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**SMACNA
GREATER CHICAGO**



LETTER FROM PRESIDENT | Jim Billard

A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

SMACNA Greater Chicago Members,

Change is all around us. The last ten years have seen both prosperous and dangerous periods for contractors. Technology continues to develop and the rate of change within the industry is constantly accelerating. Owning or running a contracting business under any circumstance is a challenge. Whether economic, financial, technological or cultural, it seems that the one thing we can count on is change.

On the economic front, it's important that contractors recognize the need for change during both growth and down periods; adjust their business models to reflect the new reality and adjust to the new normal. While we did see some failures, and companies closed their doors during the Great Recession, we also saw a lot of contractors make difficult changes that resulted in their survival. Timely reaction to a change was recognized, accepted and many survived, proving the industry is capable of change.

The problem with our industry is that we don't always recognize changes that we need to make. Some changes we are not accustomed to, comfortable with or even want to recognize. These two elephants in the room are technology and culture. Adoption of new technologies makes us safer, more productive and allows us to provide a higher quality product for our clients. Technology and education both need to be continually developed, deployed and pushed, just as in any other progressive industry.

For our industry, the idea of doing things "the way we always have" is an express trip to irrelevance and commoditization. Contractors and their labor partners need to be innovative, creative and collaborative in order to develop new programs that will ensure a sustainable future for our industry. One cannot exist without the other.

Non-union competition, extensive fabrication, out of town fabricators, modular construction and new partnerships all require the industry's stakeholders to rethink the "norm." For the industry to be truly sustainable, we need to add VALUE for clients and ultimately business owners. We accomplish this through collaboration, education, change and continuous improvement.

My point is this, on the financial and economic front, when change is needed, contractors continue to adapt because the need for change is recognized and obvious. From a technological and cultural standpoint, the changes that are necessary may not be as obvious; they include things that we are not familiar with, or even changes we prefer not to make. But we have to make them.

We are in a period where markets are improving and work seems plentiful. Now is the time to invest, rethink and, if necessary, reinvent our industry and businesses to ensure a sustainable union construction market. If we can change with regard to economic and financial challenges, we certainly can, and need to, make changes in the technological and cultural areas as well.

Jim Billard, President
SMACNA Greater Chicago



NEW MEMBER WELCOME

WELCOME NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Our membership keeps growing and we're pleased to add two more new associate members! Not only does SMACNA Greater Chicago gain strength in numbers, we gain more knowledge and expertise within the sheet metal industry. We proudly welcome the following new members to our organization.



NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBER
Welcome to SMACNA Greater Chicago!

ELFCO

Brian Mansmith
9860 Clearvue Ct.
Mokena, IL 60448
Phone: (708) 478-6464
www.elfco.com
brian.mansmith@elfco.com



NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBER
Welcome to SMACNA Greater Chicago!

SYSQUE

Bill Bradford
4470 Yankee Hill Rd.
Rocklin, CA 95677
Phone: (916) 824-3035
bbradford@sysque.com





MEMBER SPOTLIGHT | John D'Angelo started his first sheet metal business eleven years ago.

BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: "ROLL WITH THE PUNCHES"

JOHN D'ANGELO, OWNER, STATE MECHANICAL SERVICES

JOHN D'ANGELO



started his own sheet metal business eleven years ago.

"Fortunately, when I started we had time to get solid footing before the construction industry got very tough in 2009," John says. "I didn't have the benefit of family in the business, or a long history to create stability. But I did have enough drive and determination to get through the tough times."

Tough times in the industry were good for John in one way. They prompted him to diversify from the construction market into the service sector as well. "We are in a fair amount of different markets, now," John says. "We work in healthcare, office buildings, retail, even

"Roll with the punches, and let destiny take over." That's the philosophy that made John D'Angelo successful when he

high-end residential – but we don't do much public sector. We're better suited to private sector. We do plan/spec and design build. We keep up on cutting-edge technology to stay ahead of the game. We do 3D modeling using Autodesk Navisworks. It's what the customers want today."

Things have changed since John began his career, but he learned the basics well from great business people he admired at Midwest Mechanical. "It was an exciting business when I started nearly 30 years ago," John says, "but technology has made it even more exciting today. I want to continue in the industry I love for the long haul and see what other changes take place."

John admits there have been plenty of challenges along the way, but he says he has no complaints. He believes that his focus has to be on developing long-term relationships and making sure State Mechanical does what it does very well. "We don't try to be everything to everyone," says John. "We don't do it all, but we're very good at what we do."

John is clearly proud of his work and believes

that union workmanship still offers a much higher quality product than non-union. His association with SMACNA Greater Chicago has only added to John's belief in the union contracting industry. "I've been involved with SMACNA somewhere between 12 and 15 years and I've benefited probably more than they have," John says.

