



Metropolitan Washington Association of
Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors

Newsleak -

Notification: As you know, our monthly Tech Training and monthly Member Meeting, scheduled for **April 2, 2020** has been cancelled due to the increasing spread of the COVID19 virus.

We will keep the May 7th meeting on the books for now. The May 7th Tech Training will remain with Washington Gas and Understanding the **Washington Gas** Contractor's Guide along with **Empower MD** and **DCSEU**.



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Families First Coronavirus Response Act

On March 19, President Trump signed the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) into law. This is one of several legislative packages working through Congress designed to handle health care and economic fallout from the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. This law is divided into eight divisions pertaining to a variety of issues. This review is designed to highlight those divisions that pertain to our members and their employees.

These provisions apply to all employers with fewer than 500 employees, although employers with fewer than 50 employees may later be deemed exempt by the Secretary of Labor through subsequent regulations if the Act would jeopardize the business's viability.

*This law takes effect on April 2, 2020 and lasts through Dec. 31, 2020
(as taken from Oklahoma PHCC)*

(See page 5 for details about this Response Act.)



Contracting Opportunity for Affordable Multifamily Gas Efficiency Upgrades in DC

The DC Sustainable Energy Utility (DCSEU) is searching for qualified contractors to make gas efficiency upgrades in multi-family affordable housing located in the District of Columbia. The DCSEU's Income Qualified Gas Efficiency Fund is designed to support projects that improve buildings, neighborhoods, or whole communities through energy efficiency. In 2020, Washington Gas is partnering with the DCSEU to provide funding for natural gas efficiency upgrades for low- and limited-income residents of affordable multifamily housing in the District of Columbia. These gas efficiency projects are funded by Washington Gas as part of its commitment to the community in the AltaGas and WGL merger in July 2018.

Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must be an approved contractor or a property management organization or owner of multifamily affordable housing in DC willing to work with approved contractors.

Preference will be given to minority-, women-, and veteran-owned contractors (this program is not limited to DC-based contractors - DC, Maryland, Virginia, and other area contractors are eligible)

Potential projects are eligible to receive up to \$500,000 in funding

Essential health and safety upgrades, such as enhanced ventilation or roof repairs, necessary to complete efficiency upgrades may be considered for funding, capped at 25% of the total funding requested

To become an approved contractor, submit a response to the RFQ before April 30, 2020:

<https://www.dcseu.com/about/contracting-opportunities>

For questions about the Income Qualified Gas Efficiency Program, please email

incomequalifiedgas@dcseu.com or call 202-479-2222.



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Facing Our Challenges

By Carolyn Greene, Water Sales Leader, Resideo PRO Install/Honeywell Home

Greetings! I hope this finds you, your family and friends all healthy and safe. Your Super-Secret Hero identities are fast becoming common knowledge as our world's current health situation escalates. After all, we provide the first line of defense in stopping the spread of the COVID-19 virus: HAND WASHING. Without us and our fellow federal, state and local water teammates there would be no water to wash anyone's hands.

While I'm sure you may be tired of hearing all this gloom and doom, there are always different opinions on how all this will play out. The bottom line is regardless of how this current situation resolves itself, the world will go on. The question is: how does your company handle the here and now while at the same time preparing for the future?

Over the past several decades there are been several major world events where that changed our daily lives over which we had no control. From the oil embargo of 1973 to soaring interest rates & recession, along with the rise of the HIV/AIDS epidemic throughout the world in the 1980's. We lived through the devastating effects of 9/11 in 2001, followed by the crushing impact of 2008 mortgage collapse. Why do I list all these terrible examples of situations we had no control over? To remind us - **THIS TOO SHALL PASS.** The world will march on.

Since there is not much you can do except keep your distance from other folks and wash your hands, why not use this time to make your business or personal life the best it can be? Here are a few suggestions which could help your business survive this down time.

