

Journal

OF THE INTERNATIONAL KITCHEN EXHAUST CLEANING ASSOCIATION

ISSUE 55 / FALL 2023



FIRE PREVENTION

LIFE SAFETY

CERTIFICATION

GROWTH

CONTINUING EDUCATION

COMMUNITY

OPPORTUNITY

STANDARDS

Journal

OF THE INTERNATIONAL KITCHEN EXHAUST CLEANING ASSOCIATION

Serving the Commercial Kitchen Exhaust Industry Worldwide

The IKECA Journal is an industry publication for cleaners, fire marshals, insurance professionals, facility managers, vendors and other interested parties in the commercial kitchen exhaust cleaning and inspection industry.

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IN EACH ISSUE

- 05 Letter from the IKECA President**
Randy Russo, CECS, CESI / Kept Companies
- 06 From the Desk of the Executive Director**
Kathy A. DeMarco, CAE / IKECA Executive Director
- 07 IKECA Education Isn't Just for Conferences Anymore**
April Elligson / IKECA Associate Director
- 08 Association News**
- Canadian Chapter Update
 - Certification Committee Update
 - Conference Committee Update
 - Education Committee Update
 - Finance Committee Update
 - Insurance/AHJ Committee Update
 - Membership Committee Update
 - Technical Standards Development Committee Update
- 13 New Certifications & New Members**
- 16 IKECA Board of Directors**

FEATURED ARTICLES

- 18 NFPA 96, 2024 Ed.**
Nelson Dilg, CECS, CESI and Frank Mitarotonda, CECS, CESI / IKECA Liaisons to NFPA
- 21 Want to Run Your Business Better? Then Run These Three Reports**
Gene Marks
- 24 Should You Be Doing National Account Work?**
Bill Dayton / Affiliate Network at Commercial Fire
- 27 Forewarned is Forearmed**
Chuck Gallagher

DON'T MISS IN THIS ISSUE

- 29 Finding the Hard Solution for Your Client**
Charles Cochrane, CECS, BCCS / Cochrane Ventilation
- 30 IKECA Certifications Offer ADA, Other Accommodations**
Meazure Learning
- 32 What Does it Mean to Work Remotely?**
Grant Mogford, CFPS, CECS, CESI / Flue Steam, Inc.
- 33 Why is Industrial Hood Cleaning So Important?**
Nathan Willard / HOODZ International
- 34 Are You Getting the Most Out of Your Current GPS Vendor?**
Azuga, Inc.

Calendar of *Important Dates*

It's not too early to mark your calendars for 2024! Take a look at the calendar below:



2024

MEMBERSHIP

Contact Person: Rene Bonner, rene@ikeca.org, (410) 417-5234 ext. 1130

Dates shown below are the final due date for payment.

- Membership Dues – 03/01/2024
- Renewal Documents – 03/01/2024
- Additional Location Fee – 08/01/2024

CERTIFICATION RENEWAL

Contact Person: Gina Gibson, gina@ikeca.org, (443) 903-3710 ext. 1126

The following certifications renew on June 1. Payment and renewal documents must be submitted by this date.

- CECT – Fee and renewal documents, every 2 yrs.
- CECS – Fee and renewal documents, every year
- CESI – Fee and renewal documents, every 2 yrs.
- PECT – Fee, every 3 yrs.
- BCCS/BCSI- Renewal dates vary – email questions to info@ikeca.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

Contact Person: April Elligson, april@ikeca.org (410) 417-5234 ext. 1135

- Annual Membership Meeting – Orlando, FL: April 17-19, 2024
- Fall Technical Seminar & Expo – St Louis, MO: October 23-25, 2024

JANUARY

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Letter From the *IKECA* President

From the Desk of the President

Randy Russo, CECS, CESI / Kept Companies



The Importance of IKECA in Promoting Fire Life Safety and Protection

Fire prevention and life safety are of paramount importance in any community, and organizations dedicated to ensuring the highest standards in fire prevention and protection play a critical role in safeguarding public health. One such organization is the International

Kitchen Exhaust Cleaning Association (IKECA), which has emerged as a global leader in promoting fire safety through the regulation and certification of kitchen exhaust cleaning professionals. Here, I will explain the significance of IKECA and its contribution to mitigating fire hazards, protecting public health, and fostering a safer environment for all.

The role of IKECA in fire prevention within kitchen exhaust systems is an essential component of commercial kitchens—effectively removing heat, smoke, and grease-laden vapors from the cooking area. However, over time, these systems accumulate a significant amount of flammable grease, posing a severe fire hazard. IKECA recognizes this risk and plays a crucial role in establishing and maintaining industry standards for the cleaning and maintenance of kitchen exhaust systems.

By setting guidelines and best practices, IKECA ensures that certified professionals follow a rigorous cleaning protocol to minimize the potential for fires. Regular and thorough cleaning of kitchen exhaust systems prevents the accumulation of grease, reducing the risk of fire ignition and the rapid spread of flames in commercial kitchens. Through education, training, and certification programs, IKECA promotes a higher level of expertise among professionals, ensuring that they possess the necessary knowledge and skills to handle kitchen exhaust systems safely. Beyond fire safety, kitchen exhaust systems play a vital role in maintaining indoor air quality and protecting public health. As cooking activities generate various airborne contaminants, such as smoke, particulate matter, and volatile organic compounds, these pollutants can accumulate in the kitchen and surrounding areas, posing health risks to employees and customers.

IKECA's emphasis on proper cleaning and maintenance helps prevent the recirculation of contaminated air within commercial kitchens, reducing the potential for respiratory issues and other health problems. By ensuring that kitchen exhaust systems are clean and fully functional, IKECA plays a crucial role in preserving indoor air quality, and creating a healthier environment for both employees and customers.

IKECA works closely with regulatory bodies and code officials to establish and maintain industry standards for kitchen exhaust cleaning. Compliance with these standards not only ensures fire safety and public health but also helps establishments meet legal requirements. By adhering to IKECA's guidelines, commercial kitchens can demonstrate their commitment to safety, potentially reducing liability and insurance costs.

