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A full-page background image showing two plumbers in a workshop. One plumber, wearing a blue hoodie with 'PST' on it and safety glasses, is standing and working on a machine. The other, wearing a blue t-shirt and a baseball cap, is kneeling and focused on a different part of the same machine. The machine is complex, with various pipes, valves, and electrical components. The background shows a typical industrial or workshop environment with metal structures and equipment.

Continuing EDUCATION

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Calculating an Appropriate Price

Flat-rate pricing app provides customers with job prices upfront, improves profitability.
- By Ken Wysocky



On the Cover

Plumbing Systems Inc. technicians Israel Verdoza, kneeling, and Gustavo Garcia make adjustments to a Power Flame commercial burner and a Burnham V11H commercial boiler at an industrial job site near Edwards, Colorado. The company offers services such as residential plumbing service, repair and retrofits, heating, cooling and drain cleaning.

(Photography by Carl Scofield)

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adj.

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Ann Richmond



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Chris and Emily Cunningham have been running their business, Service Plus, since 2002. They used to be miserable – they worked endless hours, struggled to hire good people, and weren't making any money. They almost shut down the business.

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Chris and Emily's business turnaround isn't based on luck. Their successful, fast-growing company is the result of training, coaching, follow-through, and hard work.

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Cory Dellenbach

Handling the Watching Customer

Learn to show and teach customers what you are doing as a plumber and you could see return business

H

ave you ever had those customers who stand there and watch the whole time you are on the job?

It could be a big job, like changing out a water heater or repiping the kitchen, or something smaller, such as a toilet installation or unclogging a pipe. Either way, that customer is watching your every move.

I've seen posts on social media saying: "\$100 for a service call, \$200 if customer is watching, \$250 if customer tries to help, etc." While funny, I imagine many plumbers get that ever-watchful customer more often than not.

I have to admit something: I was that type of customer a few months ago when a plumber came to my house to change out a valve and install a new toilet. I didn't realize what I was doing until it was too late and I was watching over his shoulder the entire time. Oops!

Homeowners likely don't realize that this stresses you out and that you simply may not like it. Remember, it's their home and they want to know what is going on in it. The plumber I had handled it well. There are things you can do when a customer is looking over your shoulder, and the plumber I had did all of these.

EDUCATE THE CUSTOMER

If a customer is looking over your shoulder, the easiest way to handle it is to start educating them. While you are doing the work, explain what you are doing and why.

Tell them why you are cutting a valve off or using a certain type of valve over another. It not only educates them on products going into their homes, but also probably alleviates any concerns they have with the work being done and where the costs are coming from when they get that final bill.

Don't be afraid to tell them how something works as you're installing it, it could help them better understand why that product failed in the first place.

If a customer is looking over your shoulder, the easiest way to handle it is to start educating them. While you are doing the work, explain what you are doing and why.

MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS

As you're doing the work and the customer is looking on, use this time to recommend products that would benefit them. If you notice that the water heater is older and not able to keep up with the demands of the house, recommend a replacement in the near future.

Ask them how the other plumbing systems are working, and offer recommendations on new or updated fixtures and new technologies. All of that can easily be done while you are there working on the job they hired you for.

IMPRESS THE CUSTOMER


As they are watching you, now is the time to impress them. Make sure you are keeping the job site as clean as possible, clearly explain and show what the problem is when you find it, and if you see something minor that could easily be fixed, offer that while you are there.

If you see a fixture nearby dripping and it'll just take a simple tightening of something, do it. That simple act of kindness will almost guarantee that you'll get more work from that customer.

YOUR INTERACTIONS

How do you interact with your customers? I would love to hear some tips you have for plumbers and find out what has and hasn't worked for your company.

You can email me at editor@plumbermag.com or call 715-350-8436.

Enjoy this issue! 

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ADDING SERVICES

Getting Into the Septic Pumping Game

It's not a good business move for everyone, but some plumbers find it beneficial to tap into some service areas ancillary to their plumbing work like septic pumping. In this online exclusive, three plumbing contractors discuss their experiences adding septic pumping to their array of service offerings. plumbermag.com/featured

IMAGE IS EVERYTHING

Place a Priority on Professionalism

It's easy to say you want to maintain a professional image, but it's more difficult to consistently do all the things that entails on a daily basis. This online exclusive takes a look at the approaches a few companies take to ensure customers are always getting their best. plumbermag.com/featured

BE BOLD

The Benefits of a Good Branding Strategy

It doesn't matter how well you can do the work if you're not the company that comes to mind for people when they encounter a plumbing-related problem. Memorable branding is vital, and the companies featured in this online exclusive have all put careful thought into how they go about it. plumbermag.com/featured



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▼ Plumbing Systems Inc. owner Jim Harper stands next to a domestic water main on a job site. Harper founded the company in 2000 and now employs 46.

Continuing **EDUCATION**

Colorado plumber's progression from plumber to businessman sparked exponential growth

By Ken Wysocky | Photography by Carl Scofield

Plumbing Systems Inc., Edwards, Colorado

OWNER
FOUNDED
EMPLOYEES
SERVICES

Jim Harper
2000
46
Residential plumbing service, repair and retrofits; heating; cooling; drain cleaning
Vail Valley in central Colorado
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SERVICE AREA
WEBSITE

By many measures, Plumbing Systems Inc. in Edwards, Colorado, is a successful company. The plumbing, drain cleaning and HVAC firm generates seven-figure revenues, employs 46 people, offers customers a diverse array of services and runs about three dozen service vehicles.

But owner Jim Harper candidly admits it almost didn't turn out that way. Much of the growth at the company, established in 2000, didn't occur until the last five years or so. Before that, Harper, 50, endured an uncomfortable chair in the proverbial School of Hard Knocks.

"It was a *long* 15 years, but slowly but surely, I figured it out," he says.

The company's rocky journey to success illustrates the value of investing in revenue- and productivity-enhancing equipment, establishing a diverse range of services, getting advice from business consultants and charging rates that are high enough for a company to thrive, not just survive.

It also reflects the importance of continual self-education about the business of business, Harper adds, noting that many plumbers are great craftsmen who lack fundamental business skills. Being too busy to read and learn is no excuse, either.

"You just have to make the time to read business books and magazines," he says. "You can't ever stop learning."

“You have to know the true costs of doing business. I had to educate myself about the right amount of money to charge along with developing systems to govern how technicians work and behave.”

Jim Harper



► Technician Rudy Frausto changes a chain knocker head on a Picote Solutions Maxi Miller prior to starting a drain cleaning job in a restroom at a commercial job.

► Technician Israel Verdoza, center, adjusts a temperature control gauge while technician Gustavo Garcia, left, and company owner Jim Harper, right, look on.

Today the company offers plumbing, heating and drain/sewer cleaning services to customers in small towns in central Colorado's Vail Valley, primarily along the Interstate 70 corridor between Glenwood Springs and Silverthorne.

BUILDING DIVERSE SERVICES

Being an avid reader led Harper to his first major technology investment that, in turn, led the company to diversify by offering more and more services. It started in 2008 when Harper picked up a copy of *Cleaner* magazine and read an article about water jetters.

That led to a significant financial investment in a 4025 dual-reel trailer jetter built by US Jetting (4,000 psi at 25 gpm). "I saw it as a key way to build the service side of my business," he says. "And it did. A lot."

In a "one thing leads to another" scenario, the company then invested in a Vactor 2100 combination vacuum truck about two years later. It features a 12-cubic-yard debris tank, 1,500-gallon water tank, three-stage fan and hydroexcavation package.

"I thought it would be a way to do even more jetting because when someone hires you to do jetting, they most likely need vacuuming service and vice versa," he explains. "And there were a lot of guys around here at the time who had jetters, but they didn't have vac trucks."

"The bottom line is I like to learn about and try different things that are profitable."

Today, the company owns a fleet of machines and equipment worth millions of dollars, including 35 service trucks, primarily four-wheel drive Ford F-350 dually

Heavy emphasis on technician training yields high levels of customer service

There's no lack of competition in the markets served by Plumbing Systems Inc., a plumbing, heating, cooling and drain cleaning company based in Edwards, a small town in central Colorado's mountainous Vail Valley.

As such, when owner Jim Harper established the company in 2000, he steadfastly built a brand based on great customer service.

"Our slogan says we're committed to the best possible service. Period," he explains. "That's always our goal and intent — to provide the best possible service we can every day. I make sure my guys always operate from that mindset."

"Whatever they do has to be good for the customer, the company and the technician — and in that order."

To ensure a high level of service, the company invests heavily in training its technicians, which include about 10 lead plumbing technicians, a dozen drain cleaners and eight HVAC technicians. For starters, the company facilities include about a 1,000-square-foot training facility outfitted with everything from urinals and kitchen sinks to dishwashers, furnaces, water heaters and lavatories — even a sewage ejection lift station.

"We've got about a six-figure investment in facilities where our guys can practice their craft," he says.

Upon hire, technicians must take four hours of company-developed training every other week — done on

their own time on Saturday mornings, plus two hours every week on a weeknight. Harper says he knows that's a lot to ask, but it's also a good way to winnow out anyone who is not fully committed to their new jobs.

"It's a way to make sure they're all-in," he says. "They do this training until they're good enough to become a lead technician."

After that, technicians also get 40 hours a year of higher-level paid training, done on company time. They learn how to work on things such as power burners and boilers and learn about a range of other matters, such as backflow prevention or how to operate a vacuum or pump truck, he says.

Technicians also receive ongoing North American Technician Excellence training to get certified for working on heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration systems.

"Our customers care about training a lot," he emphasizes. "A lot of guys figure things out by themselves along the way. But they don't understand why things go where they go in, say, a hydronic system."

"If I send someone to your house, I want him to know why he's doing what he's doing," he says.

The company really ramped up its training programs about five years ago. To motivate technicians, the company gives them raises based on their skill levels and ability to sell jobs to customers, Harper says.



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“All I wanted was to build a decent-size company — one that can provide for my family, make a good living and allow me to hire a great bunch of people and do awesome work. And now I’m getting there. It just took a little longer than I expected.”

Jim Harper

pickups outfitted with Hackney box bodies and Ford Transit and Dodge ProMaster high-top vans.

The company also owns a truck-mounted 4050 trailer jetter (5,000 psi at up to 18 gpm) made by US Jetting and an Ultimate Urban Warrior truck-mounted jetter (4,000 psi at 21 gpm) developed by the Netherlands-based RIONED in conjunction with Spartan Tool.

