New England
HOSPITAL ENGINEERS SOCIETY
Newsletter

Third Quarter 1987

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Communication between our Board members and our state and local Societies is absolutely essential to the existence of our Society. The quality of our Society, in terms of serving you, its members, is directly dependent on the quality and the effectiveness of that communication process. Your Board of Directors realizes the importance of this and has set a goal this year to improve communications.

The Board’s efforts in this regard have been tremendous. They have increased their efforts to extract articles from each of you for this Newsletter and we have expanded the circulation of the Newsletter to administrators of our member institutions and others. We developed a Guideline for the Board of Directors, which defines how our Society is organized, governed and managed by our Board of Directors. Each of you, as members, received a copy of this. We decided to send each member an updated membership list so you would know who your colleagues are and could communicate with them directly.

We have developed and published a News Bulletin, designed to get you important information in a more timely way than the Newsletter can. We have sent out equipment surveys, educational film surveys, position openings, etc. In each case, our communication to you requested or deserved a response in terms of a comment or some input from you. To date, the level of that response has not been good. This is indeed frustrating to the board members who made all that effort to communicate with you, knowing how important it is to you, your career and the institution you serve.

Communication is a two-way street. Without a response, there is no communication. Perhaps those of you who are taking the time to read this message can suggest some ways in which we can improve our communication. Your response, whether negative or positive, will represent a substantial improvement in our communication efforts.

Thank you in anticipation of your response to our communications.

R. E. Popham
President

NOMINATION OF OFFICERS FOR 1988

It is time to come up with a Slate of Officers for 1988. This requires the nomination and election of a new Secretary who will replace Tom Shubuck. This Secretary will eventually become our President in 1992, so it is important that we make a good selection now.

If you have a suggested candidate for this position, please call your State Representative who will notify the Nominating Committee directly.

Nominating Committee
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Ed Boyer (617) 675-3131
John Crowley (617) 458-1411
Percy Hanscom (207) 729-0181
David Hathaway (617) 396-9250
Theron Manning (802) 728-3366
Paul Taylor (617) 337-7011
R. E. Popham
President

REPORT ON SPRING SEMINAR

The Spring Seminar was held at the Marriott Copley Place on March 24, 1987. The Seminar presented an in-depth analysis of Building Construction Cost Data for 1987 and a display of how computerized estimating can be used with the Cost Data. There were 95 members registered and 20 non-members. The breakdown by states were as follows with 7 no shows.

Massachusetts 74
New Hampshire 5
Vermont 6
Rhode Island 6
Maine 4
Connecticut 13

Expenses

Printing Program N/C
Compliments Copy Tech Business Forms Mailing N/C
Compliments New England Sinai Hospital Projection and Microphones N/C
New England Hospital Association
Marriot Hotel $3362.50
R. S. Means Co. (Brooks) $4411.40
$7773.90

Income

Dues - 60.00
Exp - 7773.90
Debit $5400.00
$2373.90

Thomas J. Galligan
Spring Chairman

WHEN WE LOST OUR WATER PRESSURE AT NEW ENGLAND MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

At approximately 10:30 a.m. one morning, we received a phone call from patient floors four and five; they had no water. I went to the pumping station immediately to see what the problem was. That morning we had taken one of the pumps out for service (for the first time in twenty years), and now the back-up pump had failed.

We have an Emergency Water Policy, as all hospitals do. Our arrangement is for the local Fire Department to come at our request and make connection with the incoming water main. They would then pump the water back through our system, thereby filling the water tower and providing the necessary pressure.

We called Stoneham Fire Department, but when they arrived we discovered that the 5" hose connector we had did not fit on their hose. We needed a 2 1/2" hose connector in a hurry, but we didn’t know where to find one. We called several vendors and finally located someone who said they had what we were looking for. We rushed over to pick it up only to discover that it was actually a 3" hose connector, and was therefore useless to us! This vendor then suggested we contact the local water department, which we did, and after a diligent search we did find a 2 1/2" connector we could use. We rushed back and installed it. By the time we started pumping it was already 3:30 p.m. It took six hours to refill the water tank!

