



December 2014

Metropolitan Washington Association of Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors

Newsleak

Message from the President — Bill Royston

Calendar of Events

- December 4 - Meeting
- ⇒ 5:00 - Board Meeting
- ⇒ 6:00 - T-4 Training : Hot Water Heaters
- ⇒ 7:30 - Dinner and General Meeting
- Jan 8 - Meeting ** - Please Note:

**This is the 2nd Thursday of the month

As the year comes to a close, so does my term as President. It has been an honor for me over these last 2 years to serve as President for this association. I have learned a lot about myself and the organization and I appreciate all of the help and support of the other Officers, Board of Directors and members of the Metro Washington chapter (both contractor and industry associates). I think every President has their priorities and one of mine has been ways to create business opportunities for members including participating in area rebate programs. These programs provide a way for companies to create new work and gain customers that maybe wouldn't be having work done without the rebate incentives. The programs also promote work being done by licensed

contractors, something very important to emphasize in our industry. I will continue to support and promote these programs and hope that other members will take advantage of the benefits of these incentives while we have them.

We will be voting for the slate of officers at the general meeting in December and then the new slate will take over at the January 2015 meeting. I am pleased that our next President of the Metro Washington PHCC chapter will be Charlie Perkins of Beltsville Heating & Air. I hope that everyone will support him as he takes on this role and I know he will do a great job in this position.

Also at the December meeting, we will have members from the Unit-

ed States Marine Corps in attendance for the Toys for Tots Program. I always enjoy seeing our Marines in



their dress blue not only serving their country but serving their community by collecting toys for this area's needy children. Please plan to be at the December meeting and bring a toy, money or both to give our area's children a joyful and merry Christmas.

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

Inside this issue:

Toys for Tots	2
Slate of Officers	2
Holiday Safety	4
Monthly Meeting	insert
Calendar	insert
Apprentice Winner	8
Winter Work Hazards	10

MWPHCC December Meeting Sponsored by D & B Distributing

Join us for our final meeting of 2014 on Thursday, December 4, 2014 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 will be "Residential Jetglas Water Heater Trouble Shooting." 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. Please come out for a great training and meeting and show your support for D & B.

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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Toys for Tots - MWPHEC 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 67 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 20 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 4, 2014 meeting. 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.

MWPHEC Election - 2015 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 MWPHEC in 2015:

OFFICERS:

President: Charlie Perkins

1st Vice Pres: Al Luke

2nd Vice Pres: Dave Warner

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Secretary: RC Scott

Sergeant at Arms: John Barry

Past President: Bill Royston

Auxiliary: Marcia Shapiro

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Tips for Holiday Home Safety by Lexi Walters

The holidays invite all sorts of fun activities, from lighting candles to hanging fresh greens and stringing lights. Unfortunately, each year hospital emergency rooms treat about 8700 people for injuries such as falls, cuts and shocks, related to holiday lights, decorations and Christmas trees.

Here's how to keep your house and family safe from fire and injury.

As you're sprucing up your home this season, keep an eye out for these common holiday trip-ups, fire hazards, and other safety snafus.



"Try to purchase a freshly cut tree, as they are more resistant to ignition. A fresh tree is green, needles are hard to pull from branches and when bent between your fingers, needles do not break."

1. Merry and Bright: Carefully inspect holiday light strings each year and discard any with frayed cords, cracked lamp holders, or loose connections. When replacing bulbs, unplug the light string and be sure to match voltage and wattage to the original bulb.

2. Lights Out: Always turn off holiday lights when you leave the house unattended or when going to bed.

3. Fresh Is Best: Try to purchase a freshly cut tree, as they are more resistant to ignition. A fresh tree is green, needles are hard to pull from branches and when bent between your fingers, needles do not break. Keep your Christmas tree watered and away from open candles. Cut a few inches off the trunk of your tree to expose the fresh wood. This allows for better water absorption and will help to keep your tree from drying out and becoming a fire hazard. When setting up the tree at home, place it away from fireplaces and radiators. If you are going to purchase an artificial tree, look for the label, "Fire Resistant."

4. Not All Decorations are Equal: Use only noncombustible or flame-resistant materials to trim a tree. Choose tinsel or artificial icicles of plastic or nonleaded metals. Leaded materials are hazardous if ingested by

children.

5. Timing Is Everything: Use an outdoor timer certified by CSA International to switch lights on and off. Lights should be turned on after 7 p.m. to avoid the electricity rush hour.

