

# NY Connection



Official Magazine for the New York State PHCC

Summer 2023



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## **NYS PHCC's 131th Annual State Convention Report**

**NYS PHCC  
Chapter  
Reports**  
p5

**2023 NYS PHCC's 131<sup>st</sup>  
Annual State Convention  
Report**  
p8





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# Contents

Summer 2023 • Volume 19 Number 2

President's Message .....	4
NYPHCC Chapter Reports .....	5
Thank You Convention Sponsors .....	7
NYSPHCC's 131th Annual State Convention Report .....	8
New Refridgerants on the Horizon .....	10
I'm Not The Best Lobbyist .....	12
President's Corner: Leading Through the "What-Ifs" .....	14
CEO Message: Unexpected, Yet Welcomed .....	16
NYSPHCC Legislative Report .....	18



page 8

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# President's Message



Greetings to all from Buffalo, NY. It appears we are in the middle of the spring season. The trees and flowers are blooming, and the weather is starting to get warmer.

We are returning to work fresh off our 131st annual state convention in beautiful Sonoma/Napa California. If you were unable to attend, you missed a wonderful time. The week started with a safari trip and continued with wine blending, winery tours, cocktail

parties, and a fantastic closing event where Frank Sinatra and Barbra Streisand performed for us. It wasn't all fun and games though. Our keynote speaker Dan Skoczylas of Hawkeye Security kept us on the edge of our seats with a presentation on Active Shooter Statistics. We thank our corporate sponsors, Hammond Safety Group, Federated Insurance and Service Roundtable for their support and presentations at our annual business meeting. Our educational seminars ended with a presentation from Kirk Alter on the topic of Walk Away Wealthy, or Why the Heck are you doing what you do!

If you were not able to make this year's convention, we hope you can make it next year. The 132nd Annual State Convention will be held April 17 – 21, at a brand-new resort in Port Charlotte Florida. The Sunseeker Resort will feature Rooms overlooking Charlotte Harbor, 20 world class food and beverage concepts, golf and two stunning pools. The resort is located minutes from the Punta Gorda airport and about 35 minutes from Fort Myers airport. We

hope to see you there. Here is a link, to check it out. <https://www.sunseekeresorts.com/>

It appears that the fight on the gas ban issue has taken an interesting turn in this year's budget with the lawmakers backing off slightly. We anticipate seeing legislation requiring new construction to be all electric and the repair and replacement market being dropped off this year's budget proposal. There has been a new twist in the nationwide fight with the U S District Court of Appeals in Berkeley California ruling that a ban on the installation of natural gas is preempted by the Energy Policy and Conservation Act (EPCA). I'm sure there will be more information and decisions regarding this issue.

As always, our goal is to grow the association and provide worthwhile services to members. With the gas ban being brought more to the forefront, please spread the word that we are doing all we can do to get our voices heard. If you know of a company in your region that could use the help of an organization like PHCC to make their business better, please pass along the information or have them contact Dorothy or myself and we'll get them everything they need.

I am always available for a conversation. Please feel free to contact me at any time. My email is [chris.tryjankowski@pcsplumbing.com](mailto:chris.tryjankowski@pcsplumbing.com) and my phone number is 716-822-4302.

Thank you,

**Chris Tryjankowski**

President  
NYS PHCC

## New York State Local Associations

### 1. PHCC of Long Island

Mr. John DeLillo  
510 Broadhollow Road  
Suite 305A  
Melville, NY 11747  
Tele: 516-922-7688  
[www.phccli.org](http://www.phccli.org)

### 2. Associated PHCC of Rochester New York

Mr. Joseph F. Tumia  
Tumia Plumbing Co, Inc.  
6229 Ontario Center Road  
Ontario, NY 14519  
Tele: 585-342-2300  
Fax: 585-671-1208

### 3. WNY Association of Plumbing & Mechanical Contractors

Mr. Joseph Benedict  
Executive Director  
2660 William Street  
Cheektowaga, NY 14227  
Tele: 716-875-4626  
Fax: 716-875-4412  
[jbenedict@conexbuff.com](mailto:jbenedict@conexbuff.com)

### 4. Association of Contracting Plumbers of the City of New York

Mr. Terence O'Brien  
535 8th Ave 17th Floor,  
New York, NY 10018  
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Fax: 212-481-7185  
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### 5. Plumbing Contractors Association of Long Island

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# NYSPHCC CHAPTER REPORTS



## Plumbing Contractors Association of Long Island

Jimmy Russo, President

2023 has started off as a very busy year for our Association. Members have been working on establishing a Metal Trades training program to help bring qualified plumber apprentices into the trade on Long Island. Members approved a pilot program that will start with ten (10) apprentices who will begin a two-year program in September.