Other investments include eight standard SeeSnake pipeline inspection cameras built by RIDGID; a PipeCaster Pro spray-lining system manufactured by IPP Solutions; a pipe bursting system from Pipe Genie; and a KingVac combination vacuum truck built by Keith Huber. The vac truck is outfitted with a 12-cubic-yard debris tank, 4,100 cfm liquid-ring pump, 400-gallon water tank and 1,600 cfm blower.

As further evidence of its diversified business base, the company also does a limited amount of commercial septic tank pumping. The company owns a 2001 Kenworth T800 outfitted with a 3,600-gallon debris tank built by KeeVac

Industries, a 400-gallon water tank and a Masport pump.

For trenchless repair of pipe leaks, PSI uses PipePatch point repair products from Source One Environmental (S1E).

THE PRICE IS RIGHT

Along with building up a roster of equipment and developing diverse services, Harper also learned how to better handle the financial end of the business. That included charging appropriately for his company’s services and collecting payments from vendors in timely fashion.

“You think you know what your work is worth, but in many case, you’re just making it up,” Harper says. “I just went with an hourly rate that other companies were charging in the area. That didn’t work very well. I was spinning my wheels financially for years.

“You *have* to know the true costs of doing business,” he emphasizes. “I had to educate myself about the right amount of money to charge along with developing systems to govern how technicians work and behave.”

Where did Harper’s education come from? He paid for consultants like Ellen Rohr and Appleseed Business (now called The 7-Power Contractor). He also joined professional groups such as Service Roundtable, which provides resources for contractors to develop best business practices.

Continued ►

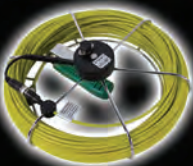
▼ Some of the staff and fleet at Plumbing Systems Inc. at the company’s headquarters in Edwards, Colorado.





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▲ Technician Brandon Content monitors a newly installed domestic tankless hot-water system by Intellihot.

Harper also learned a valuable lesson in faster collection of accounts receivable. “I was surviving, but I wasn’t staying on top of accounts receivable,” he says. “I owed suppliers a ton of money but didn’t have enough to pay them because I wasn’t collecting money fast enough from customers. You have to make that a priority.”

The company lost some customers when it imposed stricter payment deadlines. “You have to be prepared for that,” he warns. But when combined with the application of other solid business principles, it all worked toward making the company more profitable, he says.

“A lot of what we changed centered on commonsense solutions,” he points out. “But you don’t know what you don’t know, right? Once I got right things in the right places, business really took off.”

EFFECTIVE BRANDING

PSI also benefited from an integrated branding campaign centered on distinctive-looking service vehicles and

radio and television advertising campaigns.

When customers call, dispatchers are trained to ask how they heard about the company. The top answer: The company’s eye-catching dark-blue service vehicles with bright-yellow trim. The company buys blue trucks and has a local company letter them, Harper says.

The blue-and-yellow color scheme is integrated into all levels of company operations, from technicians’ uniforms to invoices and business cards. Even the company’s radio ads end with a tag line that says, “Call the guys in the blue vans.”

“If you’re not building a brand, you’re wasting your time,” Harper says.

The firm also built brand awareness through 30-second radio ads for the last 10 years and 30-second television ads for the last three years. The company invests “six figures” in such advertising, and Harper says it’s very effective.

“My main interest always is providing my guys with a lot of great work,” he continues. “And if you don’t market yourself, people don’t know who you are. And if they don’t know who you are, how are you going to grow a business?”

Developing a solid business base is even more critical in Harper’s mind because the company’s service area consists largely of small ski-resort communities where housing is extremely expensive. Rent for a two-bedroom apartment, for instance, can run as high as \$2,300 a month and even a small home costs \$600,000 to \$900,000.

As a result, he feels compelled to do whatever he can to generate the kind of revenue needed to pay technicians wages sufficient enough to support a decent lifestyle. “Guys who are always worried about how they’re going to pay for housing aren’t going to be great technicians,” he says.

MORE GROWTH AHEAD

Looking back, Harper says he never in his wildest dreams expected his company to grow so big. “All I wanted was to build a decent-size company — one that can provide for my family, make a good living and allow me to hire a great bunch of people and do awesome work. And now I’m getting there. It just took a little longer than I expected.”

- The company also does a little bit of septic pumping to keep crews busy. Devin Freschell, left, and Julian Garcia, right, pump waste tanks at a golf course in Edwards, Colorado, using the company's 2001 Kenworth T800 outfitted with a 3,600-gallon debris tank built by KeeVac Industries, a 400-gallon water tank and a Masport pump.

Looking to the future, Harper plans to expand the company's service area farther east and west. One reason: Business has reached a local saturation point. "You're only able to get so many customers in a given area," he says. "We're never going to be the be-all and end-all for everybody in our core service area, so it makes sense to expand and cover more territory."

The company already has opened a new office in Silverthorne, roughly 35 miles east of Edwards along I-70. Geographic expansion also will provide the company with access to more technicians, as well as more opportunities for technicians to live and work in more affordable areas, Harper adds.

"It's too hard to ask guys to commute in this area," he says.

Continued ►



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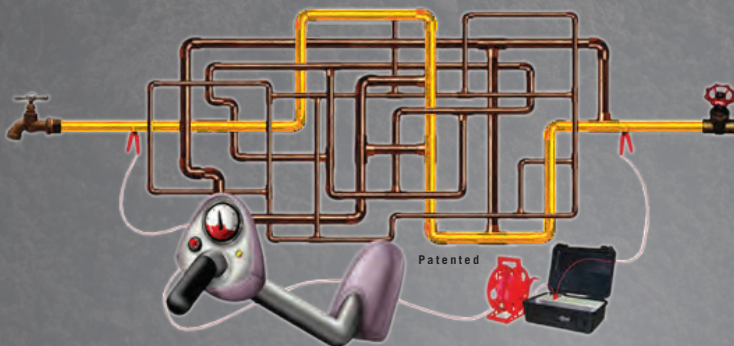
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As for financial goals, Harper aims to double the company's revenue by 2025. He knows that's an ambitious goal but says he's inspired after reading *What It Takes: Lessons in the Pursuit of Excellence* by Stephen A. Schwarzman, the chairman, chief executive officer and co-founder of The Blackstone Group, a global private equity giant.

"In the book, Schwarzman says big goals and small goals all take the same amount of commitment, so why not have big goals? I love that philosophy," he says. "Why not play a bigger game?"

"I love a good challenge. I figure I'm only coming through here one time, so I want to leave it all on the table."

Jim Harper

"I love a good challenge," he concludes. "I figure I'm only coming through here one time, so I want to leave it all on the table." **P**

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A Family Culture

Plumbing products manufacturer maintains strong connection with customers by listening to what they want and need *By Cory Dellenbach*

Having a passion for anything bathroom-related is what has helped Mansfield Plumbing Products maintain a strong relationship with its customers for 90-plus years, and the company doesn't have plans to stop that anytime soon.

Mansfield, headquartered in Perrysville, Ohio, operates a plant in Henderson, Texas, with more than 600 employees combined. The company's current lineup of products includes toilets, lavatories and urinals, toilet tank trim, and acrylic air baths, whirlpools, bathtubs and shower bases.

Phil Cunningham, vice president of marketing for Mansfield, says a big part of the success has been the company's passion and family culture. That has held steady in this unique time of a pandemic as the company works more on wholesalers' digital initiatives and focuses on training plumbers and wholesalers.

Plumber: Since Mansfield's founding in 1929, what has kept the company going all these years?

Cunningham: Mansfield's 90-plus-year heritage is something we are all proud of, and being able to add a year to that legacy is the overall driver to our continued success. However, we can break that motivation into three categories: the first, Mansfield is a family in a small, rural community. In some cases, we are literally family, as we have many workers who have relatives here now or who had worked here at some point. The entire Mansfield team, whether it is in central Ohio or East Texas, works together to support each other like a family. So many small companies strive for the idealistic family culture. We achieved it almost a century ago and maintain it today.



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WEBSITE www.mansfieldplumbing.com

▶ Mansfield Plumbing Products employee Randy Oswalt places lavatories on a shelf during the manufacturing process at the company's facility in Ohio. (Photos courtesy of Mansfield Plumbing Products)

- Danell McCartney works on toilet bowls, removing plugs from the drain, at the company's facility in Perrysville.



While our team has designed new technologies, identified efficiencies in manufacturing and found ways to conserve water, we are still passionate about putting a product in the bathrooms across America.

Second, we are passionate about toilets and bathtubs. That passion is rooted in our simplicity. We keep a minimized product line, a classic universal design in our products and essentially the same manufacturing process since the beginning. While our team has designed new technologies, identified efficiencies in manufacturing and found ways to conserve water, we are still passionate about putting a product in the bathrooms across America.

So our passion and family culture lead to the third driver of our success. Our customers have thrived throughout the years as well, and we have been fortunate to be a part of that. It is not uncommon to sit down with one of our wholesale partners and hear anecdotes about the founders of Mansfield and how we helped them through the early days of their distribution. So many of our partners have found the same culture we have, and that builds trust between our organizations. We have also been blessed with a loyal base of plumbers, and we recognize that a significant part of their business is based on installing simple products that perform every time a family needs it to. And families rarely say, "Hey that toilet is the greatest," but they will be vocal if the toilet doesn't perform. We have built trust with our plumbers by giving a lot of the former and little of the latter.

Plumber: The last several years there has been a big push from plumbers and homeowners wanting more green products or products being more green. What has Mansfield done to give them what they want?

Cunningham: We look at the concept of green products holistically. So many toilet manufacturers tout ultra-high-efficiency toilets, but if you have to flush twice to get all the debris out, how efficient are your products? Mansfield approaches it a bit differently. We want to give you a product that takes the least amount of the water per use, uses the fewest natural resources to manufacture, and reduces the carbon footprint of the logistics process. We have products that use the optimal amount of water to get rid of the waste in the bowl the first time. We recycle the heat from our kilns to power our dryers, reducing the amount of natural gas we consume. Finally, our products ship directly out of the Ohio or Texas locations, reducing the need to contract ocean freighters or long-haul trucking.

Plumber: On the company's website, there is a resources tab for customers. What does that do for Mansfield?