- ◆ Use this time to prospect future customers and build a pipeline you can have ready to go when things return to the new normal.
- ◆ Reach out to your Distributors and Manufacturers to see if they are offering any on-line training. You can use these trainings to reinforce existing skills or teach new skills and products to your technicians. New skills learned during the down time can mean new revenue streams in the future. We at Honeywell Home -Resideo have quite a few to share or can even tailor one for your specific needs. I'm sure your other Manufacturers have something in place as well.
- ◆ Send out hand written post cards to your existing customers. Not to sell anything but to thank them for the past business and to let them know you are available if they need anything.
- ◆ Increase your social network exposure. Create a Facebook page giving simple tips, explanation of the HVAC and plumbing products in their homes, the importance of maintenance of their equipment. You could possibly tell them about your company and your vision. Introduce your staff and technicians. Maybe offer a Zoom or webinar where customers could call in and talk to the expert. Be creative!
- ◆ Use this time to create your own training videos on areas your technicians need to improve or a new skill you would like them to learn.
- ◆ Go to the www.phccweb.com and check out all the resources they are offering to take your business



to the next level.

- ◆ Send out a direct marketing piece to your customers explaining what precautions your company is taking during the Covid-19 outbreak to keep them safe if they need a service call.
- ◆ Take inventory of the supplies you have in your warehouse and reorganize to make it more efficient.
- ◆ Take everything off your trucks and vans and clean and organize them. Once things get moving again start truck inspections so that the trucks and vans stay that way.
- ◆ Clean and reorganize your office. If there is anything in need of repairing or painting, do it now. Go through your old records and see if there is anything you can shred. Throw away all outdated literature, supply house catalogs and product information.

(Continued on page 4)

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This Too Shall Pass

By Carolyn Greene, Water Sales Leader, Resideo PRO Install/Honeywell Home

(continued from page 3)

- ◆ Research business grants and SBA hardship loans that you may qualify for to keep your business running. Here are a few you can check out -
 - ⇒ www.uschamber.com/co/small-business-coronavirus
 - ⇒ <https://www.sba.gov/about-sba/sba-newsroom/press-releases-media-advisories/sba-updates-criteria-states-requesting-disaster-assistance-loans-small-businesses-impacted>
 - ⇒ <https://www.foxbusiness.com/technology/facebook-100-million-coronavirus-grant>

Here are some amazing books that could also give you some tips and ideas to make your business and personal life the best it can be.

- ◆ How to Sell at Prices HIGHER than your Competitors – Lawrence L. Steinmetz
- ◆ Duct Tape Marketing – John Jantsch
- ◆ E Myth Mastery – Michael E. Gerber
- ◆ Who Moved My Cheese – Spencer Johnson, M.D
- ◆ Eat that Frog! – Brian Tracy
- ◆ The One Minute Manager – Ken Blanchard
- ◆ First things First – Stephen R. Covey
- ◆ Innovate Like Edison – Michael J. Gelb
- ◆ The Six Sigma Way – Peter S. Pande, Robert P. Neuman and Roland R. Cavanagh
- ◆ Atomic Habits – James Clear

I know this is a trying time for all of us. But I know the type of folks you are - honest, full of integrity, hardworking, super knowledgeable, caring and tenacious. THIS TOO SHALL PASS! But during this time please don't forget to count your blessings. Your family, friends, employees and co-workers and all the ma-

terial things we sometimes take for granted. Now is the time to work together to do whatever we can to get through this tough situation. Please never forget that you are all HEROES and our society could not exist as it does without you and your dedication to our trades!

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Families First Coronavirus Response Act

(continued from page 1)

Below are some of the provisions of this Response Act. To see the complete document from PHCC, click on the link at the bottom of the page.

Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act

- Requires employers to provide two weeks' worth of paid sick leave if employees are unable to work because they're (1) subject to quarantine or isolation at the behest of a government entity or health care provider, (2) are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and seeking medical diagnosis, (3) are caring for someone (does not have to be family) who is in quarantine or isolation and, (4) /or have children in schools/care centers that have closed.

Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act

- Provides eligible employees whose child's school or place of care has closed due to the COVID-19 public health emergency with a new federal source of paid leave.

