

SMACNA GREATER CHICAGO

METAL PRESS

ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



Breathe**Easy**

ILLINOIS

**THE DEBUT OF OUR
INDUSTRY-LEADING
CLEAN AIR CAMPAIGN**

P. 15



**PPP SECOND DRAW:
WHAT TO KNOW**

P. 5

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Association president Joe Passannante's greetings for a new year.

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

THE NEW YEAR BRINGS NEW OPPORTUNITY

To say that 2020 was an interesting year would be an understatement. But with a little ingenuity and a lot of hand sanitizer, we made it through. Now, here we are — fresh into a new year full of exciting new opportunities.

We've officially launched Breathe Easy Illinois, an industry-leading campaign designed to educate Chicago-area facility managers, engineers, homeowners and more of HVAC solutions that will help improve indoor air quality through the pandemic and beyond. This program better positions SMACNA Greater Chicago and our union partners as the experts with the knowledge and training to properly install practical solutions to create a safer and healthier experience for all Illinoisans. As it continues to gain momentum, we'll look to expand the program throughout the state. For more information or to be listed as a qualified contractor, visit BreatheEasyIllinois.com.

The launch of our custom mobile app is also on the horizon. This powerful resource will allow members to receive real-time alerts on important industry news, register for upcoming events and stay connected to our association. It's a useful tool that should help streamline communications in the future.

Due to the pandemic, our chapter made the decision to extend the terms of current officers another year. I'm excited to use this opportunity to collaborate with the leaders in our association and continue to find ways to keep our chapter on the cutting edge of the industry.

Wishing everyone a safe and healthy 2021!

Joe Passannante
President, SMACNA Greater Chicago



3 BIG THINGS: HOW THE BIDEN-HARRIS ADMINISTRATION COULD IMPACT THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

Increased worker safety enforcement, a rollback on some Trump executive orders and discussion on Project Labor Agreements could be on the list of Biden-Harris administration initiatives in the coming months.

3 BIG THINGS

HOW THE BIDEN-HARRIS ADMINISTRATION COULD IMPACT THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

As a new administration takes over the White House, there's no doubt we'll begin to see changes within the construction industry soon. President Joe Biden has been vocal about supporting and developing a skilled workforce and his campaign often focused on providing good union jobs. Here are three notable issues on how a Biden-Harris administration could affect the construction industry.

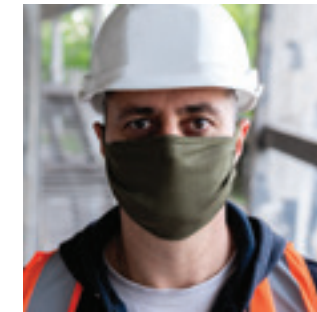
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1. ROLLBACK ON TRUMP EXECUTIVE ORDERS, INFRASTRUCTURE EXPANSION

It's expected that Biden will reinstate a number of labor-friendly Obama-era executive orders that were undone by President Trump. He'll also likely immediately rescind some of his predecessor's executive orders, including those banning diversity training and restricting employment-based visas. Biden has also announced plans for a multi-trillion-dollar infrastructure bill aimed at creating millions of jobs in infrastructure, building construction, energy and other projects.



2. MORE WORKER SAFETY ENFORCEMENT

Getting the COVID-19 virus under control tops the Biden-Harris administration's priority list. Look for increased production of masks, face shields and other PPE to meet the demands, as well as nationwide mask mandates to help mitigate community spread. It's likely that Biden will also call on OSHA to establish a set of guidelines detailing how employers must protect their employees from the virus and ramp up penalties for violators.



3. PROJECT LABOR AGREEMENTS (PLAS)

Generally speaking, PLAs help everyone meet project goals and are negotiated so that workers are paid at least minimum prevailing wage for the area. Strong PLAs help increase the safety and productivity of a project, and often result in a project coming in on time and under budget. So ... where's the beef?

Opponents argue that PLAs are too expensive and restrict the inclusion of smaller unions, among other things. Expect discussion surrounding PLAs to escalate in the coming year.

