

Volume 7, Number 3

# Sheet Metal Journal

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Western Washington



## McKinstry's Heavy Metal Summer Experience

*Also in this issue:*

**Carol Duncan, SMACNA National's New President**

**Member Profile: Summit Contracting**

Publications Mail / Agreement # 40719512



**SMACNA**  
WESTERN WASHINGTON  
Official Journal of  
Record for SMACNA-WW



# OUR CONTRACTORS SET THE STANDARDS FOR THE INDUSTRY

## WHO WE ARE

SMACNA-Western Washington is a local chapter of the Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning Contractors' National Association (SMACNA).

SMACNA Contractors are heating, ventilating, air conditioning (HVAC) and sheet metal experts. They are your assurance of quality in the fabrication and installation of ductwork and air handling systems.

SMACNA contractors are also skilled professionals in:

- Architectural sheet metal
- Industrial sheet metal
- Kitchen equipment
- Specialty stainless steel
- Manufacturing and custom fabrication
- Repair services
- Siding and decking
- Flow testing & balancing
- Energy management & maintenance

Well known and respected within the construction industry, SMACNA contractors provide the highest quality workmanship, professionalism, and service to their customers. They care about the life cycle of the project, not just the winning bid.

You'll find SMACNA contractors working in all construction sectors whether industrial, commercial, institutional, or residential.

SMACNA contractors developed the technical manuals and standards that today are accepted worldwide in the construction community. As leaders in their industry, they continue to adopt and apply the latest technologies to HVAC and sheet metal work. Everything from duct construction and installation to air pollution control, from energy recovery to roofing, from seismic restraint to welding... they do it all!

## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The ultimate goal of SMACNA-Western Washington, Inc. is to achieve and maintain the following principles and programs for the sheet metal industry:

1. To establish advertising, publicity, and promotional activities that advise the public of the nature, extent, and availability of services performed by the industry.
2. To promote educational programs to formulate high quality standards of sheet metal construction.
3. To aid in the formulation of uniform sheet metal specifications and improvement of state and municipal codes.
4. To expose fraudulent or misleading advertising or representations intended to deceive the public.
5. To encourage and promote trade practices that will eliminate unfair competition or exploitation of the sheet metal industry.
6. To encourage and promote the establishment of a uniform pattern of payments by customers during the progress of jobs to avoid inequitable payment delays and economic penalties.
7. To provide a forum for the discussion of the common interests and problems of labor and industry, and to encourage and promote harmonious relations between labor and industry.
8. To encourage any proper activity that will increase the efficiency of the industry and its ability to serve the public.

**SMACNA Contractors:  
Quality work and professional services**

Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning Contractors' National Association - Western Washington Chapter  
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SMACNA-Western Washington welcomes its newest affiliate member, Summit Contracting in Kent, Washington.

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## THE WORLD IS A MESS—BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE

Scan the headlines, listen to the chatter—the world can be a difficult and unforgiving place. Between global conflict, the environment, the economy, pandemics, and a host of other issues way too big for one person to solve, there is a lot of heaviness out there. It can be easy to wilt.

But there's another option. It is important to stay abreast of current events and stay prepared for whatever comes next, but it is equally important to practice self-care and stay strong in the face of chaos—for your own mental health and to inspire others. The next time you're feeling overwhelmed and like the mess is too much, consider these strategies for standing tall and weathering the storm.

### **Acknowledge the crazy.**

It is 100% reasonable to feel discouraged when things go wrong. We tend to compound feelings of despair with self-deprecating ideas about whether or not we should be having those feelings to begin with. Don't do it. We feel fear, sadness, anger, frustration, and curious melancholy for a reason. The Buddhists say we suffer to know joy; psychologists say we suffer to protect ourselves from harm. Whatever the reason, never forget it is okay to feel anxious about the unknown, overwhelmed by the enormity of the issues, grief about loss, or paralyzed by the inability to act.

### **Embrace the feelings.**

While uncomfortable emotions don't feel good, they are necessary and part of the healing and changing process. Unfortunately, we live in a world of "there theres" and phrases like "stay positive!" when what we really need is to stay present so we can experience the full range of our emotions and know we can recover. This is an important lesson that mitigates the anxiety that comes with difficult feelings—if we can practice staying present. Always acknowledge the depth of your feelings and your right to have them. Then, focus on self-care.

### **Care for yourself so you can care for the world.**

If you're the sort of person who feels responsible for helping or changing the world, remember that the better you look after yourself, the more resources you will have to give others. And the opposite is true.

Schedule time each day for something that makes you feel complete. That might mean something meditative like a hot bath or actual meditation, or it could be something active like a workout or time in nature. Whatever it is, schedule time each day for this activity and treat it with the same importance as any other appointment or meeting.



By Jessica Kirby, Editor

### **Find gratitude.**

There is neuroscience to support the effect gratitude has on our lives and health. Feelings of gratitude cause changes in brain structure as the medial prefrontal cortex—responsible for feelings of reward, morality, social connection, and general positivity—lights up, creating new neural pathways and strengthening our ability to revisit and draw from positive experiences. These changes in the brain also boost the immune system, reduce stress, strengthen relationships, and reduce chronic pain. Even in the darkest hour, there is always a shred of light. Find that and focus there.

### **Find balance.**

Even the most dedicated person needs a break from the world's noise. Mitigate your stress about the world by limiting the time spent focusing on the problems. For example, limit your time on social media and news outlets, carving out time for exploring and learning but remaining dedicated to those limits. Remember that only the shiniest moments make it to social media and the most difficult make the news. Neither is a true reflection of the world's nature in its entirety.

### **Focus on what you can control.**

People with attention or executive functioning difficulties find breaking large tasks into smaller lists extremely effective in feeling organized and accomplished. This simple strategy can help anyone feeling overwhelmed by the largeness of a situation. Problems that seem too big or too complex probably are, but that doesn't mean all is lost. Break big issues into smaller series of tasks and cross a few actions off at a time. The act of crossing something off a list causes a dopamine reaction in the brain, rewarding one's efforts and creating an innate sense of motivation.