6. Check for the Certification

Mark: When purchasing light strings, extension cords, spotlights, electrical decorations, gas appliances, or carbon monoxide alarms, look for the certification mark of an accredited certification organization such as CSA International, UL, or ELT to ensure that the products comply with applicable standards for safety and performance.

7. One and Done: Never connect more than one extension cord together; instead use a single cord that is long enough to reach the outlet without stretching, but not so long that it can get easily tangled.

8. The Great Outdoors: When hanging outdoor lights, keep electrical connectors off the ground and away from metal rain gutters. Use insulated tape or plastic clips instead of metal nails or tacks to hold them in place.

9. Climbing Up: Using a ladder when you put up lights? Choose the correct ladder for the job and double check for a certification mark to ensure your portable ladder complies with applicable standards.

10. Keep the Gas Behind Glass: Do not use your gas fireplace if the glass panel is removed, cracked, or broken, and only allow a qualified service person to replace fireplace parts.

11. Sound the Alarm: Test your smoke alarms monthly to make sure they work, and be sure to install smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms on every level of your home -- especially near sleeping areas.

12. Filter-Friendly Furnace: To help prevent CO hazards in your home,

have a qualified heating contractor perform a yearly maintenance check of your furnace and venting system, and clean or replace your furnace filter frequently during the heating seasons.

13. Clean the Clutter: Do not store combustible materials such as gasoline, propane, paper, chemicals, paint, rags, and cleaning products near your gas furnace. Gasoline or propane cylinders should be stored outside the home.

14. Here are Additional Tips on Food Safety during the Holidays and Throughout the Year:

- Bacteria are often present in raw foods. Fully cook meats and poultry, and thoroughly wash raw vegetables and fruits.
- Be sure to keep hot liquids and foods away from the edges of counters and tables, where they can be easily knocked over by a young child's exploring hands.
- Wash your hands frequently, and make sure your children do the same.
- Never put a spoon used to taste food back into food without washing it.
- Always keep raw foods and cooked foods separate, and use separate utensils when preparing them.
- Always thaw meat in the refrigerator, never on the countertop.
- Foods that require refrigeration should never be left at room temperature for more than two hours.

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Shapiro & Duncan's Apprentice wins 1st Place in PHCC Apprenticeship

On Thursday, October 9th fourth year Shapiro & Duncan's apprentice, Leroy Friend, won first place in the HVAC apprentice contest, CONNECT 2014, held by PHCC (Plumbing, Heating, Cooling Contractors Association) in New Orleans, Louisiana. The contest offers the nation's top 21 plumbing and top 10 HVAC apprentices a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. The competition was broken up into different phases; Brazing (90 minutes), refrigerant identification (20 minutes), written test (60 minutes), wiring (60 minutes), troubleshooting (90 minutes), and ptac readings (90 minutes).

Leroy's talents and skills were quickly noticed by his service manager, Don Jenkins. "If you believe in second chances, that's Leroy's story." Leroy Friend was a mine worker in West Virginia for 18 years. He decided to leave coal mining and change

careers to the HVAC-R industry. "I always had an interest in working with my hands. I learned about this industry when my own AC broke and I had to pay for it and help the technician fix it," said Leroy. After two years with Shapiro & Duncan, a family hardship took Leroy out of the HVAC industry and back to the West Virginia mines for several years.

In 2013, Leroy was ready to try again. He contacted Shapiro & Duncan and asked to come back. "I said yes knowing his commitment to excellence and outstanding work ethic. I learned many years ago, as an instructor for the ACCA apprentice program, to never underestimate someone's desire for knowledge and achieving goals," said Don Jenkins.

Leroy has credited much of his success to his mentor senior HVAC technician, Randall Phillips, the instructors at Montgomery College, and the support he receives from Shapiro & Duncan's service department. According to Leroy, the most difficult phase in the competition was brazing based on the scope of work that needed to be completed within the allotted timeframe. His first place award was no easy accomplishment. "I prepared by practicing brazing, did lots of reading, and looked through notes I took at school."

When asked what it felt like to win first place, Leroy responded, "It felt pretty good. The future can only look brighter while working at Shapiro & Duncan. My next goal is to graduate ACCA."



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Working in Winter Weather - Hazards and Precautions

Winter provides many challenges for those that work outdoors. Below are just some of the hazards and precautions to keep in mind for this upcoming winter.

