tweets are common in today's world, especially with the under-30 crowd. When I have an appointment with my dentist, I get a text the night before. It's simple, but effective. "Mr. Grandy, you have an appointment with Dr. Doe tomorrow morning at 9:15 AM. Please text a 1 if you will be here or a 2 if we need to reschedule." It serves as a great reminder of the appointment, and confirms I will be showing up the next day.

It's about time we put technology to work for us to solve these two issues in our industry!

Step one is gathering information. Gather your customer's cell phone numbers and e-mail addresses. Now some customers may be

concerned about providing this information, so simply explain that you are trying to improve communication (in the ways we will discuss below).

Step two involves your tech. Take each tech's picture with a quality digital camera. Be sure they are in clean uniforms and that the photo captures a "friendly" look. Our objective will be to share who the tech is with the customer, so the head shot should NOT look like a photo taken at the local police station! Gather a bit of history on the tech -- years in the industry, years with your company, education, and certifications. You might even want to gather a bit of personal information like if they are married and their favorite hobby.

Now create a simple text or e-mail to send to the customer when the tech is on the way to their home for service. The message could sound like this:

"Mrs. Jones, John Doe is on his way to your home right now to solve your equipment problem. He should be arriving within 15-30 minutes. John has over 21 years of industry experience and has been with our company for the past 12 years. John will be in uniform with our company name and his name plainly shown on his shirt. Below is a recent photo of John so you will recognize him when he arrives. Please text us a 1 if you are home or a two if we need to call and reschedule."

What did we just do? We told the customer the tech was on the way

and confirmed the customer was home, therefore reducing no shows. We also alerted the customer who was coming, what they looked like, and how much experience he has. That should make the customer more comfortable when the doorbell rings.

If you really want to put technology to use, consider sending a follow-up message after the tech has completed the job. The text might say:

"Mrs. Jones, John Doe recently completed your service call. We would welcome any feedback you would like to provide concerning the quality of work performed, cleanliness of the area after the work was completed, or anything that John could improve on next time he is in your home. Your feedback is very important to us, so please feel free to make any comments that might be beneficial when it comes to improving the quality of our service."

This article is provided by Grandy & Associates. They have trained over 16,000 contractors across the US and Canada on profitable business strategies. Grandy & Associates offers 12 different programs in their Small Business University that addresses Customer Service. For more information on their programs, seminars and services, you can visit their website at www.grandyassociates.com

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