



Metropolitan Washington Association of Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors

Newsleak

Calendar of Events

- November 7 - Meeting
 - ⇒ 5:00 - Board Meeting
 - ⇒ 6:00 - T-4 Training : Taco Pumps
 - ⇒ 7:30 - Dinner and General Meeting
- December 5 - Meeting

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Message from the President — Bill Royston



President Lincoln first proclaimed Thanksgiving a national holiday in 1863 (just 10 years later, this association was formed). Now Thanksgiving is possibly the most beloved American holiday. The holiday brings up memories of family, gratitude, great food and football. It's a holiday I look forward to celebrating every year. I want to wish all of our members and industry partners a wonderful Thanksgiving. Take the time to enjoy your family, friends and be grateful for what you have.

Last month, I attended the PHCC Convention in Las Vegas. It was a strong convention filled with quality programs. I had the opportunity to meet some contractors from around the country and learn about the latest innovations in our industry. We had good representation

from our chapter at the convention and I'm happy to summarize the highlights at our meeting this month.

This month we will be having a great training on Taco water circulation pumps used for heat transfer in a wide range of residential and light commercial applications. Thank you to our sponsor N.H. Yates for providing this training and supporting our association.

We will also have managers from ICF International to discuss updates to the EmPOWER MD program. There may be some upcoming changes to the rebate amounts for HVAC equipment and we will have the program managers to discuss these changes at our general meeting. Our association has been diligently working with area rebate programs to be the leading expert on

these programs. We regularly invite the program managers to our association meetings and our members are the first in the area to learn about the programs which includes how to sign up, how to promote to their customers and how to become preferred contractors. We've also been able to provide feedback to the programs so they can make adjustments that will better advance our industry and protect consumers. If you don't attend, you'll be missing out on this valuable information.

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

N.H. Yates Sponsors MWPHCC November Meeting

We hope that you will join us for our next meeting on Thursday, November 7, 2013 sponsored by N.H. Yates and Taco Pumps. They will provide an in-depth training on hydronic systems and their components. The training will begin at 6:00 pm. Following the training, join us at 7:30 pm for our general meeting and dinner.

Since 1949 N.H. Yates & Co., Inc. has been providing the highest quality products and services to the

HVAC and plumbing industry.

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Taco is America's leader in hydronic systems for residential and commercial building applications. A third generation family-owned company, Taco's corporate headquarters are located in Cranston, Rhode Island, with manufacturing facilities

in Cranston and Fall River, Massachusetts. Taco's commitments to Green Building, as evidenced in its acclaimed LoadMatch® and FloPro® systems, as well as to innovations in energy-efficient systems, design software, training, and support is matched only by the loyalty it extends to its employees, vendors, and customers.

Please be sure to attend our November meeting and learn more about Taco Pumps and N.H. Yates.

The Big Build at the National Building Museum

The Big Build, was held on Saturday, September 23, 2013 at the National Building Museum in Washington, DC. Every year the MWPHCC chapter provides a large exhibit for children and their families to showcase the plumbing and HVAC industry among the other trades and craftsmen. This year there were over 6,900 attendees at this annual event.

Dave Shapiro spearheaded this great hands-on exhibit as he has for many years. Dave begins soliciting for volunteers many months in advance

to ensure all of his activities will have great coverage. Some of our demonstrations this year included: helping the children to wire an air conditioning thermostat and then testing it; measuring and cutting PVC pipe to make 400 piggy banks; and one of the biggest highlights to the festival: assembling a “plumbing tree” with pipe fittings. They also had an “Ask the Plumber” booth where members of the community could talk with a plumber to learn more about the profession and get advice for plumbing issues.

Many thanks to Shapiro & Duncan for coordinating and organizing this annual event and setting up the demonstrations. Thank you to Buckey Davis from John C Flood, Alfonso Munoz from RE Michel Co., John Barry from John Barry Plumbing and 7 tradesmen from Shapiro & Duncan for volunteering their time at the festival. We’d like to express a special thank you to Dave Shapiro who takes on this event every year and works tirelessly to promote our industry to the next generation.



John Barry (JE Barry Plbg) and Marcia Shapiro (Shapiro & Duncan) setting up for the festival



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Techs Need to Know What it Costs

Very few techs have a rough idea of what it really costs to run a company. Their perception, for the most part, is that the difference between what they are being paid and what you charge the customer is all profit. If that is what your tech thinks, two things will happen.

First, they will tend to undercharge the customer. After all, Mrs. Jones is 80-years-old and living on social security. She couldn't possibly afford to pay the normal charge of \$235. The tech thinks, "Our rates are pretty high, so I'll be a nice guy and only charge her \$175." If you don't think that happens, think again! If they don't believe the hourly rate you charge (time and material, or your flat rate price) is fair, they may undercharge the customer.