### **Success in numbers.**

You can bet that if you are worried about something, there are others out there feeling the same thing. Surround yourself with people who share your values and focus. Connect with others who understand your temperament and complement your personality, and participate in activities together—eat, exercise, or entertain together and watch your mood and sense of optimism lift. Human beings were meant to connect, collectively finding solace in one another's ability to share space and ideas. Seek that and enjoy. ■

## IMPROVE YOUR COMMUNICATION WITH A CLEAR OBJECTIVE

In *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, the classic personal development book, the late Stephen Covey identifies habit number two as “Begin with the End in Mind.”

This is great advice for life and also applies to leadership and inspiring others to action.

That’s because as a leader, with or without the title, your job is to influence others—selling your ideas, yourself, and your organization.

But you can’t do that if you’re not clear on your objective. The lack of a clear objective results in pointless communication.

### Endless presentations and meetings

This is why one of the biggest complaints of people in business and other fields is that they have to listen to endless presentations and meetings with no point. And having to watch all of these on a computer monitor makes the agony even worse.

We’ve all been there: we sit through an hour-long presentation (or a day-long meeting) with lots of talking, details, and posturing. Then we return to our real work, frustrated.

Often this results from poor planning. We decide we have to have a meeting or give a talk, set the date, and then scramble to pull together slides and an agenda.

Not enough thought is given to outcomes.

### What do you want them to do?

The best place to start planning a presentation, or a meeting, is, as Covey said, with the end in mind. Why are you giving this presentation or holding this meeting? What do you want people to do?

The crux of the problem is that we live in a digital world. We are inundated with micro-bits of information and the constant tug of our phones. Research finds that most of us are exposed to some 5,000 marketing messages each day, in addition to emails, texts, and social media. Our attention spans are shorter than ever.

That’s why the best presentations, and meetings of all kinds, should start with the action you want from people.

### Add your call to action

If you can’t think of a specific action you’re asking people to take, it might be a good indication that you don’t need that meeting, or you don’t need to give this presentation.

If there’s no action, there’s no point.



By John Millen

You may say there are presentations where you don’t need action from people—you’re only informing them.

Well, that may be true, but it still makes sense to ask for a meaningful response. With a request from you, people go from passive receivers of your information to actively engaged.

Let’s say you’re informing your team of a new business project. Why wouldn’t you ask people to send you an email with one positive and one challenge they see stemming from this new development?

You’ve engaged them, made them think, and created a feedback loop for yourself. You’ll probably learn something you hadn’t considered.

Even better, ask for this feedback before the project is far along and incorporate the team’s ideas. Crowdsourcing is a wonderful thing.

### Activate their brains

Calls to action are powerful because our brains are activated by a request. Our subconscious makes a note. There’s something I need to be alert to, there’s something I need to do.

Otherwise, we are just sifting through a stream of information, lots of information, with no real emphasis.

And if the request is made with urgency—with a deadline—our brain sets up a red flag next to the task. This must be done by a certain time!

If the request is delivered with passion, the brain takes this strong non-verbal signal and further elevates its importance.

### It’s like you’re making a sale

Making a request is like the “close” in sales. It engages people and forces them to decide. Even if they decide to do nothing, they’ve decided.

But before you can ask them for something, you need to decide what you want them to do.

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## SMACNA MEMBERS HELP MAUI FIRE RELIEF WITH AN AMAZON DONATIONS

As our hearts broke for Maui and those affected by the fires this past summer, SMACNA members were on hand to help with generous donations. Throughout SMACNA’s frequent visits to Maui, its members and guests have developed strong relationships with hotel staff, vendors, and many others on the island. In response, SMACNA-Western Washington held a clothing and supply drive based on active requests from area shelters. SMACNA-Western Washington would like to thank its members for donating to the Amazon Wish List and helping to provide much needed donations to those affected by the fires. Your generosity had a direct impact on those affected by the devastating fires throughout the island. ▪

## PREVENT HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES DURING PREGNANCY: NEW TIP SHEET FROM OSHA

OSHA has published a new resource on how best to protect pregnant workers from heat-related illnesses.

Pregnancy increases the risk of heatstroke or heat exhaustion on the job because the body must work harder to cool itself down, the agency says. Pregnant workers are also more likely to become dehydrated, “a primary contributor to heat-related illness.” Elevated body temperature has been linked to adverse pregnancy outcomes.

Pregnant workers should pay close attention to symptoms that could lead to heatstroke or heat exhaustion, including headache or nausea, weakness/dizziness, heavy sweating or hot and dry skin, elevated body temperature, thirst, decreased urine output, and an increase in sporadic contractions or cramping.

OSHA recommends pregnant workers talk with a health care provider to determine if job restrictions or accommodations are necessary. The *Pregnant Workers Fairness Act*, in effect since June, requires employers with 15 or more employees to extend “reasonable accommodations” to pregnant workers. Those accommodations can include additional bathroom breaks, a water bottle at a workstation, light duty, and assistance with manual labor.

Other recommendations: Drink cool water, take breaks in shady or cool areas, ease into hot work environments, monitor work intensity, dress for the heat, and eat water-rich foods, such as fruits and vegetables.

Meanwhile, co-workers are encouraged to be on the lookout for symptoms such as slurred speech, seizures, or fainting.

Workers experiencing these symptoms should be cooled down immediately with ice or water. Call 911, stay with the person experiencing the symptoms and, if possible, move them to a shaded area. ▪

This news release was published in *Safety + Health* magazine. Visit [osha.gov](http://osha.gov) for a new tip sheet on mitigating heat for pregnant workers.

## MEMBERSHIP MIXER AT BOWLERO A SUCCESS

You know you loved it: the retro-inspired bowling/dining/nightlife experience you didn’t know you needed was an absolute blast this September at Bowlero. Approximately 30 SMACNA members and their guests enjoy networking, food, and a friendly group bowling contest with colleagues and industry partners! ▪



## VIRTUAL DECISION-MAKING: SETTING UP FOR SUCCESS

We prefer to have serious decision-making discussions in person. Challenging conversations are easier when we can read body language or even hear intakes of breath. We want to look into other people's eyes when we are making a commitment together. Now more and more organizations are being forced to make serious decisions both at a distance and at breakneck speed, with high stakes and seriously limited information. It's no longer an option to defer difficult conversations to in-person meetings.

### It's not (just) about the tech

Do you need to set up the tech so it's an enabler and not an impediment? Sure, you do.

But then you need to think about how you are going to make decisions, which decisions you're going to ask different groups to make, and why. And then proceed working with the tech—and the group of decision-makers—you've got.