Tax Credits to Offset

- The structure of the bill is designed so that employers can offset the above-provided benefits via tax credits.
- Payroll Tax Credit: The bill provides a refundable tax credit worth 100 percent of qualified public health emergency leave wages (FMLA Expansion) and qualified paid sick leave wages (Emergency Paid Sick Leave) paid by an employer for each calendar quarter through the end of 2020. The tax credit is allowed against the tax imposed under the employer portion of Social Security payroll taxes.

Unemployment Provisions

- Boosts unemployment benefits, with nearly \$1 billion in state grants to cover processing and paying unemployment insurance.

Public Health Provisions

- The bill strives to make coronavirus testing free for everyone without cost-sharing mechanisms like copays or deductibles. This includes individuals covered by Medicare, Medicaid, Indian Health Services, CHIP, the VA, or Tricare.
- Nearly \$1 billion is being allocated to food nutrition programs like SNAP, WIC, and an emergency food assistance program that will last through September 2021.

How is PHCC helping me?

- This is one of the most dynamic and fluid times in American history in terms of public safety and economic legislation. Local PHCC is monitoring all developments that may impact your businesses, employees, and the construction industry during this time. In addition, National PHCC is providing updates on legislation and events occurring in Washington.

[Click here for more detailed information about the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and other Covid-19 resources from PHCC.](#)

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HOW TO WORK FROM HOME AND NOT GO CRAZY

By: Dan Rockwell, *The Leadership Freak* Blog, March 26, 2020

Fatigue from radical change and constant stress hits you after a week or two of working from home. It's time to set boundaries and establish rhythms.

#1. Establish rhythms and routines.

Know what you're going to do every morning, for example. Know and leverage your body's rhythms. I'm at my best in the morning. I also have a couple really great hours after dinner. I get up early and write hard. Usually by 7 a.m. I've finished a post. It's time to stretch. Breakfast is usually at 8 a.m. (But sometimes it's a little later.) Typically lunch is at 11:30 or noon. That's when we turn on the television for a while. Predictable rhythms enable performance.

How might you align your work schedule with your body's rhythm?

#2. Take breaks.

I need to get back in the habit of taking short walks. I promise that you will be more productive if you don't work every minute of the day.

Often I completely block the light from my office windows.

#3. Create boundaries.

I've had a home office for years. Boundaries are the toughest thing to manage. You either work too long or Netflix steals your time.

You might try headphones if outside noise bothers you.

Control as much of your environment as you can.

What are you learning about working from home?

Turn off your laptop at night. I confess that my laptop is almost always nearby and open. Try not to do that.

Disconnect from technology if you want to maintain peak performance. It's impossible to be always-on and thrive.

#4. Control your environment.

I'm the kid who is easily distracted. Thankfully, my home office is quiet.



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Still Bonding and Grounding your CSST?

Codes for VA and WSSC have been updated

WSSC Guidelines: Bonding requirements shall NOT be the same for all CSST products. CSST listed with special coverings, referred to as counterstrike or arc resistant, may follow IFGC 310.1 and 310.3 where any electrically wired appliance with a third-wire ground will constitute effective bonding. In the absence of an electrically wired appliance, arc-resistant CSST shall be bonded per 310.2.

VA Guidelines: G2411.1 Gas piping shall be considered to be bonded where it is connected to appliances that are connected to the equipment grounding conductor of the circuit supplying that appliance. Corrugated stainless steel tubing (CSST) piping systems listed with an arc resistant jacket or coating system in accordance with ANSI LC 1/CSA 6.26 shall comply with this section. Where any CSST segments of a piping system are not listed with an arc resistant jacket or coating system in accordance with ANSI LC 1/CSA 6.26, Section G2411.1.1 shall apply.



Contact Kevin Cerretani of The Joyce Agency for more information.

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HOW TO BECOME THE TEACHER'S PET

By: Tom Grandy, March 2020

We have all been in school and noted how one particular student seems to always be the teacher's pet. Translated, that student appears to have a bunch of favor from the teacher. Why? Well, if we really watched that favored student we would notice they are doing some things the other students are not doing. That "pet" is the one who speaks up in class, turns in their homework on time, and actually looks for ways to make the teachers job a bit easier. Bottom line, their presence stands out from the rest...and they receive favor!