The other reason techs need to have an idea of what it costs to run a company can be even more painful. If the tech thinks every dollar charged above their hourly rate is profit, they will begin to think more about going into business for

themselves. They may think, "I'm doing all the work and the company is making all the profit. If I went into business for myself, I could charge a bit less and probably be able to retire in a few years!" Eventually, the thought becomes a reality, and the tech leaves the company to start his or her own business.

If technicians had any idea what it really costs to run a company, they would think twice about leaving their jobs and starting their own businesses. The owner or the service manager needs to help their technicians understand the basic costs of doing business. Techs need to understand the rent has to be paid, cell phones cost money, the gasoline bill is huge, and it costs the company tens of thousands of dollars a year in non-billable time. Somebody has to pay the credit card charges, make the insurance payments, and pay for uniforms and vehicle replacement. They need to know that these costs -- and a lot more -- are all paid by the customer in the form of the rate

you charge. If the tech can get a feel for what it costs to run a company, they will price the work properly and will think twice before going into business for themselves.

Grandy & Associates has created a 51-minute DVD titled "Why Do We Need To Charge So Much?" It was created specifically for your technicians. The program addresses many of the costs of doing business and explains how these costs eventually become part of the hourly rate you need to charge. Contractors across the country have shown this DVD to their technicians, some as a standard part of their overall orientation and new hire training program.

Tom Grandy is founder and President of Grandy & Associates. They have helped over 16,000 contractors to run profitable businesses. You can contact Tom at TomGrandy @GrandyAssociate.com or 1-800-432-7963.



"If technicians had any idea what it really costs to run a company, they would think twice about leaving their jobs and starting their own businesses."

Welcome New Members

The MWPHCC would like to welcome 2 new Contractor Members.

Welcome to Kirlin Mechanical Services, located in Rockville, MD. Kirlin Mechanical is a diversified contracting organization which offers a wide range of essential plumbing and mechanical services throughout the Mid-Atlantic region.



We would also like to welcome RE Robertson Plumbing, Heating & Air Conditioning. They are already a PHCC member, participating in the MD PHCC chapter and have now joined the Metro Washington Chapter. RE Robertson has been providing knowledgeable service to homeowners since 1977. Located in Annapolis, they provide both residential and commercial plumbing and mechanical contracting.



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The BumbleBee is a fully programmable, variable speed wet rotor circulator. Set it to one of three modes: *Delta-T* to maximize total system fuel savings; *Fixed Speed* to dial in a specific flow rate; or *Set Point* to meet a desired temperature. No matter how you set it, the BumbleBee will slash energy consumption by up to 85%. See for yourself: the LED displays real time watt usage and GPM flow. Other niceties include a convenient 360° swivel flange and Integral Flow Check.

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Family Business Dynamics



“The ugliest mistake family owned businesses make is to ignore succession planning.”



The plumbing-heating-cooling industry is ripe with family owned businesses and the dynamics that go along with them. If you are a family business owner, take pride in some of the family business ownership facts. Family businesses:

- Are built to last – the average life span is around 25 years
- Grow against economic odds – out perform non-family owned business in tough times
- Feed new job creation – over 75%
- Are inherently entrepreneurial
- Take a long term view – focus on resilience more than performance
- Contribute to the greatest part of America’s wealth – close to 90%

That sure is a nice list to be associated with. How exciting to be a part of the American dream – yet how daunting it is to keep the dream alive by keeping the right level of focus on your most important asset, your people. Only about 40% of U.S. family-owned businesses turn into second-generation businesses, approximately 13% are passed down successfully to a third generation, and only 3% can expect to last to a fourth or beyond.

Employees Impact Your Business

The “people as your most important asset” assertion may be over used, but for good reason. Many companies claim it; many fewer use practices that substantiate it. If people are your most important resource, then you need to understand the role of human resources in your family business.

Many owners believe that because they have only a few employees (and many are family), they do not need to focus on human resources issues. The reality is quite the opposite – you need to focus more attention in support of your people because, effectively, they can make or break your business. Do the

math - if your business has only 5 employees, each of those employees has the potential to have a 20% impact on the business. The impact of a bad hiring decision or an underperforming employee – even if they are a family member - gets amplified every time. Talent engagement has an impact even in the smallest of businesses.

HR Practices and Your Business

Family-owned businesses experience even more challenges when it comes to HR practices, especially when a mix of family and non-family employees are working in the business. It is often more difficult to make objective business decisions, especially as it relates to pay, discipline or other compliance-related issues. It is critical however, that all employees (family or otherwise) be treated consistently.

Succession Planning and Your Business

The ugliest mistake family owned businesses make is to ignore succession planning. Everything is at stake when the patriarch or matriarch steps down and no plan is in place. Not properly planning for succession sets the stage for succession failure and greatly increases the odds of business failure.

