



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

# Newsleak

## Calendar of Events

- March 3 - Meeting
  - ⇒ 5:00 - Board Meeting
  - ⇒ 6:00 - T-4 Training :  
Water Heaters
  - ⇒ 7:30 - Dinner and Gen-  
eral Meeting
- April 7 - Meeting

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## Message from the President – Charlie Perkins

When I was driving to work a few weeks ago, I saw a business where the roof had collapsed. The flat roof must have collapsed under the weight of the 2+ feet of snow we had earlier this winter. It makes you think about disaster preparedness and how a business recovers from an unexpected emergency. Whether you are worried about fire, flooding with the recent snow melting and heavy rains, widespread illness or malfunctioning of in-house back-up systems, emergency preparedness is a critical step for all small businesses to be prepared to minimize losses after an unexpected event. And some businesses that experience a serious emergency are so crippled that they are unable to open their doors again because closing your doors, even for a day is a costly setback.

To avoid this, all companies, no matter how large or small should develop a disaster recovery plan. Steps should include: 1. Setting up an emergency response plan and train employees to carry it out. 2. Writing out each step of the plan and assigning responsibilities to employees in clear and simple language. 3. Compiling a list of important phone numbers, addresses and emails. 4. Deciding on a communications strategy to prevent loss of customers. 5. Protecting your computer systems and data. Consider moving to the Cloud for all backups. 6. Making sure you have enough insurance to recover.

There are many resources for setting up a plan including your insurance provider and the Small Business Administration. Once

you have a plan in place and have reviewed it with your employees, find a way to test the plan to gauge how effective it would be in the case of a real emergency and where the plan may need some fine tuning. As the Boy Scout motto goes, Be Prepared.

For more business tips and industry information, be sure to attend our meeting this month on March 3rd.

If you have any questions or would like to make suggestions for the association, please feel free to contact me at 301-937-6700.



## MWPHCC March Meeting Sponsored by Washington Gas

Join us on Thursday, March 3, 2016 when Washington Gas will sponsor the MWPHCC meeting and provide three great trainings.

At 6:00 pm the training will start with Gerald Davis presenting, an Overview on 2 Psi. Following Mr. Davis, Josh McClelland will present the latest information on the EmPower MD rebates. And Don

Jones will provide a training on Damage Prevention to round out the evening. There will be time for questions for all 3 trainings.

Headquartered in Washington DC, Washington Gas Company delivers natural gas to residential, commercial and industrial customers throughout the Washington, DC and the surrounding re-

gion. Washington Gas Company has been an active supporter of the MWPHCC for many years, helping to train and inform our members and supporting all of our events. We hope that you will come out for the March meeting and show your support.

## The Latest on New DOE HVAC Efficiency Standards by Chuck White, VP—Code & Technical Svcs

The U.S. Dept. of Energy has issued several documents in the last two months establishing new efficiency standards for a variety of HVAC products. Other classes of equipment—specifically residential gas furnaces and residential central air conditioners and heat pumps—are in deliberation.

Below you'll find a summary of the primary new/and or proposed efficiency standards that affect your business. Please contact us at [membership@naphcc.org](mailto:membership@naphcc.org) if you have any questions.

**Central Air Conditioners:** Regional Standards for Central Air Conditioners have now been in effect for a little over a year. There has been little complaint registered about this process, but the market is currently in a sell-through period allowing stock manufactured prior to Jan. 1, 2015, to be legally installed. This sell-through period expires July 1, 2016, and only affects contractors making installations in the southern states. One exception has recently been noted: The California Energy Commission has not recognized the sell-through period and is enforcing installations of only equipment labeled in compliance with the new standard; SEER 13 equipment is not acceptable in California regardless of its manufactured date.

**Residential Boilers:** The DOE has issued a Direct Final Rule for residential boilers. PHCC helped hold the line on gas-fired

hot water boilers to 84% AFUE in place of mandating condensing class (90% or higher) equipment. There are small gains in oil-fired and steam boilers, as well, but the changes overall are minimal.

**Commercial Package Cooling and Heating Equipment:** DOE has issued new standards for small, large, and very large commercial package cooling and heating equipment. This class of equipment was last changed in January 2010. The new standards will be effective in two steps: January 2018 and January 2023. The increases in these categories of equipment are initially modest, with SEER values increasing one to two points with an additional one to two points in the second phase.