PPP SECOND DRAW: WHAT TO KNOW

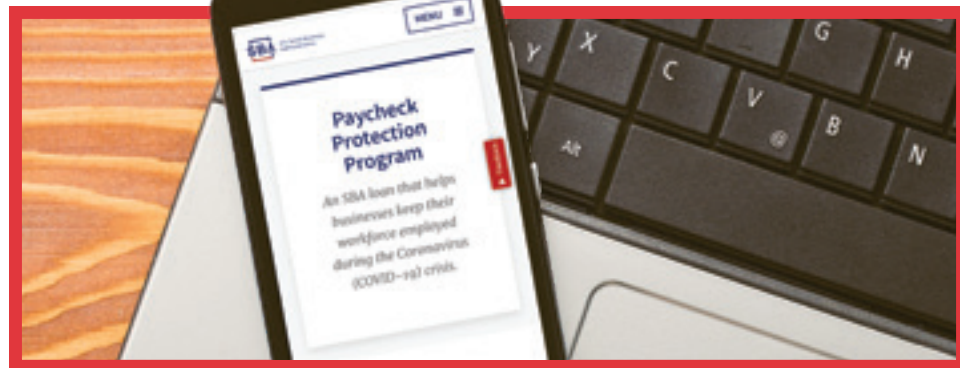
An additional \$284 billion in federal aid is now available to businesses as part of the Paycheck Protection Program's "Second Draw." Applications are due by March 31.

VIRTUAL CLASSROOM AND LUNCH & LEARN OPPORTUNITIES

SMACNA Greater Chicago is excited to present a fresh round of virtual programming FREE to members! These educational opportunities cover some of the hottest topics in our industry. Our Lunch & Learn classes also continue this winter and spring.

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PPP SECOND DRAW: WHAT TO KNOW

When the Paycheck Protection Program originally launched in March 2020, many small businesses hesitated to apply — deterred by uncertainty of the rules, no banking relationship to help with the process, etc. With a "Second Draw" of applications now being accepted, construction businesses can expect more clarity surrounding the funding under the CARES Act.

WHO CAN APPLY FOR A SECOND PPP LOAN?

Federal funding will provide an additional \$284 billion for those who missed out on the program last year and for those hoping for a second round of aid. Businesses seeking a Second Draw loan must meet the following requirements:

- No more than 300 employees
- Experienced significant revenue declines between comparable quarters in 2019 and 2020 (at least 25% reduction in gross receipts)
- Have used the full amount of their previous PPP loan

HOW CAN FUNDS BE USED?

Payroll expenses (including benefits), mortgage interest, rent, utilities, worker protection costs related to COVID-19, uninsured property damage costs, certain supplier costs and expenses for operations.

The application deadline is March 31.

For more information and to apply, visit [SBA.gov](https://www.sba.gov).



VIRTUAL CLASSROOM AND LUNCH & LEARN OPPORTUNITIES

Regardless of the challenges we face, our association continues to provide members with the resources they need to be the best in the business. Because of that, and the great response to our first SMACNA Greater Chicago Virtual Classroom Series, we have developed a Winter/Spring Virtual Classroom Series lineup.

Once again, our collection of virtual programming brings

together some of the most engaging industry professionals to discuss the hottest industry topics — like virtual networking, leading in a changing environment and conflict resolution and its impact on company performance. The best part? Every program is FREE to members.

To view the full series of virtual classes, visit SMACNAGreaterChicago.org/VirtualClassroom.

We also continue to partner with Ginnie Floraday to offer a fresh menu of Lunch & Learn and Deep Dive technology classes. Upcoming courses — which take place in the convenience of your own office — will tackle Excel, BlueBeam and Outlook.



**LUNCH AND LEARN
& DEEP DIVE
SESSION DETAILS**

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Email Laurie to register: Laurie@SMACNAGreaterChicago.org



MEMBER FEATURE: O'HARE ENGINEERING

With a combined 75 years of contracting experience, O'Hare Engineering co-owners Bob Guth and Steve Petrowski have used their industry expertise to develop strong customer relationships. According to Guth, consistent e-commerce projects helped “move our business forward” during the pandemic.



MEMBER FEATURE

O'HARE ENGINEERING: CLIENT RELATIONSHIPS KEY TO CONTINUED BUSINESS DURING PANDEMIC

In 1972, O'Hare Engineering got its start in the Chicago market as a Trane Comfort Corps dealer.