Charitable contributions and programs have been a priority for our members as we have started planning our

27th Annual Golf Outing which will be held on Monday, September 18, at Colonial Springs Golf Course in East Farmingdale. This year, we will honor and support Lean on Me Breast Cancer Network a non-profit organization that was established in May of 2000 by Dr. Dwight De Risi, Donna De Risi, Sharon Pape, retired, the late Ursula Thall and the late Gerry Accardo. Its goal is to provide one on one support for women and men who have been diagnosed with breast cancer by pairing them with volunteer survivors from among the patients of each individual's practice.

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# **NYSPHCC's 131st Annual State Convention Report**

PHCC contractors from across New York State gathered in Sonoma, CA to celebrate the New York State PHCC's 131st Annual State Convention, on April 20-23, 2023. The event brought contractors together for presentations that addressed industry issues and created opportunities to further business development, and many social opportunities.

## **Safari West Adventure**

On Wednesday morning, members and guests made the one-hour trek to Safari West, also known as the Sonoma Serengeti, and boarded our private jeep for the tour. There were ring tailed lemurs to the dazzling zebras, nearly 900 animals from over 90 unique species roam through the 400 acre preserve. After a very chilly tour of the preserve, we arrived at the Watasi Overlook, where our guide provided some delicious snacks and brews from several Sonoma County and California breweries.



## **Wine Maker for a Day Experience**

On Thursday morning guests were greeted at the Raymond Vineyards for a fun and informative wine blending experience. Each participant left with their own personal bottle of wine, which they labeled with the NYSPHCC logo.



## **Opening Reception**

At the Thursday evening opening reception, NYSPHCC President Chris Tryjankowski officially welcomed members and guests to the 131st state convention. During this event, attendees spent some time socializing and enjoying a wonderful array of delicious foods. This event was sponsored by the ACP City of NY, PCA of Long Island, Northeast Sales Associates and Bradford White.





## Friday Morning Breakfast/Annual Meeting

At the Friday morning keynote, we listened as Dan Skoczylas of Hawkeye Active Shooter Response Training, spoke about workplace gun violence. In 2019, Dan authored and published his first book, entitled, “If You’re Looking for a Victim... Keep Looking!” The book details a civilian response to the active shooter and offers insight into how individuals and companies can prepare successfully.

Afterwards, the PHCC Board and members met for the annual business session. A few invited guests were on hand to give reports from their segment of the industry. Many thanks to Service Nation and Hamond Safety Management for sponsoring the opening breakfast.

At our Friday evening cocktail reception, attendees were treated to an array of yummy appetizers and libations before heading out to dinner with their local chapters. This event was sponsored by Milwaukee Tool.



## Saturday Morning Breakfast and Seminars

Saturday morning’s breakfast was sponsored by Aspro Plumbing & Paul Robilliard. Afterwards, Kirk Alter gave a seminar on “Walk Away Rich or Why the Heck are You Doing What You Do”. The presentation was sponsored by Kohler and the PHCC Educational Foundation.