### How to structure the discussion

It's absolutely crucial to set clear expectations about what a given discussion is about—and what it's not. Remember that in a time of stress and ambiguity, putting parameters around

the conversation can come as a relief. Help people understand what they are being asked to weigh in on, how, and why. Kick some cans down the road, absolutely, but be explicit about it.

- Frame the decision – State the decision you are asking for in a single sentence or phrase.
- Outline the stakes – Why is this decision needed, and what happens if there is no decision?
- Clarify roles – why is this group or individual being asked to make this decision?
- Decide what information or inputs are needed to make that decision.
- Put the decision in context – Once this decision is made, what happens next?

### Presenting options

Presenting options for decisions, consider what options to (and not to) present; what criteria to use to analyze the options; and risks and potential mitigations for each.

To maximize your success, give people a deck, rather than



The Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning Contractors' National Association (SMACNA) is an international trade association representing contracting firms throughout the United States, Canada, Australia, and Brazil. The mission of SMACNA is to create a competitive advantage for SMACNA members through industry education, labor relations, standards development, industry representation, and business studies. SMACNA members are innovative and forward-thinking sheet metal contractors who specialize in Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning, Architectural & Industrial sheet metal, Manufacturing, Testing & Balancing, and Energy management.

**Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning  
Contractors' National Association -  
Western Washington Chapter**  
Executive Vice President: Julie Muller, Esq.

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## SMACNA-WESTERN WASHINGTON MEMBERS

### CONTRACTOR MEMBERS

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PlanGrid/AutoDesk  
Star Rentals Inc.  
SPI, LLC  
Summit Contracting, LLC, An  
Irex Company  
Sunbelt Controls  
Sunbelt Rentals  
Trane  
Valley Mechanical Insulation  
York NW Factory Direct

expecting them to follow along verbally, and ask people to reflect on the questions they should be prepared to answer

**Having a good conversation**

For the discussion, provide technical support—ideally the person responsible for the decision-making process isn’t also on IT support—and ensure there is solid leadership for the discussion. Leaders should remember to allow people space and time to think, including silence. If someone’s role suggests you need their input, go ahead and call on them by name. Be clear when you’re moving to decision-making, and when you need affirmative consent – “I’m asking for a clear yes from everyone here.”

**Decisions can be imperfect**

No one can be held accountable for making perfect decisions, but organizations are accountable for having a justifiable and appropriate process. That doesn’t mean slow decision-making in a fast-moving environment. It does mean taking a beat, making your thinking explicit, and applying critical thinking.

Meredith Low, BA, MBA, CAE, C. Dir., is the founder and Principal of Meredith Low Consulting. She loves working with not-for-profit organizations, because of the uniquely complex role they play in society. Her career spans engagements with professional associations and other not-for-profits, small to large companies (including the Fortune 500), and government. This article is an abridged version of her blog entry, “Decision making, but make it virtual”. Read the full text at [meredithlow.com](http://meredithlow.com)

**2023 ANNUAL SMACNA CONVENTION RECAP:  
60 WESTERN WASHINGTON ATTENDEES**

The 2023 SMACNA Annual Convention is a yearly highlight for members, chapter executives and Associate Members wishing to network with peers, see old friends, learn important trends and new skills, and discuss business topics with leading service providers and manufacturers. In addition, SMACNA offers wonderful opportunities to socialize and attend great social functions like the Meet & Greet Reception, PAC Reception & Dinner, College of Fellows Golf Outing, and the Closing Dinner and Show.

This year’s SMACNA Convention took place in Phoenix, Arizona at the JW Marriott Phoenix Desert Ridge Resort & Spa. More than 60 SMACNA-Western Washington attendees learned about innovative construction education, the future workforce, leadership in the workforce, and more. At the elegant resort, guests were treated to an evening of mingling and networking under the stars with a spectacular view, excellent food, and drinks.

During the week, there was an award ceremony for members with Speaker and Iron Man World Record Holder, James Lawrence. In addition, there was a private brunch with a guest

speaker for all members’ spouses. A joint chapter night was held by SMACNA - Western Washington with the chapters of British Columbia, Hawaii, and Montana at Buck and Rider to conclude the convention. Over 100 guests attended the event, which was themed Wild West. Several food stations served seafood, specialty meats, and other tasty treats. There was also a personalized cigar rolling station, line dancing, a live Arizona-based band, a whiskey/tequila bar, and a giant inflatable bubble with fun prizes.

This year’s convention aimed to offer guests an incredible way to experience the unique beauty of the American West while experiencing warm, genuine hospitality and an unmatched selection of programs and activities that celebrate the magnificent surroundings of the resort.

In 2024, the SMACNA Annual Convention moves to Palm Desert, California, October 27–30. ▪

Industry News continued on page 23

**SMACNA-WESTERN WASHINGTON CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**Membership Meeting • November 14**

From Transactional to Transformational, Mark Breslin  
Seatac Hilton | Seattle, Washington

**Thanksgiving • November 23-24**

**Christmas Gala • Friday, Dec 1**

W Hotel | Bellevue, Washington

**Christmas • December 25-26**

**Crab Feed • Friday, February 2, 2024**

Ocean Shores Convention Center | Ocean Shores, Washington

**Partners in Progress Conference • February 26-28, 2024**

Swan and Dolphin Hotel | Orlando, Florida

**Golf Tournament • Thursday, July 25, 2024**

The Golf Club at Newcastle | New Castle, Washington

**SMACNA Annual Conference • October 27 - 30, 2024**

JW Marriott Desert Springs Resort & Spa | Palm Desert, California



# INTRODUCING BLUEPRINT ORDERING

BuildCentrix's new Blue Print Ordering feature provides the ability to upload blueprints directly into BCX and order sheet metal and piping parts by simply tracing over the plans. Like any BCX order, Blueprint orders are integrated into CAM and piping equipment, and the platform calculates all of the material, fab time, cost, and price for up-to-the-minute project data at your fingertips.