What technician doesn't want to receive special treatment from their service manager and/or the owner. That special treatment may take the form of better pay, a bonus, a pat on the back or simply a bit of public recognition among their peers for having done an outstanding job. However, like the teacher's pet, that recognition needs to be earned. Here are just a few things a tech can do to stand out from among their peers.

- o Arrival time – Don't just show up on time, arrive a bit early so you are ready to go to work when the day begins.
- o Dress Code – Be sure your uniform is clean and worn properly.
- o Vehicle – Take time to wash the vehicle and keep it properly stocked with parts stored in an orderly manner.
- o Attitude – No one likes a complainer. Receive each assignment with joy and thanksgiving.
- o Look for Ways to Help – Share ideas with your supervisor that will make the department run more smoothly and/or become more profitable.
- o Help Other Technicians – When you see a need – fill it. It's usually obvious when another tech is struggling with a situation. Ask if you can help.

There is nothing new in the above list, much of it is simply common sense. However, as a nurse told me at my father-in-law's assisted living facility, "Common sense isn't so common anymore". If you will do the above things consistently and with a good attitude, you will stand out and eventually you will receive the recognition you deserve.





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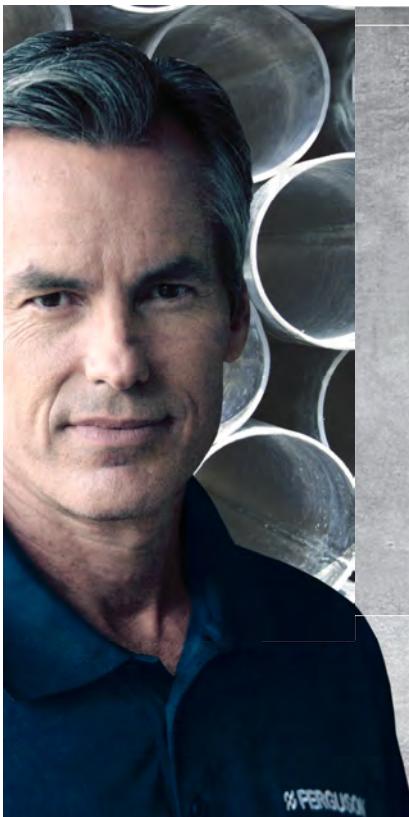


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WHO IS MORE PERSISTENT: YOU OR A SQUIRREL?

By: Tom Grandy, March 2020

Do you have a bird feeder? If so, you have likely noticed those persistent little rodents called squirrels. No matter how many times they are run off they continue to come back. I have tried numerous suggestions over the years including several "squirrel proof" feeders. None of them worked. As my frustration grew and my patience was disappearing, I visited the feed store one more time determined to spend whatever it took to rid our feeders of squirrels. I asked the owner a simple question. "Is there any kind of a bird feeder that will keep the squirrels away?" Without hesitation, his answer was "No". A bit shocked, I asked why? He then went on to tell me that 80% of a squirrel's waking hours are spent looking for food. They are persistent!

Now let's think about your business for a moment. There are at least three areas within your business where being persistence makes a huge difference. Let's talk about them.



Receivables

Some of you may be aware of the story in the Bible about the widow and the unjust judge. The lady's husband had died and she was asking the unjust judge for legal protection from her opponent. In those days of Israel, women did not have any rights so the judge said no. Scripture records that she came back the next day and the next and the next until and I quote, the judge said, "Even though I do not fear God nor respect man, yet because this widow bothers me, I will give her legal protection, otherwise by continually coming she will wear me out." Translated, she was bugging him to death!

There is a reason your customer has not paid their bill. It is usually the fact

that they have a limited amount of funds which exceeds the bills they have to pay. If you had five bills that were past due and one of the people you owe money to calls you every day asking when you are going to pay the bill, which one are you going to pay first? Likely the person who calls each day will be first on the list. Not necessarily because it's your largest bill or even the one that is most past due. Persistence pays off.