“When the business started, our primary projects were small restaurants, strip shopping centers and tract housing developments,” said Bob Guth, co-owner. “The focus of our business has always been the design build marketplace, and as we gained construction expertise, we developed relationships with general contractors who



O'Hare Engineering has performed work with e-commerce projects, a dependable source of business during the pandemic.

were active in that segment of the business.”

Now, the HVAC contractor specializes in installations for build-to-suit office buildings, distribution centers, light industrial and big box warehouse facilities, as well as senior living and multi-family residential projects.

Guth, who joined the company in 1975, has spent the past 11 years as co-owner with Steve Petrowski, who joined the firm in 1991.

“Steve and I combined have over 75 years of contracting experience,” Guth said. “Our customers have relied on us for knowledgeable HVAC design, ethical business practices and high-quality workmanship. They rely on our services and are confident in our ability to deliver.”

Last year, when American businesses began realizing the long-term economic effects of the sudden pandemic, O'Hare Engineering felt lucky to count on e-commerce projects as a dependable source of business.

“Over the last several years we’ve completed 14 e-commerce facilities, both fulfillment and delivery centers, and are currently involved in three active projects

O'Hare Engineering’s service department was initially impacted by COVID-related restrictions when client companies closed or reduced the amount of non-essential people on their premises. But business began to stabilize across the board as the year wore on.

“Particularly as we got into the cooling season, companies realized they had to maintain their equipment,” Guth said. “As a company, our philosophy has been to maintain a lean and agile operation. This has paid dividends for us during the

“AS A COMPANY, OUR PHILOSOPHY HAS BEEN TO MAINTAIN A LEAN AND AGILE OPERATION. THIS HAS PAID DIVIDENDS FOR US DURING THE PANDEMIC.”

Bob Guth | Co-owner, O'Hare Engineering

for that client,” Guth said. “That’s been something that has sustained our business during the pandemic because some of our traditional work has not been as readily available. It’s helped our business move forward during tough times.”

pandemic, as not one of our salaried staff had to be furloughed or take a reduction in pay. Our business remained profitable throughout 2020, and we’re projecting it will be profitable in 2021.”

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NEW YEAR BRINGS MEMBER DISCOUNTS



To thank our members for their continued support during these difficult economic times, we've reduced contractor membership dues and waived associate member dues for the coming year.

OFFICERS RETAINED FOR 2021

At their November 10 meeting, SMACNA Greater Chicago's Board of Directors unanimously voted to retain the Executive Committee for one additional year, effective January 1, 2021.

WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT THE COVID-19 VACCINE

The first COVID-19 vaccines were granted emergency use authorization in December 2020. New information continues to be made available, but as of the date of this publication we're updating members on how the vaccine might affect the construction industry, including if employers can require their workforce to receive it.

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NEW YEAR BRINGS MEMBERSHIP DISCOUNTS

We faced a variety of challenges throughout 2020 — working from home, navigating new technologies and adding even more PPE to our arsenal (who knew face masks and hand sanitizer would top the year's list of hot commodities?).

Our association felt the struggle and missed meeting up with our members and delivering in-person educational programs, networking events and some great conferences. We're hopeful that many, if not all, of these will be brought back throughout 2021.

To thank you for your patience and understanding as we muddled through 2020, SMACNA Greater Chicago has reduced the 2021 contractor membership dues to \$400 and waived associate member dues for the coming year. It's your dedication and commitment that keeps our association strong and moving forward, and we appreciate your continued support.

VIEW ALL OF OUR
SMACNA GREATER
CHICAGO MEMBERS

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OFFICERS RETAINED FOR 2021

At their November 10 meeting, SMACNA Greater Chicago's Board of Directors unanimously voted to retain the Executive Committee for one additional year.

We're excited for these officers to continue helping our association innovate, meet goals and elevate the sheet metal industry.