**NEW**



#### KEY FEATURES:

- Upload plans or blueprints into the BCX 3D Assembly-UI
- Trace over top of the plans the BCX 3D modelling tool
- Change views and orientation to see the 3D model over top of the plans

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# McKinstry Hosts Heavy Metal Summer Experience

Students recognize the value in skilled trades and see HMSE as an essential way to evaluate whether the trades are right for them

By / Jessica Kirby • Photos courtesy of McKinstry



Students from Highline Public Schools in the Seattle area participated in McKinstry's Heavy Metal Summer Experience this past summer. Over six weeks, 15 students spent full days at McKinstry's fabrication shop, learning the basics of sheet metal, plumbing, piping, and HVAC service, and what it takes to build a long, successful career in the construction and energy industries.

McKinstry hosted the event to invest in a strong, skilled future work force. Introducing students at the high school ages has proven the sweet spot for garnering interests in the skilled construction trades. Ultimately, McKinstry aims to spark excitement in the next generation of innovators.



“I’m proud of everyone involved and the work going into this opportunity for these students to explore what we do here at McKinstry and what the industry and trades are really like.”

—Adam Campbell, superintendent, McKinstry

Participants received personal protective equipment, work boots from Red Wing, and tool kits from Milwaukee Tool. They were also briefed on safety procedures and took a safety-specific tour of the shop to review best practices and procedures. The school district provided transportation to and from the various training areas.

Students visited Local 32 Plumbers, Pipe Fitters, Refrigeration & HVAC Union and Local 66 Western Washington Sheet Metal JATC, where they toured the facilities, were introduced to equipment used in the field, learned about steps to becoming an apprentice, and constructed projects with guidance from program instructors and current students.



Heavy Metal Summer Experience is a hands-on, day (or weeks) in the life program developed by by the Bay Area SMACNA chapter in collaboration with SMACNA-Western Washington. Its length and structure ensure an immersive experience in which students go beyond learning hands-on skills to practice critical thinking, problem-solving, collaborating, and developing the specific technological and interpersonal abilities needed in the construction trades.

McKinstry’s skilled tradespersons led 2.5-hour training sessions which involved projects, networking with industry professionals, a tour at the Local 66 JATC, a visit to an active job site and a graduation ceremony celebrating the team’s accomplishments.



In the plumbing portion, students became familiar with the skills required to work in the trade, tool safety, and constructing a picture holder and jewelry stand from copper pipe.

“At Local 32, I fell in love,” says A’Xavier Williams, a graduated senior. “I think that’s what I want to do.”

In the sheet metal portion, students reviewed tools, equipment, and safety, and constructed a trash bin and a toolbox. The projects were deliberately linked to information delivered at the Local 66 JATC, allowing the students to showcase their knowledge.

Over the final weeks, students experienced real-life work experience and explored McKinstry Service, which provided essential insight into the daily lives of service HVAC and plumbing technicians. They also toured the active jobsite the University of Washington Power Plant.

The program ended with a brief look at the pipefitting trade where participants learned how to read project designs to construct a threaded pipe shelf.

“I’m proud of everyone involved and the work going into this opportunity for these students to explore what we do here at McKinstry and what the industry and trades are really like,” says Adam Campbell, McKinstry’s superintendent of new

construction mechanical. “We had a great time working with the students over the last few weeks!

“The first few meetings were focused on plumbing, then the participants were taken on field trips to experience the training our apprentices receive in plumbing, pipefitting, refrigeration, and sheet metal. The students were very engaged and asked great questions.”

Students attended HMSE for a number of reasons. Josh, a graduated senior, says he was interested because his family members work in the trade.

“I have always had an interest in construction,” he says. “Plumbing has been my favorite. I see myself joining a trade but haven’t decided which one. I want to see what options I have.”

Others, like Subeg Dhillon, a graduated senior, were interested in skill development. The project portion and time in a professional shop were highlights for Dhillon.

“I like welding and working with my hands,” he says. “Doing it with groups is more fun, and it builds friendships and bonds. Learning new skills, you become a better person.”

Dhillon adds, “The projects have been fun. You can mess up and have a little laugh, but I felt like it made me learn

more about the outside world. Getting a little experience in a workplace could give me more opportunities for the future.”

HMSE has proven itself a valuable recruitment tool and practical, hand-on immersive experience for students who are curious about trades, as shifts in education occur and more students seek career alternatives to university and college.

Contractors and JATCs looking to host HMSE camps are supported by the *HMSE Playbook*, a living document manual that outlines sample camp schedules, parameters, projects, and instructional tips. ■



## JOHANSEN HOSTS SECOND HEAVY METAL SUMMER EXPERIENCE

Over the next five years, 40% of the construction workforce will retire. This, on the heels of a record-breaking labor shortage, has contractors in all areas of construction wondering how they are going to get their jobs done. Heavy Metal Summer Experience is one answer.

Angie Simon, former SMACNA president and CEO of Western Allied Mechanical, is co-founder of HMSE, along with Hermanson in Washington State. When the organizations piloted the six-week camps in California and Washington, respectively, they drew an impressive 28 participants. In 2022 (year two), 11 HMSE camps serving 170 kids popped up around America. And this summer, 22 camps, including Canada’s first, in Lancaster, Ontario, brought nearly 400 kids to sample the trades.

“From the beginning, the focus has been career exploration within the mechanical trades for high school students and recent graduates between 15 and 19 years old,” Simon says. “Participants complete projects, work alongside professionals, and learn about local apprenticeship training opportunities.”

With the intention of expanding and replicating the program across North America, the program organizers have created and continuously update the *HMSE Playbook*, a how-to manual complete with sample schedules, projects, and pro tips for hosting a camp.

This summer, Johansen Mechanical Inc. (JMI) hosted its second HMSE camp. The SMACNA-WW member company provided the



organization, instruction, materials, and equipment to perform various projects at the JATC in Monroe, WA.

“Our employees find it rewarding to volunteer their time to mentor a graduating student and show them the opportunities available in our trade,” says Dan Moore, division manager at JMI.

The team enjoyed that the program laid out in the *HMSE Playbook* is flexible, but also specific for smaller companies who might not have the resources to dedicate to solely focusing on developing a camp.

For contractors looking to run their first camp, Moore recommends starting small until they have a process in place.

“I would start with a small group and expand each year,” he says. “You can get quite overwhelmed quickly if you don’t have the support to host 12+ students.” ■





# General Sheet Metal Owner Elected to Serve as SMACNA President



**Carol Duncan is SMACNA National's new president and brings extensive committee and service experience to the role**

SMACNA National has announced that Carol Duncan, CEO and owner of General Sheet Metal, was elected by the Board of Directors to serve as president. Duncan's year-long term in office begins at the close of SMACNA's 79th Annual Convention in Phoenix.