If you want to get paid, it's the squeaky wheel that gets the grease.

ther of which is totally acceptable. Either the customer purchases the product or schedules the seminar or they tell us they are not interested. It's called persistence. Why is persistence important when it comes to sales? Because we are simply never anyone's number one priority. The irony of the process we use is telling. Over 90% of the programs we schedule are scheduled when "we" call back. Seldom does the potential client pick up the phone to call us to schedule a program.

When it comes to sales the same principle of the squeaky wheel applies. Call back until the sale is made or the potential customer tells you they are no longer interested.

Selling Vision to Team

Hopefully your company has a specific vision and/or mission. Do your employees know what it is? Is it part of their thinking? Can they comfortably convey that vision/mission to your customers? If not, it's YOUR fault. Owners and/or managers must continuously state and restate the vision to those they have responsibly over. It has to become habit. Like receivables and sales, the key is persistence. Tell the story over and over again until it is a normal part of the employees' presentation.

When a squirrel wants food, they are persistent. Their life literally depends on it. If they are not persistent, well you know the end result. The principle is the same for your business. Persistence pays off. If you are not persistent in asking for the sale, someone or someone else who is more persistent, will. Guess who wins!

Sales

Every company makes numerous sales calls each week. Hopefully the customer signed on the bottom line before the sales professional left the home or business. If not, what is your follow up strategy? Statistically, 80% of sales require five follow-up calls after the initial meeting. 44 % of sales reps give up after the initial call!!

Our sales philosophy is simple. Once an individual or organization has shown an interest in a product or service we offer, we call back over and over again. Each call ends with a question, "When would be a good time to touch base with you again?". The process is to simply call back and call back until one of two responses are received, ei-



Attention WSSC Water Customers:

Your safety, and the safety of our employees, is our top priority. Please note that WSSC Water is NOT closed, however some services have been temporarily suspended to assist in the public health efforts to minimize the spread of the Coronavirus.

WSSC Water is continuing to implement the following steps:

- All WSSC Water buildings are currently closed to the public. This includes the Licensing, Permit, and Plan Review counters at WSSC Water's Headquarters in Laurel, MD.
- **Residential Inspections:**
 - ◊ All non-emergency **in-home residential inspections** have been **temporarily suspended**. Reminder that permits are still required prior to the start of work per the WSSC Plumbing and Fuel Gas Code. Permit applications can be completed online using the WSSC Water ePermitting website, <https://permits.wsscwater.com/EnerGovProd/CitizenAccess/Site/Public/Main>.
 - ◊ Inspections for unoccupied residential new construction and renovation projects presently continue with the Inspector retaining discretion to cancel the inspection if a health or safety issue exists on-site.
- Inspection staff, at their discretion, will continue to perform non-residential plumbing and gas inspections where social distancing can be maintained.
- For assistance with **Permits and Licensing**, email OneStopShop@wsscwater.com or call 301-206-4003.
- For **technical questions concerning the WSSC ePermitting System** email ePermittingSupport@wsscwater.com.
- For assistance with an Inspection, email InspectionSupport@wsscwater.com or call 301-206-4004 to speak with an Inspection Services Agent.
- For assistance with **Plan Review**, call 301-206-8886 to leave a message or email plumbingplansreview@wsscwater.com.
- If your **Cross Connection Technician Certification** expires during the State of Emergency, you will have 90 days after the State of Emergency is lifted to obtain your recertification. Should you have any questions, please email CrossConnectionControlProgram@wsscwater.com or call 301-206-4004.

Check the **WSSC Water** website at www.wsscwater.com for the latest updates.

WSSC Water thanks you for your patience and cooperation.

UNDERSTANDING CORONAVIRUS EXPOSURE FOR PLUMBING PROFESSIONALS

By: By Pete Demarco Executive Vice President of Advocacy and Research – The IAPMO Group , March 12, 2020

In 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO) started monitoring the outbreak of a new coronavirus which ultimately was named COVID-19. The virus was first identified in Wuhan, China. This article is intended to provide practical guidance for plumbing professionals who work on sanitary waste and sewer systems on how to protect themselves, their loved ones and their coworkers during the current pandemic.

So, what are the implications for those who work in the plumbing industry and what steps can plumbers take to stay safe?

To read the article in its entirety, and for additional COVID-19 resources [click here](#).

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