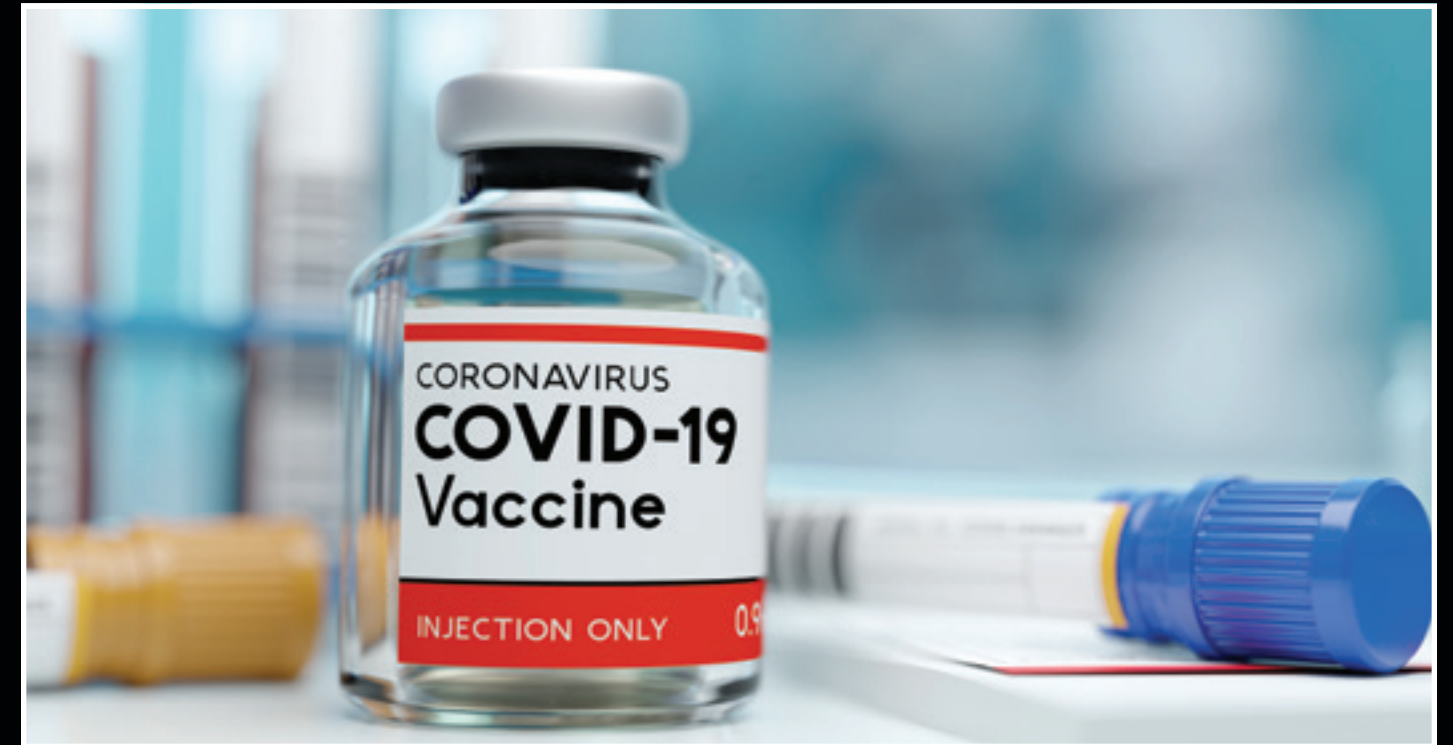
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*Cleats Manufacturing Co., Inc
President*



MICHAEL OBROCHTA
*OB Industries, Inc.
Vice President*



WILLIAM COMFORTE
*Climatemp Service Group
Secretary-Treasurer*



WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT THE COVID-19 VACCINE

Since first authorized in December, millions of Americans have rolled up their sleeves to receive the first approved immunizations against COVID-19.

As part of President Donald Trump's Operation Warp Speed, the FDA granted an emergency use authorization (EUA) to both Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna to start administering their vaccines. Pfizer's clinical trial results showed the first approved vaccine to be 95 percent effective at preventing illness caused by the coronavirus, while Moderna claimed 94 percent efficacy.

The full dose of each vaccine requires two shots given 3-4 weeks apart and are for individuals ages 16 and older.

Once health care personnel and residents of long-term care facilities have received the vaccine, people in essential industries — including construction workers — are expected to be next on the list of those who can receive it early.

"Throughout the pandemic, the construction industry remained essential and we've done everything we can to keep our workforce safe and

Continued on page 11

Continued from page 10

healthy so they can meet the demands of the job,” said Tony Adolfs, SMACNA Greater Chicago Executive Vice President. “When a vaccine becomes more widely available to the general population, we’ll encourage members to do what they feel is best for themselves and for their companies.”