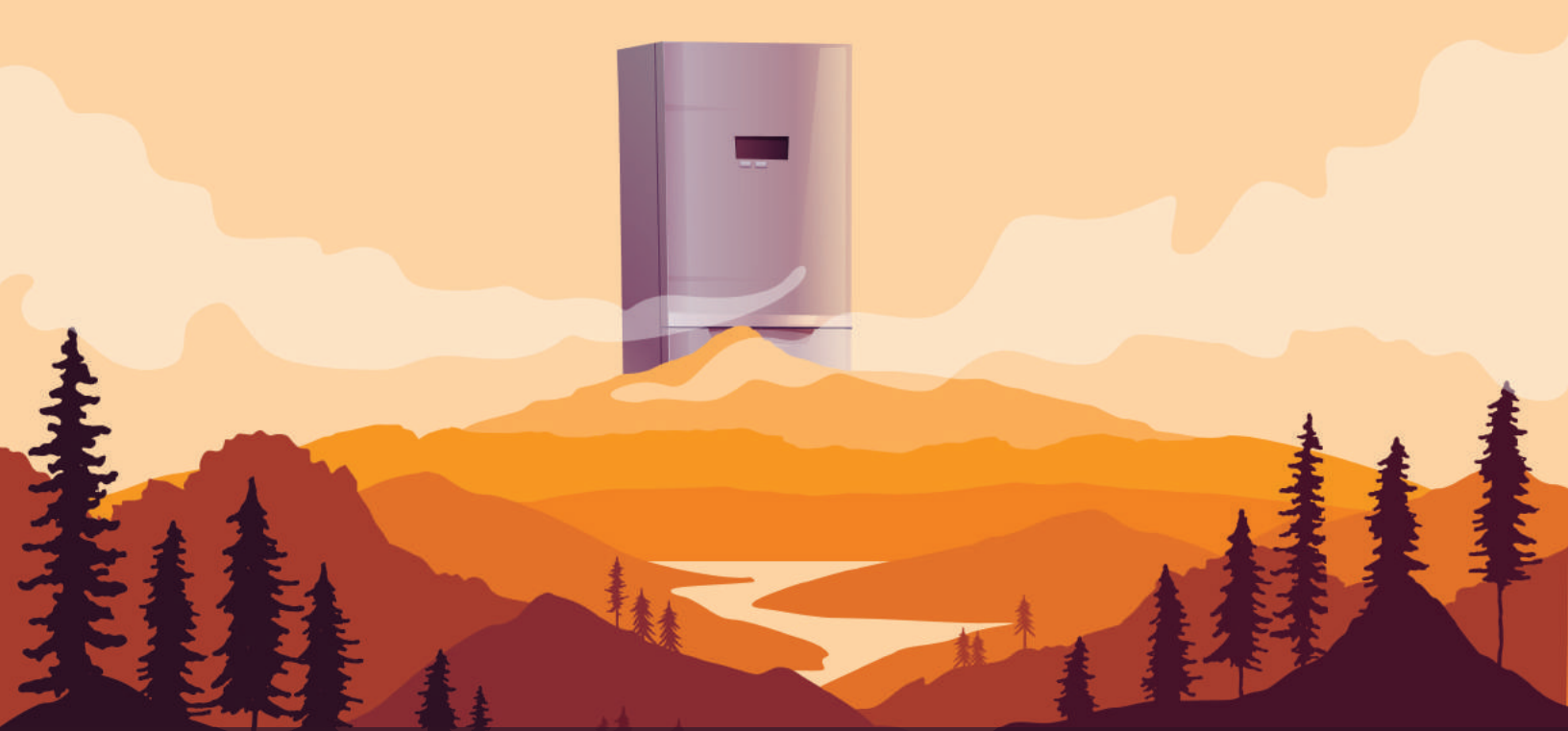


## The Closing Banquet

The closing dinner and installation was held in the Stone House where members and guests networked and were entertained by “Frank Sinatra & Barbra Streisand” –The Concert That Never Was”. This event was sponsored in part by Federated Insurance, WNYPMCA, and PHCC of Long Island.

Many thanks to our board of dedicated volunteers, your willingness to give your time and service is greatly appreciated.





# New Refrigerants on the Horizon

**By: Neil Smith, Hamond Safety Management**

**C**ooling the built environment would not be possible without using chemical refrigerants, which were first used in the late 19th century. These first-generation substances included methyl chloride, ammonia, and sulfur dioxide but efforts to invent better chemicals continue to this day. The most high-profile, well-publicized HVAC industry activities deal with the ongoing development of improved refrigerants, the best of which allow for safety, efficiency, and environmental compatibility, with environmental compatibility being the most important.

Typically, governmental regulators have mandated increasingly stringent requirements intended to protect the environment. Elimination of hydrofluorocarbons (HFC's) in refrigerants has been their top priority. For decades, HFC's were used in HVAC systems but in 1985 were proven to attack earth's vital ozone layer. Refrigeration industry scientists since then have been pursuing reductions in the so-called Global Warming Potential (GWP) by inventing more environmentally friendly refrigerants.

The federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sets the standards for the chemical composition of refrigerants and recently mandated a phasedown of the widely used R410A that began January 1, 2022, when import volume and domestic production was required to be decreased by 10%. On January 1, 2024, EPA has ordered a 40% reduction and 70% by 2027. In 2034, an 80% reduction goal must be met, and the final stepdown is 85% for 2036.

R410A eventually will be replaced by A2L refrigerants, which characteristically have higher efficiency, lower flammability, and lower toxicity. The two principal R410A replacements are R-32 and R-454B.

When compared to R410A, R-32 has the following advantages:

- Zero ozone depletion
- Possesses 1/3 the GWP (675 vs 2,020)
- More energy efficiency
- High refrigeration capacity
- Better thermal conductivity
- Less pressure drop.
- Lower toxicity
- Easier to handle and recover.

R454-B:

- Outperforms even R-32 in heating efficiency.
- Requires 5-10% less refrigerant than R410A.
- Lower GWP (465) compared to R32 and R410A
- When compared to R410A, easier transitions are possible due to similar operating pressures and temperatures.



The EPA also has approved four additional A2L refrigerants to replace R410A\*:

- R452B
- R454A
- R454C
- R457A

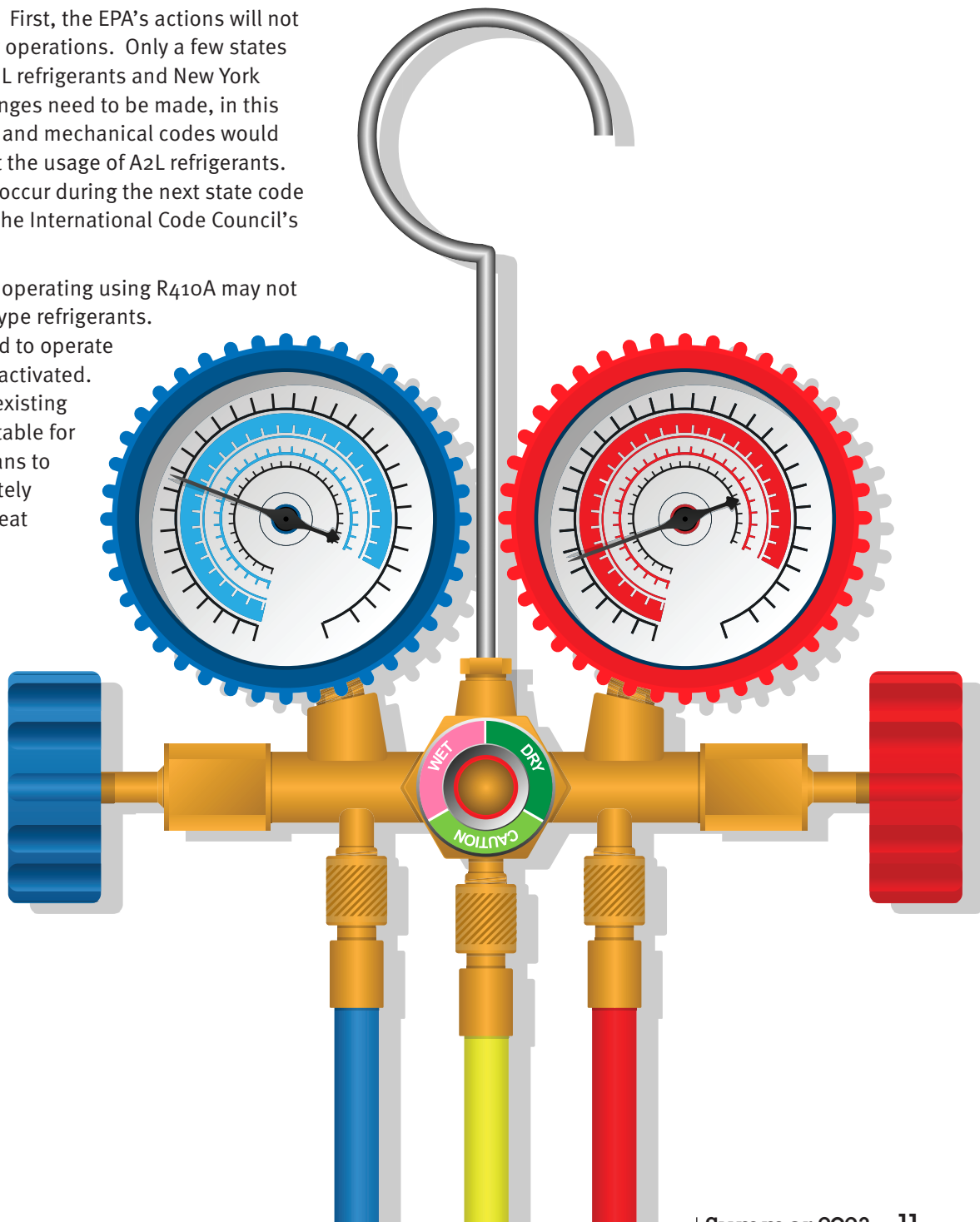
\*Note: These refrigerants are for use only in new self-contained and split-system air conditioners specifically designed for A2L refrigerants.