Cunningham: In January of this year, we launched the Mansfield Pro Center. This accomplished two objectives for us. First, the main website can be geared to talk to the consumer in layman's terms. Second, it allows us to share more technical data directly with our professionals in an organized manner. Our members of the Pro Center get access to various content depending on their relationship with Mansfield. Our wholesalers get access to product training, marketing assets, new product launches and other pieces that help them sell. Our plumbers and contractors get CAD files, spec sheets, training videos and other information that make it easier to use the products.



Plumber: What types of changes have you seen in the design/manufacturing of toilets, urinals and lavatories in the past couple years?

Cunningham: Each of those categories sees its own changes and innovations. Toilets have three conflicting design changes happening: The first is in water conservation, the second is focused on the rinse and the third is adding complex technology to enhance the user's experience. So you see companies finding their niche in of those three categories. Urinals continue to find ways to reduce water consumption. The consumer is demanding more and more nontraditional materials for their lavatories and using those fixtures as a central statement in their bathrooms. The therapy and comfort of jetted tubs are being sacrificed for larger showers, while free-standing soaking tubs also become the design focal point of the master bathroom.

Plumber: What types of "wants" are you getting from your customers? What would they like to see with your products?

Cunningham: In the current situation, we are getting a lot of requests to support wholesalers' digital initiatives

▶ Phil Cunningham, vice president of marketing for Mansfield Plumbing Products.



and also to utilize some of this "home" time to conduct training.

Plumber: What can we expect out of Mansfield for the rest of 2020 and into 2021?

Cunningham: This next 18 months are going to be focused on keeping our American families healthy. We can support our customers with American products in the post-pandemic era. Like everyone else globally, we are faced with a ton of questions and only a few speculative answers. We will be working with our loyal plumber base to understand how their business changes and how we can help them get into homes and job sites to do what they do best, safely and efficiently. 



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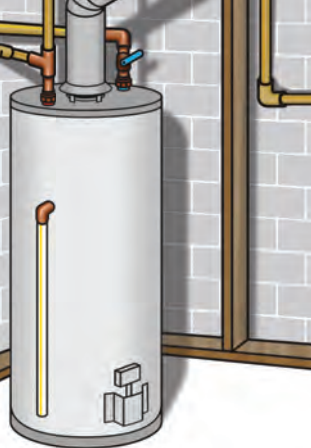
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Calculating an App-appropriate Price

Flat-rate pricing app provides customers with job prices upfront, improves profitability

By Ken Wysocky


For years, master plumber Joey Howze did jobs on a time-and-materials basis, running the risk of occasional sticker-shocked customers expressing unhappiness and surprise about the final price. But that's no longer an issue, thanks to the Coolfront Technologies flat-rate pricing app.

The app enables Howze, the owner of Howze Plumbing in Keller, Texas, and his two technicians to quickly and efficiently calculate a job cost for customers before work even starts. It also ensures the price accounts for all related expenses, plus a reasonable profit margin, he says.

The upshot? Happier customers and improved profitability, says Howze, who established his company

in 1995 and primarily focuses on commercial and residential service and repair.

"Customers don't want to digest the cost of a job and write a check at the same time," explains Howze, who runs two Chevrolet service trucks equipped with 12- and 10-foot Knapheide box bodies.



COMPANY	Howze Plumbing, Keller, Texas
OWNER	Joey Howze
PRODUCT	Coolfront Technologies flat-rate pricing app
FUNCTION	Provides fast upfront pricing while ensuring rates cover business expenses
FEATURES	Creates customized per-job prices based on a company's business expenses, plus a designated markup; minimizes end-of-job customer sticker shock by providing upfront pricing; automatically adds in part-and-material costs, plus a markup; continually updated database includes more than 30,000 jobs and 11,000 parts
COST	Varies by subscription
WEBSITE	www.howzeplumbing.com



◀ Joey Howze, Howze Plumbing owner, uses a tablet with the Coolfront flat-rate pricing app installed on it at a job near Keller, Texas.

“In years past, some customers would see the final bill and say, ‘If I had known it would cost this much, I might not have done the work,’” he continues. “We wanted to get away from that — present them with a justifiable price upfront. And this app lets us do that.”

Furthermore, most customers now are accustomed to an Amazon-like purchasing experience that’s fast and transparent. “There’s no reason why we can’t we do the same thing with plumbing,” says Landyn Howze, Joey’s son. “This app allows our company to provide that same high-end customer service.”

ENHANCED PROFITABILITY

The app also helped the company change its pricing structure to more accurately account for its expenses. Over the years, the company hadn’t raised its rates often enough, which slowly eroded profitability, Joey says.

“We were a bit anemic in covering all our costs with our billing,” he explains. “It was a hard lesson to learn.”

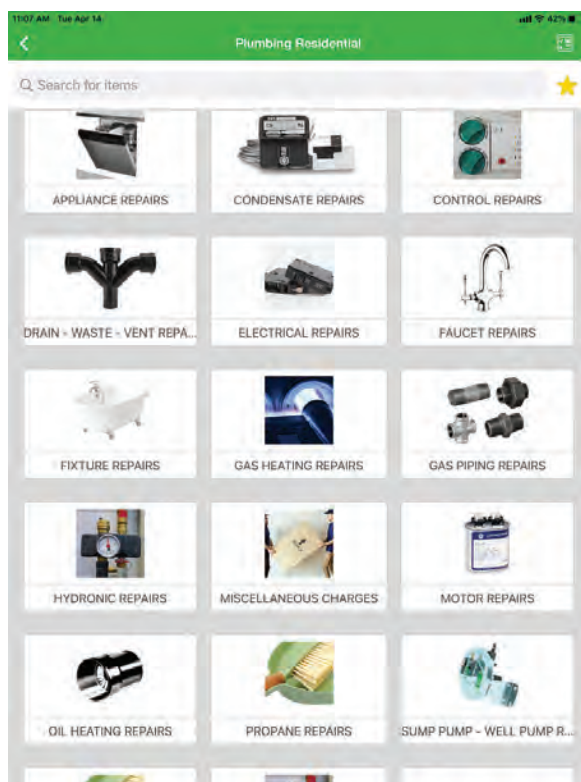
Couldn’t the company have raised its hourly labor rate or the markup on part-and-materials costs instead of converting to flat-rate pricing? “Sure,” he says. “But you still need to know where your break-even point is and where your profit starts. If you raise rates just to raise rates, you still don’t know where you stand in the big scheme of things.”

Moreover, the Coolfront app ensures that all technicians consistently bill every job the same way. That wasn’t always the case before the company invested in Coolfront, he notes.

Here’s how Coolfront works: First a subscriber must figure out all of a company’s expenses and input the data into the system. Then Coolfront determines an hourly rate that will cover those expenses, plus add a designated profit margin, explains Landyn, who handles office administration and business development for the company, which serves customers within about a 30-mile radius of Keller, a northern suburb of Fort Worth.

“Coolfront doesn’t tell you what to charge,” Joey points out. “You collect all the data about business expenses; and it develops a price for your company for specific repairs.”

The Coolfront app then automatically multiplies that hourly rate by the time it should take to do particular job, then adds on the cost of any parts and materials, plus a designated markup on them.



▲ Screenshot of the app.

How does the app know how much time a job should take? Coolfront constantly updates a database that calculates the average time required to do more than 30,000 repairs based on continual industry research. It also provides current prices for roughly 11,000 parts.

As an added benefit, Landyn says if a technician knows he can do a particular job faster than the time stipulated by the app, it can be adjusted accordingly. “That way you don’t overcharge customers,” he notes.

“But you still need to know where your break-even point is and where your profit starts. If you raise rates just to raise rates, you still don’t know where you stand in the big scheme of things.”

Joey Howze

LESS STRESS FOR TECHNICIANS

Howze Plumbing technicians adhere to a process when using the app. First they assesses the plumbing problem, then go back to their trucks to calculate the cost by calling up the app on an iPad. “When you click on a specific task, such as replacing a faucet, it’ll calculate the labor cost for that job, plus the cost of the parts,” Landyn says.

Then they show the final price to the customer. (It doesn’t show the hourly rate or the markups for parts and labor.) The app also generates a detailed description of the job. If customers accept the price, they sign an agreement on the iPad, clearing the way for work to begin.

Another benefit of upfront pricing versus time: Technicians don’t feel like they’re under the gun timewise, which can lead them to rush through a job to minimize a customer’s bill.

“With time-and-materials pricing, they know the clock is ticking,” Landyn explains. “They know the longer they take, the more unhappy the homeowner will be. But with this app, they know that no matter how long a job

takes, the customer won’t be questioning it. So it alleviates the stress.”

In addition, with flat-rate pricing, customers aren’t penalized if a journeyman plumber handles their service call and takes longer to do a job than a more experienced master plumber, he adds.

Using the program is easy and intuitive, Joey says, noting he felt comfortable and proficient with it in about a week. To prepare customers for what to expect, Landyn explains the upfront pricing concept and procedure to them over the phone before a technician arrives.


There are two versions of Coolfront. One is a mobile app that includes online flat-rate pricing capability, plus invoicing, payment processing and other features. It’s called a zero-cost option because the \$1.89 fee per work order charged by Coolfront is included automatically in the customer’s final job price, which enables contractors to recoup the fee.

Howze Plumbing uses the other version, Coolfront Books, which provides contractors with either traditional hard-copy, flat-rate pricing books or digital online versions. Costs include a \$600 activation fee, plus \$116 for the first pricing “book” and \$41 for each additional copy.

A \$2 fee automatically gets tacked on to each job to help defray the cost of the app. It’s designed to integrate with FieldEdge, which Howze Plumbing uses for its business management system.

The Howzes concede there was some anxiety internally about trying something so new after decades of using time-and-materials pricing. But their fears proved unfounded.

“It was a really smooth transition,” Landyn says. “Customers love the idea. Upfront pricing builds trust and makes them feel more comfortable.

“At the end of the day, we got into this for two reasons: It benefits the customers, and it benefits the company,” he continues. “It’s a win-win situation. There’s no more sticker shock for customers, and we now account for costs as they go up. It’s truly a no-brainer.” 



