



NCHPBA

U P D A T E S

B U R N I N G N E W S & I S S U E S



Affiliated with the Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association

Fall 2003

A Note from the President



WOW!!! What a fall so far. I cannot recall when it's been this busy. It seems everyone and their brother wants a hearth product this year and wants it NOW! If you are having the kind of season I am, the stress level on all of us has got to be getting to that point of causing a problem in all facets of our lives. I find it hard to believe that I try to figure out how to get customers in my store, and then when they do come in (by the

droves), stress rears its ugly head, giving me a problem dealing with the very thing I asked for in the first place! Having an over-abundance of anything can cause a problem, I guess. When something (like stress) does rear its ugly head, my recommendation is to do something about it.

Last week I was out in western North Dakota doing a finalization on a job we had in a hunting lodge. It was a difficult job. That alone caused a great deal of stress. Top that job with the rest of what has been going on—well, the stress was causing a problem. As I was returning home (approximately 100 miles), I pulled off on an old graveled road that led to the

top of a butte. I got out of the truck, dropped the tailgate, opened a beverage and observed what was all around me. The view stretched for 35 miles in all directions. There were patches of harvested grain crops along with row crops. The scene was mostly pasture, prairie and lots of CRP (Conservation Reserve Program) land. In my mind, that view at dusk cannot be matched.

As I sat there, I watched white tail and mule deer coming out of coulees to graze. There were also pheasants, grouse and sage hens. Even an old badger waddled about. Hawks and eagles soared about the sky that was blazoned orange and blue. In that one hour, all the answers came to me concerning my job, life and family. Well, maybe not all the answers, but their priorities sure did. It was the quiet that did it for me, along with the beauty and rapture of nature.

So I say to you, take the time to stop and smell the roses once in a while. Take a look around you where you live and work. Take a good look at the country that is yours to enjoy and the peace and quiet that nature has to offer. And, of course, an occasional good beverage won't hurt either.

Good hunting for whatever you are looking for.

Denny Hildebrand

Soot or Mold—that is the question!

Soot and mold can look alike. How do you know if you have a soot or mold problem? Well, you have to have the "black stuff" tested. Testing for soot can be very expensive—hundreds of dollars. Simple tests for mold are available and can provide you with preliminary information as whether it is or is not mold.

As you check out the problem, also check for: a musty smell in the building; visible signs of water damage; and history of roof, basement or plumbing leak, sink overflow or any other water problem. Also look for the number of plants the household has and the water in the drainage saucers. Some people have lots of plants and lots of water standing around in those saucers.

Mold can be found in carpets, kitchens, bathrooms, basements, closets, garages, ceilings, doors, and, of course around chimneys and ventilations systems. When they occur around the latter—hearth appliances may be looked at as the culprit, even though it is rare (according to OMNI-Test Laboratories in Beaverton, Oregon) that our appliances these days do cause a soot problem. More often, real sooting comes from things like petroleum based candles or oil lamps rather than our products.

Mold can also adversely affect the health of the building occupants. These are just some of the symptoms exhibited by people affected by mold: skin rashes; fatigue; depression; unexplained irritability; flu-like symptoms; trouble breathing; coughing; sinus congestion; nausea; sneezing; runny nose; loss of memory; loss of hearing; loss of eyesight; bloody noses; arthritic-like aches; chronic headaches; "crawly" feeling skin; epileptic-like seizures; upper respiratory distress; irritation of the eyes, nose or throat; restlessness; equilibrium or balance loss; and dizziness or stiffness. Since many of these symptoms can come from other causes besides mold, even carbon monoxide poisoning, any display of these symptoms by occupants should require a home or building inspection for mold and any other problems to determine if there is other appliance function irregularity.

The National Association of Mold Professionals has a certification program so their inspectors can conduct a thorough examination of the building in question. Certified professionals are available in every state. For more information, contact the National Association of Mold Professionals at www.moldpro.org or the Certified Mold Inspectors & Contractors Institute at www.certifiedmoldinspectors.com

Education—Just for the Young

If that is what you believe—you are really missing out. You can always learn something new AND you **should** be trying to learn something new every single day. Not only is this good for your business, but for your life in general.

There should be no simple routine boring install. Each one should be looked at with scrutiny to detect any possible missing element, something with the design of the house, room or installation or planned installation of other products that could be a problem or potential health or safety problem. Our hearth product may be the perfect operating machine—but if you fail to see that 1200 cfm Jenn Aire going in or planned for the open kitchen next to the room with your fireplace—you have missed something big that will require call backs until the time involved costs you the money you made on the unit in the first place. Maybe you know to check this, but do all your installers know this? If not, why not?

