

## Washington Update

### Legislative/Regulatory Update Financial Reporting Requirements

While elected lawmakers took a break in mid-August, regulators roiled the industry by churning out new financial disclosure requirements for union officials and employees of unions. As of August 15, union officials and employees were required to file their LM-30 financial reporting forms for FY 2004 in order to take advantage of a grace period excusing failure to file in previous years. LM-30 forms report any financial transaction or exchange of thing of value over \$25 with any employer, association, or union service provider. The Department of Labor (DOL) Internet notice of the grace period explained the change in policy respecting the reports, and the change in policy on compliance in effect at DOL for many years. As of late August, DOL had not issued a similar notice governing the parallel LM-10 reports required of employers, employer associations, and trust fund service providers.

A wide spectrum of employer groups representing union signatory firms, trust funds, and fund service providers are lobbying for a rollback of the sudden change of policy and stringent enforcement of hyper-technical and outdated rules. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Securities Industry Association,

American Bankers Association, International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans, and others have filed requests with the DOL seeking a gradual implementation of the more stringent policy with prospective application only in 2006 after formal public notice in rulemaking allowing public comments.

At the same time, a few in Congress are pushing for legislative changes that would mandate DOL fines on late or delinquent filers. (H.R. 1075, the Labor-Management Accountability Act introduced by Representative Sam Johnson (R-TX) (3/3/2005)).

### Stepped-Up Enforcement of Executive Order 13201

The Labor Department also announced in August that it was stepping up enforcement of President Bush's Executive Order 13201 requiring union signatory employers working under federal contracts to post jobsite notices concerning employees' union dues issues. DOL announced that the Office of Federal Contracts Compliance Programs (OFCCP) would begin enforcing the posting requirements in pre-award reviews on federal contracts beginning in August. Visit [www.mcaa.org/private/labor/](http://www.mcaa.org/private/labor/) for a complete analysis of the rules when they were published in 2004. (You will need an MCAA members only pass-

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## MCAA Board Addresses Association, Industry Issues

During its mid-year meeting July 22–23, the MCAA Board of Directors focused on new and potential education programs and the association's finances and engaged in a candid discussion on the future of the union mechanical contracting industry.

MCAA President Stanley Berger opened the meeting with a report on Executive Committee activities since the MCAA convention in Phoenix. He also welcomed new Board members and acknowledged the election of Jack Wilhelmi (Waldinger Corporation, Omaha, NE) as vice president and assistant treasurer, the newest member of the MCAA Executive Committee. The Board discussed several new education initiatives, including an extensive update to the publication, *Guideline for Quality Piping Installation* and the development by the Manufacturer/Supplier Council of a follow-up seminar to the value chain session held at *MCAA 2005* for presentation to local affiliates (see related article on page 11). In addition, Board members learned more about a potential new seminar on labor productivity focusing on the principles contained in MCAA's *Management Methods Manual* Bulletin PD-2.

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# President's Letter



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President-Elect

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Senior Vice President & Treasurer

**John Wilhelmi**  
Vice President & Assistant Treasurer

**Michael Gossman**  
Past President

**John Gentile**  
Executive Vice President & CEO

## Reporter

*MCAA Reporter* showcases educational offerings, services, and products available from MCAA and its subsidiaries—the Mechanical Service Contractors of America, the Plumbing Contractors of America, and the National Certified Pipe Welding Bureau—to empower our industry to create a better future. *MCAA Reporter* is published monthly except in February and August.

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## At MCAA: Supporting Service

As I look forward to attending the upcoming MSCA Educational Conference, I'd like to commend MSCA for the many ways in which it serves member contractors and the HVAC industry. Not surprisingly, MSCA methods and strategies are closely allied with those of MCAA; both organizations demonstrate a strong belief in the powers of a well-educated, well-represented membership.

Education is a great place to begin when talking about MSCA services. The Educational Conference itself is one example. Bringing together service contractors from all over, the conference presents the latest in industry thinking, as well as a great opportunity for contractors to exchange ideas with one another.

MSCA's other educational programming is equally impressive. Throughout the year, regional training seminars are offered in local areas to help members streamline their operations and grow their companies. The newest of these is the Dispatcher Training Program, designed to give service dispatchers tools that will dramatically improve their job performance. The program will debut this October with three programs scheduled for 2005, and in 2006, it will be offered once a month. Other regional training programs address specific operational areas. They include the Service Managers Training Program and the Selling Skills Training Program. Also available to local affiliates is MSCA's Service Seminar Series, offering a wide variety of seminars specifically designed for service contractors.

MSCA also produces a number of printed and electronic publications to help service contractors enhance their business operations. They include the *Hazardous Materials Transportation Guide for the Service Industry*, the *Labor Estimating Guide for Service*, the *Basics of Service Management Manual*, and the *Service Management Notebook*. A number of targeted safety resources also meet the specific needs of service contractors.

MSCA's strong positive relationship with the United Association is another area that provides much benefit to members. Recently the new five-year *National Service and Maintenance Agreement* was approved and signed by the leadership of both organizations. Schedule A's specifically addressing local concerns have added to the tremendous growth of the agreement in recent years. Also, the MSCA continues to play a key role in marketing and promoting the UA STAR technician certification program, and plans are underway to introduce two new STAR exams this fall—one for residential and light commercial servicemen and one for refrigeration technicians. In addition, MSCA is working closely with the UA and Ferris State University on the development of the new five-year HVACR apprentice training program.

Finally, I want to mention the MSCA STAR Qualification Program. Just about a year old now, this is one of the most useful services that MSCA provides. It recognizes outstanding mechanical service contractors who demonstrate that they hold themselves to a high standard of service, adhere to a strict code of ethics, offer outstanding customer service, value education and training for all employees, and have implemented a superior safety program. To date, 34 contractors have attained STAR status, a position that not only affirms their companies' excellence, but provides a great marketing instrument in this highly competitive industry environment.

Since I am both a service contractor and president of MCAA, I take particular pride in the ways in which MSCA continues to address the unique needs, opportunities, and challenges facing us. I have no doubt that my company's success owes much to the programs that MSCA and MCAA continue to create and present to members.

## Successful AEC Conference Addresses Trends and Programs

More than 50 MCAA affiliated association executives gathered at The Sagamore Resort in Bolting Landing, NY, for the 2005 Association Executives Council (AEC) Conference (July 31–August 3). This year's program, organized by Mid-Michigan MCA Executive Director Mike West (Lansing, MI), was hosted by AEC Chairman Brian McCabe (MCA of Toronto, Markham, ON, Canada). Members of the program committee gave presentations on negotiation trends, collective bargaining language, toolbox programs, and an AEC survey.