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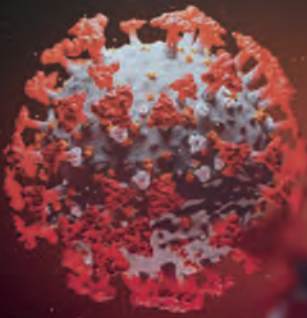
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Ami Kassir

Exploring Funding Options for Your Company

The federal Small Business Administration doesn't hand out money, but it backs loans that can help your plumbing business grow

By Ami Kassir

Where does a plumber turn when he or she needs an infusion of cash to buy a new piece of equipment, launch a new service offering or build a new shop? The first stop for funding toward new tools might be the friendly hometown banker who knows you and your business. Or you might approach that well-heeled uncle to invest in your business to help you take that next step.

If you exhaust those two options, consider going to the Small Business Administration, a federal agency that doesn't operate as a bank but acts as a valuable conduit to lenders predisposed to work with businesses like yours.

You might think the SBA is a big, bureaucratic behemoth that would be difficult to tap into for financial assistance. But that is just one of the misconceptions people have about the government agency, which has been around since 1953 and generally receives good reviews from the businesses it assists.

Let's talk about three of the biggest myths surrounding the SBA. You may have heard:

The SBA lends money

Although the SBA can directly lend money in cases of disaster, that's not its main role when it comes to lending. Instead, it serves as a government guarantee program for banks and nonbanks.

That means it essentially serves as a backup to lenders who might otherwise not be interested in making loans to smaller and/or unproven businesses. It offers guarantees up to 85% for loans up to \$150,000 and 75% for loans bigger than that. Because lenders working with the SBA are less likely to endure the full brunt of defaults, they're more likely to make loans to unproven businesses.

The SBA does set requirements and application process details. Applications will require personal background information, a business plan, personal and business credit reports, income tax returns, bank statements and

a resume, among other things. It's also possible personal or business collateral is required.

One benefit for the borrower is that loan terms tend to be longer (up to 10 years) and require smaller monthly repayments due to favorable interest rates.

The SBA is only for mom and pop shops

Mom and pop shops are among the kinds of businesses the SBA is looking to help, but they can also work with much larger businesses. Through its flagship 7(a) program, SBA-backed loans can be as large as \$5 million for needs such as working capital. And through its lesser-known 504(b) program, as much as \$12.8 million can be obtained for businesses seeking to buy real estate or major equipment.

A \$5 million or \$12.8 million loan is way above what most small businesses need. While there's no one-size-fits-all template for a typical SBA loan customer, most are businesses that are going to have anywhere between \$50,000 and \$5 million in annual revenues and up to 40 employees, which fits the scope of many companies in the plumbing industry. Those businesses are likely to be cash flow positive and profitable.

Of course, if mom and pop shops need a loan, small amounts are available, too. There are no minimum guaranty amounts for any SBA loan program.

My banker didn't tell me about SBA-backed loans or said I'm not qualified, so I'm out

Not to fear: You're most likely not "out." About 2,200 banks and other lenders throughout the U.S. write SBA-backed loans. Each one uses the program differently and requires varying qualifications.

So even if one lender rejects you, it doesn't mean that all will. It's always worth trying another lender (or two or three) if you get rejected — advice that applies when seeking non-SBA loans as well. If you go to a doctor and don't like what he or she says, you may get a second opinion; so why not do the same here?

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In addition, there may be other reasons why your go-to lenders may not tell you about SBA loans. Perhaps they're ignorant about the program. Or maybe their employer doesn't give them incentives that make them want to push SBA loans; remember, your banker is trying to make a living, too, and might push you toward more profitable options for his or her own pockets.

It might even be something as simple as your banker doesn't want to go through the necessary paperwork. Lining up an SBA loan usually does require more documentation than a regular loan. And large banks often aren't interested in making small loans, which can be less profitable and riskier than larger loans.

So, if you get rejected for an SBA loan by a large bank, try a smaller bank, which may well specialize in the program and have lenders who are well versed in the process.

UNDER FURTHER CONSIDERATION

Hopefully this clears up some of the misconceptions about the SBA and its lending programs. These programs

Because lenders working with the SBA are less likely to endure the full brunt of defaults, they're more likely to make loans to unproven businesses.

work, as many business owners will attest, and there's no downside in at least considering an SBA loan the next time you need funding. The SBA's website, www.sba.gov, is helpful as well, providing further information in an easy-to-use format. **B**

Ami Kassir is CEO of MultiFunding LLC, a speaker and the author of The Growth Dilemma. For more information, visit www.amikassar.com.

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Shopping for Nozzles

Selecting a jetter nozzle is all about your application and how much you want to invest in quality

By Giles Lambertson

Pipe cleaning nozzles are highly engineered tools that combine water pressure and sophisticated metallurgy to overcome whatever is impeding the flow in a pipe. The nozzles are part of what is sometimes called “aquadynamic cleaning technology” and come in myriad sizes, configurations and price ranges.

“We market nozzles to everybody from household plumbers to contractors cleaning 10-foot-diameter pipe. There are so many different ones. It’s all about the application,” says Dana Hicks, U.S. sales manager for Swiss manufacturer Enz, which has been producing nozzles for 30-plus years.

The wide variety of jetting nozzles can be daunting to tool buyers. To help, NASSCO began categorizing the field of nozzles into three tiers. Tier One nozzles are fairly unsophisticated cast metal pieces with holes drilled in them to admit water in volume and directionally spray it out again. These basic nozzles are relatively inexpensive — costing \$100 or so — with a relatively short life cycle, as little as three or four months.

Tier Two nozzles have channels inside to pass the water more efficiently. Instead of drilled holes, they feature replaceable inserts. These nozzles last three times as long as first-tier models and cost three times as much. Then there are Tier Three nozzles, which also offer replaceable orifices. Tier Three models have superior fluid dynamics and can withstand water wear for years. For this enhanced performance and durability, buyers can spend 30 times what they spend on a Tier One model.

Hicks doubts most nozzle shoppers even think about these tiers anymore. Rather, they know their budgets and how durable of a nozzle they want to buy. The real deciding factor for a buyer always is: Will the nozzle do what I need done? “It’s all about the application,” Hicks reiterates.

QUALITY AND DURABILITY

Richard Rauckhorst, part owner and engineer at Arthur Products in Medina, Ohio, says it’s impossible to buy a cheap, long-lasting nozzle. “No such thing. If you buy a cheap one, you’ll get a couple of uses out of it. On the other hand, a customer of ours bought a rotating nozzle and used it for 14 years.”

Like with any other product, a buyer can go one of two ways. “When the price of a nozzle is low, you might buy two or three of them and toss each one when it wears out,” Rauckhorst says. “Or you can buy a high-end nozzle and not replace it.” He adds that maintenance also determines how long a jetting nozzle will last. If the unit experiences calcium buildup and isn’t cleaned, for example, it loses its effectiveness. “It depends to some extent on how customers maintain their equipment.”

- Investing in more expensive, high-quality nozzles means replacing them less often. Even high-end nozzles eventually wear out; but with maintenance, they should last three to seven years before losing effectiveness.



Recycled sewer water that increasingly is being deployed by municipalities for nonpotable uses is also a factor. As the contaminated water is being sprayed, it can scar the interior of a nozzle and render it inefficient. Though recyclers have come a long way in purifying the liquid, recycled water “still has a lot of contamination in it,” Rauckhorst says.

To resist the wear of particles in recycled water, manufacturers keep improving their hardened tools. Scott Paquet, owner of Florida nozzle manufacturer NozzTeq, says wear-resistant materials employed in better nozzles include 304 stainless steel and 442 hardened steel. For the same reason, some manufacturers fabricate the inserts from ceramic material.

“We use ceramic jets and have a five-year guarantee on nozzles with the ceramic inserts,” Hicks says. “Don’t get me wrong, they will wear out. But a drilled hole will wear out faster. Water will eat it up. Ceramic reduces that.”

The useful life of a jetting nozzle, then, depends on its maintenance, how effortlessly fluid can pass through it and the wear resistance of the material from which it’s manufactured. Paquet estimates a higher-end nozzle will last three to seven years on average before the tool begins to lose its effectiveness. “These aren’t your Amazon-type nozzles,” he says. “They’re not your Walmart nozzles.”

MANY OPTIONS

Whether nozzle orifices are simple drilled openings or fitted with removable sleeves, the holes are not randomly placed in the head. Their positioning is by design so they can perform one or more hydrodynamic functions. The simplest example is a fixed nozzle with one hole up front that emits a single jet of water to cut through total blockages, with all 1,200 psi or so being concentrated at a single point.

Other static nozzles — as opposed to rotating or oscillating units — average six to eight orifices and send out jets of water at calibrated angles. For example, some have two or more jets spraying at 45-degree angles to a pipe wall to batter and lift material clinging to the sides of the pipe.

Meanwhile, rearward-facing orifices send jet streams behind the head of the nozzle, a force that both propels the nozzle forward and sends loosened debris skittering behind to a clean-out. In some situations, pipeline contractors opt for a nozzle without rearward-facing jets, preferring to mount the nozzle on a lance that pushes the unit forward and reserves impelled water for debris removal.

To reiterate: Nozzles alone clean nothing. It is the water rushing through them that gouges out and sweeps away the debris, roots or encrustations that clog a pipe. The water’s pressure does the gouging; its volume does the sweeping. So how many pounds per square inch and gallons-per-minute flow is needed for a nozzle to work properly?

“When the price of a nozzle is low, you might buy two or three of them and toss each one when it wears out. Or you can buy a high-end nozzle and not replace it.”

Richard Rauckhorst

“We like to say if you can maintain 1,200 to 1,400 psi at the nozzle, you are going to be able to clean just about any kind of pipe,” Hicks says. “Remember, that’s the pressure at the nozzle, not in the hose. The rule of thumb is if you are pumping 60 gpm into a 1-inch pipe, you will lose 1 psi per foot of hose.” Using that formula, if a pump is blasting out water at 1,200 psi, by the time the water exits the hose at the nozzle 50 feet away, the pounds per square inch has dropped to 1,150.



▲ Contractors generally have a variety of nozzles in their toolboxes and often will employ two or more types in a single application. No one nozzle can do everything.

On the other hand, high pressure isn’t always the best use of water in pipe cleaning. If debris or residue is simply cluttering the pipe, rather than being caked to pipe walls, the nozzle is inserted mainly to flush out the debris. In that instance, volume flow is more important than pressure and angle of attack.

MATCHING THE APPLICATION

So what are the applications that determine nozzle choice? For clearing away grease, Paquet recommends either a fixed nozzle with four forward-facing jets or a slowly rotating unit. “Or if it’s really bad, you could use a rotating nozzle with a chain cutter.” Rauckhorst would attack grease with a degreaser/de-icer elongated nozzle with jets blasting forward at 45-degree angles. Hicks would opt for a rotating nozzle to ensure grease at the top of a pipe is blasted free.