**Gas Furnace Equipment:** The DOE Final Furnace Rule, a rule that was set aside due to litigation, has been in industry negotiations to reach a compromise agreement. Initially, DOE proposed all residential gas furnace equipment would be in the condensing category (92%). PHCC and industry stakeholders have remained adamant that the deletion of a non-condensing category gas furnace would be detrimental to many consumers posing safety risks related to continued use of faulty heating units, improper installations of condensing vents, and increased use of space heaters. The industry has proposed maintaining non-condensing furnaces with a limited input capacity between 75,000 and 90,000 BTU/Hour,

while the energy advocates are holding the line at 50,000 BTU/Hour. These negotiations reached a tentative impasse prior to the holidays. It is expected that DOE will have to take the results of these negotiations under consideration and produce a Proposed Rule for public comment in the next 30 to 45 days.

**Residential Central Air Conditioners and Heat Pumps:** DOE is also working on the next level of residential central air conditioner and heat pump efficiency standards. A working group was convened to have industry and energy advocates come to consensus on the efficiency standards that would be implemented in 2023. The working group has nearly completed their work; efficiency levels will remain in the regional format, something industry was hoping to avoid. Levels will rise by one point with some additional capacity breakpoints in the southeast and southwest; units 45,000 BTU/Hour and larger would only rise ½ a point. This plan is further confounded by a change to the test procedure for this class of equipment; the SEER values from the old test procedure will not be the same as the new test procedure. DOE will issue guidance on the conversion of SEER values, but the new numbers will be lower than the current rating—e.g., SEER 14 now will be about SEER 13.5 in the new method. PHCC will be filing comments regarding the new program and will encourage members to voice any support or concerns that they may have.

### Welcome New Members

#### Arizona Heating & Cooling

We would like to welcome contractor, Arizona Heating & Cooling to the MWPHCC. They were members of the association in years past and have rejoined in 2016. We are happy to welcome them back and look forward to seeing them at our meetings and events.

*For information on MWPHCC membership, go to [mwphcc.org/membership.html](http://mwphcc.org/membership.html)*

#### H.M. Sweeny Company

We would also like to welcome, H.M. Sweeny Company, a new Industry Associate member. H.M. Sweeny is a distributor of air conditioning, heating, ventilation, and refrigeration parts and equipment. In addition to sales, H.M. Sweeny also provides many classes from their Educational Department including Journeyman/Master HVACR Prep & Review classes. They have 3 locations in Maryland: Landover, Annapolis and Rockville.



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## MWPHCC 2016 Calendars—Still Available

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2016 Lottery Match Calendar  
Visit us at [www.mwphcc.org](http://www.mwphcc.org)

The MWPHCC 2016 lottery calendars are still available for purchase. If you would like to win big in March and throughout the rest of 2016, be sure to pick one up at the next meeting.

Each calendar has a unique 3-digit

number. If the number is chosen with the DC Lottery, you will win the corresponding amount for that day. For \$40, you have the opportunity to win for both the day and evening pick. For \$20, you can win with the evening pick. We've already had lots of winners in 2016.

If you are interested in a particular 3-digit number, please let us know and we'll see if it is still available. Calendars will continue to be sold at meetings or can be mailed out. Contact Susan at [susan@mwphcc.org](mailto:susan@mwphcc.org) if you have any questions.

## PHCC Offers Legislative and Regulatory Tracking Service



PLUMBING-HEATING-COOLING  
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The Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors—National Association (PHCC) announces the launch of state legislative and regulatory tracking service that allows PHCC members and state and local leaders to monitor active bills and regulations affecting their state or geographic region.

Accessed through PHCC's website, this online system gives PHCC members and chapter leaders the opportunity to monitor the bills and regulations that impact them so they can directly engage directly with their state representatives on related issues. Licensing,

workforce development, unfair regulations and code developments are among crucial issues currently impacting the plumbing-heating-cooling industry.

"With increased legislative and regulatory activity in recent years, it's more important than ever that our members and chapters have a quick and easy way to see a synopsis of relevant issues being discussed in their areas," said PHCC—National Association President Chip Greene. "We are very excited to offer this new online technology to help chapters be even more engaged with the legislative process in their

states."

Through this new service, PHCC members and chapter leaders can view an interactive map, click on their state and view the issues affecting the industry. The author, history, status and even a vote count of the listed items can all be accessed. In addition, a weekly report of new items will be provided.

"Based on the available information, PHCC chapters can determine a plan of action to support or oppose laws or regulations affecting their businesses," Greene said. "Our national office is ready to help with these grassroots efforts."



## MWPHCC Fishing Trip — Friday, April 22, 2016

We hope you can join us for our annual MWPHCC Fishing Trip scheduled for Friday, April 22nd.

The cost is \$150 which includes a 6-hour chartered boat cruise, license, tackle, fish cleaning, lunch

and water/sodas. We'll be departing at 6:00 AM from behind Abner's Crab House in Chesapeake Beach, MD.