The conference began with an update from MCAA President Stanley Berger, Immediate Past President Mike Gossman, and Executive Vice President John Gentile. President Berger led a discussion about the state of union construction market share. Attendees aired concerns on a number of issues, including pension fund liability and increasing competition from non-union contractors. Berger concluded the discussion by encouraging execs to strengthen working relationships with their labor counterparts.

John Koontz and Tom Williams, both of whom present NEI seminars to affiliated associations and member companies, gave an update on some of their new programs for the upcoming year. Williams, who will be leading the upcoming Project Performance Conference (PPC) in Chicago, IL, on October 6–8, stressed the program's value to contractors. Both Williams and Koontz are faculty at the PPC and emphasized how valuable the education is for participants and how much they, as educators, enjoy this conference. John Koontz remarked, "I travel over 100 days a year teaching programs to MCAA contractors, but this is the

conference I enjoy the most. The small group interaction among the participants is electric. The audience is more engaged and their comprehension and retention are amazing."

David Sharkey, Victaulic's (Easton, PA) representative to MCAA's Manufacturer/Supplier Council (M/SC), followed their presentation with the announcement of a new program that council members will present, based largely on a presentation at the 2005 MCAA convention, "Leveraging the Value Chain to Become More Competitive". The M/SC plans to offer the seminars locally to MCAA affiliated associations at no charge, with the first two seminars scheduled for October 10 (MCA of Metropolitan Washington, Lanham, MD) and November 14 (MCA of Chicago, Chicago, IL).

Cynthia Buffington, MCAA's executive director of strategic programs, previewed the 2006 MCAA Annual



Officers elected for 2005–2006 are: Mike West (Mid-Michigan MCA), vice chairman; Steve Lamb (MCA of Chicago), chairman; and Leo Reed (New England MCA), program committee chairman.

Convention in Maui from March 19–23. She reported that the convention, instead of having one headquarters hotel, will instead have four primary properties: The Fairmont Kea Lani, The Four Seasons, The Grand Wailea, and the Wailea Marriott. Since registration opened on July 31 and the first convention brochure was mailed in mid-August, she recommended that association executives urge their members to take advantage of the online registration ([www.mcaa.org/mcaa2006](http://www.mcaa.org/mcaa2006)) since early registration will more likely result in an optimum room choice.

During the next days of the meeting, the conference focused on labor negotiations, collective bargaining agreements, and chapter operations. Dick Sawhill (ARCA/MCA, Ontario, CA) led a Tuesday morning discussion on recent trends in negotiations during which attendees were able to hear reports of recent negotiations using different bargaining strategies from many local jurisdictions.

John Rayburn (MCA of Indiana, Indianapolis, IN) then presented a compilation of the best language taken from many collective bargaining agreements across the country. The report was so well received by attendees that AEC Chairman Brian McCabe asked Rayburn to lead a task force to refine and develop the report with updated information as it progresses.

Marcie Marquardt concluded the Tuesday morning session with a detailed look at the toolbox program her association has developed in Madison, WI. The program provides a new toolbox with a set of common tools to all journeymen in the jurisdiction. The journeymen can transport the tools from job to job, and tools are not given to pre-apprentices or travelers. As most of the complement of tools have

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*This is the third in a planned series of UA Updates in the Reporter on issues of importance to both the UA and MCAA. UA officials Bill Hite, Steve Kelly, Kirk Smith, and Jerry O'Leary met recently with Marathon Oil officials and discussed a broad range of topics similar to those under discussion with the Construction Users Roundtable. Below is correspondence from the UA reflecting the response to that meeting.*

July 22, 2005

Mr. Larry Echelberger  
Senior Vice President of Refining  
Marathon Oil Corporation  
539 South Main Street  
Findlay, Ohio 45840-3229

Dear Sir:

I want to begin by thanking you and your associates for meeting with my staff and me on July 14th, 2005. It was our intent to introduce ourselves as well as the United Association (UA) and to gain insight as to the owner's view of our performance on your various projects.

I am pleased to tell you that in my view—mission accomplished.

During our meeting, I mentioned that I had been involved with the Construction Users Round Table (CURT). It is significant to note that the concerns and/or observations that you, Bubbie and Rod shared with us track closely with observations and conclusions that have evolved during our CURT tripartite meetings. As a point of clarification, that tripartite consists of CURT, various contractors and the Building and Construction Trades unions.

Under the general topic of things that we need to improve, we discussed the following:

**Productivity** as your number one concern is of particular concern to me. From the beginning of a member's apprenticeship training, we stress the importance of giving a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. While I am proud of the fact that many of our members are productive, it is clear that far too many are not. A disconnect has developed that I will correct.

To that end, I intend to make improvement of productivity a cornerstone of each and every program operated for the instructors and training professionals charged with the education of both our apprentices and journeymen. As I mentioned during our meeting, our annual Instructor Training Program is coming up in August. During the week the instructors are together, discussions of improving productivity will be made a part of each class offered.

It is not enough that we simply address the training community with this issue. We must also elevate the importance of improved productivity to our local union leadership. I plan to place an article in our next monthly Journal. The subject of that article will be the results of our meeting with Marathon Oil. In particular, I intend to highlight the issue of improving our members' productivity. I will also integrate the theme of improving productivity into our Business Manager/Business Agent and Financial Secretary Treasurer Seminar coming up in October.

**Absenteeism** on construction projects is particularly vexing for owners, contractors and union leaders alike. Obviously, there are legitimate reasons why an employee does not report to work. Circumstances such as sudden illness and family emergencies are

reasonable reasons to miss a day of work. We all can understand these and similar situations. Unfortunately, the bottom line is no legitimate reason can account for the pervasive absenteeism that afflicts far too many large construction projects. Having been a field supervisor, I know first-hand how disruptive absenteeism can be to a job overall. I intend to take the same tact as mentioned above and raise the issue of absenteeism with our instructors and local union leadership.

**Workplace Attitudes** are often overlooked as to their role in the success of a construction project. It is in our human nature to have the occasional "bad day." Disgruntled and unhappy workers are not as productive as workers who enjoy their work environment. Misery does love company. Disgruntled workers seem to seek one another out on the jobsite and compare their respective levels of discontent. My guess, this factor alone explains their lack of productivity. For me, the bottom line is that if a person simply refuses to enjoy a particular job—they should find another one.

**Inexperienced Foremen and General Foremen** was a particularly disheartening complaint for me to confront. We expect our local unions to send their very best to supervise a project. From our conversation, it would seem that this is not always the case. As we pointed out during our meeting, we do offer **Leadership and Supervisor Training** as part of our journeyman training effort. Of course, at this point in time, that training is voluntary. Since our meeting, I have been thinking about creating a Certification for Supervisors. An employer would then be able to request a Certified Supervisor (Foreman and General Foreman) without running afoul of local hiring hall rules. Your feedback would be of value on this matter. I am enclosing copies of both the Student and Instructor Manuals for our **Leadership and Supervisor Training** course. Please look this material over and share your thoughts with me. The certification I mention would be based on the course contained in the manuals.