Roots generally require a mechanical intervention: a flailing chain on a rotating nozzle or a high-torque auger cutter. How about a good scouring nozzle? On 4- or 8-inch pipe, Paquet would use a fixed nozzle: “Maybe with jets at 10-degree angles. Some like to use a nozzle with a variety of angled jets to really clean the pipe, maybe at 8 and 12 degrees, but 10 degrees is pretty normal.”

Obviously, techs have many nozzle choices — almost too many choices. “I tell everybody, ‘If I made one nozzle that did everything, I’d be rich,’” Rauckhorst says. “There’s no one nozzle that does everything.”

Contractors generally have a variety of nozzles in their toolboxes and often will employ two or more types in a single application. The sequence might be first inserting a rotating model to flush the worst of the debris, then a spinning chain model or cutter to chew through areas of protruding hardened matter and, finally, a scouring nozzle to rid pipe walls of encrusted material.

Given the need to design nozzles for different sizes of pipe and different tasks, manufacturers’ variations in the tools seem virtually endless. Sophisticated innovations keep coming.

One example is NozzTeq’s BL Swiper nozzle for pipe ranging from 4 to 60 inches in diameter. The patented Swiper uses air in a pipe to maximize the thrust of jet streams and minimize turbulence while halving the rate of water flow. The Enz product line includes its Bulldog Antiblast nozzle that cleans a sewer line without blowing a toilet and its Rotopuls vibration nozzles with an off-center rotor that creates vibrations and jet pulses that fracture deposits.

Arthur Products offers a full range of innovative nozzles, and each nozzle sold is custom-built for the buyer. Founded in 1946, the eight-person firm has from the start marketed custom nozzles, according to Rauckhorst, a part owner since 2006. The company produces finely machined stainless steel blanks — that is, undrilled stock — in quantity and fabricates each nozzle according to a customer’s specifications. One of its signature products is its Cnt-r-KUT flexible centering nozzle that optimizes the impact of jetting sprays and helps nozzles navigate bends in pipes.

What’s next? “There’s always a new nozzle coming out,” says Paquet, who has been in the industry for 23 years. “The market is rapidly changing. With nozzles, it is always a continuing education.” **PI**

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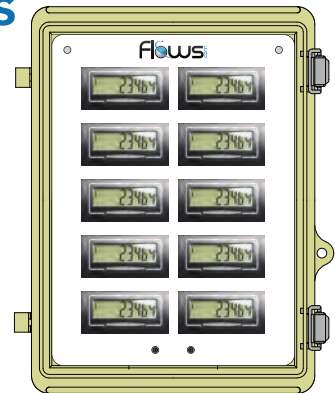
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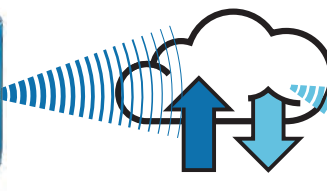


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Randy Lorge

Essential — Today, Tomorrow and Forever

Your job was always important, but now even more will be relying on you as things return to normal following COVID-19

By Randy Lorge

I truly hope that by the time this article is printed, our nation, our world, has found its way through the COVID-19 pandemic and we are moving as swiftly as possible back to the new normal.

By the time this is published and you have had a chance to read it, my bets are you've probably heard and seen things that you never would have imagined in your lifetime. I know I have. Today my family and I celebrated the Easter vigil sitting on the couch together watching a "virtual" mass. It's definitely something I will never forget.

There are so many thoughts going through my head right now about our trade and the incredible, essential people working in it. I'm thinking of the risks that come with the job. I'm thinking of the incredible need for plumbers and plumbing right now. I'm thinking of how, in the blink of an eye, the world realized the importance of something that is, or at least was, taken for granted — the ability to wash hands. I'm thinking about your safety and hoping each and every one of you is on high alert.

But something else is creeping into my mind as I write this article: What's next? Now what? COVID-19 reared its ugly head, and we kept working. We didn't back down. Those of us who were allowed to went on working. Hell, we've been working the front lines of providing safe potable water for hand washing for decades now. We've opened drainlines and been exposed to fecal matter and a host of dangerous pathogens almost every day. Have we done it without losses? No, unfortunately we're not bulletproof, nor are we virusproof.

We've lost some of our brothers and sisters of the plumbing trade to this and other viruses over the years. They've paid the ultimate price for doing what we do, and because of them, we need to remind ourselves that we must remain vigilant in remembering our own safety.

I am going to guess that by now businesses, schools and other facilities that were closed during the pandemic are beginning to open. Life is about to get back to normal.

There are so many thoughts going through my head right now about our trade and the incredible, essential people working in it.

But is it? Plumbing systems have sat stagnant for months. Water distribution systems have not been in use, and now another potential attack is lurking in our plumbing. *Legionella* and other biofilm-associated bacteria may be ganging up and preparing an attack on the public. When water is stagnant, hot-water temperatures can decrease to the *Legionella* growth range (77-108 degrees F, 25-42 degrees C). Stagnant water can also lead to low or undetectable levels of disinfectant, such as chlorine.

Based on the information I gathered from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, each year between 8,000 and 18,000 people are hospitalized with Legionnaires' disease. The CDC also reported that about 15 out of every 100 people who get Legionnaires' disease die from the infection. That means that typically 1,200 to 2,700 people will die each year from this disease. Those numbers represent a "normal" year. The year 2020, I hope, will *never* be looked at as a normal year.

I think it's easy to see that our work as plumbers is never done and the next "battle," if you will, is just about to begin. It's time to tool up and take our game up a notch in the plumbing industry. I'm hoping by the time you read this that we have been, or are already, in the process of working with our local municipalities to counter the effects of what could be another terrible situation for the public. The CDC has published a document entitled "Guidance for Building Water Systems." The document lays out eight steps to take before a business or building reopens.

Every single step outlined in one shape, form or another calls upon the plumbing industry to again help protect the public:

- Develop a comprehensive water management program for your water system and all devices that use water.
- Ensure your water heater is properly maintained and the temperature is correctly set.
- Flush your water system.
- Clean decorative water features, such as fountains.
- Ensure hot tubs/spas are safe to use.
- Ensure cooling towers are clean and maintained.
- Ensure safety equipment including fire sprinkler systems, eyewash stations and safety showers are clean and well maintained.
- Maintain your water system.

I encourage you to check out the steps above and stay abreast of best practices related to these plumbing-related issues.

Stay informed and continue to follow plumbing organizations like www.iapmo.org that are posting the latest information and resources available to our industry on issues like *Legionella* and COVID-19. Now more than ever, you need to be diligent about your continuing education. Seek out the courses and certifications that will ensure you have the tools you need to remain successful and safe. I highly recommend you research the ASSE International's Series 12000 standard; this is a Professional Qualifications Standard for Infection Control Risk Assessment for All Building Systems. The standard sets the minimum criteria for the training and certification of pipe trades craftspeople, and other construction and maintenance personnel, on how to safely work in an environment with potentially deadly diseases that may be present within work sites

I'll leave you with this. On March 28, 2020, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security made it clear in a memorandum that individuals who represent the water and wastewater sector are essential. I'll expand on that statement to say each of you is essential, not only today and tomorrow, but forever.

Stay safe. 

Randy Lorge is a third-generation plumber and the director of workforce training and development for the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials (IAPMO). Lorge is also a member of the planning team for the International Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Foundation (IWSH). This 501(c)(3) foundation has completed water and sanitation projects for those less fortunate in India, South Africa, Indonesia and, more recently, the United States. He enjoys time with his family and spending as much time as possible in his deer stand. To contact Lorge, email editor@plumbermag.com.

Aug. 19-21

Legionella Conference, Sheraton Grand Chicago, Chicago. Visit www.legionellaconference.org

Sept. 11-16

American Society of Plumbing Engineers (ASPE) Convention & Expo, Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, New Orleans. Visit www.aspe.org

Sept. 13-17

International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials (IAPMO) 91st Annual Education and Business Conference, Sheraton Charlotte, Charlotte, North Carolina. Visit www.iapmo.org

Sept. 22-24

Service World Expo, Tampa Convention Center, Tampa, Florida. Visit www.serviceworldexpo.com

Sept. 30-Oct. 2





Plumbing Heating Cooling Contractors (PHCC) Connect 2020, Sheraton Dallas Hotel, Dallas. Visit www.phccweb.org/event/connect-2020 

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Residential Plumbing/Water Quality and Conditioning

By Craig Mandli

Bath Tubs

BainUltra Tulipa

The **Tulipa** free-standing tub from **BainUltra** is proportioned to welcome a single bather into a generously deep soak. Therapeutic baths are available in the THERMOMAS-SEUR category featuring the Geysair hot-air system with 35 strategically placed air jets and a heated backrest, as well as a soaking tub, where WarmTouchShell technology offers three heating zones from the seating to the headrest. Both categories offer Illuzio chromatherapy, bringing natural colors to the bath to enhance the restorative and healing experience of the bather. Crafted from durable acrylic, it comes in a glossy white finish that is meticulously detailed for long-lasting beauty and easy maintenance. The distinctive metal feet, along with integrated waste and overflow, are available in a choice of six finishes, including chrome, brushed nickel, polished nickel, satin brass, black chrome and matte black. **800-463-2187; www.bainultra.com.**



Mansfield Plumbing Products Lana Duo

Lana Duo free-standing bathtubs from **Mansfield Plumbing Products** are designed to make installation easier. With two pieces, use the outer skirt to set the position of the tub and align the water supply, before setting in and connecting the interior bathing well. Accented color options on the outer skirt provide additional styling options for homeowners to coordinate with the rest of their bathroom. They include high-gloss, easy-to-clean acrylic with fiberglass reinforcement for added strength and rigidity, with adjustable legs for simple leveling. Linear waste and overflow is included. It has a spacious bathing well for one- or two-person comfort, along with a spacious area to mount



the faucet on the deck. It is available in two sizes: the model 3466, which is 66 by 34 by 21 1/4 inches, and the model 3260, which is 60 by 32 by 21 1/4 inches. **877-850-3060; www.mansfieldplumbing.com.**