The insert below is from Mary Lynn Salisbury of Fireplace Lifestyles in Grand Rapids, Minnesota. This business has education as the heart of its operation—and they are very successful at it, too. Mary Lynn and Spike Salisbury were at the NCHPBA's spring meeting and conference at Red Wing this past May. Mary Lynn was asked to write about her experience with this and other education programs.

Our customer's safety is our most important concern, which is why training for employees becomes paramount. We are proud to work with an accomplished group, whose skills and experience are so important to our association. An important part of our agenda is to schedule training. Yes, it's expensive—40 full days last year.

On behalf of our staff and customers, we would like to thank the many outside sources. The individual sales representatives and manufacturers have helped maintain high standards, the Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association offered superb classes both regionally and nationally. In spite of the difficulties of travel and re-arranging their own family

responsibilities, our co-workers logged overnight mileage not only to conferences over 200—300 miles away, but also to both coasts. Close to home (for us) the Energy Conference in Duluth offered excellent speakers at a low cost.

The guidelines are simple; learn from speakers we can trust. No matter how much education we receive, there is always room for improvement. Thank you for providing opportunities to attend.

Why should we try to learn something every day? Not only is it good for business as Mary Lynn Salisbury attests, but geriatric research indicates that we can slow the effects of aging, in particular, the effects of brain cell deterioration and diseases like dementia and Alzheimer's by keeping the brain challenged. Doing crossword puzzles, math equations and trying to learn something new keeps the brain busy.

Just think about some of the things you used to be able to do, such as advanced mathematics, geometry or even calculus. Some learned chemistry and its related formulas. We learned enough to pass those courses at one time, but how many of us could take those same tests now and pass? We stopped using the brain cells for that knowledge and now it is lost. Many people use calculators for adding and subtracting or use computer programs for accounting and reconciling your bank accounts. Stop using those aids for a few weeks and use your brain every once in a while. First—you will be astounded at how slow you now are at it and how quickly you forgot how to do things by hand. Then go back to the "tools."

Read, study, and take courses every chance you get. Hold regular and frequent meetings with your service staff to review installs and encourage questions. Hold meetings with your sales staff and do the same thing. Challenge your brain every day. It's good for business. It's good for you. Use it or lose it...its up to you!

Dues Renewals "In the Mail"

It does not seem possible that another year has gone by so quickly. Doesn't it seem like we were just preparing for that Y2K thing? Well, we are well past that and have gone through many more events, even one of our states having a wrestler for a Governor. We all thought having a B-movie star as Governor in California (Regan) and then become President was unreal—well, California has done it again. This one, however, cannot become President (not born in America). What will the next year have in store for us?

Well, you won't find out unless you pay your dues and continue to get emails, faxes or newsletters from us. The dues

notice does include a small increase of \$25.00 this year. Just a few months ago, the HPBA Board approved changing the dues share formula to a minimum of \$65 per non-manufacturer company member. This means NCHPBA would have to pay HPBA at least \$65 for each member instead of \$40. Since NCHPBA has not raised dues for over four years, this small increase will help us break even.

Please help us keep our costs down by paying with the first notice. Non-payment after 12/31/03 will require us to take you off our rosters and you may miss some valuable information. Don't just wait until EXPO. Renew with the first!

www.nchpba.org

Anyone check this out lately? Tony Leggett and staff have been busy upgrading the site. The cascading rollover menu bars have been expanded. Photos have been included. Attempts have been made to help you find the most frequently sought after areas. For example, if you want to find out about Building Codes in Minnesota you just have to click on Government, then State Information, then Minnesota, then Administration and ...up pops Building Codes and Building Construction.

We have tried to set up the page specifically for the members and use the format of NCHPBA, such as Education,

Membership, and Government Committees as the key areas that you may have questions about. Want anything posted? Just contact staff. A recent call from a Minnesota member yielded getting the "Options for Compliance" table posted. It can be very quick.

Want to find the home page of any state in the United States? Click on Government and then to the rollover box that says Other State Information. You will find a map. Click on any state and that state's home page will appear.

The NCHPBA web page is a work in progress. Let us know what you like and don't like. We want to meet YOUR needs.

Ask NC

Got a question about your business? Ask NC. It is just that simple. Once the issue is researched the results are provided and are available for others. Here are a couple of examples.

Situation 1. One member heard there was a new Administrative Rule regarding the need for outside air for all woodstove installations in Michigan residences. The Codes Coordinator was contacted. NC staff was contacted and the search was on. HPBA staff found the Rule in question. It then was reviewed by both HPBA and NC staff. NC staff sent copies of the Administrative Rule to the Codes Coordinator and the member who contacted him with follow-up that there was a misinterpretation and that the new Rule only applied to mobile homes.