On the plus side of our meeting, I hope you learned about what we are doing right. As I said, we spend more than \$120 million per year on training. An integral part of that training is our commitment to jobsite safety. Safety training and for that matter, any of our training, can be made specific for any project or client.

We have nearly completed work on our **SMART** Dispatch system. The goal of this system is to expedite the hiring of our members through the sharing of complete electronic files with our contractors. These files contain W-2 information, certifications of craft skills (associated documentation), background check (positive ID and terrorist watch lists) and drug testing verification. The system has the same security protocols as on-line banking for member privacy protection.

The **UA Welder Certification Program (WCP)** is a welder pre-qualification program and is recognized by the National Certified Pipe Welding Bureau. The program is rooted in ASME Section IX, Subsection B 31.1, which covers process piping. The welder tests on his/her own time. The test is performed under the control and supervision of a contractor. The weld is then subjected to non-destructive and/or destructive testing by an independent third party lab. Hartford Global Services oversees program compliance. Generally, the welders take industry standard tests. However, if a particular owner/client has a special procedure or process that will be used on the jobsite, the program is flexible enough to accommodate those circumstances. Industry estimates are that about \$1,000.00 per welder is saved by the client if this program is in place on the project.

During our meeting, I mentioned that I had been elected President of the Mechanical Allied Crafts Council (**MAC**). The members of **MAC** are the apprenticable crafts that are the key players on the majority of your projects. Our goal is for those crafts to work in harmony for the expansion of market share for our respective unions. In spite of division within the house of labor, most notably the Carpenters Union, we intend to work with our contractors and the owners hiring those contractors to bring projects in on time and under budget. It is through this ongoing dialogue that we hope to resolve issues such as limited cross-crafting that owners in particular regard as a hindrance to job productivity.

As a case in point, I want to mention that we have two National Agreements with the Boilermakers Union. We have a joint Non-Destructive Testing Agreement and our two unions work under identical National Specialty Agreements with a bridge agreement joining the Specialty Agreements allowing for composite crews when manpower is in short supply for either craft.

We also have a Joint National Agreement for Instrument and Controls Technicians with the IBEW. The calibration and loop checking that is so vital to the refinery is often performed by contractors signatory to this Joint Agreement. Once again, craft jurisdiction between the UA and the IBEW is simply not a problem.

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## Welding Fumes

*Contributed by Walter J. Sparkp, P.E.,  
NCPWB Consultant*

Welding fumes consist of visible particulate and gases that are generated by the electric arc used during welding. That arc is hot—15,000 to 20,000°F. That is hot enough to melt, vaporize, or decompose anything that gets in its way. The metal in the welding electrode melts, the base metal being welded melts, the flux coating on E7018 (mostly minerals) melts and the flux coating on E6010 (mostly organic stuff) decomposes into carbon monoxide or carbon dioxide and other gases, while any water that gets into the arc decomposes into hydrogen and oxygen. Paint, rust, lubricants, cutting fluids, and anything else that gets into the arc also breaks down into constituent elements or other compounds, including carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, and ozone. All of these lightweight compounds rise into the air with the hot air generated by the arc creating the fume plume.

Fumes and gases from welding and cutting cannot be classified simply due to the complexity of the decomposition and reforming that occurs. The composition and quantity of fumes and gases are dependent upon the metal being worked; the process and consumables being used; coatings on the work such as paint, galvanizing, or plating; and contaminants in the atmosphere such as halogenated hydrocarbon vapors from cleaning and degreasing activities. In welding and cutting, the composition of the fumes is normally different from the composition of the electrode or consumables.

These decomposition products rise from the arc mixing with the oxygen or nitrogen in the air; because these compounds are usually unstable, they form new compounds with the oxygen and nitrogen. For example, when welding on gal-

vanized steel, the zinc vaporizes in the arc and turns to zinc oxide when it hits the air. The white powder that rises in the fume plume when galvanized steel is welded is zinc oxide. Zinc oxide, while not toxic, will make the welder temporarily sick if he or she inhales the dust in the fume plume. Other compounds that are formed in the arc and subsequently in the fume plume may be less benign if inhaled.

Obviously, the first and one of the most effective actions that a welder can take to avoid breathing welding fumes is to keep his or her head out of the fume plume. That means keeping the head to the side of the plume and positioning himself so that any air movement will carry the plume to the left or to the right. Wind coming towards the welder carries the plume directly into the welder's shield and breathing zone. Similarly, air coming from behind the welder will circulate around both sides of the welder creating a smokestack effect—again bringing the fumes up into the welder's breathing zone.

The second step that protects the welder from the fumes is a simple mask similar to what painters use. These masks will filter particulate such as zinc or other metal



oxides and, if the mask contains activated charcoal, will collect some other gases such as ozone and organic gases. Masks that are not properly fitted will not be effective in protecting the welder since the fume can be pulled through any openings between the mask and the welder's face. Welders who are given masks or any other kind of personal protection equipment have to be trained how to adjust them so that they work correctly. In addition, OSHA regulations (29CFR Part 1910.134(b)) require:

- that fabricators have a written procedure for use of personal protective equipment such as respirators and masks;
- that the equipment be selected from that approved by the Mine Safety and Health Administration and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH);
- that the equipment selection be based on the hazard to which the welder is exposed;
- that only employees who are physically capable of doing the job and know how to use the safety equipment are assigned to perform work;
- that respirators are cleaned and disinfected regularly, stored in a convenient, sanitary location, and kept in good repair;
- that the work area be monitored for changes in exposure;
- that the medical status of employees is reviewed regularly; and
- that the program be reviewed on a regular basis to appraise its effectiveness.

Disposable masks eliminate some of the hassle associated with meeting these OSHA regulations. Masks that use replaceable cartridges provide a better seal and better filtering of the air, but they are less comfortable and more hassle for both the welder and the contractor than the disposable masks.

More complex and expensive than masks are the “personal environment

systems” in which the welder has air supplied to a loose-fitting helmet and an outer shroud that drapes over their shoulders. Portable fans or a supply of compressed filtered air is supplied to each welder, keeping any welding fumes out of his breathing area by maintaining a slight positive pressure inside the shroud.

It should be noted that any compressed air supply has to be “oil-free” air; normal shop air contains oil that, if inhaled, will coat the lungs in a short period of time, causing irreversible blockage of air absorption followed by death.