Duncan began her career in the sheet metal industry in 1982 at General Sheet Metal, a Clackamas, Oregon-based company specializing in mechanical, architectural, and HVAC fabrication, installation, and repair services for the commercial and industrial markets. Duncan's leadership and expertise in the sheet metal industry has allowed her to rise through the ranks, becoming the company's CEO in 2000. Since then, she has helped grow the company from 25 employees to more than 180—building a positive corporate culture and keeping both employees and clients happy.

One of Duncan's proudest professional achievements was her work advocating for issues that affect the industry. She has been active on the national legislative front for over 25 years, serving as the Political Action Committee (PAC) Chair and Legislative Chair.

"Carol is an essential member of the SMACNA Executive Committee, and I am excited to see her take on the role as our next board president," said Aaron Hilger, SMACNA's Chief Executive Officer. "Carol's extensive industry expertise and dedication to our association and its members will provide a solid foundation as we strive to further our organization's mission."

An active member of SMACNA both nationally and locally, Duncan has served in many roles and committees, including Products & Programs Coordinating Committee and SMACNA-SMART Best Practices Market Expansion Task Force. Locally, Duncan has been heavily involved in her local chapter, SMACNA Oregon & Southwest Washington.

In her new role as president, Duncan will be focused on the BE4ALL initiative, a joint effort of SMACNA, SMART, and the International Training Institute to positively impact the industry's work culture and meet the real-world demand for the best, and most qualified workforce available. ■


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SAVE THE DATE





# Summit Contracting Joins SMACNA-Western Washington

SMACNA-Western Washington welcomes its newest affiliate member, Summit Contracting in Kent, Washington

By / Jessica Kirby • Photos courtesy of Summit Contracting

**Summit Contracting** is the Pacific Northwest affiliate of the Irex Contracting Group, which is a national specialty contracting company primarily focused on mechanical insulation.

“We have branched into various other businesses over our history, but insulation has always been the core of what we do,” says Adam Dickinson, operations manager.

Dickinson joined the Seattle team at Summit Contracting in May 2023. He brings 14 years of top-notch industrial insulation experience to the team.

The company began as Armstrong Cork Company’s contracting arm in the 1920s. In the 1960s, Armstrong decided to exit the contracting business and the company was sold to a group of employees, becoming ACandS and, later, Irex.

Over the last 60+ years, the company has grown through both organic processes and acquisitions. In 2013, Irex purchased the contracting division of EJ Bartells, which had been an institution in the mechanical insulation industry since the 1940s.

“EJ Bartells then became Summit Contracting, serving the Pacific Northwest from our offices in Portland and Seattle,”





**Summit Contracting intends to continue deserving trust from its long-term customers by maintaining the attention to detail and professionalism the company is known for while entering a growth phase to expand the business.**



Dickinson says. “We pride ourselves on building long-term partnerships with our clients through outstanding performance and quality craftsmanship in mechanical insulation, firestop, scaffolding, and industrial coatings.”

Summit Contracting has been a trusted partner of Boeing for more than 30 years, performing both maintenance and capital work.

“It is a similar story for the Port of Seattle,” Dickinson says. “We’ve been on-site at SEATAC almost steady since the early 1990s, helping the airport evolve to serve the needs of the community.”

Over the long term, Summit Contracting intends to continue deserving trust from its long-term customers by maintaining the attention to detail and professionalism the company is known for while entering a growth phase to expand the business.

“We believe we have a lot to offer to a diverse clientele, and we stand ready to help create new partnerships with both mechanical contractors and owners in the area,” Dickinson says.

The company approached SMACNA-Western Washington about membership because, first and foremost, as a company and as individuals, Summit Contracting team members are huge believers in the value of being involved.

“This is true professionally, personally, and where the two coincide,” Dickinson says. “SMACNA is a fantastic organization bringing mechanical contractors, affiliates, and the communities they inhabit together in a variety of positive ways. We believe we have a lot to offer in terms of participation in and support for SMACNA.”

The Summit Contracting team hopes to build new relationships with individuals and member companies that value its commitment to quality craftsmanship and timely service.

“Our aim is always to truly partner with our clients with the idea that the goals of each party are more fully achieved together,” Dickinson says.

*Learn more about Summit Contracting at [irex.com](http://irex.com) and welcome Adam Dickinson at [ADickinson@Irex.com](mailto:ADickinson@Irex.com)*

## CONTRACTORS AND SUPPLIERS



**SMJ-WW is on the lookout for interesting HVAC, architectural sheet metal, testing & balancing, and industrial/specialty projects and feature topics. If you have a great idea, notice an industry issue that needs addressing, or want to weigh in on a technical subject, we would love to hear from you.**

**We also need great pictures—current and historical—of people working in all aspects of the sheet metal industry. If you have something to share, please email it to our editor, Jessica Kirby, with a caption about what is going on in the photo.**

**Questions about how else to get involved in a future issue of *Sheet Metal Journal*? Reach out to [jessica.kirby@pointonemedia.com](mailto:jessica.kirby@pointonemedia.com) or 250.816.3671 to get the scoop.**

## LOOKING FORWARD TO 2024 SESSION

The 2024 legislative session starts January 8. It will be a short 60-day session where legislators will tune up the state's two-year budgets and address unfinished business. The short session does not lend itself to passing major new laws, but some unfinished issues could get resolved.

### Election year 2024

2024 is an election year, which means legislators will want to complete their business so they can start re-election activities. All the House members and half of the Senate will be up for re-election. In addition, all state elected officials will be up for re-election. Four statewide positions will be open—Governor, Attorney General, Public Lands Commissioner, and Insurance Commissioner. Governor Inslee decided not to pursue what would have been an unprecedented fourth term. Insurance Commissioner Mike Kreidler is retiring after six terms totaling 24 years. Attorney General Bob Ferguson and Public Lands Commissioner Hilary Franz are both vying to replace Governor Inslee as is State Senator Mark Mullet. Three other state senators have tossed their hats in the ring for the other three statewide seats. All of them are current committee chairs, so if any of them win, there will be shuffling to fill their chairmanships.