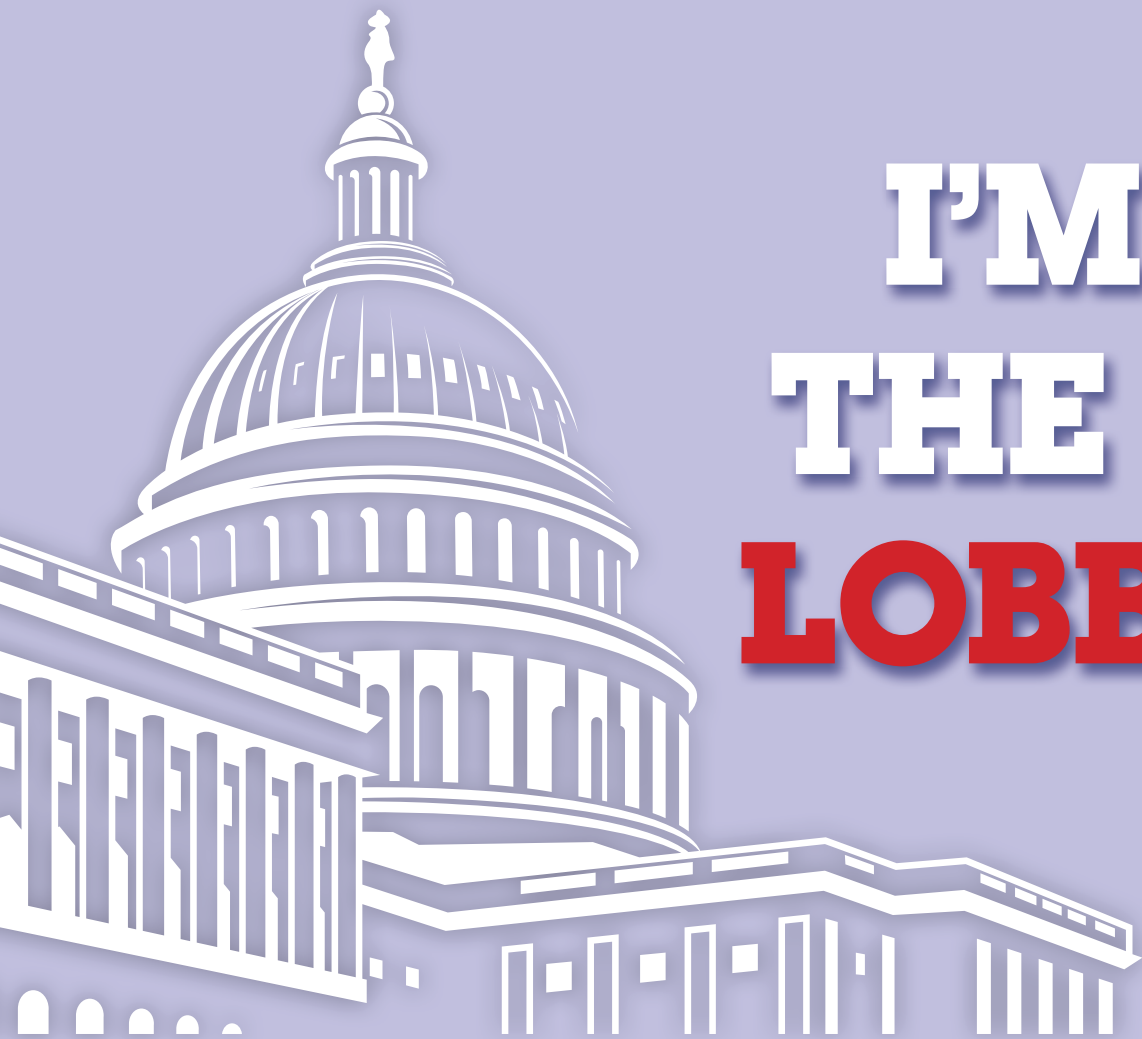
What do these changes mean for technicians and their customers in New York State? First, the EPA's actions will not immediately affect day to day operations. Only a few states currently permit the use of A2L refrigerants and New York is not one of them. Code changes need to be made, in this case the state's building, fire and mechanical codes would have to be modified to permit the usage of A2L refrigerants. It appears that this likely will occur during the next state code update cycle when it adopts the International Code Council's (ICC) 2024 family of codes.

Second, equipment currently operating using R410A may not be converted to use the A2L type refrigerants.

Only new HVAC units designed to operate on these refrigerants may be activated. Maintaining R410A powered existing equipment is perfectly acceptable for now, however the EPA has plans to ban the use of R410A completely in new air conditioners and heat pumps by January 1, 2025.

In the meantime, HVAC professionals should become familiar with the new family of refrigerants by taking the appropriate training so they will be certified when these products become legal to use in New York State. Regarding customer relations, as the A2L rollout gains momentum, it is a good idea to advise prospective customers to future proof their purchase by selecting an A2L compliant system. By taking these steps, HVAC companies will be prepared for the inevitable conversion over to the next generation of refrigerants.





# I'M NOT THE BEST LOBBYIST

**By: Mark Valentini, PHCC Director, Legislative Affairs**

**W**ith a byline like this, you're probably wondering why I would still be employed, but bear with me on this one. Heck, there are folks out there who might even agree with that sentiment, and that's okay: my contact information is included in every article I submit to receive feedback from PHCC members on how I can do my job better so that our Association is accurately portrayed before the government and industry organizations with whom PHCC collaborates. In fact, many of you have reached out to offer your ideas, and I will always adjust our advocacy strategy based on what I hear from you. Because I'm not the best lobbyist ... you are.

## **You Know Better Than Anyone**

Yes, you are the best lobbyist because you are the true subject matter expert. You manage the employees; meet with the inspectors; mentor the apprentices; install the furnaces and boilers; service condensers and backflow preventers; dig the trenches; cut your fingers on old equipment; sprain or pull God-knows-what lifting new

equipment; work on rooftops and cramped spaces on hot days, cold days, rainy days, snowy days, and even nice days; and most importantly stay compliant with the myriad laws and regulations governing our industry, all while dealing with the customers. Whew. You have the experience; you know how the plumbing and HVAC world works; you know your customers' needs; and you know how to communicate this better than anyone else, even me. You have real-world experience. You are a wealth of knowledge!

Legislators need to connect with private sector professionals like you to truly understand how government affects industry, its constituents, and the broader economy. Should anyone have a question about plumbing or HVAC, who better to ask than a plumber or HVAC contractor, especially if they're a member of PHCC? On issues related to workforce training and apprenticeship, who better to ask than a PHCC contractor or state or local exec who hires apprentices or runs an apprenticeship program? This is the art of advocacy at its very core!