Here are some succession questions to consider:

- Do you actually want the business to continue to exist once you are ready to leave?
- Does it make more sense to sell the business to another company and let them take over operations?
- If you do want to pass on the company to someone else, what’s the ideal profile of your successor?
- Does that ideal profile exist within the company now, family member or not?
- If not, what is your plan for finding that person, hiring them & training them? Do you actually have the time

required to implement that plan?

- If you plan on passing the company on to a family member, have they been groomed for the responsibility? Other employees may resent a new owner who “inherited” but didn’t “earn” the corner office job.

- If you are planning to pass the company on to multiple family members, remember – one person must be ultimately be in charge. Nothing is more stubborn than two chiefs with opposite viewpoints.

- As you go from one generation to the next, will family members continue to work together?

- If you have a succession plan in place – do you re-visit it regularly?

- Do you have a clearly written succession plan with specific goal points along the way?

- Do you have a clear rationale for the decisions in your succession plan? Have you made it fair and transparent?

- What do you want your legacy to be? Perhaps the greatest legacy of an effective leader is to have positioned great people on staff who can take over and run the business even better than you did.

There is so much good to enjoy about being a family business owner, especially if you avoid the most common pitfalls. Remember to run your business in a way that is fair, equitable, and transparent for all. Plan ahead for the day when you will leave. By doing so, you will boost the odds of creating a successful a multi-generational family business.

This content was developed for the PHCC Educational Foundation by TPO, Inc. (www.tpo-inc.com).



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Drug Free Workplace FAQ



“Absenteeism, increased healthcare costs and decreased productivity due to alcohol and other substance abuse costs your company \$1,000 per employee per year!”

What is a "Drug Free Workplace?"

It is an employment setting where all employees adhere to a program of policies and activities designed to provide a safe workplace, discourage alcohol and drug abuse and encourage treatment, recovery and the return to work of those employees with such abuse problems. The intent of the program is to educate adults on the problems relating to substance abuse. The one place where there can be mandated adult education is the workplace. This empowers the individual and the family, resulting in stronger communities.

Why Should An Employer Establish a Comprehensive DrugFree Workplace Program?

Current research indicates that nearly 77% of illegal drug users are employed in full and part-time jobs. Consequently, when the effects of alcohol abuse are added, the result is a large impaired portion of the national workforce. For the typical employer, that means unhealthy employees, unsafe working conditions, loss of productivity, smaller profits, more accidents, higher medical claims expenses, and a host of other negative effects for the employer and the employees.

Small and medium-sized firms employ 80% of the U.S. workforce where drug testing policies & programs are not in place. Absenteeism, increased healthcare costs and decreased productivity due to alcohol and other substance abuse costs your company \$1,000 per employee per year!

You can minimize the chance of having to deal with a serious job performance problem in the workplace, and in the process support a better quality of life for your employees, by implementing a drug free workplace program in your company. It will reinforce the message to your employees and customers that a positive work environment is a high priority. The

Council can provide you and your company with information and support to ensure your certification as a drug free workplace.

All aspects of society are harmed by illicit drug use; however, the American workplace is especially impacted. Business owners lose an estimated \$160 billion per year because of drug use. Business owners can expect to pay thousands of dollars more per year to employ a worker who uses illicit drugs than to employ a worker who is drug free.

What Are the Components of a Comprehensive Drug Free Work Place Program?

The "Drug Free Workplace" is a more recent term and concept introduced by the Federal government's policy for its employees in 1986 and promulgated in the private sector by the President's Drug Advisory Council. A comprehensive approach to having a drug free workplace would include:

- A written policy
- Access to assistance
- Employee education
- Supervisor training
- Drug testing

Supported by public opinion, legislation and regulation of safety-sensitive industries in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the drug free workplace concept was adopted and promoted by national, state and local organizations of employers and business executives. Some unions adopted it as well and undertook drug testing of their members and provided "drug free worker" identification. Written poli-

cies assure that all employees have the same understanding of their rights and responsibilities under the program, and that employers administer the program uniformly among all employees.

The Council on Alcohol and Drugs helps companies meet the above requirements after organizations become a drug free workplace and provides the policy, rules and guidelines with support, so that companies can be educated and encouraged to become drug free workplaces. The Council provides the resources necessary to become, and remain, a drug free workplace.

Why Should I Implement A Drug Free Workplace?

Family Members' Substance Abuse Affects Workers!!

Slightly more than one-fourth (26%) of employed adults report that there has been substance abuse or addiction within their family and 42% of these workers report that they have been distracted or less productive at work because of it, according to a recent national telephone survey.

Having their mind drift away from work tasks to thoughts of the problem was the most frequently reported work-related problem (89%), followed by missing a deadline or work/attendance suffering (57%) and errors in judgment (46%).

The workers surveyed suggested several ways in which employers could help, such as implementing a drug free workplace program, offering counseling for family members of addicted individuals (73%), providing better health insurance coverage (67%) and providing a more flexible work schedule or time off work (65%).

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