### Budgets and opportunities

There will be additional funds in the state coffers in 2024 that could provide opportunities for SMACNA contractors. Funds from the recent federal legislation on infrastructure and energy continue to pour into the state in the form of specific energy efficiency grants programs administered by the Department of Commerce. And Commerce expects to add more federal funds for solar expansion. Money from the state's *Climate Commitment Act* (cap and invest program) auctions have exceeded projections so far. The Legislature will be tasked in the 2024 session with deciding how and when to spend the additional state auction money. Some of it could be used to increase the clean buildings and energy efficiency grant programs. More information is available on the Commerce website at [commerce.wa.gov/growing-the-economy/energy](http://commerce.wa.gov/growing-the-economy/energy)



By Kathleen Collins,  
Government Relations Consultant

### Unfinished business

Last session, Puget Sound Energy asked the legislature to give them the authority to start decarbonizing their system by reducing the use of natural gas. The most controversial part of their proposal was to stop all new natural gas hookups effective June 2023. There have already been discussions on reviving the bill in the 2024 session. If the near-term ban on new natural gas uses is removed, the opposition would be reduced.

State law specifies that the prevailing wage rates be set using the highest contract negotiated for a specific trade but does not specify how many companies or workers need to be covered by the contract. Some unions have taken advantage of this lack of clarity and have negotiated higher contracts with a single employer that then set the wage rate. Several of the construction groups want to amend the law in the 2024 to set the wage rate against the contract that represents the majority of the work done by a specific trade. Related to this, recently prevailing wage and project labor agreements have been added as a requirement for private sector work when they are given a tax credit. We will probably see this trend continue.

### Building code changes

The Building Code Council is finally slated to adopt the revised 2021 building code on November 28 with a March 15, 2024, effective date. The revised code was supposed to go into effect this summer, but the Council had to revisit their ban on the use of natural gas appliances after an appellate court ruling that said these bans ran afoul of a federal law regulating appliances. (*Energy Policy & Conservation Act* of 1975 – EPCA). The Council will consider two options for the code prepared by the technical committees. One option provides a fossil fuel compliance pathway in the energy code using revised energy credits. The other option makes changes throughout the building code and established requirements for fossil fuel appliances. Hearings on the proposed revisions are November 21 and 22. ■

*For more information on any of these items, please contact the SMACNA offices.*

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## NEW CODES, NEW REGULATIONS, AND ALTERNATE IDEAS

It's been a busy summer in the development of new regulations in the State of Washington that affect our industry. We have seen an 11th hour delay in the implementation of new energy codes and an entirely new set of proposed regulations concerning the use of refrigerants in HVAC and refrigeration systems recently released. The SMACNA Western Washington Code and Technical Committee has been tracking these issues closely and has provided the following updates for our members.

**Washington State Energy Code Updates:** Implementation of the 2021 Washington State Energy Code was delayed from last June to this coming October 2023. This is to allow time for the State Building Code Council (SBCC) to convene two Technical Advisory Groups to consider stakeholder proposals to modify sections in the commercial and residential energy codes. The modification is intended to address legal uncertainty stemming from the *California Restaurant Association v. City of Berkeley* court decision recently issued by the federal Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and has been similarly challenged in our state. This decision allows for continuation of the use of natural gas for commercial and residential buildings.

The 2021 version of the code ready for adoption this summer included requirements for use of electric heat pumps in lieu of gas heating for most building applications. With the federal ruling our state will need to allow gas use in both commercial and residential buildings (at least for this latest energy code cycle). The SBCC is now navigating a path to align with the federal court's decision to retain natural gas as an energy source, but to also drive builders and developers towards the use of heat pumps for both HVAC and domestic hot water generation and discourage the use of natural gas.

One proposed "solution" to promote the use of heat pump technology instead of gas is to adjust the 2021 code language to make the selection of energy source part of the credit-based system used in the current code under Section C-406. This section describes energy efficiency requirements for permitting that sets the minimum number of "credits" required to be code compliant based on a list of energy efficiency measures. Each measure is described and includes its own efficiency "credits" score. There are measures and associated points for building envelope, mechanical, plumbing, and electrical systems, and a combination of these must be incorporated into the project to meet the total credits required to be code compliant and obtain a permit. These new credits are described in Tables in Section C406 and, depending on your project's occupancy type, you will need to incorporate between 41 and 74 credits from the 31 categories included in this table. For existing building additions, you will need between 20 and 36 credits to meet permit requirements. Discussion currently underway may give



By Peter Boileau, Chairperson  
SMACNA-Western Washington Code & Technical Committee

additional credits for the use of heat pumps and include negative credits if gas is used as an energy source. This would result in needing offsetting additional credits (e.g., better glazing systems, more insulation, or higher efficiency lighting and HVAC systems) to offset the use of gas in a building.

The current schedule for recommendations to be made to address which energy source will be used will be at a meeting of the State Building Code Council and its technical advisory groups on September 15. It will be interesting to see how this new wrinkle in our progressive energy code will be solved this fall for implementation of the new 2021 energy code by the target date of October 29, 2023.

**New Refrigerant Regulations:** Just published are new proposed guidelines for refrigerants coming from the Washington State Department of Ecology dated August 2023. In 2021, the Washington Legislature passed HB 1050, the *Hydrocarbons-Emissions Reduction Act*. This law requires the Department of Ecology to establish maximum Global Warming Potential (GWP) for both existing and new refrigeration and air conditioning equipment. In general, HVAC systems using refrigerants with a GWP index of 750 or greater will be phased out between January of 2024 and January of 2028 depending on application. Some examples of refrigerants to be phased out include the widely used HFC-134A, and many of the HFC 200-series and R-400 series refrigerants, as well as R-507.

Under the proposed guidelines equipment owners currently using high GWP refrigerants will not be required to replace their existing equipment if the equipment remains in good operating condition and detected leaks of high GWP refrigerant are repaired. These owners will need to register with the Department of Ecology and participate in annual reporting as proposed in these new guidelines and as summarized below.