Meeting and networking with business owners in similar situations has enriched John's career and confidence, as well as helped him form long time friendships. Merging SMACNA Chicago and SMACNA of Northeastern Illinois was a positive move in John's opinion. He feels that merging the two will make it easier to move the industry forward and attract younger members in the future.

He enjoys the opportunities for travel that SMACNA Greater Chicago offers, and travels on his own for enjoyment. While Italy is his favorite overseas destination, the golf course and clay target shooting courses are his favorite local destinations. John D'Angelo is a man who keeps busy, and keeps looking toward a future that always looks bright.



MEMBERSHIP RECOGNITION

Be on the lookout for your SMACNA Greater Chicago membership plaque!

MEMBER PLAQUES

Our membership is growing and we are now bigger and better. As a sign of our thanks and appreciation to members for their continued support, SMACNA Greater Chicago has designed a plaque for each member.

The SMACNA Greater Chicago board and officers thank each member for their dedication and contributions to not only the association, but the sheet metal industry as a whole. We are confident our membership will continue to grow, and we look forward to many successes in the years ahead.

In May, the membership plaques will begin to be mailed to each member at their office. Be on the lookout for them and we hope you'll display the plaques with the same pride we have for each and every member.

GOLF OUTING 2016 | Midlothian Country Club on August 15th

GOLF OUTING 2016!



The date to reserve for this year's Annual SMACNA Greater Chicago Golf Outing is August 15th. In keeping with tradition, this year's outing will once again be held at the historic Midlothian Country Club.

The Midlothian Country Club boasts the oldest 18-hole golf course in North America. The quality of the course and the spacious and stunning interiors of the clubhouse and dining facilities complete the experience of the day's events. It has been our course of choice for many years and we are proud to continue the tradition.

SMACNA Greater Chicago will be accepting sponsorships for the 2016 outing.

Opportunities for sponsorship include Event Sponsor at \$500 or Hole Sponsor at \$200. Sponsors will receive recognition on signage throughout the course. Last year's sponsorship was a great success and we are confident we will have an increase in the number of sponsors for this year's event.

Tee times are limited and reservations will be taken on a first come, first served basis. So, watch for details in your mail and on our website at SMACNAGreaterChicago.org.

SMACNA
GREATER CHICAGO

BEST PRACTICES | The best practices in fleet safety.

FLEET SAFETY TIPS

KEEP SAFETY TOP-OF-MIND

Regular and consistent year-round communication is a key to safety, according to an area industry provider of mechanical and HVAC services. Managing a fleet of over 350 vehicles, they know firsthand that employees need to be reminded of what's expected and the ramifications of not following company policy.

They recommend starting with the standard motor vehicle records check. It's a critical step that's a must-do. But you don't stop there. Let your employees know you'll be checking in with the DMV several times per year to keep up with their personal safety records.

In addition to the traditional records check, use multiple ways to communicate your safety message to drivers. That can be a brief online "lesson" that becomes required reading to signing hands-free pledges against driving without using cell phones.

One of the best tools is the simple "How's My Driving" sticker that includes the company phone number inviting feedback from the public. "It's inexpensive and effective."

USE TECHNOLOGY WISELY

It's easier than ever to improve safety by adopting practical technology, although there can be a significant financial investment for a large fleet.

Common in nearly every police car today, commercial-grade dash cams are an investment that can pay off. At about \$300 each, these cameras keep an eye on what drivers are doing throughout the day. They also provide an invaluable and indisputable record of what's going on around and in the vehicle – information that's especially critical should an accident occur.

"Dash cams provide a level of protection that can either support or refute eye-witness accounts," said Gary Glader of Horton Insurance.

The same is true for back-up cameras. The newer the vehicle, the more likely a back-up camera will come with it. After-market cameras are an option for smaller or older fleets at a few hundred dollars per unit, depending on features.

Like the dash cams, Glader says the back-up cameras are investments that could lead to discounts on insurance rates. He advises asking your carrier about discounts before heading out to buy.

KEEP RECORDS UP-TO-DATE

Vehicle maintenance is standard practice, but logging that maintenance can sometimes fall by the wayside. The log can become a key piece of information in accident cases and is often requested by insurance companies during an investigation. This can either be done using specialized computer software that allows for tracking or a simple paper log.

The National Transportation Safety Board recommends tracking the maintenance of the following at minimum every six months:



BRAKES



LIGHTS



TIRES



WIPERS

PLAN AHEAD

Reinforce your company's commitment to safety with a plan that keeps the message front and center at all times. That means writing it up and then distributing it broadly to all employees. It's standard practice to have employees sign a document acknowledging they have read and understand the plan.