The other approach to removing the fumes in the air from the welder’s breathing space is to capture it so that the fumes never rise into the welder’s face. Source capture devices are usually flexible ducts attached to an exhaust system. Gas Metal Arc Welding (GMAW) guns with fume capture suction tubes integrated directly into the gun are also available to capture the fumes at the source. Finally, an open grid surface work table with a plenum beneath it attached to an exhaust duct provides a downdraft that pulls the fumes downward away from the welder.

### Elements of Particular Concern

A high ceiling and well-ventilated shop or an outdoor environment provide adequate general removal of fumes during welding if the welder avoids breathing the fume plume. When the following materials are vaporized during welding, special ventilation directly at the source or suitable masks or hoods must be provided: Antimony, Arsenic, Barium, Beryllium, Cadmium, Cobalt, Copper, Lead, Mercury, Selenium, Silver, and Vanadium. Refer to Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) and precautionary labels provided by the manufacturer to identify any of these materials. If you are in doubt about air quality, the air should be sampled at the welder’s breathing zone and also in the general work area if work is indoors or in a confined area.

Of greater concern to contractors are fumes associated with manganese, nickel, and chromium because these elements are commonly used in electrodes and filler metals for welding carbon, low-alloy, and stainless steel. These elements vaporize in the air and form compounds that, if they are inhaled excessively, produce effects similar to those produced by fumes from zinc, including nausea, headaches, dizziness, and respiratory irritation. Some people may develop a sensitivity to chromium or nickel which can result in dermatitis or skin rash. Overexposure to manganese fumes can damage the central nervous system causing slowed body movement, slowed reflexes, and hand tremors, mimicking some aspects of Parkinson’s Disease.

The chronic effects of exposure to fumes containing chromium and nickel are not yet determined, however NIOSH believes that some forms of hexavalent chromium and nickel and their inorganic compounds should be considered occupational carcinogens (cancer-causing agents). No conclusive determination has yet been made concerning the health effects on welders or users of alloys containing these elements but exposure is limited by OSHA to 0.1 mg/m<sup>3</sup> and 0.2 mg/m<sup>3</sup> respectively over an 8 hour period.

Manganese is used in small percentages in carbon, low alloy, and stainless steel fluxes and wire to reduce porosity in the weld metal, so it is present in welding fumes in low concentrations. OSHA also limits exposure to manganese in fumes to 0.2 mg/m<sup>3</sup> over 8 hours.

Thoriated tungsten electrodes are a different concern because they contain thorium, a radioactive material that can pose health and environmental risks when concentrated or inhaled. Thorium is a low-level radioactive material that emits mostly alpha particles and some beta and gamma radiation. Radiation from external contact with tungsten (i.e., carrying it around in one’s pocket) presents no risk. Although

some tungsten vaporizes during welding, not enough of it is carried into the fume plume to be of concern. However, inhaling tungsten grinding dust should be avoided since the dust created during grinding can cause internal radiation exposure if ingested or inhaled, increasing the risk of cancer. Also, although the grinding dust settles to the ground, it should be collected using a bag vacuum system and the dust disposed of in accordance with federal, state, and local regulations.

### Sources of Additional Guidance

The American Welding Society website ([www.aws.org](http://www.aws.org)) offers free health and safety information. ANSI Z49.1 *Safety in Welding, Cutting, and Allied Processes* is available, as are the Health and Safety Data Sheets. The following are some titles that are of interest to contractors:

- No. 1 Fumes and Gases
- No. 2 Radiation
- No. 3 Noise
- No. 4 Chromium and Nickel in Welding Fumes
- No. 5 Electrical Hazards
- No. 6 Fire and Explosion Prevention
- No. 7 Burn Prevention
- No. 8 Mechanical Hazards
- No. 9 Tripping or Falling
- No. 11 Confined Spaces
- No. 12 Contact Lens Wear
- No. 14 Graphic Symbols for Precautionary Labels
- No. 16 Pacemakers and Welding
- No. 17 Electric and Magnetic Fields (EMF)
- No. 24 Fluxes for Arc Welding and Brazing: Safe Handling and Use
- No. 26 Arc Viewing Distance
- No. 27 Thoriated Tungsten Electrodes
- No. 28 Oxyfuel Safety: Check Valves and Flashback Arrestors
- No. 29 Grounding of Portable and Vehicle-mounted Generators
- No. 30 Cylinders: Safe Storage, Handling and Use

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# Power of Insulation

*The National Insulation Association (NIA) is the voice of the mechanical and specialty insulation industry, representing its members—contractors, distributors, fabricators, and manufacturers—in all facets of the commercial and industrial construction markets. We are excited about the opportunity to provide MCAA members with information on the “Power of Insulation” and how it can be used to best advantage through occasional articles in the MCAA Reporter.*

## Insulation’s Role in Sustainable Design

“Green building” has recently become a buzzword and an interchangeable term for sustainable design. A green building provides a people-friendly environment for living and working and includes aspects of sustainable design with the goal of reducing operating costs and improving environmental impact. Green buildings are on the rise, and insulation is a key component to many aspects of sustainable design.

Many articles have been written about how improving a building envelope’s energy efficiency is a key component to overall energy conservation while few articles have been written about insulation’s similar role in the mechanical industry. Insulation is one of the tools that can be used to attain energy efficiency, and one cost-effective method is to simply increase the R-value of insulation being used, whether it is in the building’s envelope or on a mechanical system. This can be done by increasing the insulation thickness or by using more efficient insulation materials or systems.

Apart from the building’s envelope, insulation is also present on ducts, pipes, equipment, and in a variety of other areas that are also wrapped up in the whole energy efficiency discussion. The same principles that apply to a building envelope receiving LEED (Leadership in Energy and

Environmental Design) credits for increased or improved insulation systems apply to these areas.

In the “PCA Reports” published in the March/April 2005 *Reporter*, it was noted that, “since many of the LEED credits that can be earned focus on a building’s water, indoor air quality, and energy efficiency, plumbing and mechanical contractors are a leading force in a project’s LEED status.” The proper selection and installation of an insulation system amplifies the effect of efficient water and heating systems. Whether the building owner is striving for total LEED certification or not, the benefits they will receive in reduced energy cost and improved operating efficiency of the cooling and heating equipment—not to mention improved occupant comfort and productivity—should easily justify any potential cost increase in the insulation system.

Actually, insulation is normally a relatively small percentage of the total project cost and yet can yield one of the highest returns on investment. And if maintained, that return is sustainable.

Using more efficient insulation materials or systems, regardless of the LEED initiative—new construction (NC), commercial interior (CI), or existing building (EB)—projects can pay dividends by contributing to lower life-cycle costs. It makes financial sense.