IKECA's collaboration with code officials also contributes to the development and improvement of fire codes related to kitchen exhaust systems. By providing expert knowledge and industry insights, IKECA helps shape regulations that reflect the latest advancements in fire prevention and mitigation techniques, further enhancing the overall safety of commercial kitchens.

The International Kitchen Exhaust Cleaning Association (IKECA) plays a pivotal role in promoting fire safety, protecting public health, and fostering a safer environment in commercial kitchens worldwide. Through its certification programs, IKECA ensures that kitchen exhaust cleaning professionals possess the necessary skills and expertise to maintain systems in compliance with industry standards. By addressing the critical issues of fire hazards and indoor air quality, IKECA enhances safety, reduces health risks, and aids in compliance with codes and regulations.

As we continue to recognize the significance of fire prevention and public health, IKECA is instrumental in creating a safer and healthier environment for employees, customers, and the public. By promoting awareness, setting standards, and fostering collaboration, IKECA serves as a beacon of excellence in the field of kitchen exhaust cleaning, making invaluable contributions to fire safety and public well-being. ♦

From the Desk of the *Executive Director*

From the Desk of the Executive Director

Kathleen A. DeMarco, CAE / IKECA Executive Director



Calling All Stakeholders: IKECA Is Here For You

As the only trade organization in the KEC industry, IKECA must, by definition, represent all stakeholders who have an interest in life safety and fire prevention through proper commercial kitchen exhaust system inspection, cleaning and maintenance. Like a table, all legs must support the top equally... or you have

an uneven, unstable surface, or one or more legs will fail. In fact, in its standards-writing activity, IKECA's ANSI accreditation as a Standards Developer absolutely requires that all stakeholder parties be represented while creating an industry standard.

A stakeholder is defined as “a person, group, or entity with an interest in a project, organization, or system. They're impacted by its outcomes, directly or indirectly. Their differing views influence decisions. Effective management involves engaging to consider interests and address concerns for better outcomes.”

Represented in the growing IKECA membership are KEC companies (domestic and international), who perform KE inspection and cleaning services; supplier Associate members who support the KEC work through the equipment, supplies and services they provide; insurance and risk management professionals who work to evaluate and eliminate risk of commercial kitchen fires; restaurant owners/facility managers, who manage and operate commercial kitchens; and authorities having jurisdiction, our code official partners who have the authority to regulate local standards for KEC cleaning and inspection.

With this many stakeholder parties involved, it is important that each understands not only their own roles and responsibilities when it comes to managing the commercial kitchen exhaust system, but the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders.

IKECA recently introduced a new resource for the industry, the *Commercial Kitchen Exhaust System Cleaning, Maintenance & Inspection Responsibilities: A Guide for Stakeholders* and in less than a year, nearly a thousand copies have been purchased and handed

out to stakeholder partners in the field. Why? Because in one simple hand-out/leave-behind piece, IKECA defines the roles and responsibilities of each party in easy, list form. This sets the stage for real conversation about how the facility can best be managed, cleaned, inspected and maintained, and enables discussions on industry standards, qualified and certified work, and more.

If you haven't already, consider how you could use the Guide for Stakeholders in your business. IKECA is making the full-color foldout brochures available to IKECA Members essentially at cost. Available in the IKECA Online Store, the *Guide* uses eye-catching graphics, professional layout, and format which is designed to accommodate labeling for mailings.

This new publication is just one way that IKECA is striving to meet its mission to advance the quality of cleaning, inspection and maintenance of commercial kitchen exhaust systems worldwide. By bringing together all stakeholders and providing education and fostering understanding of roles and responsibilities, everyone can do their part to protect life safety and prevent fire loss and damage in commercial kitchen exhaust systems. ♦

Share Your Ideas

Write an article for an upcoming issue of the Journal

Not sure about writing an article?

Our professional staff will help you “polish” your article. Don't let the thought that “I'm not a writer” stop you from sharing your ideas or perspective.

Need more incentive?

Earn CEUs!

Need continuing education credits to maintain your certification?

Earn 0.3 CEU for submitting an article for publication in the IKECA Journal.

Questions? Call IKECA at 410-417-5234 or email info@ikeca.org.

A Word From the *Associate Director*

IKECA Education Isn't Just for Conferences Anymore

April Elligson / IKECA Associate Director



IKECA Certification is more than just passing an exam. AHJs and Facilities around the world are now seeing the importance of hiring a KEC operator who has IKECA Certified Technicians on staff. Part of what makes our certification program stand out as elite are the requirements behind not only earning the certification but maintaining it by earning Continuing Education Units (CEUs) between renewal cycles.

There are currently many ways to acquire CEUs. OSHA provides online 10 and 30-hour courses, IKECA provides CEUs for submitting Journal articles, there are online courses related to fire suppression and safety that IKECA accepts, etc.

Despite these opportunities (just to name a few), for years many IKECA Certification holders relied on attending an IKECA Conference for their certification renewal requirements. Prior to 2020, this was the best solution for many KEC operators and certification holders because all education could be earned in a three-day setting while being able to connect with like-minded individuals and discover new ways to grow their business with different tools from the exhibitors on the tradeshow floor.

Now that we are living in a post-pandemic world, the landscape of the KEC industry, like many other industries, has completely changed. Being able to afford (not just monetarily) to travel to an IKECA Conference is not as easy and glamorous as it used to be. The desire is still there, but many KEC owners are finding it difficult to step away from their business due to a lack of manpower and having more work than they know what to do with.

This new landscape has led to a “catch-22” for many IKECA certification holders. They need to maintain their certification through education, but they can't step away. If they let their certification lapse, they could potentially lose business, but IKECA Conferences are just not as simple as booking travel anymore. So what are they supposed to do?

The IKECA Board and Staff have watched this unfold over the past three years. We have found the need for

more education throughout the year, and have begun cultivating more opportunities to earn CEUs in a virtual setting.

Starting in January of this year, the Membership Committee has hosted monthly virtual study sessions for new certification exam candidates. The Education Committee held a Waste Water Virtual Roundtable in June, which will be followed up by a Solid Fuel Webinar in September and an Employee Retention/Recruitment Roundtable in December. The Insurance/AHJ Committee presented a KEC Stakeholders Webinar in late June to over 50 attendees. Each individual session, for those who attended, provided 0.1 CEUs. Our Virtual Fall Tech Seminar this October will provide up to 1.5 CEUs. Every one of these options provides resources for the appropriate education needed toward IKECA Certification renewal. The even better news is, we are just getting started!