## You Can't Always Be on Capitol Hill or in Albany...

However, in order to be effective, we must proactively engage with policymakers to protect and promote our industry. This is particularly difficult considering you must tend to business, family, and state/local chapter duties. There's simply not enough time for you to maintain a presence in Washington to meet with legislative offices and promote the industry.

That's where PHCC Government Relations and your state chapter have you covered as full-time advocates for you, one of the most valuable member benefits PHCC can offer. We engage policymakers every day, building and maintaining relationships with legislators and regulators at the state and federal level. We continually stay educated on the latest industry trends and collect constant feedback from contractors of all stripes, from service to new construction to residential to commercial, both union and open shop, and exchange that information with policymakers in D.C. and Albany so that you are represented, recognized, and prepared for legislative and regulatory changes that will impact your business.

## ... But Don't Let That Stop You!

There's nothing stopping you from engaging your legislators who generally make themselves available to their constituents through townhall meetings, job fairs, county fairs, meet-and-greets, and other public events. You can even schedule a time to meet with your legislator or one of their advisors in their district office either in person or over the phone, you don't even need to venture into Washington, DC or the state capitol in Albany. The website of your state and federal legislators will have their office location and contact information—you can call them anytime to request a meeting, they're more accessible than you think! Use that interaction to introduce yourself, talk about your business, talk about our industry, and most importantly explain how certain laws and regulations help or hurt your business.

Engaging policymakers is an opportunity not only to educate them, but to build a working relationship just like you would in a business setting. Most importantly, it's an opportunity to show them just who the best lobbyist is. (Hint: it's not me!)

*Mark Valentini is the Director of Legislative Affairs for PHCC—National Association. An experienced professional with more than 20 years of experience as a U.S. Senate staffer and lobbyist with several national trade associations, Valentini applies his expertise in public policy to advocate on behalf of all PHCC members.*

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# President's Corner: Leading Through The “What-Ifs”

By: Dave Frame

**A**s p-h-c business owners, part of what we sign up for is the “opportunity” to survive the ups and downs that affect our companies. At times, it can feel like a rollercoaster. That is why it is so important, as company leaders, to have strong systems and structure in our businesses so we can withstand whatever is ahead.

Taking over my family’s business at age 26 opened my eyes to good times and bad times. I’ve realized tremendous success, and I’ve lived through 1983 and 2008 – years that I was told would “build character.”

Not only did they build character, but they provided valuable lessons on preparing for the future, and now I’m passing those lessons onto the younger generation at my company, including my children. Given the talk that a recession is coming (some say it is already here), it looks like some of the real-life insights I will be sharing over the coming months will be those I learned during economic downturns.

Most younger folks haven’t led a company through a recession, so I focus on teaching them how to prepare for “what ifs.” We look at expenses and our equipment. What trucks aren’t moving? What are we not getting receivables on? Do we have a vehicle that hasn’t been on a job site for three months but still has good value? If so, let’s sell it.

## Thinking Ahead

We also look at what our plan will look like if things slow down. We make group decisions with all the techs about how we can keep everyone on the payroll and not make layoffs. Perhaps we would rotate techs so everyone still gets 30 hours over three days a week.

We look at our credit lines and equipment lines. You hope you don’t have to use them, but if you’re growing, you’re going to. Or you may need to rely on them to get through a tough month. (Just get them paid up before the end of the year!)

The key is considering all these options before we get into slow times. Of course, leadership also means making difficult decisions. If all the plans you put into effect still

don’t keep your financial statements in the black, analyze where cuts may need to happen. Consider employee performance, history, and attendance. Where is everyone with certifications? Who is equipped to multitask? Those all factor into the equation.

## Listening and Collaborating

As a leader, truly listening is key, and the older I get, the easier this is for me. When I was younger, I was just so eager to get things going perfectly on steady ground that I didn’t listen as well, and I didn’t consider all sides of an issue. Now I stop and listen to what everyone in the company is saying – across all levels.

It’s also important to collaborate with those outside your company – advisers such as accountants, bankers, and attorneys – before things get slow. My accountant knows the pulse of my company as well as I do because I talk to him that much. Keep in touch with them when things are good so they’re able to provide sound counsel if and when things go south. A crisis is not the time to start the conversation.

## Establishing a Culture of Transparency

We have new employees coming on, and – even in the busy summer months – we talk openly about what things will look like if we do slow up. If nothing else, it strengthens our relationships among the team. At the end of every year, our entire company meets to discuss our strengths, the divisions that need improving, where we need to spend more money, or perhaps some expenses we need to cut.

I like progress, so having to tighten things up in a down year is tough for me. Educating my team on the numbers and making decisions together is key, though. Our techs are instrumental in providing input on where to invest profits for the future, like new equipment needs. Better yet, as a leader, I suggest you go out on the job sites and watch so you can see what equipment they’re struggling with; perhaps there’s something on the market that can make their jobs easier, keep them safe, and make your company more profitable.