Communities rely on a safe and healthy construction workforce to deliver essential goods and services. By encouraging vaccination, contractors may be better equipped to stay on track with projects throughout the coming year.

“THROUGHOUT THE PANDEMIC, THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY REMAINED ESSENTIAL AND WE’VE DONE EVERYTHING WE CAN TO KEEP OUR WORKFORCE SAFE AND HEALTHY SO THEY CAN MEET THE DEMANDS OF THE JOB.”

Tony Adolfs | SMACNA Greater Chicago

Individuals who have been vaccinated against COVID-19 should still practice social distancing, wear a mask in public and continue frequent hand washing. Questions about getting the vaccine? Be sure to talk to your doctor.

CAN EMPLOYERS MANDATE THE VACCINE?

Although it’s safe to say the majority of us are ready to return to a more normal work environment, the recent rollout of approved vaccine options has given us more questions than answers.

Most employers are eager to get their teams back to work and start building their businesses to reach pre-COVID levels. But at what cost? The vaccines — currently our leading defense against the virus — have brought up issues and considerations for employers to be aware of, including questions about the applicability of a variety of equal employment opportunity laws.



MANDATING THE COVID-19 VACCINE

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) states that employers can require employees to get vaccinated, but there are several issues to be aware of, including:

- Accommodations for employees who have a medical disability where the vaccine could pose a threat to their health
- Accommodations for employees who hold a sincere religious belief against being vaccinated
- Employer repercussions if a vaccinated employee becomes seriously ill, which could result in a worker’s compensation claim
- Who holds the liability when vaccinations are mandatory from a customer standpoint? Ex: Your hospital or school project requires your workforce to be vaccinated.



VACCINE PRESCREENING QUESTIONS

For employers who provide vaccinations at the workplace, a series of job-related prescreening questions will be asked to make sure there is no medical reason that could cause harm if vaccinated. If an employee refuses to answer prescreening questions, they should not be allowed to receive the vaccine. Another option is to allow the vaccine to be administered from an alternate provider. These employees will need to provide proof of vaccination.



REFUSAL OF THE VACCINE

If an employee refuses the vaccine and the employer wants to pursue further action, they will need to prove that the employee could pose a threat to the safety of themselves and others. In an at-will employment setting, an employee can choose to seek employment elsewhere if the current job mandates getting the vaccine. However, if you’re in a unionized setting governed by a collective bargaining agreement, you should consult with your union attorneys.

Regardless of your choice to mandate the vaccine, a good first step for all companies is to develop a solid communications plan for your employees. This will help prepare you for potential questions and allow you to explain your company’s stance in providing the safest workplace possible for all employees.

This article is not a legal document and is written for guideline purposes. For the safety of your employees and clients, continue to practice the safety protocols recommended by the CDC: wear a mask, wash your hands and practice social distancing when possible. For more information, visit www.eeoc.gov/coronavirus.



ASSOCIATE MEMBER FEATURE: LONG SUPPLY

Family-run Long Supply has experienced steady growth during the past decade, including a recent expansion to a bigger location last fall. Despite the ongoing pandemic, the company is proud to continue cultivating client relationships and offering specialized products.



Long Supply prepping a shipment to a client.

ASSOCIATE MEMBER FEATURE

LONG SUPPLY: SPECIALIZED PRODUCTS, CUSTOMER CONNECTIONS

In May 2011, Jason Long and his wife, Michelle, purchased Strogen Metals from longtime business owner Dick Conover. Under the new ownership, Long Supply, Inc. has become one of the most comprehensive sources for sheet metal supplies in the Chicagoland area.

“One of our big pushes recently has been gasketed duct systems, and acoustical spiral duct liner is growing extremely well for us too. We can pretty much handle anything but TDC or TDF ductwork and can cut right to size for the contractor,” said Long, owner and president of Long Supply. “We offer a very competitive

price while still maintaining a very high-quality product. We’re a one-stop shop, so we take away the headache of going to multiple suppliers. We’re strictly sheet metal and the accessories around it.”

During its nearly 10-year history, the family-run business has seen steady growth. What started as a single shop in Aurora now includes a second location in Addison, where the team recently moved in October 2020.

“It’s a bigger facility but also gives us the opportunity to grow because it’s on 1.5 acres,” Long said. “It also gives us easier access to downtown. Our goal is to have two more locations within the next seven to eight years.”