During the day something interesting happened. We had contacted the foreman for grounds first thing in the morning when we discovered the lack of water, asking him to shut off all the sprinklers on the lawns. He did this, but we later discovered that someone had started the sprinklers going again. Our staff in the hospital had been asked to restrict their use of water, yet looking out the windows they observed that we were still watering the lawns! No doubt this caused some staff members to question what on earth we were up to! (We suspect that a patient from our psychiatric/addictions department had taken a look at the lawns and decided that we did indeed need to water them!)

This experience demonstrated to us the need for hospitals to have a test run to make sure that they really did have an emergency water supply available to them.

Barney Bolton
Newsletter Editor
Directors of Plant Operations in Small Rural Hospitals and Large Metropolitan Hospitals: Is There Really a Difference in Roles!

As Engineers from the six New England states rotate through the offices of NEHES, a variety of responsibilities are represented. The current President of NEHES, Mr. Richard Popham, is the Director of Facilities Management and Operations at the University of Connecticut Health Center, one of the largest hospitals in the East. I am the Plant Superintendent at Gifford Memorial Hospital, a 53-bed acute care facility in Randolph, Vermont. Gifford's 13-town primary service area reaches out to a radius of about 15 miles and incorporates 17,000 people.

Yet no matter how large or small our facilities are, each NEHES member shares the same ultimate responsibility of building and maintaining a very complex total plant operation. The size of our operation certainly will determine if we are the first line contact person. But whether we manage five or fifty employees or are responsible for 65,000 or 650,000 square feet, our problems and concerns are exactly the same. We all need to meet the requirements of governing agencies, such as JCAH. We face a host of problems daily, from leaky oil tanks to asbestos and hazardous waste, not to mention construction projects and the rising cost of operating our facilities.

I generally find that engineers from the larger hospitals spend more time in management meetings, large project development, and budget review. Engineers from smaller hospitals tend to be more technically oriented. They usually wear more hats and are frequently responsible for more than one department, such as housekeeping, laundry-linen, transportation, or communications. They often act as the Safety Officer of their hospitals. Still, despite the size of our operations, our overall goals and objectives are the same.

NEHES offers us a way to come together. I have been a member since 1975, and since that time have attended most of our spring and fall programs. For six years I've been active on the Board with engineers from hospitals of all sizes. I've enjoyed the friendship of engineers from Fort Kent, Maine to Newport, Rhode Island. No matter what kind of a problem you have, someone in this society can offer you valuable advice.

The one vehicle that we have that reaches all of us is this Newsletter. I encourage each of you to express your comments and concerns to our newsletter editor.

As I approach the year that I am to assume the responsibilities of the President of the New England Hospital Engineers Society, I will look to NEHES members for advice, participation, and good times. I urge you to get involved with the Society. You can contact me at Gifford Memorial Hospital at (802) 728-4441, ext. 2240.

Theron A. Manning
President-Elect

LAWS AFFECTING HOSPITAL ENGINEERS

Through the years, one would think that we as hospital engineers would be immune to the new laws that affect our work. Loss Control, Energy, Cost Containment, a few, may in fact alter that sense of immunity. The very latest Rhode Island law governing Asbestos Abatement appears to top my list of frustration. As is the case with any new law, there are many unknowns, and when this is compounded with bureaucracy at its best, one may find a classic case of a Catch 22 situation. Most of us deal with hospitals old enough to insure the presence of asbestos. Our law dictates removal when there is demolition and in most cases, renovation. This in itself is enough to consider, however, depending on one's involvement with the planning activity, the knowledge of the structure becomes paramount to the coordinated plan of asbestos removal versus demolition, construction.

The average turnaround, once an abatement plan is prepared through the first day of authorization, is approximately 2-2½ months. If you find there is asbestos that needs removing after you start your program, the job is stopped, an amended to the Abatement law is made, and then presented to the State for approval (approximately one-month wait). Only then may the job resume. I am sure two years from now, we will look back and say asbestos was not a problem, that is if we are allowed the luxury of not having something else to occupy our thoughts.