## Envisioning Our Future Workforce

As your PHCC—National president, one of my goals this year is to become a more inclusive organization and ensure that everyone is represented in our future workforce. This is a delicate topic that needs to be out on the table. My personal opinion is that this needs to start at the apprenticeship level, because apprentices move on to advance their careers and may even someday become business owners. We need to ask ourselves: Why are we not attracting a more diverse crowd? Are we not targeting the right issues? Should we be casting a wider net when it comes to getting information out about the opportunities in the p-h-c profession? PHCC needs to be what the world looks like now.

As a member of the Federated Insurance Board of Directors, I know its diversity and inclusion committee is gathering a lot of good data on this topic that will be helpful for PHCC to review. The PHCC Board of Directors had some very worthwhile discussions on this during its

recent board meeting and strategic plan review. Through conversations like this – and the ability to tap into best practices that other organizations have adopted – I am hopeful we will make a lot of progress in this area in 2023.

We always say that PHCC means not having to reinvent the wheel. That's true for our association business ... and for your business!

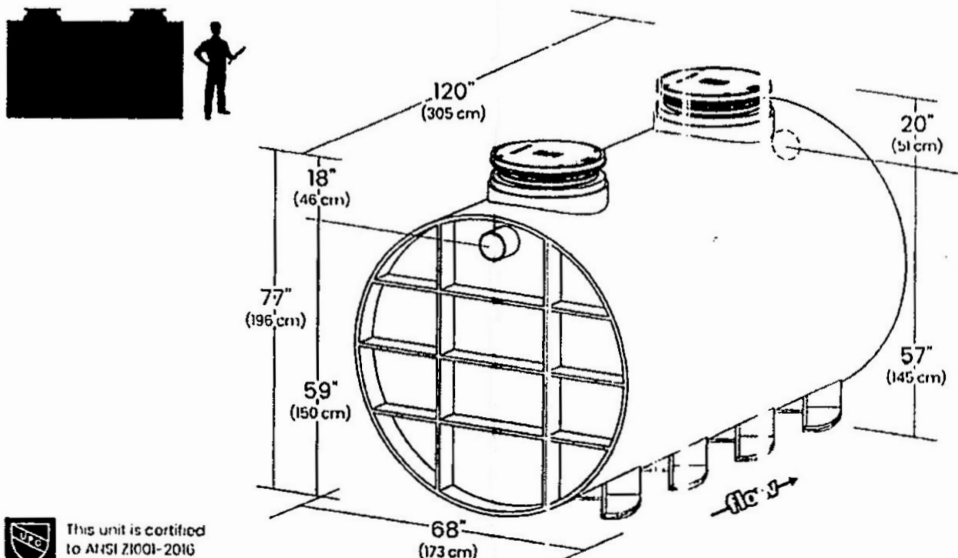


PHCC—National Association President Dave Frame is CEO of Bob Frame Plumbing Services, Inc., a fourth-generation family business in South Bend, Indiana.

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# CEO Message: Unexpected, Yet Welcomed



**By: Cindy Sheridan**

**L**ife throws you curveballs. Six months ago, I was planning my retirement ... travel, more time with family, and a chance to explore more of the amazing opportunities near my home in the Washington, D.C. area. It would take something really special to derail those plans ... and that's exactly what happened in late January when I was asked to serve as the chief executive officer of PHCC.

## **I Knew...**

Like a prepared Scout, I knew exactly what to do when the unexpected happened. I knew that I shared the same passion as the people of PHCC – from the staff at our National headquarters, to our volunteer leaders, to our thousands of contractor members – and that is to advance our beloved plumbing and HVAC industry and educate its workers.

From my 22 years of involvement in PHCC – first as vice president of membership and chapter relations and most recently as chief operating officer of PHCC's Educational Foundation – I knew that I had the experience, familiarity, emotional intelligence, and commitment to make a positive impact on PHCC and help it meet its strategic goals.

I also knew that we had an incredibly solid base of relevant member resources, valuable networking opportunities, and respected relationships with legislators and regulators.

And I knew that I couldn't pass up on this opportunity to build on that strong foundation ... to increase collaboration among all levels of our association and with our industry partners, to improve teamwork among our National staff and chapters, and to grow the association ... not just through recruitment and retention numbers but through increased engagement among the members we have now.

## **Building on Our Foundation**

Thankfully, I know that PHCC doesn't need to reinvent the wheel. We have established a reputation for quality, and we are well respected.

Our goal now needs to be to raise awareness of PHCC within the industry and among those making decisions that impact our member contractors. As an example, Chuck White participated in three different panel discussions at the AHR Expo in Atlanta, Georgia, in February. As a voice for the value that skilled workers bring to the table as the country seeks to increase the energy efficiency of installed HVAC and water heating systems, Chuck continues to be a valuable advocate for our members and an incredible representative for our association.