There are many organizations and directories that define and identify green building products. The construction industry has been using the prefix “green” for building products for some time: terms like “green concrete” or “green lumber.” But, we are not talking about the kind of green associated with sustainable design. Many building products, including many insulation products, are already certified as green. Ask your insulation supplier if the insulation products you are using, or that are specified, are green-certified. If not, an opportunity may exist to examine alternatives.

Insulation is a key component in many aspects of sustainable design, and is potentially one of the easiest components to implement in the process of obtaining LEED credits. Increased knowledge of insulation provides an advantage to your company in differentiating itself as one of the strongest emerging markets in the construction industry, sustainable design, and in your traditional markets.

Some have referred to insulation as a “lost or forgotten technology.” The value of insulation in the sustainable-design movement has been found, and the technology of new insulation materials and systems will play a vital role in that movement. Contact your insulation contractor, manufacturer or distributor and learn more about the power of insulation: It can add value, volume, and profit to your business. ♦

*The National Insulation Association (NIA) provides this article as an MCAA member service. Please visit [www.insulation.org](http://www.insulation.org) for more information about insulation’s role in sustainable design.*

## Summit, Chapter Faculty Advisor Changes Mark Student Chapter Program's New Year

MCAA's Career Development Committee, which oversees the association's student chapter program, is addressing changes in the 2005 and 2006 *Student Chapter Summit* and two of the program's oldest and most established student chapters.

### Tour Changes for 2005 Student Chapter Summit

Those participating in the 2005 Student Chapter Summit in Seattle, WA, (September 23–24) will experience one of those changes first hand. The on-site tour, which is the centerpiece of the annual Summit, provides students and faculty with an opportunity to see equipment and/or systems either being built (as in past years) or actually functioning.

Instead of visiting the Seattle Public Library and the Mutual of Washington building, the tour will now include three structures, each of which required innovative solutions to mechanical systems challenges. Summit participants will see the mechanical systems of the Experience Music Project and Science Fiction Museum, a well-known Seattle attraction that celebrates music as an art form; Fisher Plaza, which houses a television and radio station and is the emergency preparedness center for the City of Seattle; and the Central Utilities Plant, which supplies electricity to a large segment of metropolitan Seattle.

A visit to McKinstry Company (Seattle, WA), one of the foremost mechanical contractors in Seattle and the U.S., will be featured on the tour. McKinstry's David Allen, vice president of marketing, will address the group before the tour begins.

### 2006 Summit Heads South

A significant change affected the committee's plans for the 2006 *Student*

*Chapter Summit*. Rather than heading to New York City, the committee decided to hold the 2006 Summit in Atlanta, GA, at the Sheraton Hotel—Buckhead. Since Atlanta is the home of the MCA of Georgia, large mechanical contractors, and interesting examples of the projects they have successfully completed, the committee agreed that the capital of the Peach Tree State was a great location for the 2006 Summit. Program planning will begin shortly after the Seattle Summit concludes, so stayed tuned.

### Faculty Advisor Changes

This year, the committee says "so long" temporarily to two stalwart, loyal friends who are faculty advisors to MCAA's oldest student chapters. Professor Daryl Orth, faculty advisor to the MCA of Indiana Student Chapter at Purdue University (West Lafayette, IN), is leaving the home of the Boilermakers to join the faculty of Northern Kentucky University's (Highland Heights, KY) construction management program. This

was his fifth year with the university and the chapter. A main reason for Orth's move is that the program has moved into the College of Business, where plans are underway to build and expand the program into a separate department. He also plans to form an MCAA student chapter, and he will continue his participation in the Mechanical-Electrical Academic Consortium, a group which he co-chairs.

Professor John Bryant, faculty advisor to the MCA Student Chapter of Texas A&M University (College Station, TX), is taking a two-year leave of absence to teach engineering courses at the university extension program in Qatar in the Middle East. Bryant has been the A&M chapter's advisor since it was established in 1999. "It's hard leaving home, but the opportunity to see and experience another part of the world proved too tempting to pass up." His wife Elizabeth and son Graem are joining him.

Efforts are underway to find replacements for both departing professors to ensure that courses and the MCAA chapters will continue. ♦

## Attention Students and Faculty: Planning Ahead for MCAA 2006? You'll Need These Forms!



If you're planning to register early for **MCAA 2006** in Maui, be sure to complete and send in both forms—the convention registration **and** hotel forms. There's no registration fee for students or faculty, but we still need to know who you are and the hotel where you want to stay. If you need forms, contact Ann Mattheis at [amattheis@mcaa.org](mailto:amattheis@mcaa.org).

# Speaking of Safety

## ANSI A10.40 Ergonomics

The American National Standards Institute's (ANSI) Construction and Demolition Operations Committee publishes voluntary safety and health standards for the construction industry. The most recent draft of its standard on ergonomics (A10.40) was rejected for the second time by the full committee. However, at the committee's July 2005 biannual meeting, the authors of the draft reported that they will again rewrite the draft, change the title to something other than ergonomics, and attempt to make it a little less burdensome on construction employers. MCAA countered by making a motion to disband the ergonomics workgroup and stop work on the standard. However, the motion was defeated.

MCAA is skeptical about the proposed changes and fully expects that the next draft will attempt to impose tremendous liability on construction employers. However, the authors' rationale for imposing liability on employers is completely unfounded.

Although ANSI standards are voluntary, once they are published, the hazards addressed in the standards become "recog-

nized hazards," and subject employers to OSHA General Duty Clause citations and fines. Also, plaintiff attorneys use the standards to generate and support lawsuits against employers.

MCAA's issue with proposed ergonomics standards and regulations is that the medical community cannot discern with any degree of certainty which of a multitude of confounding factors cause workers to complain about musculoskeletal pain. To place the liability on employers for complaints of musculoskeletal pain that could be caused by many non-work-related lifestyle choices, the natural aging process, arthritis, predisposed genetic traits, old injuries, etc., is irresponsible and unacceptable. MCAA and other construction trade associations are fighting to keep the standard from being published.

## Meeting on Manganese

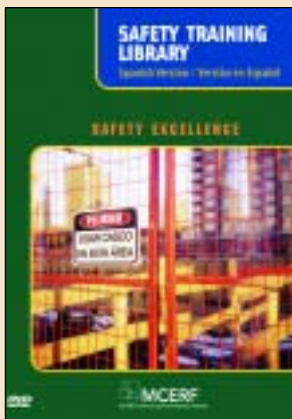
MCAA recently met with representatives of the United Association, Center to Protect Workers' Rights, and National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) to address the manganese issue in the construction industry. Manganese is a heavy metal in welding

flux that can cause health problems if workers become overexposed. However, there don't appear to be any significant health issues when ventilation is adequate.