Lee Kissinger, RI State Representative

NEWS FROM CONNECTICUT

The 1986-1987 Society Year has been active and rewarding for the Connecticut Hospital Engineers. The topics presented accurately reflected the needs and interests of the Society members. General Membership meetings were held at Danbury Hospital, Meriden-Wallingford Hospital, Elmcrest Psychiatric Institute and St. Mary's Hospital. The topics presented at those General Meetings included the following areas of interest: 1) Preparing for JCAH Inspection, 2) Helicopter Landing Facilities, 3) Hospital Strike Experiences, 4) NFPA 99 Updates, 5) Underground Storage Tanks for Petroleum Products & 6) Air Quality Compliance Guidelines. The Meetings were all well attended with over fifty members attending the March meeting at Elmcrest Psychiatric Institute. The Society Year culminated with the Annual Meeting and Pork Roast in Barkhamsted in August. At the final meeting of the year, Annual Reports were read, awards presented and Officers for the 1987-1988 Society Year elected. Officers elected were as follows:

PRESIDENT-ELECT: Edward Oskandy
Manchester Memorial Hospital
VICE-PRESIDENT: Peter Fovargue
Danbury Hospital
TREASURER: Gunther Ohler
Meriden-Wallingford Hospital
SECRETARY: John Pardo
Stamford Hospital
E. L. Oskandy, Connecticut Representative

YOUR INPUT IS URGENTLY NEEDED

This Newsletter should represent a broad cross section of our membership, but at the moment we are seeing nearly all our articles coming from NEHES Board members. While it is helpful that these key people keep you informed, you, and the rest of us, are missing the opportunity to learn from each other. THIS IS THE PURPOSE OF OUR ORGANIZATION.

The Newsletter editor has plenty to do with collecting the material, editing it, organizing and formatting it, finding a printer, checking the proofs and finally mailing the completed Newsletters. What has been developing is the tendency for all of you to rely on the Board members alone to come up with suitable items for the Newsletter. This shows a lack of participation.

There is another way we could produce a Newsletter and some of you have suggested it. We could hire an organization to screen the appropriate periodicals and they would publish a Newsletter for us. This is very expensive and I doubt you would be very happy with it.

Please communicate with your Newsletter editor, Barney Bolton, Director of Plant Operations at New England Memorial Hospital, Stoneham, MA 02180, Telephone # (617) 665-1740, ext. 281. Your contribution is important.

If you have had a JCAH inspection, we would be interested to know what you learned from it. If you have experienced a disaster drill or serious incident which caused you to activate your disaster plan (George Hawley's oil delivery spill was a good example), we would like to know how you managed to handle the situation. If a piece of your equipment failed and you discovered something we should all be looking out for, please share it with us. Maybe you are looking for a contractor, or have found a good one; I have personally been searching for a good fire alarm maintenance company and kitchen exhaust cleaner; possibly some of you could help me in this regard.

As incidents occur at the facility where you work, do write them down so you will remember to make your important contribution to our Newsletter. We need your valuable input and look forward to your participation with us in producing an interesting and helpful collection of articles.

Thank you.

David Hathaway

POOR RESPONSE TO EQUIPMENT SURVEY

Response to the Equipment Survey has been very slow. Part of the problem may be that you have questions about the type of information which is requested. Please give me a call if you do have any questions, if you need another form to fill out, or if you wish to receive a completed example.

Please remember that only those who send a completed Survey sheet will receive the tabulated results once we have finished collecting them.

Rod Cameron, Director of Engineering
Lawrence & Memorial Hospital
365 Montauk Avenue, New London, CT 06320
Telephone # (203) 442-0711
NEW HAMPSHIRE SOCIETY OF HOSPITAL ENGINEERS

The New Hampshire Society of Hospital Engineers is having a very successful year. The membership has increased to the highest ever in our organization. This can be accredited to having better and more informative programs which has led to more productive meetings. This has not only increased our membership, but has helped the attendance at our meetings. The following list of programs were presented at our last six monthly meetings:

1. Changes in state licensing requirements for incinerators. The state departments involved were:
   - N.H. Dept. of Environmental Services
   - Air Resource Division
   - Waste Management Division
   - Solid Waste Bureau
   - Resource Technology Corp.