SHEET METAL INDUSTRY NIGHT | Thursday, June 2nd

ON YOUR MARK, GET SET

SMACNA Greater Chicago is a pacesetter in the race on technology, and we're dedicated to keeping our members on track. Join your fellow members on June 2nd for SMACNA Greater Chicago's Sheet Metal Industry Night. We've partnered with BuiltWorlds, a media network company fostering a smarter built environment to promote a deeper understanding of the new and emerging tech applications within the industry.

Sheet Metal Industry Night will educate and provide useful information for all members, regardless of whether you're highly tech-savvy or just joining the race. At this hands-on event, you will gain useful insight, share the latest on what apps and practices are best suited for you and your company and help improve your bottom line.

LINEUP OF SPEAKERS

MARK TERZIGNI

Director of Engineering Technical Resources for **SMACNA National**

HARD HAT HUB

The fastest-growing site to match jobseekers and employers who work in the built environment

AUTODESK

A leader in 3D design engineering and entertainment software

Today's sheet metal industry is growing and shifting, and we're moving right along with those changes. Looking ahead, being prepared and understanding the trends and newest technologies is essential for remaining at the front of the pack.

So don't miss out on an opportunity to understand how our industry is changing, what technologies will drive those changes and how our members can adapt!

See you at the SMACNA Greater Chicago Sheet Metal Industry Night!

JUNE
2016

Thursday

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WHEN

Thursday, June 2nd

TIME

5:00 - 8:00pm

WHERE

BuiltWorlds Media
1260 West Madison Street
Chicago, IL 60607

For more information, please call the SMACNA Greater Chicago office at **708-544-7007** or visit us online at **SMACNAGreaterChicago.org**.

SAFETY | Coming soon!

ONLINE SAFETY STORE



Having a reputation for being a safe contractor can mean the difference between winning a bid, and losing it. SMACNA Greater Chicago has created an online Safety Store to help its member contractors earn a reputation of being the safest contractors in the industry.

We already know that member contractors of SMACNA Greater Chicago have the best-trained workforce, but now we're helping to make sure they're also the safest workforce. Coming soon, SMACNA Greater Chicago will have an online Safety Store where you can order, and have on hand, those extra safety items that are used every day on the jobsite; safety glasses, gloves, vests, etc. No worker should be left to face a safety risk unnecessarily.

Announcement of the "opening" of the SMACNA Greater Chicago online Safety Store will be made to members in the very near future.



DON'T MISS OUT! JOIN THE CONVERSATION AT:
FACEBOOK.COM/SMACNAGREATERCHICAGO

IT PAYS TO ATTEND THE SMACNA NATIONAL CONVENTION

This year's convention will be held October 15th through the 19th in Phoenix, Arizona, at the JW Marriott Phoenix Desert Ridge Resort & Spa. Experience luxury amenities and the latest updates on technology.

SMACNA Greater Chicago is offering a \$2,000 EXPENSE ALLOWANCE for all members who attend!



OSHA REGULATIONS UPDATE | Two new OSHA regulations are in effect

NEW OSHA REGULATIONS

OSHA recently released two updated rules to help minimize employee risk in the following areas of exposure: respirable silica and confined spaces. Prepare now to avoid facing lengthy investigations or additional expenses in the future.

EXPOSURE TO RESPIRABLE CRYSTALLINE SILICA



According to OSHA, an estimated 2.3 million people in the U.S. are exposed to silica dust at work. This puts workers at risk for debilitating — and potentially deadly — diseases, such as silicosis, lung cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and kidney disease. The organization's final rule takes effect beginning June 23, 2016, with one year to comply with construction requirements.

Reduce the permissible exposure limit (PEL) of respirable crystalline silica to 50 micrograms per cubic meter of air, per 8-hour shift. Employers required to: limit worker exposure to the PEL with use of engineering controls; provide respirators when controls cannot adequately limit exposure; limit worker access to high exposure areas; provide written exposure control plans, offer medical exams to highly exposed workers, and train workers on silica risks and limiting exposure. Specifications and best practices for common tasks spelled out for the construction industry. If followed, employers can be certain they are providing workers with the required level of protection.

CONFINED SPACES IN CONSTRUCTION



Confined spaces are large enough for workers to enter and perform certain jobs, but are not designed for continuous occupancy and have limited means of exit in the event of an emergency. Confined spaces include, but are not limited to: manholes, pits, silos, hoppers, HVAC ducts, crawl spaces, attics, etc. OSHA estimates that this final rule, which took effect on August 3, 2015, would reduce the average number of fatalities and injuries in the construction industry by 96 percent.