Our committees are working hard to continue to grow IKECA and provide as many educational resources as possible. In 2024, we hope to increase these opportunities, as well as build our online library of recorded sessions. We ALWAYS want to see our fellow KEC operators, technicians, and vendors in person at our conferences, but we do understand that sometimes you just need to be able to spread out the education that you need in order to continue cleaning to the highest standard.

As we develop our online offerings, we of course welcome any ideas or input from any of our IKECA members. The education we provide is for YOU! Let us know how we can help.

In 2024, IKECA's Annual Membership Meeting will be in April in Orlando, Florida; followed by the Fall Technical Seminar in October in St. Louis, Missouri. We hope to see you there, but we certainly enjoy the opportunity to provide education and “see you” virtually as well.

As always, thank you for your continued support of the International Kitchen Exhaust Cleaning Association. ♦

Association News

Update from the Candian Chapter Alex Young, CECS

Our chapter had a mission to increase our brand awareness and presence this year with our Canadian AHJs. Last year we had our first All Canadian IKECA booth at the Ontario Municipal Fire Prevention Officers Association. This presence produced an additional 35 Canadian AHJ members.

Our chapter committed to a two-year sponsorship with this association and this year we stepped up our presence and commitment.

We were very successful with another 30-plus AHJs joining our IKECA membership. Again having an in-person IKECA booth at the vendor trade show portion of their 65th Annual Training Symposium. In addition, we submitted an article for publication in their annual magazine “Top 10 Things You Must Know About Commercial Kitchen Fire Prevention.” We are very pleased to report we were successfully published.

Following this article, we were offered an opportunity to provide a presentation at the June 4th – 8th Symposium. Along with myself and vice chair of the Canadian Chapter, Bill Doherty, we presented on stage to an audience of approximately 150 Ontario AHJs. For those of you who are not familiar with our Ontario market, Bill along with being the past president here in Canada for IKECA, is also one of my KEC company's largest competitors.

I felt having Bill as a co-presenter would bring true transparency to IKECA. We are there on behalf of IKECA and truly dedicated to our mission of bringing brand awareness and presence along with education to help aid the AHJ's mission of life safety.

I'm pleased to report the presentation was an amazing success we were extremely well-received and generated a lot of conversation and buzz among the present AHJs. Following our presentation we have been approached to speak with many individual chapters around Ontario at their local meetings. The conversation continued throughout the Symposium, showing a very committed interest in commercial cooking operations and the value IKECA certification brings to our KEC industry.

Furthermore, I had the opportunity to attend multiple segments of the Symposium in and amongst the AHJs showing IKECA as a true partner committed to life safety through education and partnership with the AHJ community.

Our Canadian Chapter was very successful in meeting our goals of higher IKECA brand awareness and presence in the first part of this year.

Moving forward, we will need to improve our efforts to schedule and maintain regular committee meetings. I understand we are all volunteers and our day-to-day commitments to our companies are in extremely high demand, mine included. Our goals for the future are



Update from the Candian Chapter, *continued*

Alex Young, CECS

to address our brand and the value of IKECA certification and membership to our AHJ and KEC community across all provinces of Canada, building on the success of Ontario.

Thank you, and I look forward to talking and virtually seeing you all at our fall conference. ♦

Update from the Certification Committee

Charlie Cochrane, CECS

The certification revamp is going well. The PECT is online and the first round of the CECT has been completed online with excellent results. At this time two exams will have been completed online marking a very significant step forward for the Association in the validity of the IKECA Certification program.

The Committee has been working with psychometricians in updating the CECT process and exam along with the study material. The Education Committee has been busy at work building study content for the exam program and filling holes in the material where we could not find any published content.

The Psychometric process is designed to ensure the exam is testing knowledge that the industry has deemed important and to evaluate the test results and questions to ensure the questions are not misleading and the passing (cut score) is statistically valid. The Committee recently reviewed the score rates and reviewed the questions on the CECT per standard psychometric practices and the data is very good.

The Committee has now embarked on updating the CECS exam in the same way the CECT has been updated. The Committee is in the process of writing the questions referred to as items in the psychometric world and also with the help of the Education Committee, updating the study guide so that there is adequate study material to support the exam questions.

We would like to thank all of you who have participated in helping to define the subject matter in both the CECT and CECS programs. It is essential that the content reflect what all the stakeholders in the industry feel is the requisite knowledge. It is this process that creates the foundation for our certification programs. ♦

Update from the Conference Committee

Randy Russo, CECS, CESI

The conference committee holds significant importance for the International Kitchen Exhaust Cleaning Association (IKECA) and its meetings. As an organization dedicated to promoting the highest standards of kitchen exhaust cleaning, IKECA relies on the Conference Committee to facilitate collaboration, decision-making, and consensus-building among its members.

First and foremost, the Conference Committee provides a platform for IKECA members to come together and exchange knowledge, expertise, and best practices in the field of kitchen exhaust cleaning. The committee meetings offer an opportunity for industry professionals, including cleaning contractors, technicians, equipment manufacturers, and inspectors, to share their experiences, discuss emerging trends, and address common challenges. This collective intelligence and information-sharing contribute to the advancement of the industry and the improvement of standards.

Additionally, the Conference Committee serves as a means for developing and updating IKECA's industry guidelines and standards. Through committee discussions, members can review existing guidelines, propose revisions or additions, and work towards a consensus on the best practices to be followed in kitchen exhaust cleaning. This collaborative process ensures that the standards set by IKECA reflect the collective wisdom and expertise of its members, leading to safer and more effective practices in the field.

Moreover, the Conference Committee plays a vital role in organizing and planning IKECA's Annual Membership Meeting and Fall Technical Seminar. Members of the committee contribute their insights and ideas to shape the conference agenda, select relevant topics for presentations and workshops, and identify industry experts and keynote speakers. The committee's involvement ensures that the conference meets the needs and expectations of IKECA members, providing a valuable platform for networking, learning, and professional development.

