



CONTRACTOR CONNECTION



January February March 2024

Hey. Look. The New Guy.

By Chuck Gillespie, MBA

2024 marks transition at Indiana PHCC. After 24 years at the helm, Brenda has retired from a role that she eloquently performed. Enter me. I come to you with 30+ years of work experience - fifteen years in association management at both the state and national level. I was thrilled and honored when I received the call that I was selected to be your Executive Director.

My career started as a human resources professional with stints as the Head of HR for two different organizations. In the middle of my HR career, I sidetracked for three years and worked for the Indiana House of Representatives as a Legislative Assistant. This was a strategic move, as the work was ideal for going back to school to get my MBA. My association management experience includes time at the Indiana Chamber of Commerce and as the CEO of the National Wellness Institute. I have started businesses and invested in others.

Personally, my wife is an optometrist and our daughter is finishing her final semester at Purdue. I love spending time with them...except when they want to go shopping. Outside of work, you will find me sailing, working around the house, helping out at the family farm, or spending time with my family and friends. I am an avid fan of Purdue sports and Indycar racing.

While I have only been here a short while, here is what stands out to me, so far. First, the plumbing-heating-cooling industry is in a growth mode and in need of new professionals to enter the profession. Second, Indiana's building code is grossly outdated - the code has not been updated in over ten years. Third, the plumbing apprenticeship program in Indiana is in good shape with approximately 1,500 students statewide studying to become

a licensed plumber. Fourth, HVAC regulations can be cumbersome, as the licensing regulations are governed locally. And fifth, consolidation is occurring in the industry, but there also continues to be new licensed contractors starting up their own business every day.

My diverse background allows me to look at things through multiple lenses. As an example, there is a picture hanging up in the Indiana PHCC offices that says "The Plumber Protects the Health of the Nation." This got me thinking about the work that you do. What industry has done more for the health of the nation than plumbers? Quite frankly, clean water alone has accounted for the health and well-being of society, as much as any medical procedure or medication has. Heating and cooling professionals are saving lives all of the time - especially during extreme weather conditions.

It is an honor to be here, and I am confident that with your help, together, we will be able to ensure that the industry continues to grow and be a great career for years to come. I look forward to working with each of you.

Chuck





THE PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Mark Helm is President of the Indiana PHCC.
Mark is President of P.I.P.E., Indianapolis

Hello Indiana PHCC,

Happy New Year! I hope that everybody had a safe and blessed holiday season. I also hope this coming year will be the best in terms of both your business and your personal lives. Maybe fresh starts will lead to fresh faces in our industry! We all know we need it, but how can we do it?

Well, we as owners/leaders need to step out of our comfort zone and take a leap of faith (just not too far). So, when you delegate something to the younger employee that you are mentoring/training, you understand that they might do it differently than we do. Their different approach does not make it wrong.

You might find out that their way is a better way and more efficient than your way! But we will not know until we try it and allow it.

I know in my business I have amazing younger people that are much better at doing a lot of things than I am. I just had to learn, and this is the hard part, that I am good at certain things but other things not so much. They, on the other hand, excel at what I do not. That is a win-win for both of us and the industry.

We just have to be ready to take that leap of faith!

Best of luck.
Mark

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2024 PREDICTIONS FOR BUSINESS & HOUSING

THE UNPREDICTABLE HOUSING MARKET

In 2023, mortgage rates surged—hitting a high of 7.79% in October, according to Intercontinental Exchange, a financial technology and data services provider.

2024 may be a better year to purchase a home—at least for some. While home prices will likely remain elevated—and even increase in some markets—industry experts expect prices in certain areas of the country to soften. Economists are also optimistic that the Federal Reserve is done with its rate-hiking campaign to lower inflation after policymakers kept the federal funds rate unchanged for a third straight meeting. The federal funds rate is the benchmark interest rate financial institutions charge each other for overnight loans; it tends to indirectly influence mortgage rates.

Even so, affordability challenges will continue in 2024. Pent-up demand and low inventory will generally bolster prices, and elevated mortgage rates will remain until the Fed implements cuts to the federal funds rate.

INDIANA'S BUSINESS CLIMATE PREDICTIONS



The Center for Econometric Model Research (CEMR) forecast for Indiana across key measures of our economy calls for the state to manage small gains in net growth across most measures: Indiana's GDP in 2024 will grow at quarterly rates of less than 1% throughout the year, picking up some steam in 2025, with quarterly rates between 1% and 2% per quarter.

Indiana's resident labor force will inch closer to a significant milestone of 3.5 million persons either actively employed or actively seeking work. The unemployment rate will track steadily below 5% and often below 4%. Personal income will grow significantly - by nearly 4% in 2024, with per capita personal income reaching \$63,170 by the end of the year, which is about 88% of U.S. per capita personal income.