This is a very popular trip and the boats fill, first-come first-serve so

be sure to get your registration and payment in as soon as possible.

We will have flyers/registration forms at the March and April meetings. You can also go to our website at [mwphcc.org](http://mwphcc.org) for all details.



Steve Heidler, Past MWPHCC President, Installs the 2016 Officers and Board of Directors for 2016 at the January General Meeting.

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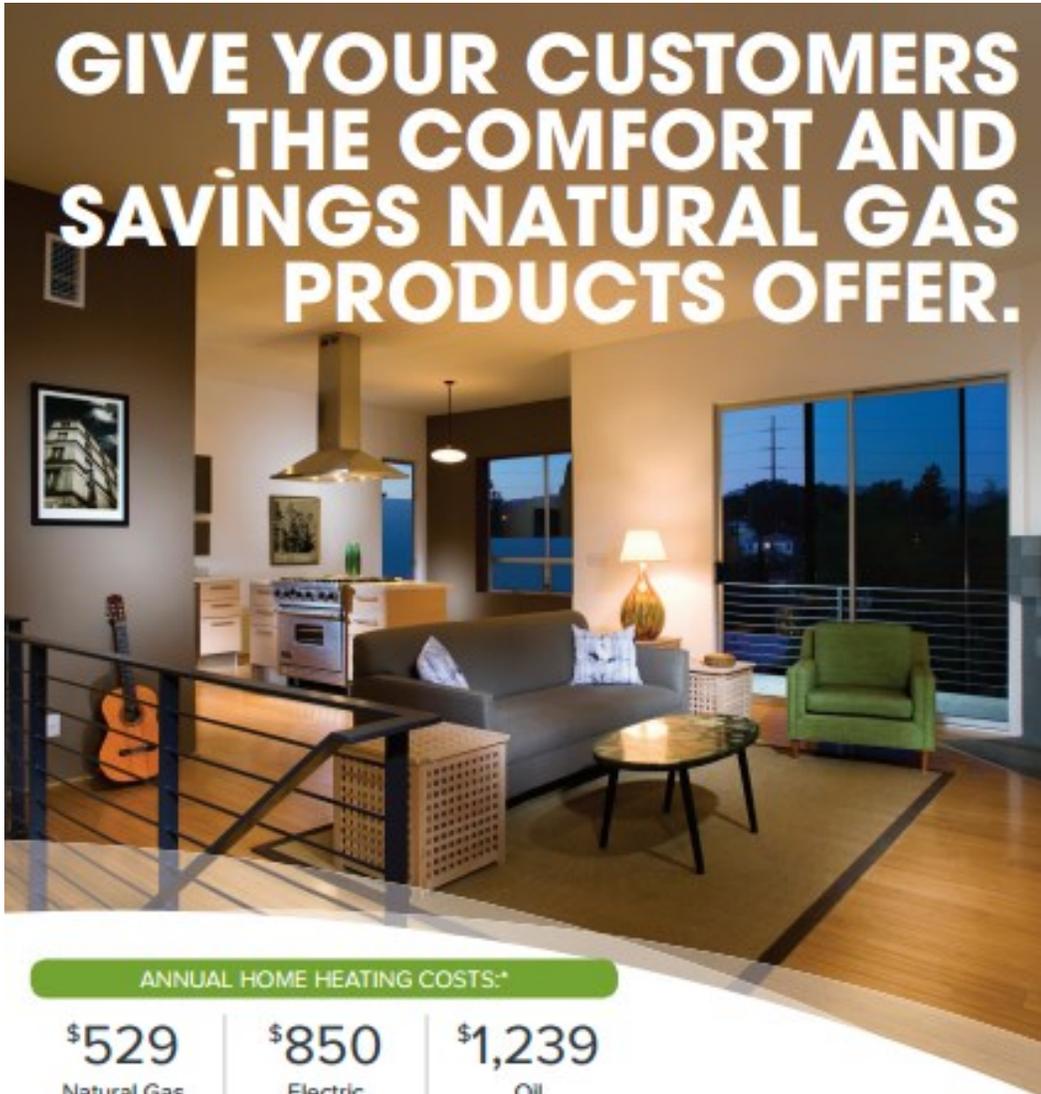


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Washington Gas appreciates the dedication of the MWPHCC membership, and we look forward to a continued strong relationship in the future.

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\* ESC Carbon Footprint Spreadsheet

## Looking out for Small Business Interests by Mark Riso, VP of Government Relations

During the annual meeting of the Small Business Legislative Council (SBLC) in early February, PHCC had the opportunity to hear from two influential small business advocates in Washington and learn more about pending issues and trends that could impact PHCC members in 2016.