All in all, the Conference Committee is of great importance for IKECA and its meetings. It enables collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and consensus-building among industry professionals, leading to the develop-

Continues on page 10

Update from the Conference Committee, *continued*

Randy Russo, CECS, CESI

ment of industry standards, improvement in practices, and the successful organization of events that benefit IKECA members and the kitchen exhaust cleaning industry. ♦

Update from the Education Committee

Dane Bundy, CECS

The Education Committee has continued to get new volunteers and is working hard to provide educational content for the membership. We would like to thank all of our volunteers for their participation and as always we encourage new volunteers to join our team.

This year we focused on a “KEC Best Practices Webinar Series.” We hosted our first roundtable in June covering the topic of wastewater and it provided some valuable content. As I am writing this update, we are gearing up for a Webinar on Solid Fuel in September which we are excited about as well, and following that webinar, we are ending the year with a roundtable in December on employee recruiting and retention. We will continue hosting these moving into the new year and they will be available for our membership to watch at any time on our website.

As you may know, the Education Committee has also been working on our IKECA Certification Exam Study Guides. We are proud to say after much hard work the study guide was released along with the new CECT online earlier this year. We are currently working on the study guide for the CECS and are excited to keep this momentum going.

As always, please visit the IKECA website and our YouTube channel to gain additional education, review content, and stay up to date with committee initiatives. The Education Committee thanks its volunteers, SMG, the board, and everyone who has helped or supported us. We look forward to a GREAT 2024! ♦

Update from the Finance Committee

John Muller, CECS

The Finance Committee’s primary role is to provide facts and analysis to help the Board make the best decisions about revenue and spending for the organization. The Committee is monitoring how the organization is doing versus the agreed 2023 budget, which so far has not required any recommendations of course corrections. We have also moved some of the organization’s reserves into better interest-bearing accounts, taking advantage of higher rates, and reviewed the draft 2022 tax returns submitted by our accountants and recommended them to the Board. Toward the end of the year, as the 2023 financial results become clearer, we will work with the Board to formulate a 2024 budget. ♦

Update from the Insurance/AHJ Committee

Frank Mitarotonda, CECS, CESI

The IKECA Insurance/AHJ Committee, upon completion of the Stakeholder Guide, moved forward to create another aid in the understanding of roles and responsibilities surrounding commercial Kitchen Exhaust Cleaning Stakeholders.

Our committee hosted a webinar on June 29th, 2023, which was presented by Joel Berkowitz and myself, and included a guest appearance by Kathy Slomer who had provided and explained a sample Work Order, all of which was very well received by an audience of slightly over 50 guests.

The webinar was based on information created and provided by IKECA through the Commercial Kitchen Exhaust System Cleaning, Maintenance & Inspection Responsibilities: A Guide for Stakeholders

The presentation consisted of a total of 51 slides, of which 13 were pictorials, which communicated the responsibilities of each of the Stakeholders. The stakeholder groups are identified below:

- Kitchen Exhaust Cleaning Companies
- Insurances/Loss Control/Safety Professional Responsibilities
- Facility Management / Ownership
- Authorities Having Jurisdiction (AHJ’s)

Update from the Insurance/AHJ Committee, *continued*

Frank Mitarotonda, CECS, CESI

In addition to elaborating on what the guide states, the webinar featured video footage of a restaurant fire, examples of hood stickers, a sample line drawing of ductwork, further detail into fire suppression systems, emerging technologies, etc.

In conclusion, the webinar was a success. Now off to the next task! Should you have any ideas that you would like the Insurance/AHJ Committee to expand upon, please forward them to April@ikeca.org.

Make an impact, join any Committee, share your creativity, and if you think it is difficult, well hell yeah, but, DIFFICULT jobs get done, IMPOSSIBLE jobs take a little longer.

In closing, I would like to thank the members of the team in no order, April Elligson from Stringfellow Management, Kathy Slomer, William Doornbos, Alex Young, Jay Wingfield, Scott Justis, Jeff Ralston, Anne Levine, Pete McDonnell, Caleb Pearson, Dennis Poulin, Joel Berkowitz, Bill Barnes, and Eric Dyer. ♦

Update from the Membership Committee

Kathy Slomer, CECS

I hope everyone had an awesome summer, where has the time gone?

Did you know with your IKECA Membership, you have access to many benefits, including discounts and deals with our IKECA Strategic Partners?

- Azuga, a Bridgestone Company – 50% off the first 4 months of service
- IA Business Advisors – 10% off services
- DPW Sales and Services – 25% off the list price for pressure washer parts & equipment
- My Tech Pix – 10% off the first 6 months of service
- Schermerhorn Bros. Co – Free carton of nitrile gloves with any full pallet of plastic
- Service First Processing – 20% off and an annual rebate
- Zgoda Fire Prevention – 20% off kitchen exhaust cleaning training courses

A huge thank you to our Strategic Partners!!

If you know of a company that would be a great fit with our Association and they want to become a strategic partner, send them my way.

Another benefit to your membership is the Virtual Study Sessions held the last Wednesday of the month, with no charge to members and only \$25.00 for non-members. Thinking of certifying some of your team members? Sign them up to log in and learn from the best in the industry.

Don't forget about our referral program. You can offset your membership dues by referring new members. For each paid membership you refer, you get a \$100 credit!! We have eliminated the cap so you can refer as many as you want, you could potentially have enough credit to cover your whole membership dues.

Last bit of news, the Membership Committee recommended to the Board of Directors that as an Association we discontinue the requirement for proof of vehicle insurance to join and it was approved. All other insurance requirements are still in place.

Find IKECA on all of your social media platforms, and like and share our posts! Sharing is caring. ♦

Technical Standards Development Committee Update

James Shea

Since our last committee communication, we have had two meetings this year including our meeting during the 2023 IKECA Annual Conference as well as a virtual meeting held in June. As I type this article, we sit on the eve of our 3rd meeting of the year to complete the I-10 next revision.

To update you all on the actions during these meetings I'll keep my points short by providing them to you in bullet form.

1. We voted on a new member to the committee acting as an alternate for Scott Futrell. We welcomed William (Chip) Barnhart to our committee. Chip joins the committee with extensive knowledge in kitchen system design, fire cause & origin, and forensic science. We are excited to continue to grow the level of expertise we have on the committee in these fields.