Situation 2. Another member called the NC office about a black "soot" problem supposedly (according to the building contractor) from a gas fireplace. The same black marking was

seen around a window. The question of mold arose. NC staff contacted HPBA's John Crouch, Intertek and OMNI for input. A web search was then conducted and information provided to the member on the results. Simple self-tests or lab tests were available (from less than \$30—greater than \$80.00+) to determine if mold was the problem. Some of these kits have a 48-hour turn-around time for results. This member indicated that simple mold kits will be sold in his retail store as a benefit to his customers. Information on this mold research is now provided to all members in this issue of Update.

Situation 3. Several members called the office indicating that their liability insurance rates doubled or tripled and asked for help. Staff provided referrals so business insurance was not lost and the members did not have to pay 3 times what they had in the past.

Red Wing, 2004!

Yes, we said Red Wing in 2004 again. We received so many comments about the low cost for lodging and the excellent food and services at Treasure Island in Red Wing, Minnesota, plus the ease of travel (except for the route taken by the Salisbury's) that the Board unanimously determined to go back for 2004.

This time, we want to fill up that cruise ship (people raved about the food and the views). We did have a few open seats! We also want to fill up those program rooms. We will continue to harp at everyone that education IS a GOOD THING. We have kept the costs of the programs down but the quality of the offerings continues to go up. We always plan one program that targets business and sales while the concurrent session usually has a technical flair.

The Education Committee for 2004 is Rodger Holland, Erik Nelson and Margaret Zalaznik. We know they will develop



"Spirit of the Water" Treasure Island yacht.

something special. They welcome your thoughts and suggestions. Mark your calendar now. **May 23-25, 2004.**

Photos Sought!

NCHPBA is looking for photos that can be used in newsletters or materials to send to government or regulatory folks that highlight the clean burning nature of our hearth products. The photo shown in this article was taken of the "cut-away" stove provided for use at the MREA Energy Fair this past June in Custer, Wisconsin.

Photos of great store designs (outside and inside) as well as grill displays, or outdoor living displays are in demand as well. NCHPBA and HPBA gets requests to help magazine editors or newspaper journalists with photos for various articles on our product. We always have to scramble to get something for them. We really want to be prepared in advance. After all, if someone is going to write a positive article about our industry—we want to be sure it gets published—and nothing provides impact to someone like a photo. Of course, electronic files are great—but glossy colored photos will work, too as they can be scanned. All photos will be returned—just let us know when you send them. Also—**be sure to send a note that you have given us permission to use any of the photos.**



1903 versus 2003

1903

- There were only eight thousand cars in the United States and 144 miles of paved roads.
- Only 8 percent of homes had a telephone. A three-minute call from Denver to New York City cost eleven dollars.
- The average wage in the United States was twenty-two cents an hour.
- Only 14 percent of the homes in the United States had a bathtub (probably zero showers).
- Sugar cost four cents a pound. Eggs were fourteen cents a dozen. Coffee costs fifteen cents a pound.
- More than 95 per cent of all births in the United States took place in the home.
- Most women only washed their hair once a month and used borax or egg yolks for shampoo.
- The population of Las Vegas, Nevada was thirty. The remote desert community was inhabited by only a handful of ranchers and their families.
- Mother's Day and Father's Day did not exist.
- One in ten American adults couldn't read or write. Only 6 percent of all Americans had graduated from high school.

2003

Now compare the upgraded statistics in just a mere 100 years. The following data was compiled from simple web searches off the Internet. The differences are truly amazing!

- According to the Physics Factbook, there are over 600 million motor vehicles in the world today. There are 107 million U.S. Households, each with an average of 1.9 cars, trucks, or sport utility vehicles and 1.8 drivers. That equals 204 million vehicles and 191 million drivers. There are 46,567 miles of Interstate highway; 113,983 miles of other National Highway System roads and 3,771,462 miles of other roads. There are 8,500 miles of roads in the National Parks System alone.
- The US Census Bureau indicates there are 292,285,255 people in the U.S. with 6,322,391,685 in the World. The FCC indicates that the telephone subscribership rate per household in the U.S. is 95.1%. That means there are at least 101 million phones. This does not include data on mobile phones. Depending on your long distance service (and there are many of these) a three minute call from Denver to New York can cost as little as \$0.09.
- According to the U.S. Department of Labor, based on the employment of 127,980,410 people, the average wage using all occupations is \$16.35/hour. Statistics and wage

information is available on 22 various occupation categories from Management to Healthcare Support to Transportation and Material Moving.