House Small Business Committee Chairman Steve Chabot (R-OH), a regular participant at PHCC's Legislative Conference, spoke to SBLC members about the importance of continuing to be active in the legislative process. He also mentioned that the House Small Business Com-

mittee is always looking to groups like SBLC for ideas for Congressional hearings.

Darryl DePriest, the newly Senate-confirmed Chief Advocate of the U.S. Small Business Administration, gave an update on how the SBA is advancing the views and concerns of small business before Congress, the White House, the federal agencies, the federal courts and state policy makers. Mr. DePriest said he welcomed the opportunity to build relationships with SBLC and its members.

PHCC has long enjoyed a strong relationship

with the Office of Advocacy and looks forward to working with Mr. DePriest in the future.

PHCC is an active member of the SBLC, an independent, permanent coalition of trade and professional associations who share a common concern for the future of small business. The annual meeting is the beginning of building a 2016 policy agenda for small business. One of SBLC's agenda items discussed at the meeting was a push for a White House conference on small business.

## PHCC's New Online Job Service — Career Center

PHCC members have already set a tone of collaboration and constant improvement within the plumbing and HVACR industry. With continuing education, certification programs, and an unprecedented passion for excellence, it's no wonder that our members are among the most sought-after in the industry. In keeping with our commitment to providing the best recruitment resources to our members, the new PHCC Career Center includes features and upgrades that make it that much easier to facilitate connections between p-h-c professionals and employers.

Here are just a few of the enhancements *for*

*employers* that we are rolling out with the PHCC Career Center:

- **Unmatched exposure for job listings** – PHCC represents the largest audience of qualified plumbing and HVACR industry professionals.
- **Easy online job management** – You can enter job descriptions, check the status of postings, renew or discontinue postings, and even make payments online.
- **Resume searching access** – With a paid job listing, you can search the resume

database and use an automatic notification system to receive email notifications when new resumes match your criteria.

- **Company awareness** – Along with each job posting, you can include information about your individual company and a link to your web site.

Check out all the PHCC Career Center account benefits. Post your jobs at [www.phccweb.org/careercenter](http://www.phccweb.org/careercenter).

**The Metro Washington PHCC Industry Associate Members provide tremendous support to our association. Please show your support to them when you purchase your supplies and are in need of their services.**

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## Plumbing & HVACR Apprentice eLearning

The PHCC Educational Foundation offers plumbing and HVACR apprentice eLearning courses for apprentices who need a non-traditional method of receiving their apprenticeship-related instruction. This program is recognized by the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment & Training Administration, Office of Apprenticeship, as a reasonable option for apprentice training. Each course is the equivalent of one year of classroom instruction. On-the-job training must be coordinated with a participating employer.

The eLearning courses offer enhanced course quality and give students fast feedback on their performance.

### Advantages of eLearning

eLearning is not the preferred method of apprentice training for most apprentices; however, it offers several important advantages over a traditional classroom:

- **Open Enrollment** — Apprentices may enroll at any time throughout the year since there are no class scheduling requirements.

- **Pace of learning** — Apprentices work at their own pace. Apprentices who are considerably experienced can typically move through the curriculum quickly. Individuals who are highly motivated can also work at a fast pace.

- **Convenience** — Apprentices can work from the comfort of their home or office, at a schedule that best suits their needs. Apprentices may postpone eLearning during peak work periods, setting aside time for study on weekends or other more convenient times.

Since there is no set schedule, apprentices pursuing eLearning must be self-disciplined and self-motivated to maintain steady progress. Employer support and monitoring can be an effective method for addressing this issue.

eLearning places primary responsibility for learning on the apprentice. When needed, most apprentices ask their employer or a colleague for assistance.

For details on enrollment qualifications and pricing for the Plumbing and HVACR eLearning Program, contact the following individuals:

- Colorado - Kim Gill - (303) 757-3956 or kim@campc.org
- Georgia - Ellen Whitaker - (678) 947-3473 or ewhitaker@plumbingpros.com
- Louisiana - Julie Fuselier - (225) 343-2776 or julie@pperron.com
- Missouri - Ray Hefner - (314) 770-0093 or ray@picstl.com
- New Jersey - Nicole Urizzo - (609) 987-0500 or director@nj-phcc.org
- All other states - Maureen Vasquez - (800) 533-7694 or vasquez@naphcc.org

Prior to enrolling, the apprentice should confirm with his or her state licensing and/or labor department that this program is acceptable as substitute for classroom instruction.