Continues on page 12

Technical Standards Development Committee Update, *continued*

James Shea

2. Our Staff Liaison, Nikki Augsburger reviewed and completed the annual compliance process with ANSI.
3. The TSDC operating procedures were adjusted and modified to sync more with ANSI Essential Requirements and sent to ANSI for approval.
4. NFPA 96, 2024 edition is out and now available for purchase electronically or hardcopy. Membership should pay close attention to the “new language” in Sections 12.6.1.3 – 12.6.1.5 regarding reporting requirements placing additional accountability on Kitchen Exhaust System cleaners. Also, the definition for “cleaning” in section 3.3.1.2 now includes combustible creosote. A change that clearly recognizes the trend in solid fuel indoor cooking. A more detailed report can be obtained by attending the Fall Virtual Technical Seminar’s session on the NFPA 96 update.
5. The TSDC is in receipt of acceptance from NFPA for the MOU request for the M-10 Standard, Revision 2
6. M-10 Standard, 2nd Edition went through ANSI public comment phase with no issues and was approved by ANSI for publication.
7. The TSDC began and is currently underway in the latest revision to the I-10 Standard with several editorial and content changes reviewed and discussed.
8. The Sub-Committee for Emerging Technologies gained some progress with regard to scope and focus and is concentrating currently on Solid Fuel cooking in Commercial buildings and working to develop language for adoption into the trio of ANSI / IKECA standards.

You might ask “Is that all?”

Well, no, not really. Your Chair and Vice Chair recently attended the National Association of State Fire Marshal’s annual symposium representing IKECA. Both Randy and I manned a booth where we received, met, and spoke to many of the State Fire Marshals throughout the country. We were able to meet the State Fire Marshal from Alaska, Chief Lloyd Nakano where we solidified our relationship and agreed to continue to provide “qualified, trained” cleaners for the great state of Alaska. We gained insight and knowledge on the process and procedure to introduce certification and potential licensing at the State & Local levels with the help of the Fire Chiefs Association. We performed a 45-minute seminar on the challenges facing commercial cooking operation life safety planning, and fire prevention and introduced the Fire Marshals to technology trends that require a knowledge of ventilation cleaners that goes beyond, plastic, chemicals, and pressure wash-

ers. Finally, we introduced the need for better code enforcement regarding Solid Fuel Cooking indoors and the challenges associated with meat smokers, improper ductwork, low auto-ignition temperatures, and low flashpoint temperatures associated with hardwood creosotes and these cooking processes. As I finish this update I can tell you that our attendance was well received, positive, and impactful! Two weeks following the symposium we have already been contacted by one State Fire Marshal in support of statewide licensing and certification and many local jurisdictions.

We are making a difference one day at a time so I will challenge each of you to look in the mirror and ask yourself, “Are we Ready for What is Coming?” It may not be today, tomorrow, or next year but if your teams are not trained, qualified, and certified maybe it is time to get this done. Be proactive, but more importantly, be ready for change because it will be coming. One city, county, province, or state at a time.

I tell my clients all the time “We are not janitors!” We are fire prevention & life safety professionals. We do not contain fires; we do not extinguish fires. What we do is a greater good than even those folks because if we do our jobs properly, we are preventing fires!



It has been and will continue to be a goal of Randy and myself to improve this industry and reduce losses of life and property from fire through proper training, qualifications, licensing, and education.

We remain humble in our endeavor! ♦

New Certifications / *as of August 2023*

CONGRATULATIONS TO THOSE WHO RECENTLY ACHIEVED THEIR DESIGNATIONS AND CERTIFICATIONS!

PECT Professional Exhaust Cleaning Technician

- Hector Mago / Bare Metal Maintenance, Inc.
- Antonio Taborn, Jr. / Bare Metal Maintenance, Inc.
- Angel Burgos / Bare Metal Maintenance, Inc.
- Connor Jarvis / Performance Industrial
- Chance Anderson / Core Mechanical, Inc.
- Patrick Allyn Butler / Besal Services, Inc.
- Kyler Norton / C & S Fire Safe Services, LLC
- Idris Idin / Besal Services, Inc.

CESI Certified Exhaust System Expert

- Benjamin M. Swanson / Hood Cleaning, Inc.
- Jonathan Scott Vignati / Cintas Fire Protection-FNA
- Joseph Amore, III / Airways Cleaning & Fireproofing Co.
- Chris Alan Saylor / A&A Fire & Life Safety Group

CECT Certified Exhaust Cleaning Technician

- Sean Hollinger / Apex Hood Cleaning, Inc.
- Russ K. Sneddon / Utah State Fire Marshal
- Eric Bridenhagen / Apex Hood Cleaning, Inc.
- Micah Croker / Westman Fire Protection
- Steven Scott / Westman Fire Protection
- Miles Rowland / North Bright Inc.
- Nazim Senaldi / NIS
- Andrew Zimmerman / Z-Mann Fire Protection
- David Kirk Smith / Apex Hood Cleaning, Inc.

CECS Certified Exhaust Cleaning Specialist

- Del Ray Wren / C & S Fire-Safe Services, LLC
- Jon Blue / Midwest Duct Cleaning Services
- Christopher Alan Saylor / A&A Fire & Life Safety Group
- Misael Bernal-Sigala / Bernal Cleaning LLC
- Bernie Braunwalder / Maximum Exhaust Cleaning
- Jeffrey W. Ludlam / Clark Services Group
- Christopher Dowgiert / Sani-Vac Service Inc.
- Hassan Jafari / CFM Testing
- Kevin Bowen / Bowmar Industrial Services, Inc.
- Cleve Seymour / Inland Inspect Cleaning Systems Ltd.
- Martin Stout / Boyz In Da Hood

BCSI Boston Certified Systems Inspector

- David Russo / CS Ventilation
- Thomas Dunlevy / Apex Ventilation Group, LLC

BCCS Boston Certified Cleaning Specialist

- Thomas Dunlevy / Apex Ventilation Group, LLC
- Andrew Hall / Nelbud Services, LLC
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- **Ariel Rivera** / Morales Soto E Ingenieria Limitada
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- **Weam Diab** / The Healthy Home
- **Malik Alsuhaimeh** / WHJA CO