GET INVOLVED WITH YOUR LOCAL PHCC CHAPTER

Fort Wayne Area PHCC

Contact: Kristen Roberts: fwaphcc@gmail.com

Greater Indianapolis PHCC

Contact: Beth Link: giphcc1@gmail.com

North Central PHCC

Contact: April Mink: phcc@phcc-ncia.com

Northwest Indiana PHCC

Contact Clint Mann at mmp10974@gmail.com

St. Joseph Valley PHCC

Contact Jerilyn Boniface at jerilyn@stjoevalleyphccmcai.com

South Central PHCC

Contact Cindy Klem at cindy@schroeringphac.com

Southeastern PHCC

Contact Tony Phillips at email@acphillipsplumbing.com

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Contact Nicole Meny Schmitt at nicole.meny@srmey.com

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SUCCESS HAPPENS TOGETHER

Why PHCC membership is good for business

One year ago, we wrote in this issue that over 85% of failed business are not members of a trade association? No matter the industry, trade associations give their members many advantages in a fast-paced, competitive world. There are numerous reasons for businesses to fail, but there are three that you can benefit from through your membership.

To grow your business, you need to:

- . Add good production staff. This is where the PHCC apprentice programs become a value-add for your membership. Indiana PHCC also has its website "TheBestCareer4You.com," which will see a makeover in the coming months. This site aims to attract new professionals to the industry.
- . Have the right marketing efforts. 1 out of every 5 failed plumbing businesses attribute their failure to poor marketing efforts. Of those who do market their business online, only 17% think they stand out from their competition online. This is an area that Indiana PHCC will be working on as a value-add in 2024.
- . Ensuring you are building relationships with your customers - not just fixing their problems. Find out what they value and see if you can add or subtract from your current approach to meet their needs. Simplify the number of steps it takes someone to do business with you, whether that's scheduling a plumbing service, getting in touch with the office or paying a bill. Check online reviews regularly and adjust your work to avoid future negative comments in the future.

In 2024 we will continue to see changes in the industry. Changes may be somewhat less due to the political atmosphere that will dominate 2024. However, we still must be aware of:

- . New Plumbing, Mechanical, Fuel Gas and Fire Codes being reviewed and adopted.
- . Changes within the Federal Apprenticeship programs.
- . Workforce shortages, supply issues, regulations at the state and federal level.
- . Risk management issues from driving vehicles, to cyber issues.

These are all areas that PHCC is on top of so that you can do what you do best in the contracting arena.

Indiana PHCC will be presenting the popular Leadership Summit, September 12 -13 in Fishers. This event sells out because of the amazing speakers and opportunity to interact with the best contractors from across the state.

Membership in PHCC includes the PHCC-National Association which offers a variety of programs, education and services to keep your business in the know.

There are free monthly webinars, the Business Intelligence report with highest level of market awareness, professionalism, leadership, and business profitability in the emerging and ever-changing built environment.

The PHCC Educational Foundation has educational scholarships available to members. This year the PHCC Educational Foundation will be offering 60+ scholarship awards worth up to \$150,000 to apprentices, technicians and college students pursuing an industry-related major. The application is available at phccfoundation.org/scholarships.

Not a member? Contact any of our Board members and find out why we are committed to give back to the industry. You can also call the Association office at 317-575-9292

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10 Years to Replace Lead Pipes: The EPA's New Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRI)

Have you heard about the EPA's Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRI)? It's the newest iteration in the agency's ongoing efforts to protect our nation's residents from drinking lead-contaminated water. The biggest highlight by far of the LCRI is the aim of "Achieving 100% Lead Pipe Replacement within 10 years."

The first thing to note about the LCRI is that right now, it's just a draft rule.

The goal of the LCRI is to eliminate lead contamination from our nation's drinking water. It's as simple as that. The EPA has provided a roadmap on how to get there through its Lead and Copper Rule Revisions (LCRR). The LCRR requires water systems to create a lead service line inventory (LSL) to identify all lead pipes in their systems, and to communicate with the public about this work (among other things). This inventory will require a lot of hands to build the inventory – likely to work alongside plumbers to get this work done. In proposing a 100% replacement of all lead pipes in U.S. water systems, the LCRI represents the last step in the process the EPA started when it made the LCRR into a rule on December 16, 2021. This could mean a lot of work for the plumbing industry.

But before any federal agency can make a new rule, it must first make it available for public comment. If you want to make a comment, visit the Federal Register and search for the public docket associated with the LCRI: Docket ID Number EPA-HQ-OW-2022-0801.



Meet Your Indiana PHCC Staff

What is one thing you would like to share



Chuck Gillespie:
Five years ago, I rekindled my love of sailing.



Susie McFarland:
Original numbers matching car and original owner



Jamie Stafford
Love being a Grandma

The FuelVM.com logo consists of three vertical bars: an orange bar on the left with the letter 'F', a dark blue bar in the middle with the letters 'E L' and a white triangle pointing up, and a brown bar on the right with the letters 'V + M'. Below the bars are several white circles of varying sizes, resembling a fuel gauge or a stylized 'V' shape.

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CONTRACTOR CONNECTION

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JAN/FEB/MAR 2024



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*The individual firms listed, each a member of Indiana PHCC, have pledged their financial support toward the continued operation of this publication as they believe it is an asset to the Association and the p-h-c industry.