The new proposed guidelines establish a refrigerant management program for building owners with equipment containing over 50 pounds of refrigerant per facility. This program will require owners to follow record keeping and reporting requirements, which include continuous leak monitoring, regular inspections, and additional requirements for equipment service and repair

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## COMFORT BY DESIGN PER ASHRAE STANDARDS 62.1 AND 55

The goal of a good room air distribution system is to provide thermal comfort and a healthy living environment for occupants in the space. ASHRAE Standard 55-2020 *Thermal Environmental Conditions for Human Occupancy* and ASHRAE Standard 62.1-2022 *Ventilation for Acceptable Indoor Air Quality* provide design engineers with the guidance to optimize health and comfort in occupied building spaces. Many codes around the country require compliance with these ASHRAE Standards, and so does LEED. This article will briefly outline the goals of these standards and illustrate how to comply.

The occupied zone as defined by Standard 55-2020 reads as: “the region normally occupied by people within a space, generally considered to be between the floor and 6 ft. level above the floor and more than 3 ft. from outside walls/windows and 1 ft from internal walls.” The space from the interior walls inward 1 ft. serves as a mixing zone where room air is entrained into the supply air stream and mixes to provide thermal comfort in the occupied space. When designing underfloor air distribution (UFAD) systems or thermal displacement ventilation (TDV) systems, the occupied area around the outlets may be excluded to where the total air jet from the outlet contains velocities greater than 50 feet per minute. These areas are known as the “clear zone”.

Any design must also include an adequate supply of ventilation air to the breathing zone of the space. ASHRAE 62.1-2022 defines ventilation air as “that portion of supply air that is outdoor air plus any re-circulated air that has been treated for the purpose of maintaining acceptable indoor air quality”. The breathing zone is the 6 feet area above the floor.

The primary factors to consider when determining conditions for thermal comfort in the occupied space are temperature, air velocity, humidity, clothing insulation, and activity level of the occupants. All of these factors are inter-connected when determining the general occupant comfort of the space. The ideal temperature in a space is where the occupant will feel neutral to their surroundings. While the range of acceptable temperature may vary depending on other conditions, ASHRAE 55 requires the “allowable vertical air temperature difference between head and ankles to be 5.4 degrees F”. Air velocity in the space is less than 50 fpm during cooling and 30 fpm during heating. ASHRAE 55 requires the dew point to be less than 62.2 degrees F. Clothing variables also are factored in from sandals to shoes. The final item is the activity level of the occupant in the space. Most office activity ranges from a 1.0 to 1.3 factor.

The three common methods of room air distribution used in commercial buildings are fully mixed; fully stratified; and



By Norm Grusnick, PEng  
Sales Engineer, ECCO Supply

partially mixed, such as in underfloor systems. Design methods for cooling an interior zone and heating a perimeter zone vary with each method. For fully mixed systems, the pattern of the air delivered to the space must be considered when selecting the air outlets. Various options include ceiling diffusers, plenum slot diffusers, and side wall grilles.

Typically for perimeter applications where the same outlet is being used for both heating and cooling, a liner or plenum slot diffuser is used. For perimeter heating, the requirements for table 6-2 of ASHRAE Standard 62.1-2022 must be considered.

For partially mixed air distribution systems (typically UFAD), the core area usually experiences even loading throughout the occupied area. The goal of partially mixed systems is to save energy by conditioning the lower area through use of floor diffusers. Perimeter zones for partially mixed systems need special attention due to the outdoor solar and air temperature changes. Fully stratified design typically requires a separate heating system but ventilation air can be reduced by 20%.

Regardless of which type of room air distribution system you use on your project, occupants who are comfortable are more productive. Comfort derived from good design keeps all occupants and users happy and healthy. ■



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## BREAKING GROUND

### Helping More Women Begin Careers In Construction

Imagine a snowball at the beginning of its journey downhill: the growth is small at each turn, but the potential is huge.

That's what we're looking at with women in construction. Not even three years ago, 13.4% of construction workers were women. Fast-forward to June 2023 and the proportion is 14%. Now, some might argue that a 0.6% increase isn't huge, but in terms of raw numbers, we're looking at thousands of women choosing a career in the trades.

That's a good thing. The more talented people applying for apprenticeships, the easier job we have of bringing in great workers and raising the quality of our workforce.

So, how do we get that snowball rolling faster? Since we've all heard the old advice, let's look at three newer strategies to get more women into construction.

**Creative Sourcing.** While no job is exactly like construction work, some have useful similarities. For example, farm work requires hard, physical labor, working with machinery, and a willingness to get dirty.

One apprenticeship director we know noticed similarities in nursing home aides' jobs, too: These workers start their days early, work in loud environments, and do a lot of heavy lifting, as well. The list of similar jobs goes on—it just requires some creative thinking.

Once you know what you're looking for, search jobs websites like Indeed or ZipRecruiter for people in your area who have these experiences. You may find a lot of people receptive to your pitch.

**Outreach.** We know many apprenticeship programs that are trying get the word out everywhere they can about the opportunity of a union construction career.

The good news is that it works: a study by the National Association of Women in Construction found that 72% of women in construction said they were first exposed to the industry through outreach programs. If your outreach programs



By Mark Breslin, Apprentice Performance Solutions

aren't attracting women, consider tailoring your messaging and initiatives to spread the word more effectively.

**Tailored Programs.** This strategy is a deeper dive... If you're not getting enough women into your apprenticeship program, try to learn why that is. An easy start is to survey the women currently in the program and get a sense of what changes might make it easier for other women to join.

It could be as simple as better outreach. It could be providing options for online, hybrid, or part-time courses that better fit women's schedules and challenges. We've seen programs make lots of different types of adjustments and see positive results.

You may not have to make big changes for your changes to have big effects, but you do need to know where to start—and that comes from asking the questions.

There's great talent out there, looking for the right opportunity. And we all know the incredible opportunity of a career in union construction.

As more women build careers in construction, more women will see their success and consider the possibilities for themselves. Our job as an industry is to get that snowball rolling faster—for everyone's benefit. ■

*Apprentice Performance Solutions delivers fair, equitable, and validated apprentice assessment through the APS Success Profile System, designed to address four common challenges among union apprenticeship programs: diversity, fairness, liability, and right talent. Learn more at [apprenticeperformance.com](http://apprenticeperformance.com)*

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Have a story idea or project to share? Drop our editor, Jessica Kirby, a line at 250.816.3671 or by email at [jkirby@pointonemedia.com](mailto:jkirby@pointonemedia.com).