Introductory Membership

- **Naz Senaldi** / National Interior Solutions LLC

AHJ

- **Sean McKibben** / Belleville Fire Department
- **Michael Yavarow, Jr.** / Bemidji Fire Department
- **Kevin Plested** / Bracebridge Fire Department
- **Aimee Jordan** / Bradford West Gwillimbury Fire and Emergency Services
- **Doug Kellam** / Brant County Fire
- **Jeffrey Hajek** / Broadview Heights Fire Department
- **Harrison Quan** / Central York Fire Services
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- **Kevin Esposito** / Charlotte Fire Department
- **Patrick Harrington** / Charlotte Fire Department
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- **DaShaun Wilson** / Charlotte Fire Department
- **Kelly Blaine** / City of Burlington Fire Department
- **Krystal Langston** / Clinton Fire Department
- **Ryan Rutter** / Cornwall Fire Service
- **Tom Waldschmidt** / County of Brant Fire Department
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IKECA Announces 2023 Revision of the ANSI/IKECA M-10 Standard for the Maintenance of Commercial Kitchen Exhaust Systems

The International Kitchen Exhaust Cleaning Association (IKECA) is thrilled to announce the highly anticipated release of the 2023 revision of the ANSI/IKECA M-10 Standard for the Maintenance of Commercial Kitchen Exhaust Systems.

First published in 2019, the ANSI/IKECA M-10 defines acceptable methods to operate and maintain commercial kitchen exhaust systems by end users in the interim between professional system cleaning services. The purpose of the ANSI/IKECA M-10 is to enhance public safety by reducing the potential fire safety hazards associated with commercial kitchen exhaust systems, irrespective of the type of cooking equipment. This standard is intended to be used by Authorities having jurisdiction (AHJs), insurance underwriters, installers, maintainers, designers, inspectors, specifiers, operators, and food service establishments to ensure compliance and alignment with applicable codes and requirements for system cleanliness and fire safety.

For many years, the commercial kitchen exhaust cleaning industry has relied on NFPA 96®, Standard for Ventilation Control and Fire Protection of Commercial Cooking Operations. The ANSI/IKECA M-10 works in concert with and addresses many of the areas not covered in NFPA 96.

The International Kitchen Exhaust Cleaning Association (IKECA), formed in 1989, became an American National Standards Institute (ANSI)-Accredited Standards Developer in 2009. Accreditation by ANSI signifies that an organization's voluntary consensus standards development procedures meet ANSI's requirements for openness and due process. Accreditation by ANSI is a prerequisite for an organization to submit documents for approval as American National Standards (ANS). ANSI approves a document as an ANS when the sponsoring ANSI-Accredited Standards Developer (ASD) successfully demonstrates that consensus has been achieved and that the standard's development complied with ANSI's Essential Requirements and oversight process.

We extend our gratitude to the dedicated industry professionals and experts who have contributed to developing this revision, including Cleaning Contractors, HVAC Contractors, Fire Suppression Contractors, End Users/Food Service, Fire Analysis Experts, Designers, Manufacturers, Fire Prevention Authorities and Insurance professionals. Their commitment to advancing

kitchen exhaust system safety and maintenance is pivotal to the success of our industry.

The ANSI/IKECA M-10 2023 revision is now available for purchase in both digital and print formats. To acquire your copy of the ANSI/IKECA M-10 2023 revision or to learn more about its contents, please visit the official IKECA website www.ikeca.org and the [online store](#). ♦

Purchase your **ANSI/IKECA**
2023 M10 Today!



SCAN ME

Featured Articles

NFPA 96, 2024 Edition Published

Nelson Dilg, CECS, CESI & Frank Mitarotonda, CECS, CESI / IKECA Liaisons to NFPA

The 2024 edition of NFPA Standard 96: Standard for Ventilation Control and Fire Protection of Commercial Cooking Operations is complete, has been published and is available through IKECA headquarters. Please act to get a copy and familiarize yourself with its new content. Remember that, through ANSI/IKECA C-10, I-10 & M-10 standards, and various ICC codes, NFPA 96 is the most durable guide that KEC contractors have available. It remains the most comprehensive and most widely distributed source of readily available information for all interested parties. We cannot go wrong by being well aware of its contents and by standing on the merits of ALL that it prescribes.

In this writing, we will seek to briefly inform you of recent revisions and additions, especially as they might matter to the commercial kitchen cleaning contractor. We will summarize those changes that are most pertinent, chapter by chapter, here below. Please note that we do not have the permission of NFPA to directly duplicate the text of the standard here.

Introduction – The introduction to the 2024 Edition includes three key points:

1. Expansive work was done to guide the reader who is interested in Mobile and Temporary Cooking Operations, because it was decided that this subject would continue to be included in NFPA 96 rather than to “spin off” as its own standard.
2. What is required concerning the responsibility for inspection, testing, maintenance and cleanliness of commercial cooking operations has been made clearer and greatly expanded in this text. This should be of particular interest to the cleaning contractor.
3. Also, the form, use and maintenance of labels has been expanded and puts greater responsibility on the parties described. This too should be of great interest.

Chapter 4

4.1.5 Responsibility – This section has been expanded to include a new 4.1.5.1 & 4.1.5.2 which lend greater clarity to the reader/user as it relates to who is responsible for inspection, testing, maintenance, and cleaning. More specifically, the new language makes it clearer that the cleaner is not the contractually responsible party, overall.

4.9 Grease-Contaminated Cloths – This is a new section intended to address the risk of fire from spontaneous combustion of greasy/oily rags. Giv-

en the potential for the contractor’s contribution to this risk, it will be important that we understand this revision and, that contractors can demonstrate procedural compliance with its provisions.

Chapter 12

12.6 Cleaning of Exhaust Systems – Needless to say, most of our interest is found here. Please know that one of the challenges that the NFPA Technical Committee sought to overcome in this cycle was that of identifying the last individual company and the last individual technician who personally inspected or cleaned the system. Further, that the actual cleaning contractor performing the work (instead of the master or general contractor who sold the work) would be required to report on an adhesive hood label, per

12.6.13.1; the date of service as indicated by a perforation to the label, the name of the individual performing the service and, the name, address, and phone number of the service provider (local company). Also, per 12.6.13.2, that the required label shall be securely attached to the hood.