- Of the 107 million households, 5.4 million or 5% (12.3 million individuals) live in housing with severe physical deficiencies, such as having no hot water, no electricity, no toilet, or neither a bathtub nor a shower.
- The cost of sugar varies from \$.39/pound to over \$0.50 a pound. Eggs vary in size and color and range from \$.39—over \$2.00 a dozen. Coffee comes from all over the world and ranges from around \$2.00 a pound to over \$15.00 a pound for the gourmet variety.
- In 2002, there were 4,019,280 births in the U.S. 83.8 percent of women began receiving prenatal care in the first trimester. Less than 2% have home births.
- There are 148,000 web sites containing the word shampoo. All shampoos are 80-90% water with 2-8% detergents and foaming agents and about 1% fragrance and preservatives. No statistics was found on frequency of hair shampoos by women.
- The population of the city of Las Vegas is 478,434. It also boasts having 75 hotels with the capacity of over 123,000 rooms and claims to be the "Gambling Capitol of the World."
- There is now a Mother's Day, Father's Day, Grandparent's Day, Administrative Professional's Day, National Boss Day and many others.
- According to the National Center for Education Statistics, 86.5 percent of young Americans are completing high school. This number includes GED. Statistics by J. Greene from the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research, indicates that the national graduation rate is about 74%. Literacy statistics from the U.S. Department of Labor indicate that at least 50% of the unemployed are functionally illiterate. The National Assessment for Education Progress indicates in a 1985 study of 21-25 year olds, 80% couldn't read a bus schedule, 73% couldn't understand a newspaper story, 63% couldn't follow written map directions, and 23% couldn't locate the gross pay-to-date amount on a paycheck stub. The Laubach Literacy Action cites 27% of army enlistees can't read the training manuals written at the 7th grade level. [This information may indicate that High School graduation does not necessarily directly correlate with the ability to read or write!]

The only thing that has gone down is the price of a long distance phone call!

Burn Barrels—are they legal?

As hearth professionals, we need to be concerned with emissions in our environment. For years, our product has been undergoing changes to burn cleaner. We also should be instructing our customers on what should be burned in our fireplaces and stoves AND what should NOT be burned.

This practice needs to be applied to the use of burn barrels, too. Know the laws in your state. Many cite it is legal to have them but discourage their use. Some prohibit use of burn barrels by government or commercial entities. There are

a lot of items that are illegal for use in burn barrels. Unfortunately, many people that use burn barrels do not attend to what they burn in them. They use them for whatever they want to discard or don't want to haul to a legitimate waste yard. When illegal product is burned in these barrels—the emissions affect everyone. It all goes into the air and then gets into the groundwater.

Be in the forefront of promoting good burning for all products in your area. Know the laws.

Innovations & Ideas for Indoor-Outdoor Living

Hearth, Patio & Barbecue
EXPO 2004

Anaheim, California is the place to be next March 17-20, 2004! Every year the show grows and more people attend. If you are in any way involved with hearth, patio or barbecue products—YOU NEED TO BE THERE! Or, you will be conspicuous by your absence!

EXPO is the site for viewing product and making deals. It is also the site for LEARNING! There are a tremendous number of education programs to attend. Each one will result in you learning something new. You could also take the opportunity to get NFI certified in wood, gas or pellet. There are a lot of people both in and out of our industry that are very interested in the certification programs. A goal of HPBA is to get NFI certification recognized by the regulatory folks instead of any other type of certification or licensure. A major goal for us—is to flood the market with certified professionals so the regulatory folks will see that this is the way to go. If not, maybe they will want everyone to have a plumbers license or HVAC or both or more! We need to jump on this and get NFI accepted—by us and then them! Get certified. Get on the education bandwagon at EXPO.

Product abounds at EXPO. See what's new. See what you thought about getting last year. Find out what is happening. Go to the various caucuses and other meetings. Talk with colleagues from across the country and other countries as well. Talk with old friends or meet new ones. Try something new.



July, 2003 NFI Certified

Congratulations to the following that attended the NCHPBA sponsored NFI review courses and exams on Gas and Wood and received their certification. Those with an * received both wood and gas certification.

American Home Fireplace & Patio, West Salem, WI
Lynn Meyer*

Brownstone Distributing, Minneapolis, MN
Adam Lee
Mike Nordby

Copycat Hearth & Home, Webster, WI
David Stangler*

Energy Plus, Inc., Duluth, MN
Damian Pennings
Brad Biermaier
Chris Lindberg

Marcell's Specialties, Wausau, WI
BJ Marcell
Tim Guldan

Onalaska Stove & Stone, Onalaska, WI
Gary Stanley*

The Energy Shop, Inc., Green Bay, WI
Erik Nelson *
Jared Coulumbe*
Jay Vandervest
Bill Waterstradt

The Fireplace Professionals, Cambridge, WI
Jon Marshall

The Stove Works, Inc., Hayward, WI
Mike Adair

Zillges Materials, Inc., Oshkosh, WI
Steve Owen*

NCHPBA has 177 folks that have received NFI certification to date (according to the NFI web page on hearth specialists). This is a start but we have a long way to go.

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