MTI Baths The Blake

The **Blake** free-standing tub from **MTI Baths** was created in collaboration with Studio DB, an acclaimed architectural and interiors company, as part of an upscale Brooklyn, New York, condominium project. This sleek tub is notable for its distinctive lip that accentuates its elegant silhouette and invites adding a contrasting exterior color. It is available in white or biscuit, in either matte or hand-finished deep high-gloss, with eight optional exterior colors including sapphire blue and stratus gray. This tub is a suitable choice for those who want to add colorful contrast to an all-white bathroom. It is crafted from SculptureStone, a 70% mostly organic mixture of natural minerals mixed with high-performance resins to create a molded stone appearance that is solid, nonporous and resistant to stains, mold and mildew. Measuring 66 by 32 by 22.5 inches, it includes graceful lines and a versatile simplicity that complements both modern and traditional decor. **800-783-8827; www.mtibaths.com.**



Boilers

Dunkirk DCBF-125

The **Dunkirk DCBF-125** combi and space heating boiler has Artificial Intelligence Control Technology. With this innovation, the boiler automatically calibrates with the touch of two buttons. The onboard combustion control recognizes natural or LP gas, then continuously monitors the flame signal



and adjusts gas and airflow to optimize efficiency and fuel savings. It has a stainless steel heat exchanger and offers AFUE of 95%. The firing rate modulates up to 7-1 turndown ratio in domestic hot-water mode and 5.7-1 turndown modulation ratio in heating mode. It is rated at 125 mBh in central heating mode. 315-797-1310; www.dunkirk.com.

to see the clog and open it without pulling the cable out of the pipe. After opening the drain, the tech can explain the problem to the customer, offering a range of solutions, including descaling and root removal, as well as coating of the pipe. This system can rehabilitate more than 50 feet per hour. There is no need for a crew, making it a revenue opportunity. 888-354-6464; www.pipeliningupply.com.



LAARS Heating Systems Pennant

Pennant boilers and volume water heaters from LAARS Heating Systems include the LAARS Linc intuitive control system with color touch screen. It has an easy-to-navigate icon control structure, quick-start option, USB input, BACnet connectivity and performance metrics displayed on the home screen. Also included is an auto cascade feature that automatically configures up to eight Pennant units. The cascade feature includes auto redundancy — if the lead unit drops out, the remaining will continue to operate. They are available in seven sizes from 500 to 2,000 mBh, natural or LP gas, thermal efficiency levels up to 85% and stage firing of up to 4-1. Systems also qualify as low-NOx emission-rated, below 10 ppm. They can be vented from the top or back, installed indoors or outdoors, and racked on top of each other for up to 4,000 mBh in a small footprint. 800-900-9276; www.laars.com.

Controls/Control Panels

FloLogic System

The FloLogic System is a comprehensive and smart leak control solution that works in virtually all homes and businesses with 3/4- to 2-inch water service. It offers real-time leak detection abilities beginning at 1/2 ounces of water flow per minute, thanks to its EverWatch leak-sensing technology. When a leak is detected, the water is shut off automatically and the users receive an alert through a smartphone app. The CONNECT module has a thermometer, allowing low room temperature alerts and automatic water shut-offs. 877-356-5644; www.flologic.com.



Coating/Lining/Sealant

Pipe Lining Supply Quik-Coating System

The Quik-Coating System from Pipe Lining Supply allows a single service technician to inspect, open, clean and coat indoor drain, waste and vent piping without the need for a full crew. The system allows the operator to insert a drain opening tool with a high-speed cable machine

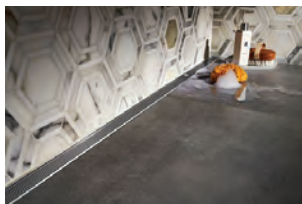


SJE Rhombus VARIOspeed N1

The VARIOspeed N1 control panel from SJE Rhombus controls a three-phase pump in constant pressure control applications, including booster pump, deep-well submersible pump and irrigation pump applications. It offers a variable-frequency drive and display in a NEMA 1 enclosure with locking latch for indoor use. As flow and head conditions change in the pumping systems, the VFD automatically controls the pump speed and maintains a constant discharge pressure. The desired set pressure is entered on the display inside the control

panel. The pressure transducer measures the pump discharge pressure. It includes vents for VFD cooling, run dry protection, high-pressure protection and system fault log. The standard package includes a zero to 200 psi pressure transducer. The entire control system is UL listed and has dual safety certification for the U.S. and Canada. It is not for use with sewage pumps. **888-342-5753; www.sjrhombus.com.**

Drains



Infinity Drain Site Sizable low-profile linear drain

The **Site Sizable** low-profile linear drain from **Infinity Drain** further simplifies the shower installation

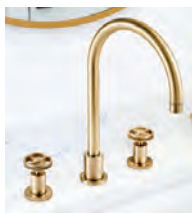
process, with its lower profile helping minimize the floor height needed to achieve a curbless entry. In addition to its lower profile, the PVC channel option has been designed with a new mortar lock to ensure it stays positioned firmly in the mortar bed floor. Sold as a complete kit, the drain enables modifications to the length and outlet placement to be made on site. **516-767-6786; www.infinitydrain.com.**

QuickDrain USA tub-to-shower conversion kit

Tub-to-shower conversion kits from **QuickDrain USA** help contractors economically adapt to numerous commercial job site irregularities, including unexpected plumbing configurations and structural constraints when constructing spallike curbless or curbed showers for hospitality, health care and institutional applications. Contractors can select from among several linear drain bodies and multiple waste-outlet orientations together with presloped pan kits to achieve near-universal adaptability. The kits affordably accommodate finished shower dimensions between 32 and 72 inches. **800-321-9532; www.quickdrainusa.com.**



Faucets



Barber Wilsons & Co. Brigade

The **Brigade** faucet from **Barber Wilsons & Co.** is notable for its gracefully arched swan neck spout and knurled detailing on the handles. Available with a 6- or 8-inch spout as a lavatory fixture, the line also includes a wall-mounted design, Roman tub fixtures and a thermostatic shower valve. The collection is offered in all of Barber Wilsons' standard finishes, as well as a brushed brass finish. With its classic silhouette and distinctive style, it complements a variety of decors, from vintage to transitional, and even brings a new twist to contemporary settings. **800-727-6317; www.barwil.co.uk.**

BK Resources Evolution Series

Evolution Series faucets from **BK Resources** offer T-304 stainless steel precision-machined construction, making them rust- and corrosion-resistant. Stainless steel is more durable than brass, giving these faucets superior longevity. They are lead-free and safe for all types of drinking water. They are available in 4- and 8-inch on-center, as well as splash and deck mount. A full list of replacement parts is available. **888-310-4393; www.bk-resources.com.**



QTOO wall-mounted faucets

Wall-mounted faucets from **QTOO** bring a hip, modern aesthetic to the bath. All three designs have a fixed spout, built-in aerator and an eco-friendly water flow rate of up to 1.3 gpm. Options for spout projections include 4.5, 7.4 and 9.84 inch. Clean lines and gentle curves give each faucet an elegant, minimalist style that works well in a wide variety of bath decors. The faucets are available in matte or polished finishes and are fully lead-free compliant. **www.qtoobath.com.**

Filtration Equipment/System

ENPRESS PIONEER

PIONEER from **ENPRESS** successfully removes poisonous chemicals — and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS). It is installed where the waterline enters the customer's home, business or restaurant. It is a complete lead, cyst, PFOA and PFOS removal system designed to be easy to install and a way to deliver peace of mind to customers. **440-510-0108; www.enpress.com.**



Fittings

REHAU EVERLOC+

The **REHAU EVERLOC+** compression-sleeve fitting system has 26 additional configurations, making transitions between pipe sizes more convenient in single-family and multifamily residential plumbing projects. The system comprises RAUPEX UV shield PEXa pipe in 3/8- to 2-inch diameters, polymer and lead-free brass fittings, and power tools for reliable and safe connections. Designed for no-leak security, the two-step fitting expansion and compression process is performed quickly in any weather, making installation faster than other PEXa cold-expansion fittings and copper. The NSF/ANSI 14 and 61 certified system delivers safe drinking water with no mineral buildup, allowing contractors to create healthy and sustainable residential environments in less time. **800-247-9445; www.everlocplus.com.**



Taco Comfort Solutions Near-Boiler Trim Kit

The **Taco Comfort Solutions Near-Boiler Trim Kit** provides a quick and convenient way to purchase all the accessories needed for near-boiler piping. The kit comes in premium,



advanced and select configurations and is available in 1- and 1 1/4-inch sizes so installers can select the kit that fits their needs. All versions of the kit include air separators, boiler feed and backflow preventer, 4.5-gallon expansion tanks, and all fittings and connections. The trim kits are designed for easy installation and are ASSE listed. **401-942-8000; www.tacomfort.com.**

Fixture

Creative Cleanout Covers products

Custom clean-out covers from **Creative Cleanout Covers** are designed for homeowners and businesses looking to add a decorative touch to the traditional chrome clean-out. This line of decorative clean-out cover products currently offers five designs with five finishes. Colors include beachnut bronze, seaside silver, glamour gold, Newport copper and paint-grade white (paintable). Made from injection-molded ABS plastic, the covers snap into place using a rare-earth magnet. Designed for indoor and outdoor use, applications include residential and commercial retrofits, new construction, hotels and restaurants. Custom designs are available. **714-841-4930; www.creativecleanoutcovers.com.**



Showers

PRIER Products C-108SH1

The **C-108SH1** freezeproof outdoor shower from **PRIER Products** is fully compatible with the **PRIER** hot and cold C-108 hydrant, which is sold separately. It's suitable for lake houses, the beach, pool, campgrounds, farms, athletic facilities and anywhere an outdoor shower is desired. The self-draining kit comes with everything needed to install, including a standard MPT showerhead and mounting hardware. With a stainless steel riser, it will maintain its attractive finish for years. **800-362-9055; www.prier.com.**





ThermaSol Smart Shower

The **ThermaSol Smart Shower** brings the multisensory powers of water, sound, steam and light under the user's complete control. With a clean, integrated look, the shower interface eliminates the need for multiple bath fittings with a modular design. The silent smart digital

shower valve with ThermaTouch smart touch-screen control interface paired with the Serenity Light, Sound Rain-head lets the user personalize every element of his or her shower, from the preferred water outlet (classic shower-head, rainhead or wand) to the ideal light setting, temperature level, duration, volume and even the user's favorite video or music apps. A quieter, more precise temperature control is made possible with 400-position stepper motors. 800-776-0711; www.thermasol.com.