The group discussed a strategy for obtaining objective data that employers could use to help them protect workers from overexposure to manganese during welding operations, under differing conditions in various locations. The strategy also included medical monitoring to address the presence of manganese inhaled by the workers. The data could help employers understand which jobsite welding conditions require only standard ventilation, and which might require special ventilation and possibly respiratory protection.

At the meeting, NIOSH proposed methodologies for sampling and medical monitoring. However, there were concerns that the proposed methodologies would be too time-consuming, making it difficult to find employers willing to participate in the study. NIOSH agreed to revise the methodologies and resubmit them to the group sometime later this summer or in the early fall. MCAA will keep you informed about this subject. ♦

## MCERF and MCAA Partner to Offer Safety Training Library in English and Spanish



By now, members should have received their complimentary copy of the English-language Safety Training Library containing all 21 of MCAA's existing safety training videos plus two new titles: *Controlling Energy Sources: Lockout/Tagout and Other Precautions* and *Pre-use Precautions: Inspecting Material Handling Equipment*. MCERF partnered with MCAA to fund and produce this extraordinary safety product for the mechanical construction and service industry. What's even more extraordinary is that this Safety Training Library is also available in Spanish to help members train their Spanish-speaking workers, and the first copy is free. To obtain your copy, e-mail [publications@mcaa.org](mailto:publications@mcaa.org). Additional copies of both the English and Spanish versions are available for purchase for \$395, a tremendous value considering these videos total almost \$1,500 when purchased individually. For more information or to place an order, contact Linda Burke at 301-990-2200 or [publications@mcaa.org](mailto:publications@mcaa.org).

## MCAA's Value Chain Members Active All Year

When the Mechanical Contracting Education & Research Foundation (MCERF) published *The Value Chain: Adding Value to the Supply Chain* earlier this year, this inventive research document was introduced to many members during a highly popular session that was part lighthearted skit and part straight-ahead presentation. Since a large part of the research pointed out that those companies developing stronger relationships with trusted suppliers would add value for all concerned, it was particularly appropriate that most of the presenters during that session were highly active members of MCAA's Manufacturer/Supplier Council (M/SC), a group that has become, in effect, an integral link in MCAA's value chain.

### Everyone Benefits

During MCAA's conventions, the presence of manufacturers and suppliers is visible everywhere. From the moment contractors check in at the registration desk, they are frequently reminded of M/SC sponsorship of many convention amenities and activities—from tote bags and portfolios to recreation and social events. Frequently, M/SC companies sponsor education session presenters and sometimes, as in the 2005 value chain presentation, company representatives take on the role of presenters themselves.

In turn, contractors flock to the annual Manufacturer/Supplier Exhibit, not in gratitude for M/SC convention support, but in the expectation that during one-on-one conversations with key representatives of important national companies, their questions will be answered, their concerns will be addressed, and they will have cemented a relationship that can have a positive impact for years to come.

### All Year, Every Year

To the surprise of many contractors who identify M/SC activities only with con-

vention sponsorships and the annual exhibit, the contribution of many manufacturers and suppliers extends far beyond the convention.

Traditionally some of the most generous financial supporters of MCERF, manufacturers and suppliers have recently taken on a broader role with the Foundation. In May, there was a first-of-its-kind meeting between the MCERF Board of Trustees and the M/SC Governing Board. Because the M/SC was central to both inspiring and carrying out much of the research for the value chain study, MCERF trustees were interested in what these highly informed individuals thought about the industry and what emerging trends might benefit from MCERF research.

As described in the June issue of the *Reporter*, M/SC ideas for further research ranged from the need for standardized product nomenclature to the impact of green building. If the reported mood of the meeting is any indication, these two groups will be working together for a long time to come. In fact, MCERF and the M/SC plan to hold their summer meetings jointly to continue the kind of positive communication that took place during the inaugural event.

MCERF and the M/SC are now working together on a much-needed revision to the MCAA *Guideline for Quality Piping Installation*, expected to be ready for introduction during the MCAA 2006 convention in Maui.

### Taking it on the Road

Evaluations from the 2005 convention made it clear that the value chain presentation was one of the most highly rated, and many contractors felt it spoke directly to their need to use existing resources to enhance their operations and strengthen their competitive positions. In fact, after hearing the presentation,

MCAA President Stanley Berger decided to focus on the value chain information during his company's next company-wide meeting and invited three customers and general contractors, three subcontractors and engineers, three consultants and professionals, and three manufacturer/suppliers to attend. (The details appear on page two of the May 2005 *Reporter*.)

Those who missed the convention presentation will have a chance to hear all about it, since M/SC members will present a value chain seminar for affiliated associations. The first two seminars—offering an overview of the value chain publication and how it can be used by member companies—have been scheduled by the MCA of Metropolitan Washington (Lanham, MD) on October 10, and the MCA of Chicago (Chicago, IL) on November 14.

### New Logo Says It All

The phrase on the new logo for the Manufacturer/Supplier Council—"Adding Value to Your Supply Chain"—pretty much sums up MCAA's experience with this energetic and knowledgeable group of people. Their growing participation in association activities throughout the year, and in many operational areas, promises to add value for many years to come. ♦

Manufacturer/Supplier Council  
**MCAA**

*Adding Value to  
Your Supply Chain*

## WASHINGTON UPDATE

*continued from page 1*

word to access this site. If you do not have a password and would like to apply for one, you may do so at [www.mcaa.org/password](http://www.mcaa.org/password)).

### Good News on the Legislative Front Ban on Federal Project Internet Reverse Auctions Gains Broad Business Support

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce's influential Acquisition Reform Working Group (ARWG) offered its full support of the MCAA and Best Value Coalition position seeking full implementation of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recommendation banning Internet reverse auctions for federal construction program procurement. Moreover, MCAA and the coalition continue to gain support for amending the proposed 2006 Defense

Department Authorization Bill (H.R. 1815, Section 812) to ensure that the ban is explicit in the statute itself and that amended language may then be included in the Senate bill (S. 1042) or in the conference report reconciling the two. The ARWG position paper addresses the application of reverse auctions in commodity purchasing and goes even further, urging Congress to allow purchasing agencies wider discretion in procurement strategy to choose which of their commodity purchasing is best suited to reverse auctions.

### Estate Tax Vote Expected This Month

A Senate vote is expected in September on a proposal to permanently repeal the estate tax (S. 420, H.R. 8). Some substantial relief is expected, even if outright repeal can't garner the 60 Senate votes needed. The multiemployer pension plan

bill, the Pension Protection Act (H.R. 2830, S. 219), will continue to be vetted in House and Senate labor and fiscal committees, with some chance of enactment this year—more likely next. Still, the House Labor Committee leadership is calling for action this year in view of the perilous state of the Nation's private retirement system.