2. Update of underground oil tank regulations by the N.H. Dept. of Environmental Services, Oil Pollution Control Bureau.

3. Building Team Approach which included general construction contracts, construction management, design building, and other types of negotiated format.

4. Carcinogens presented by Biosafety Officer, Ernst Schori of the Dartmouth Medical School. The discussion ranged from regulatory authorities and documents to disposal techniques. Mr. Schori’s ability to comment on the complexities and solutions surrounding the carcinogens was excellent.

5. Mike Hill of the New Hampshire Association met with members of the New Hampshire Society of Hospital Engineers to have members serve on the advisory board for the Hospital Services, Inc. Clinical Engineers.

6. Some technical VHS video tapes were presented on asbestos medical gases, etc. which led to good round table discussions.

A future goal of the New Hampshire Society of Hospital Engineers is to develop a training video tape for hospital employees on how to handle special situations involving asbestos removal, hazardous waste, electrical safety, etc.

- Julien Bellavance
  N.H. State Representative

THE MEMBER WHO NEVER CAME BACK

(EDITOR’S NOTE: George Franklin, President of the Engineering Society of New England, wrote an essay and published it in the ESNE Journal. NEHES - and probably every organization nationally - needs more participation and support from its membership.)

“It amuses me now to think that your organization spends so much time looking for new members when I was there all the time. Do you remember me?

“I’m the fellow who came to every meeting, but nobody paid any attention to me. I tried several times to be friendly, but everyone seemed to have his own friends to talk to and be with. I sat down among some unfamiliar faces several times, but they didn’t pay much attention to me.

“I hoped somebody would ask me to join one of the committees or to somehow participate and contribute - but no one did.

“Finally, because of illness, I missed a meeting. The next month no one asked where I had been. I guess it didn’t matter very much whether I was there or not. On the next meeting date I decided to stay home and watch a good television program. When I attended the next meeting, no one asked where I was the month before.

“You might say that I’m a good guy, a good family man, that I hold a responsible job and love my community. “YOU KNOW WHO ELSE I AM? I’M THE MEMBER WHO NEVER CAME BACK.”

Reflect a few moments. Remember the new member you signed up? Is he or she still around? Every organization needs new members - but not just for statistics. Everyone wants to feel welcome and needed.

Submitted by
Jack Berger

WANTED

PROGRAMMING STRATEGIES

Our Andover Controls computer is up and running. I went to Andover’s class for two days and am impressed. You cannot learn all the points on programming your equipment for effective energy savings, but you do get enough of the basics to get your feet wet and not erase your program. You can connect numerous pieces of equipment to time, occupancy, outside air and space temperature and the operation of other equipment. I will have to admit that learning the strategy is not easy. You have to take time and learn the logic. But that’s the beauty. Computers, if anything, are logical. It trains your mind to be thorough, consistent and accurate. These valuable traits you can use anywhere, especially in maintenance and management. At this point you and your computer are limited only by your imagination. I cannot claim great imagination - however I’m trying. If anyone wants to swap program strategy ideas I would be happy to do this.

Also, it would be possible to see this first hand if you had a modem with 1200 baud rate and Procomm communications software. However, if you don’t and are using other systems, I’m sure the basics are the same and swapping strategies will help us both out.

David Hathaway
(617) 396-9250 x1482

NEWS FROM VERMONT

Vermont is pleased to host the fall seminar of the New England Hospital Engineers’ Society this month. The Equinox in Manchester, Vermont is a beautifully restored country inn that will give all those who attend a flavor of autumn in Vermont.

The Vermont Hospital Engineering Society held its annual meeting on September 18th in Stowe, VT. The meeting was held in conjunction with the Vermont Hospital Association and featured a discussion with Dr. Larry Miller from the VT. State Air Pollution Control Division. His topic was incineration regulations pertaining to installation and operation within the state.

All sixteen Vermont hospitals were recently scrutinized by the hospital data council, an independent group formed to review the proposed budgets of the respective hospitals. The resulting recommendations were critical of the larger hospitals’ attempt to attract primary care patients from small and rural facilities market areas. The general feeling of the council was that if the smaller hospitals are to survive, the primary care for the community should stay within their health care facility.

Jack Gosselin
Vermont State Rep.
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