Sink

BLANCO IKON

The **IKON** 33-inch apron, 1 3/4 bowl with low-divide sink from **BLANCO** is designed to make prepping, cooking and cleaning a more seamless and comfortable experience for all users. It is crafted with the brand's SILGRANIT granite composite material and available in nine colors. With a convenient low divide that sits just 5 1/2 inches from the sink bottom, it can easily handle large pots and baking sheets while still dividing the sink into cleaning and prepping bowls. Because apron front designs are installed farther forward and eliminate the countertop, they minimize the need to lean over as much and help to reduce strain. Optional accessories include a floating grid that provides an extra level within the sink, a floating cutting board that fits right on top of the sink to create an extra workspace, small and large grids, a three-in-one basket strainer and a three-in-one disposal flange. 888-668-6201; www.blancoamerica.com.



Sump Pumps

Ashland Pump SVP sump pumps

SVP sump pumps from **Ashland Pump** have rugged cast iron construction for the professional. The pumps come equipped with continuous duty rated motors and an upper and lower ball bearing design. The vortex impeller is made of thermoplastic with the 1/3 hp option or cast iron with the 1/2 hp option. These sump pumps have a professional contractor-grade vertical switch with switch guard and a 10-foot power cord. 855-281-6830; www.ashlandpump.com.



Pentair Flotec FPUFKP40 Flood Kit

The all-in-one **Pentair Flotec FPUFKP40 Flood Kit** can help homeowners prepare for flood season and other emergency dewatering tasks. Built



with easy operation and storage in mind, this kit includes a powerful Flotec 4/10 hp utility pump, a large-diameter industrial hose and a convenient filtration cage/storage crate. The pump's durable thermoplastic construction holds up to rigorous use and removes up to 41 gpm for quick dewatering. The cloth hose is 25 feet long and has a large diameter to help remove water fast, with corrosion-resistant cam locks to quickly and securely connect to the pump. Small slots on the filtration cage allow water through while keeping large debris out. When the work is done, the cage doubles as a storage crate to easily transport and store the kit. 800-365-6832; www.pentair.com.

Toilets

Kohler Eir intelligent toilet

Boasting a modern design softened by gentle curves and a sloping profile, the **Eir** intelligent toilet from **Kohler** includes a full complement of convenient features, including a heated seat, customizable



cleansing, night light, hands-free opening/closing, automatic flush and a touch-screen remote. It offers advanced function without compromising on form, as the bowl is misted prior to use for more effective rinsing after flushing, front and rear wash modes provide warm water for cleansing, and the self-cleaning function uses UV light and electrolyzed water systems to sanitize the wand surfaces. The sleek tankless and skirted design combined with a back-to-wall installation allows for concealed connections and smooth installation. **800-456-4537; www.kohler.com.**



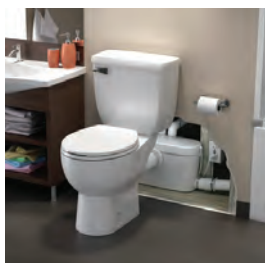
Niagara Original

The **Original** single-flush toilet with Stealth technology from **Niagara** is a stylish ultra-high-efficiency model. It delivers a quiet, powerful flush thanks to the vacuum-assist properties of the Stealth flush chamber and air transfer system. This technology, along with the combination

of a siphon jet and rim wash, helps achieve a clear bowl every time, eliminating the need to flush more than once. The WaterSense-certified Original only uses 0.8 gpf — half of the federal requirement — and its flapperless technology prevents leakage and requires minimal maintenance. It is available in both round and elongated styles to meet any space needs, and it offers either a left side or top-flush option, both of which are ADA compliant. **800-831-8383; www.niagaracorp.com.**

Saniflo Saniaccess3

The **Saniaccess3** upflush macerating plumbing system from **Saniflo** comes equipped with two easy-to-open panels atop the unit, providing ready access to the internal components for servicing. Periodic maintenance can be accomplished quickly and easily without having to disconnect the unit from either the toilet or the rest of the plumbing system. **800-571-8191; www.saniflo.com.**



TOTO USA Nexus WASHLET+ toilet

The **Nexus WASHLET+** toilet with autoflush from **TOTO USA** is available as a one- or two-piece model. It boasts a modern design with a skirted bowl, making maintenance easy. It seamlessly connects with its companion WASHLET bidet seat, with no protruding water or electrical connections. It offers a 1.0 or 1.28 gpf high-performance flushing system, featuring two powerful nozzles that create a powerful centrifugal rinsing action, keeping the bowl cleaner longer. Its proven touchless technology enables the toilet to automatically flush when the user simply rises and walks away. It offers three cleaning technologies — CEFIONTECT, TORNADO Flushing and EWA-TER+ — that work synergistically to provide cleansing. At 17 inches from base to seat, it facilitates rising from the seat and is ADA compliant. **888-295-8134; www.totousa.com.**

Tools

Enz USA Rotodrill Bend

At 2 3/4 inches long, the **Rotodrill Bend** nozzle from **Enz USA** is a powerful cleaning tool that can easily negotiate traps and bends. The high-powered rotating jet provides thrust power and is effective for moving debris and tree roots and clearing blocked pipes. The nozzle pushes itself through pipes via a tapered front. It cleans and cuts its way down the pipe as it's retrieved, adding efficiency. It can operate on flow as low as 4 gpm while cleaning pipe ranging from 3 to 6 inches in diameter. It is available in 1/4- and 3/8-inch connections. **877-362-8721; www.enz.com.**



Milwaukee Tool M12 FUEL Installation Drill/Driver

The **M12 FUEL Installation Drill/Driver** from **Milwaukee Tool** was developed specifically for service contractors. The tool has four dedicated solutions (3/8-inch chuck, 1/4-inch hex, offset and right angle) that can attach in 16 different positions to reach uniquely challenging locations.



An in-line grip at the back positions the users' hand higher on the tool, providing better access and control in tighter spaces. In addition, the top of the tool is flat, allowing it to be placed flush against surfaces for additional access when needed. These features combine with the tool's compact size and weight, allowing users to maneuver for best access in hard-to-reach places. **800-729-3878; www.milwaukeeetool.com.**

RIDGID PowerClear

The compact and versatile **RIDGID PowerClear** drain cleaning machine eliminates tub, shower and sink blockages from 3/4- to 1 1/2-inch lines without the mess. It offers Autofeed technology to keep users' hands clean and free from touching the cable while advancing and retrieving it in the line. A guide hose also helps to keep the work area clean, making it suitable for residential or commercial use. Weighing only 12 pounds, the lightweight design makes it easy to handle while still being powerful enough to clear the toughest blockages. Its 120-volt motor feeds cable at a rate of 18 feet per minute to a maximum of 25 feet, and its clear cover allows users to view how much cable is remaining. The heavy-duty inner core cable is also purpose-built for long life, increased strength and kink resistance. **800-474-3443; www.ridgid.com.**



Water Conditioner

AquaMotion AMH3K-7

The **AMH3K-7** hot-water recirculation system from **AquaMotion** delivers instant hot-water comfort to every faucet/shower from hot-water tanks in 250 feet systems, with the **AMH3K-R** for tankless systems up to 600 feet. It installs undersink in 10 minutes without cutting pipe. It includes a stainless steel pump with legs, with a built-in timer, sensor, switch and 10-foot line cord. It has automatic timer selected operation, as well as on/off at 85 to 105 degrees F. It includes two stainless steel hoses, tees, checks and union fittings. It can save up to 12,000 gallons of water annually while also saving on utility costs and time. Both models meet California Title 24. **401-785-3000; www.aquamotionhvac.com.**



Water Heaters

A. O. Smith Water Heaters ProLine

The **ProLine** electric tankless series from **A. O. Smith Water Heaters** is designed for commercial, residential and point-of-use applications. The water heater is available in three sizes, with 45 different models ranging from 2.4 to 32 kW and Uniform Energy Factor up to 0.93. The units are available in a variety of voltage options: 120, 208, 240 and 277 volt. All models have true dry fire protection, where the element will only turn on when the chamber is full of water. All models also have scale reduction technology. This feature reduces scale formation on the elements and on the chamber walls, which reduces failures and service requirements. **800-527-1953; www.hotwater.com.**



Bradford White Water Heaters RE250T

The **RE250T** residential upright electric water heater from **Bradford White Water Heaters** has a 20-inch-diameter, making it suitable for tight installations or retrofits. It has fully automatic controls, including a fast-acting surface-mount thermostat with high limit energy cutoff for safety. It provides direct heat transfer through immersed elements, transferring heat directly and efficiently to the water. The factory-installed Hydrojet Total Performance System reduces sediment and increases first-hour delivery of hot water while minimizing excessive temperature buildup in tank. Its Vitraglas enamel lining provides superior tank protection from the highly corrosive effects of hot water. This results in less energy consumption, improved efficiencies and jacket rigidity. **800-523-2931; www.bradfordwhite.com.**



Kevlyn Pumps OPD350

The OPD350 from **Kevlyn Pumps** is a water heater leak protection device that is easy to install and replaces traditional PVC connections. It incorporates a pump in its reservoir, which allows you to control leaks, even when there are no floor drains available or the existing pan cannot be connected to a drain. The device can be used below grade and in multilevel housing where gravity systems will not work. It attaches to a fluid collection pan, which is not included. The 24-volt system operates on regular house current. There is an audible alarm and a mobile app for Android and iOS that sends notification when water is detected. It can also help drain down water heaters when they need to be replaced. It is suitable for facilities managers who have to manage multiple locations. **610-214-3030; www.kevlynpumps.com.**



Noritz America NCC199CDV

The NCC199CDV commercial condensing water heater from **Noritz America** has redesigned dual stainless steel heat exchangers and is produced as a single-piece structure for easier servicing. It incorporates a 100% improvement in corrosion resistance and at 200% improvement in heat-shock durability over previous models. It has a Uniform Energy Factor of 0.97 and a fully integrated exhaust nonreturn valve that speeds and simplifies common venting for up to six heaters without the need for additional accessories. Because the valve is built into the heater, operational safety is ensured and installation time and cost are reduced. **714-433-2905; www.noritz.com.**