## SETTING GEN Z UP FOR SUCCESS IN CONSTRUCTION: THE IMPORTANCE OF CLEAR EXPECTATIONS

*Gen Z has unique skills and fresh perspectives that can help the industry thrive if given the right opportunity.*

By Apprentices Performance Solutions

With unemployment rates at historic lows and Baby Boomer retirements continuing, the construction industry is in a battle to bring in Gen Z workers. It's about more than just getting warm bodies onto the job site—Gen Z has unique skills and fresh perspectives that can help the industry thrive if given the right opportunity. But with the high turnover rate in the industry—a whopping 26.7%—attracting and retaining these young workers has become increasingly difficult.

So, how do we do it? We don't necessarily need complex strategies and a TikTok presence. One simple approach is setting clear expectations for Gen Z workers. Let's dive into why such an obvious idea is so important.

Gen Z workers crave structure and guidance. So when expectations are unclear, it can lead to confusion and misunderstandings—and we know that can be problematic for this group. By being clear about what we expect, what they're doing right and wrong, and encouraging two-way communication, we can help them feel more confident and empowered in their roles. And that will keep them happy and productive.

Let's explore three simple approaches that expand on this idea.

**Clearly Define Roles and Responsibilities.** Think of it like a recipe: the job description is your ingredient list, and it outlines everything the Gen Z worker needs to know to be successful in their role. By providing a detailed list of responsibilities upfront, you're giving them a roadmap to follow, which can help them stay on track and feel more confident in their abilities.

**Provide Regular Feedback.** Gen Z has a bad reputation for seeking out praise. While they appreciate praise (who doesn't?), what they really want is feedback. It can help your Gen Z workers understand how they're doing, what they're doing well, and where they can improve. Gen Z is highly adaptable, tech-savvy, and driven to succeed, and they understand that feedback is an important part of personal and professional development. Keep it constructive and positive, and your Gen Z workers are more likely to feel motivated and engaged.

One key is to focus on specific examples of what they're doing well and what they can improve on. If they're doing something wrong, don't just tell them—show them how to do it right. And praising them for their hard work and progress will help your feedback go that much further.

**Encourage Questions and Open Communication.** Encouraging Gen Z to ask questions and voice their concerns can help them feel more comfortable and confident in their roles. When they feel like they can come to you with anything, it can help them better understand your expectations and what they need to do to succeed in their job.

This idea is bigger-picture than just being open to their questions: By creating an environment of open, two-way communication, you'll foster a sense of teamwork and collaboration that can lead to better business outcomes. When your Gen Z workers feel like they can contribute to the success of the organization, they'll be more engaged and motivated to do their best work.

**The Bottom Line.** Setting clear expectations is a simple but critical strategy for attracting and retaining Gen Z workers. By providing a structured and guided work environment, companies and unions can help this critical group feel more empowered and confident in their roles and make everyone more successful in the end. ■

*Apprentices Performance Solutions delivers fair, equitable, and validated apprentice assessment through the APS Success Profile System, designed to address four common challenges among union apprenticeship programs: diversity, fairness, liability, and right talent. Learn more at [apprenticesperformance.com](http://apprenticesperformance.com)*



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**GUEST EDITORIAL**

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My request of you: this week, before you schedule a presentation or a meeting, decide, what’s the outcome you seek? What do you want them to do?

In other words, begin with the end in mind. ▪

*This article was reprinted with permission from the author. John Millen, storytelling and communication coach, conference speaker, and course creator, has more than 25 years of communication experience, including serving as VP of Communications for Fortune 100 companies Nationwide and The Hartford. His purpose is to help leaders and entrepreneurs grow their businesses and careers by developing their storytelling and communication skills. Learn more at johnmillen.com*

**INDUSTRY NEWS**

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**SEATTLE-AREA CONSTRUCTION COSTS LEVEL OFF IN Q3 2023**

The non-residential construction industry in Seattle is facing a complex landscape in the third quarter of 2023, with both challenges and opportunities on the horizon. As the nation grapples with high interest rates, Seattle’s construction sector has managed to keep costs essentially flat, perhaps as a result of market dynamics and significantly lower demand for construction services.

One key factor contributing to this leveling is the flattening of material costs and lead times. After enduring successive quarters of cost increases caused by the global supply chain crisis and the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the construction industry is finally seeing some relief, according to a report by Mortenson. In Seattle, non-residential construction costs increased by a mere 0.02 percent in the third quarter of 2023. This aligns with the steady construction activity in the region, as evidenced by the Rider LevettBucknall RLB Crane Index.

The RLB Crane Index, which tracks the number of fixed cranes on construction sites, is a simplified measure of the current pipeline of construction projects. Seattle witnessed an increase in the number of cranes on commercial projects, bringing the total crane count to 45 in the third quarter, with a slight uptick in the Capitol Hill area.

*Read the full text at [news.theregistryps.com](https://news.theregistryps.com)*

**CODE CORNER**

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reporting. This program also establishes the maximum allowable leakage threshold on all existing equipment currently in use.

In addition to new owner requirements, there will also be new refrigeration management program requirements for companies that install, repair, maintain, service, or dispose of refrigeration or air conditioning equipment, which will apply to all Washington based mechanical contractors.

Finally, these newly proposed guidelines require refrigerant suppliers and recyclers to follow new record-keeping and reporting requirements. Please keep in mind that at this time these are recommendations only. The Department of Ecology has, however, targeted approval of these new guidelines by the end of this year, so as SMACNA partners we need to follow this issue closely as it will likely and significantly impact our business practices.

As our industry moves forward incorporating more complexity in order to meet future regulations, perhaps we should take a step back and consider alternate paths to provide low energy human comfort solutions. Past generations from around the civilized world have relied on passive air-based cooling systems for human comfort and refrigeration. Persia’s ancient “cooling towers”, China’s “sky wells”, and the latticed “jaali” or “net” systems incorporated into monumental buildings in India, such as the Taj Mahal, have been used to direct cool outside air during night and early morning hours through buildings to evacuate heat collected during the day to make building interiors comfortable and prevent food spoilage. Why can’t we use modern sheet metal systems with either passive venturi effect systems or super-low fan energy boosting systems to both cool and flush out our modern buildings? These systems can both improve indoor comfort and air quality without the use of complex, high first-cost systems currently prescribed by our codes.

Our code and technical committee welcome your ideas on this subject as we develop our own solutions using our sheet metal-based knowledge and experience. ▪

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