### Fire Sprinkler Incentive Act

Similarly, the MCAA-supported Fire Sprinkler Incentive Act (H.R. 1131, S. 512) continues to garner co-sponsors in the House and Senate. That measure would permit five-year accelerated tax depreciation of fire sprinkler retrofits, and is widely judged to be a significant boost to public health and safety, a significant stop-loss on fire property damage and insurance claims, and fiscally "revenue neutral" for the taxpayers. ♦



**How do you decide what job deserves a bid from your company?**

**Once you find yourself in the middle of a project that looks hopeless, what are the strategies you and your operations team can use to transform desperation into success?**

These are the kinds of strategic issues that are important to MCAA contractor **Jim Humphrey**, president of Houston-based Humphrey Company, Inc. Recently he said *"I didn't expect anything exceptional when I attended the 2004 Project Performance Conference, but having gone through the program, I wished I had attended the previous one—before I found myself in a major claim, a claim that definitely could have been avoided by using information presented at the conference. If I had taken the time to attend the 2003 conference, I would not only have saved myself a lot of money, I would have saved one of the most important things a contractor has—an ongoing relationship with a good client."*

Your project teams can still register for this year's conference (**October 6–8 Chicago, IL**) where they can find the answers to these questions. **To register, call Melissa Cochran at 301-990-2219.**

## MCAA BOARD

*continued from page 1*

Career development took the spotlight when Career Development Committee Chairman Jack Wilhelmi offered an overview of several highly successful initiatives, including the first MCERF Faculty Training Camp, a 2.5 day conference designed to provide faculty with little or no background in mechanical systems with the basic information they will need in order to teach courses in those subjects. He also reported that seven new student chapters are forming, which will bring the total number of MCAA student chapters to 40. See the Mechanical Careers column on page 9 for more information about other activities.

Board members also discussed several other MCAA education programs and publications. This year's Project Performance Conference (October 6-8 in Chicago) will feature a real-world case study that demonstrates how a contractor can turn challenges into opportunities and risk into rewards. A new version of MCAA's popular *Guideline for Project Profitability through Preplanning* will debut during the conference. The fifth Advanced Leadership Institute will take place this fall. In response to student input, the Institute for Project Management (IPM) and Advanced IPM curricula have been revised and enhanced. An extensive revision of MCAA's *Project Manager's Manual*, due to debut at *MCAA 2006* in Maui, is also underway.

In response to member demand, a series of National Education Initiative classes on Project Profitability have been added; MCAA Past President Tom Williams will teach these classes.

Updates on the MSCA Annual Educational Conference and the MSCA STAR qualified contractor program were given by MSCA Chairman Mark Kerney (Hill York Service, Ft. Lauderdale, FL). In addition, Kerney reported that more than 600 Project Home Again missing children posters have been ordered for display on members' vehicles. PCA Chairman David Kruse (L.J. Kruse Company, Berkeley, CA) reported on several continuing initiatives, and that PCA is considering offering a one-day seminar on plumbing service. NCPWB Chairman Bob Silvia (Process Engineers & Constructors, Inc., Cranston, RI) reported on the successful NCPWB Annual Technical Committee Meeting, announced that John Robertson will serve as NCPWB's representative on the new ASME Hydrogen Piping and Pipeline Committee, and reported that NCPWB intends to publish a visual welding guide.

On the government relations front, Lonnie Coleman (Coleman Spohn Corporation, Cleveland, OH) reported that the MCAA PAC has made significant inroads in relationships with key representatives from several states. Board members were updated on the status of several key legislative issues, including Internet reverse auctions, multiemployer pension plan

reform, and prospects for a legislative compromise on the federal estate tax. The Board also discussed other issues such as accelerated depreciation for energy-efficient HVAC installation and fire sprinkler retrofits and the status of LM-10 and LM-30 reporting requirements (discussed in the article that begins on page 1 of this issue). Immediate Past President Mike Gossman (Huxtable & Associates/P1 Group, Lenexa, KS) updated the Board on developments at the Construction Users Roundtable and Past President Jim Murphy (Murphy Company, St. Louis, MO) briefed the Board on activities at the Industrial Relations Council.

President Berger next began an open and frank discussion by the Board on steps that need to be taken now, by MCAA contractors and the United Association, to regain market share. He introduced Facilitator Richard Barnes, former director, Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. During the day, the Board identified several challenges and opportunities.

Other matters discussed included review and approval of MCAA's mid-year financial statements; the reports of the Investment Advisory Committee and the Audit Committee; and a membership update. The Board also received reports from MCAA's Management Methods, Labor Estimating Manual, Safety and Health, Technology, Industry Improvement Funds, and Government Affairs Committees. ♦

## NCPWBULLETIN

*continued from page 7*

Portions of this article are based on information from Z49.1 and these data sheets.

### **Contractor Action to Minimize Health Risks Associated with Welding Fumes**

- Direct welders to keep their heads out of the fume plume and to not breathe those fumes and gases.
- Direct welders to be sure that there is enough ventilation or exhaust at the arc to keep fumes and gases away from their breathing zones.
- Make simple respirators suitable for particulate filtering available for welders to use. Train welders to fit respirators properly, particularly when welding stainless steel or nickel alloys.
- Review MSDSs to determine if products being used contain the dangerous elements noted previously in the product being used.
- If in doubt about air quality, the air should be sampled by an industrial hygienist at the welder's breathing zone and in the work area. ♦

## Keep Your Member Benefits Coming to Your New Address

If you're moving, or have recently moved, or if your company's principal contact has changed, please let MCAA know so we can continue to provide your member benefits. It's as easy as a phone call (301-990-2218) or e-mail (jletow@mcaa.org) to Jan Letow, who will make sure your changes get made.



## AEC CONFERENCE

*continued from page 3*

lifetime warranties, when one is broken, it is replaced through the program at no cost to the journeyman. If a tool is missing or lost, it is the journeyman's responsibility to replace it. The program has had great results so far, as it provides a cost savings to contractors and encourages journeymen to take more responsibility for their tools. In addition, the toolboxes are able to move with workers on the job, making them more productive and allowing them to spend less time going back for tools.

The last day of the conference included a survey report organized by Tom Wanner (MCA of Cleveland, Cleveland, OH). The survey compared different associations' practices and programs. It allowed each association present to compare its own practices with the status quo.

Following the report, Dr. Dale Belman, a professor from Michigan State (East Lansing, MI), provided insight on ways to measure your market share. He used his study for the Mid-Michigan region as an example and showed ways to access public information to gauge market share by different regions.



2004-2005 AEC Chairman Brian McCabe (MCA of Toronto), left, receives a plaque thanking him for his service from 2005-2006 AEC Chairman Steve Lamb (MCA of Chicago).