As many of you know, my personal passion is workforce development, and – again – I look forward to helping PHCC build on our workforce training and resources. I encourage you to get more people involved in some of our specialized opportunities. For example, Quality Service Contractors (QSC) has really ramped up its training and coaching for our service and repair contractors. PHCC's Construction Contractors' Alliance (CCA) explored the latest new construction trends during its 25th anniversary meeting in February. And, UAC had a highly successful Collective Bargaining Seminar in January for our union-affiliated contractors. The event was an example of collaboration at its best – with PHCC's UAC, PHCC of Illinois, and the PCA of Greater Chicago (plus generous sponsors Milwaukee Tool and Bradford White) working together to offer the first UAC in-person meeting since 2019. UAC plans to continue this series of seminars moving forward; I hope you'll consider joining them!

Of course, we can't talk about building on our foundation without considering the future. We've made great strides both at the state and National level this past year at providing more opportunities for our rising leaders. I encourage you to get the rock stars (or potential rock stars!) in your company more involved in PHCC.

Take them to a chapter meeting so they can hear about the issues facing other contractors and get more involved in promoting the value of p-h-c careers. (Let's face it, they're our industry's best recruiting tool!) Bring them to the PHCC Legislative Conference in May so they can share in the accountability we have for protecting the skilled



trades. Sign them up for the Rising Leaders Summit at PHCCCONNECT2023 in Cleveland, Ohio, in October so that they can network with others at their level from around the country, learn best practices, and become inspired to be the next great leader in your community and in the industry!

As you can tell, your passion for the future of this profession has become my passion. That's why I'm so committed to this association 22 years later ... and counting! Together, let's ensure our beloved industry is in good hands for generations to come.

*Cindy Sheridan, CAE is Chief Executive Officer of PHCC—National Association. With decades of association management experience – most recently as the Chief Operating Officer of the PHCC Educational Foundation – Sheridan and her team work to ensure that PHCC contractors are the best choice for professionalism, reliable products, and knowledgeable service.*



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# **NYS PHCC LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

The FY 2024 final budget bills are now in print. The state's budget will ban fossil fuel combustion in most new buildings under seven stories starting in 2026, with larger buildings covered in 2029. That means no propane heating and no gas furnaces or stoves in most new construction. New York would be the first state to take this step through legislative action; California and Washington have done so through building codes.

The budget language in Part RR amends subdivision 6 of section 11-104 of the energy law, as added by chapter 374 of the laws of 2022, is amended and two new subdivisions 7 and 8 are added:

- Subdivision 6 (a)... the code shall prohibit the installation of fossil-fuel equipment and building systems, in any new building not more than seven stories in height, except for a new commercial or industrial building greater than one hundred thousand square feet in conditioned floor area, on or after December thirty-first, two thousand twenty-five, and the code shall prohibit the installation of fossil-fuel equipment and building systems, in all new buildings after December thirty-first, two thousand twenty-eight.
- New Subdivision 7 (a) - he provisions set forth in paragraph (b) of subdivision six of this section shall not be construed as applying to buildings existing prior to the effective date of the applicable prohibition, including to:



(i) the repair, alteration, addition, relocation, or change of occupancy or use of such buildings; and

(ii) the installation or continued use and maintenance of fossil-fuel equipment and building systems, including as related to cooking equipment, in any such buildings.

- (b) In addition, in effectuating the provisions set forth in paragraph (b) (b) of subdivision six of this section the code shall include exemptions for the purposes of allowing the installation and use of fossil-fuel equipment and building systems where such are installed and used:
  - (i) for generation of emergency back-up power and standby power systems.
  - (ii) in a manufactured home as defined in subdivision seven of section six hundred one of the executive law; or
  - (iii) in a building or part of a building that is used as a manufacturing facility, commercial food establishment, laboratory, car wash, laundromat, hospital, other medical facility, critical infrastructure, including but not limited to emergency management facilities, wastewater treatment facilities, and water treatment and pumping facilities, agricultural building, fuel cell system, or crematorium, as such terms are defined by the code council.

- 8. For the purposes of this section:

(a) “Fossil-fuel equipment and building systems” shall mean (i) equipment, as such term is defined in section 11-102 of this article, that uses fossil-fuel for combustion; or (ii) systems, other than items supporting an industrial or commercial process as referred to in the definition of equipment in section

11-102 of the energy law, associated with a building that will be used for or to support the supply, distribution, or delivery of fossil-fuel for any purpose, other than for use by motor vehicles.

(b) “Electrification ready” means the new building or portion thereof where fossil-fuel equipment and building systems are allowed to be used which contains electrical systems and designs that provide sufficient capacity for a future replacement of such fossil-fuel equipment and building systems with electric-powered equipment, including but not limited to sufficient space, drainage, electrical conductors or raceways, bus bar capacity, and overcurrent protective devices for such electric-powered equipment.

In addition, the Part RR also adds a new subdivision 19 to section 378 of the executive law, as renumbered by chapter 47 of the laws of 2022 to include the prohibitions and exemptions stated above.



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