When the pandemic hit the country early last year, Long said the biggest issue they experienced was a lag in shipping.

“Companies that we work with may have had to shut down for a few days due to COVID, so that affected shipping and our lead times extended,” he said. “When the economy started opening up again it was like playing catch-up. Now we’re anticipating price increases in shipping on January 1, so people are stocking up now causing more shipping delays.”

Missing out on in-person client meetings is another unfortunate side effect of the pandemic.

“One of those things you really appreciate in business is that personal connection with customers. I really miss that part,”

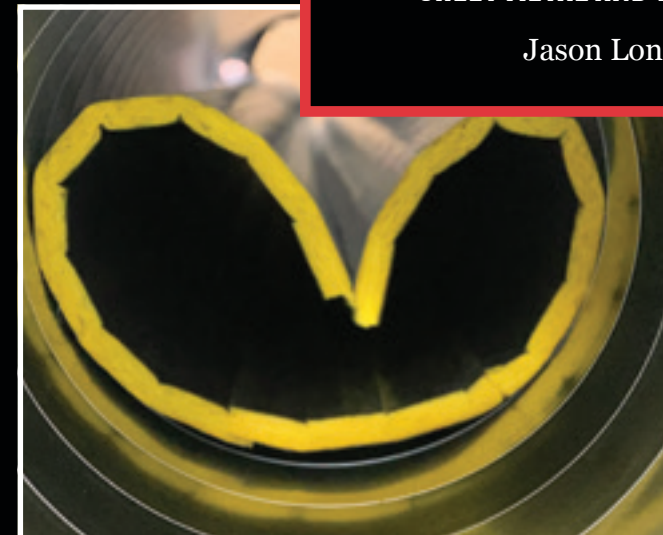
Long said. “I’m very passionate about what I do. It’s fun and I learn something new every day, and I think that’s what drives me. I love the customers and I love the business.”

For now, Zoom is working to stay connected to clients, and will eventually be used as a training tool and a way to keep customers up to date in the future. Long also hopes to offer customers a more streamlined online experience in the coming year by investing more into e-commerce.

“I want someone in the shop to be able to know exactly what we handle, how much it costs and be able to make an order online 24/7/365,” he said. “The easier it is to do business with us, the more it benefits everybody.”

“WE’RE A ONE-STOP SHOP, SO WE REMOVE THE HEADACHE OF GOING TO MULTIPLE SUPPLIERS. WE’RE STRICTLY SHEET METAL AND THE ACCESSORIES AROUND IT.”

Jason Long | Owner, Long Supply



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ABOUT LONG
SUPPLY**

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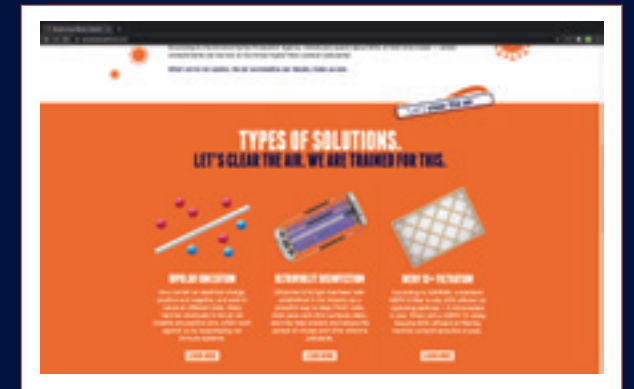
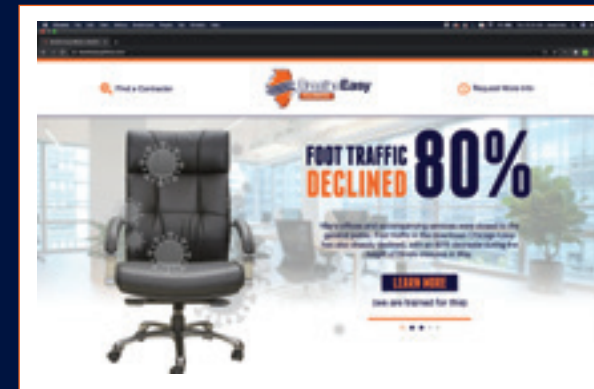
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BREATHE EASY ILLINOIS IS HERE!