The conference concluded with the AEC annual business meeting. The following officers were elected for 2005-2006: Steve Lamb, chairman; Mike West, vice chairman; and Leo Reed, program committee chairman. ♦

## UA UPDATE

*continued from page 4*

At this time, I would like to invite you or your designee(s) to Industry Day (August 11th) during our week long Instructor Training Program at Washtenaw Community College (Ann Arbor, Michigan). This program has been in continual operation for the past 52 years. I believe that your attendance will give you real insight with regard to UA training. I also invite you to participate in our annual Business Manager/Financial Secretary Seminar. This meeting will be held October 16th

through the 20th at the Diplomat Hotel in Hollywood, Florida. Immediately following the seminar is the annual UA/MCAA (mechanical contractors) Labor/Management Conference at the same location on October 21st through 23rd. In the event that you are able to attend either of the events to be held in October, we ask that you plan to speak and/or participate in a panel discussion with other owners, as well as contractors and union representatives. My office is available to assist you in travel and scheduling for these events.

In closing, again I want to thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to meet with me. I want to reiterate that a direct line of communication has been opened to my office—don't hesitate to contact me. I look forward to working with you and our union contractors to building a winning relationship that will last for many years to come.

Sincerely yours,

William P. Hite  
General President

## MCAA Local Exec Steve Lamb Recognized by AHEAD

MCA of Chicago (Chicago, IL) Executive Vice President Steve Lamb was recognized by the Alliance to Help Employment and Development (AHEAD) Coalition at a special meeting on August 3. Steve was recognized for his work to pass House Bill 2137, now Public Act 94-0227. The bill reforms the workers compensation laws in Illinois, and promotes the interests of employers throughout the state.



Steve Lamb



Kelly Bryson

## Kelly Bryson Named Contracting Business 2005 Woman of the Year

MSCA Board Member Kelly Bryson, executive vice president and COO of Berg, Inc. (Shreveport, LA) and president of the company's Berg Service division is the recipient of *Contracting Business* magazine's 2005 Woman of the Year Award. The award, which was presented during the magazine's Comfortech conference in September, recognizes outstanding woman business leaders who have demonstrated a com-

mitment to promoting and improving the HVAC industry. For more information or to submit a nomination for next year's award, contact *Contracting Business* Managing Editor Valerie Stakes at [vstakes@penton.com](mailto:vstakes@penton.com).

## Mike Brunett Honored for 50 Years of Service to the Mechanical Industry

Mike Brunett (John E. Green Company, Ann Arbor, MI) was honored for his long-time service as a member of the Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee and his service to the plumbing and mechanical industry over the last 50 years at UA Local 190's recent Apprenticeship Graduation Ceremony. Brunett has worked for the John E. Green Company throughout his distinguished career, and has served on the Greater Michigan PMCA (Ann Arbor, MI) Board for over 20 years, currently serving as vice chairman. In addition to his work on the PMCA Board, he actively participates in numerous

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# MCAA CALENDAR

## SEPTEMBER

25-29  
IPM, Class 37, Week 2  
Austin, TX

25-30  
Advanced Leadership Institute, Week 1  
Wellesley, MA

## OCTOBER

6-8  
Project Performance Conference  
Chicago, IL

9-14  
Advanced IPM  
Austin, TX

18-21  
MSCA Service Managers Training Program  
Chicago, IL

20-22  
Labor Relations Conference  
Hollywood, FL

23-27  
IPM, Class 38, Week 1  
Austin, TX

## NOVEMBER

6-11  
Advanced Leadership Institute, Week 2  
Wellesley, MA

## 30-DECEMBER 2

Industry Funds Conference  
Long Boat Key, FL

## JANUARY 2006

8-12  
IPM, Class 38, Week 2  
Austin, TX

16-17

Collective Bargaining Seminar  
Tucson, AZ

## MARCH

19-23  
MCAA Convention  
Wailea, Maui, Hawaii

For more information on these events, contact Linda Fiedler at 800-556-3653.

## MCA WORLD

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local committees, serves on the Eastern Michigan University Construction Management Advisory Board, is a past president of the Michigan MCA (Lansing, MI), and is active within his community. In 2001, Mike received the MPMCA Contractor of the Year Award.



Mike Brunett receiving his Award from PMCA member James Dornbrock.

## Bassett Mechanical Achieves Safety Excellence

Bassett Mechanical (Kaukauna, WI) reached a remarkable milestone last December when its workers and supervisors reached more than 2 million work hours without a lost time injury. The company worked almost four years to reach the mark and it's still going strong. The commitment to worker safety comes from the top. Company President Bill Bassett has made occupational safety and health his top priority and all of his employees know

it. Ryan Murphy, the company's safety director, believes that much of the company's success comes from a combination of the company's corporate commitment to its worker safety and health, a solid joint labor/management safety committee, extensive training and education programs, carefully followed safe work procedures, and jobsite audits. MCAA congratulates Bassett Mechanical for achieving such a high degree of safety excellence.

## MCA of Chattanooga Aids Ronald McDonald House

The MCA of Chattanooga (Chattanooga, TN) stepped in to help when their local Ronald McDonald House closed due to a faulty chiller. They donated \$10,000 toward the purchase of a new chiller plus labor and materials to install the new unit. The MCA changed the chiller out on a Friday morning and worked until 8:00 p.m. Friday to get the air back on so that the house could re-open on August 8. ♦



## MCAA Mourns the Loss of MCA of Maryland Executive Vice President Bernie Vondersmith

**B**ernard J. Vondersmith died on August 12 at the age of 61. Vondersmith was the executive vice president of the MCA of Maryland (Towson, MD), a position he had held since 1983. He was a co-founder and a past executive director of Contractors and Unions Together (COUNT), and served as executive director of Associated Utility Contractors of Maryland from 1980 to 1989. He held similar positions at both the Masonry Institute of Maryland (Baltimore, MD) and the Delmarva MCA and was a trustee of various funds for Plumbers & Steamfitters Local 486 (Baltimore, MD) and Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 782 (Seaford, DE). He also served two terms on the board of the International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans (IFEBP). He is survived by his wife, Mary Jo; three daughters; his mother; two siblings; and six grandchildren. A memorial service was held at the Church of Nativity at the Interment Dulaney Valley Memorial Gardens on August 17. Contributions in his memory can be sent to the Maryland Chapter of the Society of Otorhinolaryngology Head and Neck Nurses (SOHN) c/o Joyce McAdoo (415 Donegal Drive, Baltimore, MD, 21286) or the COUNT Foundation, Inc. (809 Gleneagles Court, Suite 303, Towson, MD, 21284).