Additionally, per 12.6.14, after inspection, a written report shall be provided to the system owner (see 4.1.5) or to the AHJ within two weeks. The written inspection report shall include, per 12.6.14.1, a record of those areas where accumulation exceeded prescribed limits (as in 12.6.1), areas that are inaccessible, areas that are accessible but that were not inspected, location(s) of access panels, location(s) of visible duct leakage, location(s) of leaking access panels. Moreover, per 12.6.15, after cleaning, a written report shall be provided to the system owner (see 4.1.5) or AHJ within two weeks. The written cleaning report shall include per 12.6.15.1 the date of cleaning, the name of the person who performed the work, and the name address and phone number of the service provider (local company).

Also, per 12.6.15.2, note information about areas that are inaccessible, areas that are accessible but that were not cleaned, location(s) of access panels, location(s) of visible duct leakage, location(s) of leaking access panels. Moreover, per 12.6.16, reports required in 12.6.14 and 12.6.15 shall be provided to the AHJ. Lastly, per 12.6.18, grease removal devices that are missing or in disrepair shall be replaced.

Chapter 15

15.7 Fire-Extinguishing Equipment for Solid Fuel Cooking. This section has changed in 15.7.4 to require that solid fuel appliances of cementitious or

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masonry construction shall have provided automatic fire suppression equipment.

Chapter 17 Mobile and Temporary Cooking Operations. As stated earlier, NFPA decided that these operations would continue within the 96 standard instead of establishing a new specific standard. As a result, chapter 17 is significantly expanded as compared to the 2021 edition. Though it has been crafted to emphasize the application of existent standards to Mobile and Temporary, we suggest that you read the chapter for yourself, in its entirety, to become more familiar with its specific requirements.

Annex A

A.4.1.5.1 Suggests that qualified inspections should occur at the time of change in ownership, tenancy or appliance arrangement. A.4.1.5.2 more specifically stipulates that the cleaning contractor or fire suppression contractor does not bear the burden of responsibility for compliance with 4.1.5. Also, A.12.6.13.1(1) Identifies a hand punch as an acceptable perforation tool.

We will give a presentation, similar to this writing, during the 2023 IKECA Virtual Fall Technical Conference and, a more comprehensive presentation with Q&A at the 2024 IKECA Annual Conference in Orlando next spring. ♦



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Want To Run Your Business Better? Then Run These Three Reports

Gene Marks



As a lifelong accountant, I have what may be surprising news for you: your company's monthly financial statements aren't very effective.

Sure, they can help. It's good to look back at the prior month and the year-to-date results so that you can determine if your company is profitable and also where there may be over-spending. Don't ignore your monthly financial statements. But take them with a

grain of salt: they're usually prepared well after the fact (for many, it's weeks after the month ends). So although they serve as a good post-mortem review of results, they're not so useful to run a business in real-time.

So what is useful? I've found that these three reports are core for the managers of my best clients who run profitable businesses. Why? Because they tell the man-

ager what's going on right now and what is likely to happen in the near future.

The flash report

Maybe you've never heard of this report because it's not a common name among accountants. But for my best clients, their **flash report** is a critical tool for keeping their real-time pulse on the business.

The flash report is an aggregation of data from many different sources. It's usually produced two or three times a week and put together not necessarily by a finance person but by a good administrative person who has access to the data needed. I have clients where the administrative person creates this report manually on a piece of paper and leaves it on the desk of the owner. I have others that do it by spreadsheet or via email. The report brings together numbers from various places that are key to the current operations of a business.

These numbers vary by industry, but for the most part, they include **current cash, receivables and payables**. The report also shows **year-to-date sales, backlog, purchase orders and open quotes**. It shows year-to-

Continues on page 24

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Want To Run Your Business Better? Then Run These Three Reports, *continued*

Gene Marks

date hours and overtime. Some of my clients like to see updated data about specific ongoing jobs or product lines.

The most important thing about this report is **benchmarking**. Every current number has a corresponding number from its prior period. For example, if cash on hand is \$500, what was cash on hand at the end of last year? Or if year-to-date sales are \$10,000, what were the same sales at this point last year? Are we ahead or behind? You have to benchmark your current numbers against a similar period to put things into context.

The pipeline report

Where the flash report takes numbers from different sources, the **pipeline report** should be taking numbers from your customer relationship management (CRM) system — which is an application every company should have. When you're using your CRM system the right way, you will be tracking quotes and opportunities, as well as tasks and emails connected to those things.

My best clients leverage this data weekly and review a pipeline report. The pipeline report lists all **open opportunities** usually by "hot," "warm" and "cold" designations, which are internally defined. It shows the **dollar value** of the opportunity, the date it's **estimated to close** and the **"weight"** or chance it will turn into a sale. It also shows who's working on the opportunity and the historical and future tasks that need to be done to complete the opportunity.

When used the right way, the pipeline report is a tool for managing the sales team and seeing who is doing what and how effectively. This report is a sales forecast and serves as a critical instrument for knowing whether growth or contraction is in the cards. If you produce this report every week, you'll not only be able to better direct your under-performing sales people towards more productive activities, but you'll also have your thumb on the blood flow of your business: your expected revenues.

There are other great reports you can run from your CRM system, but that's a topic for another day. Relying on the pipeline report will not only help to increase and manage your company's expected revenues but also increase the usage of your CRM system.

The rolling cash forecast report

If you've got a great pipeline report, then good for you — you are forecasting your revenues. But just forecast-

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ing revenues isn't enough. My best clients forecast their cash flow. Why? Because successful people are always looking ahead. They don't like surprises. They want to know what's coming, so they can make decisions in advance and better manage the future to the full extent.

Sales are important, but in the end, it's all about cash. Do you know what your cash will be just 90 days from now? You probably don't. But you should. And to know this, you'll need to have a **rolling cash forecast report**. Putting this report together isn't so tough. Here's how:

First, estimate your overhead over the next 90 days. You know this: it's your payroll, utilities, rent, internet... all the recurring costs you're already paying.

Next, estimate your typical margin on a sale, which takes into account the direct materials and labor needed. I realize that this may differ based on many factors, from the product line to the time of year. But this is not science — it's just an estimate. So come up with a reasonable number.