Rheem Hybrid Gen 5

The Hybrid Gen 5 ProTerra hybrid electric water heater from **Rheem** is easy to install and service. It installs just as easily as a standard electric water heater; and with zero clearance requirements, it can be installed in tighter spaces. The 40-gallon model makes it a suitable option in more places inside the home. Plus, earthquake straps can easily be added where required. Service is simple, with all components



accessible from the front of the unit. The top pan lifts away without having to remove piping. And while at the unit, Diagnostic Mode allows plumbers to use the Rheem Contractor App or EcoNet App to view diagnostic information to expedite service. The system's premium model features LeakGuard, an integrated leak detection and auto shut-off valve that limits water loss from the tank to just 20 ounces of water. It allows users to control, monitor and check hot-water availability. **800-621-5622; www.rheem.com.**

Triangle Tube Smart 316

The **Smart 316** indirect water heater from **Triangle Tube** is available in sizes ranging from 30 to 120 gallons. Its 316L inner tank is constructed from high-grade stainless steel for long service life. Acid pickling promotes superior corrosion resistance, while an improved welding process and a watertight top cover prevent corrosion of the outer tank. All dry wells are subject to pressure testing prior to installation. **856-228-8881; www.triangletube.com.**



Water Pump

Davey Water Products DynaDrive

The **DynaDrive** all-in-one home pressure system from **Davey Water Products** has a variable-speed drive that maintains water pressure at a fixed point regardless of an increase or decrease in water demand in the household. Desired water pressure can be easily set on the controller, which comes with an intelligent interface and compact design. The controller would alarm for any system faults and allows for daisy-chain applications of two pumps in parallel if needed. Stainless steel impellers offer reduced power consumption and low noise output, which ensures quiet pump operation, and increased wear resistance. The system comes with an enclosed fan-cooled electric motor that ensures longer life for the pressure system and easy service while also being economical. **866-328-7867; www.daveywater.com.**



Product Spotlight

Device designed to detect carbon monoxide in shop environments

By Craig Mandli

Carbon monoxide is a major cause of poisoning deaths in the U.S. This odorless, tasteless and colorless gas can kill in minutes or hours depending on the level of CO in the air. If it is inhaled at damaging levels, it can lead to breathing difficulties, impaired judgment and memory, nervous system damage, cardiac trauma, brain damage, coma and even death.

In an effort to combat the issue in garage and shop environments, Bacharach has released the Monoxor XR high-range CO exhaust gas analyzer. Ideal for OSHA safety compliance and engine efficiency testing for forklifts and other equipment, the Monoxor XR measures CO in ambient air or directly from the exhaust pipe of forklifts, floor burnishers or other equipment burning propane, gasoline, diesel or compressed natural gas. For plumbers who maintain a shop of equipment and supplies, it can be a lifesaver.

The analyzer detects and displays the presence of CO by first drawing in a gas sample from the area being tested by the analyzer's built-in motorized pump. The gas sample is next directed into a sensor chamber, where the sample is analyzed for the presence of CO. If CO is detected, the parts-per-million level is given on the analyzer's main display. A trending screen shows dynamic CO levels graphed over a programmable time period (from 30 seconds to 15 minutes). In addition to the visual notifications,



the user can set a CO alarm limit, above which an audible alarm buzzer will beep repeatedly. An audible alarm with a slower beep frequency occurs when the batteries are low.

The Monoxor XR is the suitable instrument for verifying worker safety and achieving compliance with OSHA air-quality regulations. It can also be used for engine tuning and diagnostics, resulting in improved equipment efficiency and fuel savings. The instrument provides visual and audible alarming for instant

alerting of personnel to dangerous CO levels.

The expanded measuring range of 80,000 ppm allows technicians to test even the most poorly maintained equipment without risking damage to the gas sensor. Bacharach's combustion mobile app allows the user to quickly and easily create and send customizable emissions reports from his or her smartphones or tablets.

A specialized exhaust probe kit is available for direct connection to various exhaust pipe designs, and a magnetic rubber boot is available to provide a nonslip, secure grip for hands-free testing. The Monoxor XR employs Bacharach's B-Smart sensor technology for precalibrated sensor replacement in the field. **800-736-4666; www.mybacharach.com.**

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Liberty Pumps mini-split condensate pump

The LCU-MS mini-split condensate pump from Liberty Pumps is for removal of condensate from wall-mounted, ductless mini-split air conditioners up to 23.5 Btu, fan coils and suspended ceiling air conditioners. The unit features quiet operation, solid-state switch technology and a clear reservoir for easy visual inspection. Two models are available: the LCU-MS and the LCU-MS2, which includes a line cover kit. **800-543-2550; www.libertypumps.com.**



UTILITY Jiffy Jell toilet water absorber

UTILITY's Jiffy Jell toilet water absorber solidifies the water left in the toilet into a gel. The absorbing powder is a simple, inexpensive and easy-to-use product that comes in convenient premeasured packets. It's safe for septic systems and biodegradable. Jiffy Jell eliminates the need for scooping or sponging and prevents the risk of spills, water damage or time-consuming, messy cleanups. After reinstalling the toilet, fill the tank, flush the toilet and watch the Jiffy Jell reliquefy. **516-997-6300; www.utilitychemicals.com.**




lines at up to 15 to 20 feet per minute. The assembly quickly attaches to any Switch Pack drum with the mounting plate installed. A twist lock feature allows the Cable Drive to be easily swapped between drums, meaning only one Cable Drive is needed for all the Switch Pack drums. A ratcheting lever automatically adjusts for Milwaukee Tool 5/16-, 3/8- and 1/2-inch inner core drain cleaning cables and 5/8-inch open wind cables. The assembly is equipped with a Rapid Stop button that releases the steel bearings to provide a quick way to release the cable once a blockage is reached, preventing the cable from binding. **800-729-3878; www.milwaukeetool.com.**

Matco-Norca lead-free flange sillcocks

Matco-Norca has expanded its hose outlet sillcock offerings with the addition of four large flange sillcocks. They are lead free and are available in threaded and sweat (206FLF), PEX (PXFLF) and cold expansion PEX (PXCE-FLF) versions. The large flange sillcocks come with cast brass bodies and 1/2-inch size inlets. They have a 125 water, oil and gas maximum pressure rating and 160 degree F maximum operating temperature at 125 psi. **800-431-2082; www.matco-norca.com.**



Webstone, a brand of NIBCO, press to PEX fittings

Webstone, a brand of NIBCO, expanded its line of transition products including press to PEX reducing fittings, baseboard elbow and dual-vent elbow for use with any 1/8-inch NPT vent. The dual-vent design ensures that an upright vent port is accessible no matter the orientation the elbow is installed. Ideal for boiler risers or baseboard radiator installations, each elbow includes a brass stiffener for copper finned tube press connections. All products are certified lead free and available for F1960 or F1807 PEX. **800-225-9529; www.webstonevalves.com.** 



Electric Eel eCAM Ace pipeline inspection camera

Two new standard features were added to Electric Eel's Ace inspection camera. A battery cradle installed on the hub of the reel will accept a Milwaukee Tool M18 or equivalent battery (battery not included). This allows for operation in remote locations or anywhere electricity is not available. The Ace camera can run six to seven hours on battery power. Also, 6-inch wheels are now built into the frame for easy transport of the unit. **800-833-1212; www.electriceel.com.**



Milwaukee Tool Cable Drive assembly

Milwaukee Tool's new accessory, Cable Drive, for the M18 Fuel Switch Pack sectional drum system, provides the ability to automatically feed and retract cables through 1 1/4- to 4-inch



Send us your plumbing product news: Email new plumbing product news, photos, and videos to editor@plumbermag.com.

Rajendra retires as executive chairman of A. O. Smith Water Heaters

A. O. Smith Water Heaters announced that executive chairman Ajita Rajendra retired effective May 1. The company's board of directors has elected Kevin Wheeler as chairman of the Milwaukee-based water technology company effective upon Rajendra's retirement. Wheeler will continue to serve as president and chief executive officer of the company. Rajendra will remain a member of the company's board of directors. Rajendra joined A. O. Smith in January 2005 as president of its Water Products Co., a manufacturer of residential and commercial water heaters and boilers, and he was named an executive vice president of the corporation in 2006. He was promoted to president and chief operating officer in August 2011 and was elected to the company's board of directors in December of that year. Rajendra was named executive chairman of the corporation in September 2018 as he continued to lead the company's board of directors.



Pipe Lining Supply adds new technical representative

Pipe Lining Supply hired Steve Maszczak for the technical representative position serving the Northeastern U.S. He brings more than 10 years' CIPP experience to Pipe Lining Supply. He started as a CIPP technician, moved to a CIPP foreman and worked in sales and project management for the past seven years. Maszczak will support the company's customer base with training, advice and sales for CIPP lateral lining and AIPPR pipe coating projects for drain, waste and vent in Pennsylvania and surrounding states.



Uponor distribution center powered by wind energy

Uponor North America announced that its Lakeville, Minnesota, distribution center now receives 100% of its electrical power from wind energy, and it is the first major manufacturing customer to participate in Dakota Electric Association's Wellspring Renewable Energy program. As a partner in the program, Uponor will annually purchase approximately 2.2 million kWh of wind-generated electricity, which is equivalent to powering 263 homes' electricity use for one year.

Oatey promotes Suriner to vice president


Oatey announced the promotion of Brian Suriner to vice president, wholesale national accounts. In 2014, Suriner joined Keeney Mfg., which Oatey acquired late last year, as vice president of marketing and commercial sales. In his new role, he will manage the corporate relationships at Ferguson Enterprises, IMARK, Affiliated Distributors, Winsupply, Hajoca, Commonwealth and Reese for the Oatey and Keeney Mfg. businesses.



U.S. Boiler launches new online training platform

U.S. Boiler launched its new online training program, called U.S.B-U (U.S. Boiler University). U.S.B-U was developed to provide an archive of readily accessible information to help heating professionals perform service and installations quickly and with a high degree of confidence. The new training platform delivers educational content in video and blog format. Live online training seminars are also offered. The training material is developed by U.S. Boiler's technical sales and support staff. To learn more, visit www.usboiler.net/u-s-boiler-university.html.

Viega launches new rewards program

Viega launched a new rewards program that will allow contractors to earn free Viega products and tools. Viega Rewards launched in early April. It's open to small- to medium-sized contractors who use Viega products. Qualified participants will be awarded points according to annual spending tiers: bronze, silver and gold. Rewards include free fittings, tubing, press tools, swag and training at Viega's seminar centers. 



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