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## Creating a Culture of Integrity Prepared for the PHCC Foundation by TPO, Inc.

Promoting integrity in your business is an easy choice. A company where the employees themselves work to prevent unethical behaviors – such as inventory theft, missing tools, timecard manipulation, leave abuse, or side work being done with company vehicles, tools, or materials – saves your business money and the time required to deal with such problems. This article explores actions you can take to promote and reinforce a culture of integrity in your business.

### Start Promoting Integrity via the Hiring Process

You can set the right tone for company culture by hiring the right people in the following ways:

- **Background checks.** Conduct extensive background checks and hire contractors that do their own. If you're thorough, you'll be more likely to ensure that a potential employee doesn't come with bad history – like stealing from a previous employer.
- **Employ behavioral interview questions.** Ask situational questions during the interview, as well as questions about education or skill sets. The interviewee will more likely provide a spontaneous and clearer picture of his personality and ethics.
- **Reference checks.** Ensure all credentials and references are valid.
- **Emphasize managerial hiring.** Leadership sets the tone in a business, so if you apply these standards when hiring managers, you'll more likely see overall ethical behavior.

### Clear Expectations for Ethical Behavior

If employees don't know what's expected of them, they'll be more likely to break rules. Even when a rule seems obvious, it's important to communicate it.

Here are ways to set clear expectations:

- **Training.** Once again, it's best to set the tone from the beginning. Whether through presentations, memos, or some combination, clarify ethical policies.
- **Establish a clear code of conduct.** You can include this in your employee handbook. The code should specify prohibited behaviors and their consequences. Have employees sign a statement indicating they've read it; their

signature will indicate that they're aware of the rules and that they agree to comply with them.

### Communicate and Act Fairly in Response to That Communication

You've already set clear expectations. If you continue to be as open with employees as possible and give them opportunities to communicate in return, you'll create an overall more transparent environment. Hopefully the following pointers will sound familiar:

- Ask for feedback from employees.
- Have regular conversations with employees to give them the chance to speak up and to give you a chance to see if the culture of integrity is being communicated effectively.

Employees with open communication channels with their manager and company will be less likely to engage in behaviors such as theft

### Establish Monitoring Systems

Let's take the example of timecard fraud. There are a few options to hold employees accountable for honesty in recording their time:

- **Install a device such as a time clock, card scanner or electronic timekeeping system on a computer.** These can also record arrival and departure times, and some enter information into the payroll system.
  - **Compare timecard records.** You can keep copies of cards for past pay periods to determine regular work patterns. Any discrepancies may indicate fraud.
  - **Require your approval of timecards before they're submitted.** Once you've verified that the information is accurate, you can submit it.
  - **Use GPS monitoring systems in company vehicles.** If employees know that the truck's location is always tracked, they are less likely to consider stretching driving time between appointments, making personal detours, doing weekend work or even speeding.
- Another example would be equipment or material theft, which can be prevented in the following ways:
- **Establish physical security.** Make sure there are locks where your equipment and materials are stored. Visible video cameras prevent thefts of opportunity.
  - **Trust employees who've earned it.** Designate

employees who you trust to inventory materials and equipment. Knowing that someone is checking helps to prevent the mindset of "nobody will even know if I take this."

- **Institute strict policies for access to inventory.** If employees must sign in when accessing materials inventory or when using specific equipment, you'll create a sense of accountability and discourage theft.

### Establish an Employee Awareness Program

Involving employees in your accountability system further invest them in your business and encourage them to behave with integrity. One way to do this is by creating an employee awareness program:

- **Inform employees about the signs of unethical behavior.** For example, if you're worried about misuse of company equipment, you can share parts of your accountability system with employees. This reinforces the idea that someone is paying attention and enables them to spot misuse by fellow employees if it is happening
- **Encourage them to report.** Employees will be more motivated to share any concerns with you if you've created an environment of open communication.

### Respond Quickly and Fairly

Needless to say, employees will be less likely to lie or steal if they know there will be actual consequences, so make sure you're responding to unethical behavior in the following ways:

- **Respond quickly.** If you take swift action, employees will know you're serious about enforcing the code of ethics.
- **Do what you say you'll do.** You've set expectations for ethical behavior, so you must apply the consequences laid out in order to reinforce those expectations.
- **Keep to your daily procedures.** If you're consistently taking actions like locking up equipment, checking equipment logs, and verifying time sheets, you'll demonstrate you're committed to catching fraud.

If you work to create a culture of integrity from the start, establish trust, and take actions to cement that commitment to ethical behavior, you'll both promote a healthier work environment and save your bottom line in the long term.

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