SMACNA Greater Chicago, Local 73 and Local 265 are excited to announce the launch of Breathe Easy Illinois. This labor-management cooperative features today's most advanced solutions designed to help improve indoor air quality (IAQ) now and beyond the pandemic.

During 2020, the need to create healthy buildings became more important than ever. Now, improving occupant health and wellness is no longer a value-added option — it's a necessity. The creation of this industry leading program fills an important need within our communities and translates well across both commercial and residential markets.



“A casual meeting sparked the idea for this program, and kind of snowballed from there,” said Tony Adolfs, SMACNA Greater Chicago Executive Vice President. “We currently have 47 Local 73 and Local 265 contractors who have officially signed up to participate, with more requests rolling in every day. Our members have the best-trained workforce to install and maintain today’s most reliable IAQ solutions, and we’re proud to take the lead in our industry with the launch of Breathe Easy Illinois.”

Through extensive industry research and testing, we know that HVAC systems equipped with MERV 13 and higher-grade filters, installing UV-C and bipolar ionization technologies, utilizing

more outdoor air and controlling humidity are all solutions we can offer customers for increased safety and peace of mind. These are the solutions Breathe Easy Illinois promotes to facility managers, building engineers, building owners and residential homeowners throughout the greater Chicago area.

Here’s how it works: If a building owner was interested in installing MERV 13+ filtration, UV-C or bipolar ionization, a test and balance company would first perform a comprehensive IAQ check. After measuring the total flow of the air handler, the number of air changes per hour and checking things like temperature, humidity and CO2

levels, a preferred Breathe Easy Illinois contractor would make a professional recommendation of the best solution to fit that specific facility’s needs. Most solutions can be installed in a day or two (with a few exceptions), and cost and maintenance are relatively minimal.

“How can you put a price tag on health? That’s how I look at it,” said Leo Thier, Local 73 JATC instructor. “For a one-time payment, you get peace of mind and literally a measurable difference in your airflow quality. There’s no comparison. These products in particular are guaranteed by the manufacturers and are proven to make a difference.”

LEARN MORE ABOUT BREATHE EASY ILLINOIS

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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Our membership continues to grow! Join us as we welcome Hayes Mechanical into our contractor membership base, and AIS, Inc. as an associate member.

SMACNA COLLEGE OF FELLOWS SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE APPROACHING

The deadline for the SMACNA College of Fellows 2021 scholarship program is coming up soon: February 28, 2021. More than 20 scholarships are available this year.

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The advertising phase of the Breathe Easy Illinois campaign will position participating members and signatory contractors as the FIRST contractors called to do the job — helping buildings reopen safely and keeping existing buildings and homes operating safely.

Resources and sales tools are currently in development and available to participating members upon request.

Email Tony for more information: Tony@SMACNAGreaterChicago.org

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

CONTRACTOR MEMBER

HAYES MECHANICAL

HAYES MECHANICAL

5959 S. Harlem Ave. | Chicago, IL

ERIC HEUSER

EHeuser@HayesMechanical.com | 773-784-0000

ASSOCIATE MEMBER

ais
ALL INFORMATION SERVICES, INC.

AIS, INC.

1815 S. Meyers Rd. Ste. 820 | Oakbrook Terrace, IL

JOHN RUDISEL

JRudisel@AISlabs.com | 630-613-8640



SMACNA COLLEGE OF FELLOWS SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE APPROACHING

SMACNA COLLEGE OF FELLOWS SCHOLARSHIP

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APPLICATION FOR NATIONAL & ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIPS

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The SMACNA College of Fellows is accepting applications for the 2021 scholarship program. Applications will be for the 2021-2022 academic year, and more than 20 scholarships are available.

The SMACNA College of Fellows Scholarship Program is open to eligible students from the SMACNA extended family seeking to further their undergraduate education by attending an accredited four-year college or university. Eligibility extends to SMACNA's extended family, which includes SMACNA contractors, employees of SMACNA contractors, SMACNA

chapter executives, employees of SMACNA National and local chapters, and members of the families of any of these groups.

The application deadline is February 28, 2021. For questions about the College of Fellow Scholarship program, contact Jason Watson at JWatson@SMACNA.org.

In addition to the national scholarship, applicants from the SMACNA Greater Chicago chapter are also eligible to apply for the Marty & Vic Comforte Endowed Scholarship.

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