Winter Driving

Although employers cannot control roadway conditions, they can promote safe driving behavior by ensuring workers: recognize the hazards of winter weather driving, for example, driving on snow/ice covered roads; are properly trained for driving in winter weather conditions; and are licensed (as applicable) for the vehicles they operate. For information about driving safely during the winter, visit OSHA's Safe Winter Driving page.

Employers should set and enforce driver safety policies. Employers should also implement an effective maintenance program for all vehicles and mechanized equipment that workers are required to operate. Crashes can be avoided. Learn more at: Motor Vehicle Safety (OSHA Safety and Health Topic's Page).

Employers should ensure properly trained workers inspect the following vehicle systems to determine if they are working properly:

- **Brakes:** Brakes should provide even and balanced braking. Also check that brake fluid is at the proper level.
- **Cooling System:** Ensure a proper mixture of 50/50 antifreeze and water in the cooling system at the proper level.
- **Electrical System:** Check the ignition system and make sure that the battery is fully charged and that the connections are clean. Check that the alternator belt is in good condition with proper tension.
- **Engine:** Inspect all engine systems.
- **Exhaust System:** Check exhaust for leaks and that all clamps and hangers are snug.
- **Tires:** Check for proper tread depth and no signs of damage or uneven wear. Check for proper tire inflation.

- **Oil:** Check that oil is at proper level.
- **Visibility Systems:** Inspect all exterior lights, defrosters (windshield and rear window), and wipers. Install winter windshield wipers.

An emergency kit with the following items is recommended in vehicles:

- Cellphone or two-way radio
- Windshield ice scraper
- Snow brush
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- Shovel
- Tow chain
- Traction aids (bag of sand or cat litter)
- Emergency flares
- Jumper cables
- Snacks
- Water
- Road maps
- Blankets, change of clothes

Work Zone Traffic Safety

Workers being struck by vehicles or mobile equipment lead to many work zone fatalities or injuries annually. Drivers may skid, or lose control of their vehicles more easily when driving on snow and/or ice covered roads. It is therefore, important to properly set up work zones with the traffic controls identified by signs, cones, barrels, and barriers, to protect workers. Workers exposed to vehicular traffic should wear the appropriate high visibility vest at all times, so that they can be visible to motorists.

Stranded in a Vehicle

If you are stranded in a vehicle, stay in the vehicle. Call for emergency assistance if needed, response time may be slow in severe winter weather conditions. Notify your supervisor of your situation. Do not leave the vehicle to search for assistance unless help is visible within 100 yards. You may become disoriented and get lost in blowing and drifting snow. Display a trouble sign by hanging a brightly colored cloth on the vehicle's radio antenna and raising the hood. Turn on the vehicle's engine for about 10 minutes each hour and run the heat to keep warm. Also, turn on the vehicle's dome light when the vehicle is running as an additional signal. Beware of carbon monoxide poisoning. Keep the exhaust pipe clear of snow, and open a downwind window slightly for ventilation.

Watch for signs of frostbite and hypothermia. Do minor exercises to maintain good blood circulation in your body. Clap hands and move arms and legs occasionally. Try not to stay in one position for too long. Stay awake, you will be less vulnerable to cold-related health problems. Use blankets, newspapers, maps, and even the removable car mats for added insulation. Avoid overexertion since cold weather puts an added strain on the heart. Unaccustomed exercise such as shoveling snow or pushing a vehicle can bring on a heart attack or make other medical conditions worse.

Shoveling Snow

Shoveling snow can be a strenuous activity, particularly because cold weather can be taxing on the body. There is a potential for exhaustion, dehydration, back injuries, or heart attacks. During snow removal in addition to following the tips for avoiding cold stress, such as taking frequent breaks in warm areas, there are other precautions workers can take to avoid injuries. Workers should warm-up before the activity, scoop small amounts of snow at a time and where possible, push the snow instead of lifting it. The use of proper lifting technique is necessary to avoid back and other injuries when shoveling snow: keep the back straight, lift with the legs and do not turn or twist the body.

Using Powered Equipment like Snow Blowers

It is important to make sure that powered equipment, such as snow blowers are properly grounded to protect workers from electric shocks or electrocutions. When performing maintenance or cleaning, make sure the equipment is properly guarded and is disconnected from power sources.



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PHCC Mission

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