Identify all confined spaces in the work environment, along with the hazards they contain. Protect employees from potential exposure by removing hazards before entry, or restricts entry with the use of permit spaces when the employer cannot remove the hazard completely. Provide appropriate testing, training and equipment to employees who work in a confined space. Implement an effective emergency plan to rescue workers quickly and safely.

MARKETING | Tips from Mitch Seifert, Director of Web Development at Nehlsen Communications

TURN YOUR WEBSITE INTO AN EFFECTIVE SALES TOOL



As online technology continues to evolve, it is important for companies big and small to stay relevant and position themselves as industry leaders. When used correctly, your website can become one of your most effective sales tools. Customers today expect an engaging online presence and will look to your website to learn more about your company. Not only is your website available 24 hours a day, but it is often your company's first impression to potential customers. Whether you are just getting started with your website or considering ongoing improvements, there are important areas that should not be overlooked.

A strong website design is crucial when engaging potential customers. Everything from colors to image quality will help relay your unique message to visitors. This message should be immediately recognizable and help position your company as industry experts. If visitors cannot immediately recognize who you are, what you do and how you differ from competitors, you have missed a key opportunity.

Make sure all images and video displayed on your website are high quality and clearly show who you are as a company. Depending on your in-house skill-sets, professional photography and video services can help improve your visitor experience.

Intuitive website navigation is also important, as it allows users to move through your website easily and efficiently. If it is confusing, they may become

frustrated and leave your site. Make sure you are offering easy to understand phrases like "projects" or "services" so online visitors can immediately learn more about services your company provides.

Your overall website content is not only important for informing users, but is directly connected to your Search Engine Optimization (SEO). When writing your website content, be sure to use industry keywords that customers would likely use to search for a company similar to yours. These industry keywords should be included in overall body copy, headlines, bullets and page titles.



Make each page of your website easy to scan for important areas of content. Pages that break up large blocks of content with headlines and images are less overwhelming for visitors, making them more likely to interact with the page. Be sure that all images on your website are also optimized for best SEO practices through the use of keywords in tags and file names. Without proper SEO, your website will be difficult to find online among your competitors.

On every page, feature content that your potential customers want to see. Although a long company history might be exciting to you and your team, online visitors are more interested in services and previous projects you have

completed. Consider including a projects page with a photo gallery that shows off your best services.

In addition to projects and frequently using industry keywords, your content should also feature strong calls to action. These calls to action should be easy to find and direct visitors to interact with your company. Whether they encourage users to request a quote online or pick up the phone, calls to action are a great way to build relationships with new customers.

Effective calls to action can generate direct leads for your business and hopefully convert to future sales. Encourage visitors to provide information, which quickly generates a targeted audience that is already interested in working with your company. For example, by asking visitors to submit their email address, you can contact them later about specific services or offers.

Following up on new leads is a great way to increase sales directly obtained through your website. A user-friendly email campaign system is Constant Contact. Not only will Constant Contact host your growing email database, but it also offers an easy to use email builder. By consistently following up on ongoing emails, you have a built-in method to directly contact potential customers.

As your leads continue to increase and you continue experiencing more traffic, it is important to be sure that all users have a positive experience on your website. With the increase in smart phone browsing, integrate a mobile or responsive version of your website so you can turn visitors into customers, whether they are on a desktop, tablet or smartphone.





HAPPENINGS | SMACNA Greater Chicago Annual Conference, held April 14-17, 2016

2016 ANNUAL CONFERENCE RECAP

SMACNA Greater Chicago's Annual Conference, held at Pelican Hill in Newport Beach, California can be added to the list of successful conferences. The Resort at Pelican Hill provided an extraordinary backdrop from which to present leisure and business activities.

A morning business meeting kicked off Saturday with SMACNA's current national president, Guy Gast. Guy provided a detailed account of the sheet metal industry and how various issues and events are affecting

our Chicago contractors. In addition, SMACNA's Executive Vice President Vince Sandusky provided an update on a number of legislative and labor issues. Needless to say, attendees left the meeting well-informed.

Leisure activities included a tour of Newport Harbor, a sunset dinner cruise aboard one of the region's most magnificent yachts as well as the opportunity to visit many of the cultural and arts areas well-known in this majestic area of Southern California.

Golfers attending this year's conference left the Pelican Hill Golf Course with a renewed love for the game. Ranked by Golf Digest as "America's 100 Greatest Public Courses," golfers were able to demonstrate their abilities in a setting that more than made up for any above par scores.

With such a great turnout for this year's Annual Conference, we're already looking forward to next year's.





**2703 VAN BUREN STREET
BELLWOOD, IL 60104**

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SMACNAGREATERCHICAGO.ORG
Facebook.com/SMACNAGreaterChicago