



# CONNECTIONS

Aug, 2012

## SAFETY MATTERS

### Unacceptable Excuses

Across the industry, time loss due to workplace injuries dropped 50% between 1991 and 2008! Most of the gains in workplace safety can be attributed to improvements in awareness, equipment, policies, and training. In the search for other areas to improve, a survey of more than 1500 workers was conducted. The results identified a trend of risky silence, particularly concerning these three issues:

**Just this once** – unsafe actions are justified because they are exceptions to the rule.

**This is overboard** – unsafe practices that bypass safety policies because workers think the policies are excessive.

**Take one for the team** – unsafe practices that are justified for the good of the team, the customer, or the company.

**Just this once.** More than half of the survey respondents said that they have seen their coworkers make unsafe exceptions to safety rules for convenience, or in an attempt to correct mistakes or salvage opportunities. I think all of us have used this line of reasoning sometime. When it comes to making exceptions to rules and policies, only one in four people is willing to speak up and express their concerns to the unsafe person.

**This is overboard.** Workers sometimes ignore new rules and guidelines in favor of their old habits. The reasoning goes like this: "I have been doing this for twenty years – I am a professional. I don't need to follow this new policy. I know what I am doing." Old habits die hard and frequently workers encourage each other in this grumbling. But ideas on safety and unnecessary risk are changing. When people ignore new rules, three out of four of their coworkers either say nothing or fail to share their real concerns.

**Take one for the team.** Close to 60% of the survey respondents reported that they have seen their coworkers violate safety precautions for the "good of the team, the company or the customer". In order to save face ("I am not going to be the one to wimp out."), keep customers happy, or meet expectations, only one-quarter of those say they speak and share their concerns with the person who is putting the team at risk.

Monitor your own behavior: first be sure that you are not using these excuses for being unsafe, and then make sure you speak up when you see unsafe work practices. Safety leadership is a critical element of the UMC safety culture. Leading by example includes not only avoiding unsafe behaviors but also encouraging your entire team to perform safe work and avoid poor excuses. Don't be one of the silent ones: speak up and encourage your coworkers to follow safety rules.

# STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

## LEVERAGE OUR INNOVATION

*UMC is focusing on three specific strategic objectives: Leverage our Innovation, Build a Sales Organization and Workforce Development. The objectives key in on UMC's strengths in these areas. This month's update focuses on our Leveraging our Innovation Objective*



### Innovation

Our culture at UMC has been forged through 95 years of continually innovative construction practices, one person, and, one project at a time. The sum of our innumerable experiences is the UMC of today.

Because of our great experiences we often hear.....“Now THAT is a UMC Job!” and it is not just a compliment, it is truly something of value, and, each time we hear this we know we provided our clients our expected level of service. If you haven’t heard it yet, there is more to do!

But as you know, times are changing. Our excellent experiences are no longer our bench mark for tomorrow; we will innovate more, each and every day. In the next 5 years, we have our clear target of revolutionizing all of our key processes and practices to create a “new normal” in our construction deliverables, what we expect from our construction teams, and, how our construction teams will continue to continually “raise the bar” in currently unknown ways.

What we do know is: Quality and safety will be driven up, time and cost of construction will be driven down, and our clients will enjoy the economic benefits that result from occupying their new or upgraded facilities as well as being a team member challenging sustainable green building benchmarks.

Innovation has been one of our key “strategic initiatives” since way before anyone coined the phrase. It is our foundation.....and it is up to each of us to keep the innovation inspiration, processes, and practices alive and growing!

MCAWW is like-minded with UMC in our combined keen focus on driving sustainable innovation and educating our construction managers and staff on the practices and processes reshaping our industry.

On Thursday, September 27, 2012, the MCA will be hosting a “Mechanical Innovation” Conference on at the Convention Center in Seattle.

As summarized by MCA in its’ promotional brochure, this “Conference is designed to inspire, motivate, and provide tools to every mechanical contractor owner and employee so that they can enhance their firm's bottom line through innovation.”

UMC has several construction managers and staff scheduled to attend the all-day sessions with speakers that spans throughout the day.

I challenge you to make the time to participate in this great event. If you are a Project Manager or Project Engineer and would like to attend, please see your manager for their concurrence and then email Steve Brooks to schedule you with MCAWW.

There is also a complimentary exhibit forum open from 8am-4pm that will showcase innovative products and services from the following firms:

- AO Smith
- Bailey Sales & Associates
- Braley-Gray
- Charlotte Pipe & Foundry
- Columbia Hydronics
- Compsee
- Custom Mechanical Solutions
- Get the Point
- Harrington Industrial Plastics
- I.S.A.T.
- Mechanical Sales
- Moen Commercial
- Pac West Sales
- Proctor Sales, Inc.
- Puget Sound Energy
- Ridgeline
- RIDGID
- Shinn Mechanical
- Siemens Industry, Inc.
- Superior Tapping
- Trane
- Trimble
- Victaulic
- Viega
- Washington Air Reps
- Watts Water Technology

I have attached the MCA informational brochure for your convenience.

Come be inspired and motivated. Bring what you learn back to UMC and continue, each and every day, to get better, and be better.

See you there!

## LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENING

### 2012 EVENTS CALENDAR

#### SEPTEMBER

Golf Tournament

**Sunday, 9/9**

7:30am shotgun start  
Harbour Pointe Golf Course  
Mukilteo



MCAWW Conference

**Thursday, 9/27**

WA State Convention Center  
Seattle

#### OCTOBER

Trick or Treat

**Tuesday, 10/30**

3pm-5pm  
UMC

#### DECEMBER

Santa Party

**Thursday, 12/13**

5pm-7pm  
UMC

#### JANUARY

Holiday Party

**Saturday, 1/12/13**

6pm-Midnight  
Lynnwood Convention Center

### YEARS OF SERVICE

#### **20 Years:**

Pat Damitio (Aug)

#### **15 Years:**

Bruce Freeman (Sept)

#### **5 Years:**

Greg Ferguson (Sept)  
Richard Farmer (Sept)  
Ian Footer (Sept)

### "HAPPY BIRTHDAY"

#### August

13 Tom Kadoya  
15 Doug Smith  
17 Bruce Freeman  
23 Toni Adams  
24 John Strand  
24 Les Bouck  
25 Curtis Watson  
25 Gary Green  
27 Troy Lowery

#### September

5 Mary Bouck  
6 Karen Langeberg  
8 Grant Young  
13 Ned Miller  
18 Troy Turpin  
20 Leah Holden  
28 Lloyd Lagutang  
29 Mike McNeil