Assuming you're producing a reliable pipeline report, you've got your sales forecast for the next 90 days. There are sales that are not on this report because they've already closed and are considered open orders. Add this. Then talk with your sales team to further refine this 90 days sales forecast.

Now, take your estimated sales, multiply the estimated margin and deduct your estimated overhead. You're almost there!

Think about any anomalies over the next 90 days — an estimated tax payment, a big supplier check that will be due, etc. — and figure that in. Take your beginning cash, add/deduct the net results from the above and you'll have your ending cash in 90 days. Voila! You've now done a rolling cash forecast.

Do a rolling cash forecast every month. It'll be tough at first, but easier after you get it down. Trust me when I tell you it will change your life. No longer will you be running your business in the dark. You will have a better idea of the future and can make better decisions because of it.

In summary, there are lots of reports that are great for a business. But most involve analyzing the past. But the reports that really focus on the present — and the future — are the reports I've listed above. Get in the practice of producing these reports and you'll find yourself running a more profitable, sustainable organization. ♦

Opinions expressed by IKECA Journal contributors are their own. Article originally featured in Slingmakers Magazine, Issue 177.

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Should You Be Doing National Account Work?

Bill Dayton / Affiliate Network at Commercial Fire

Every kitchen hood exhaust cleaning (KEC) company owner must ask if national account company (NAC) work makes sense for their business. The answer is a little more complicated than yes or no.

Being in the KEC and life safety business has its advantages. We know that commercial and public buildings require our services, but have we appreciated how code requirements make our industry recession-resistant? During a recession, our customers cannot ask, "Can I go without abating the grease in my commercial kitchen's hood exhausts?" Instead, they can only ask, "Should I continue to work with the same service company?" That is a great position to be in, and it paid dividends during the pandemic.

Our industry has always been recession-resistant. Now we can say the industry is pandemic-resistant as well. Thanks to advocacy efforts made by the Fire Equipment Manufacturers' Association Government Relations Committee (FEMA GRC*), the U.S. Department of Homeland Security deemed the fire prevention industry essential. Again, what a great industry to be a part of. Not only do we get economic and financial benefits, but we also get to make a difference every day by keeping people and property safe.

What does all this have to do with NAC work? It is easy to forget today where we were in 2020 and 2021. It is reasonable to say that many of you have more work than your technicians can complete. Every leader I talk to in our industry describes their biggest challenges as hiring, training, and obtaining licenses for qualified technicians.

This makes it easy to forget that in 2020 the businesses that kept their buildings open for our technicians to perform work were largely grocery, convenience, big-box stores, and large restaurant chains. These businesses are also the ones that work almost exclusively with national account companies. This means that NACs helped many independent fire prevention companies keep working during the hardest part of the pandemic. Had it not been for their partnership with NACs, many independent KECs may have closed their businesses. I can tell you that, as director of Affiliate services for a national account company, having our Affiliate partners personally reach out to say, "Thank you for keeping my business open" was one of the most gratifying things I have experienced in my thirty years in the industry.

National account companies have been around my entire career and are not going anywhere. Biased or

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not, multi-site facility managers (FMs) are all pushing for vendor consolidation and will continue to do so. The demand for NACs is only increasing at the customer level as FMs desire data and visibility for all their assets across locations. This growth in NAC demand is driving many non-traditional companies that manage other types of services to enter the fire prevention business.

Since NACs are here to stay, what are the benefits for KECs to partner with NACs, besides maintaining work through turbulent social and economic times?

BENEFITS

Consistent Cash Flow and Zero Acquisition Cost. This is a huge benefit, as national account work is provided at no cost to you. No need to sell/hunt for new work. New work orders are assigned to your team, which is an excellent way to grow your existing routes.

More Productive and Efficient Routes. Adding national account work helps you optimize your technician's routes by giving them fill-in work for their territories, reducing windshield time, and making their routes more profitable.

You Get Into Businesses that are Normally Closed to You. Large restaurant chains, for example, consist of multiple sites rather than a single location. For that reason, these large restaurants need someone who can take care of all their locations. And as part of an NAC, you're an essential part of the nationwide system that does just that.

Easy Way to Start/Expand Your Business. You automatically have profitable work to start your new business or to expand into a new geographical or service area. Adding national account work helps you afford that new technician you need for local work but need more work to pay for. Before long, you may find that your team has grown larger as a result.

No Bad Debt Write-Offs. All business owners understand the frustration of having bad debt. With national account work, this risk is on the national account company, not you. The NAC typically pays you once the work and paperwork are completed, regardless of when the customer pays. This also means no admin time chasing down past-due invoices.

Single Contact for Multiple Customers. This is self-explanatory. It just makes sense to avoid having to deal with multiple contacts. Call centers are operated by the NAC, meaning most calls—good and bad—are handled by the NAC, helping you focus on what you do best—providing fire prevention and life safety services.

Does all this mean there are no trade-offs for doing national account work? It would be disingenuous for

me to say yes. So what are the trade-offs, and how do NACs mitigate them?

"When the shutdown of local businesses occurred, the ones that stayed open were mostly in verticals that worked with national account companies."

TRADE-OFFS

Revenue Sharing with the NAC. Income from national account work is typically lower than what you charge in your local market for equivalent work. This is because NACs need to cover their costs and make a reasonable profit. However, remember the savings you receive, like zero cost for obtaining new customers (sales and advertising). With this and other considerations, revenue sharing with the NAC is much more profitable than many think, as proven by the hundreds of service companies doing NAC work since the 1980s.

National Account Companies have Strict Compliance Requirements. They certainly do. Many of these requirements are mandated by the customers, who comprise some of the country's largest and best-run businesses. Their standards and expectations continue to climb and permeate the industry as many KECs adopt NAC-level requirements for their local work. Not all, but many of the requirements are good for business.

It Takes a Long Time to Get Paid, or You Must Fight to Get Paid. This should not happen. Good national account companies pay their Affiliates when the work is complete, not when the customer pays them. If any company tells you they will pay you when they get paid,

Continues on page 26

Featured Articles

Should You Be Doing National Account Work?, *continued*

Bill Dayton / Affiliate Network at Commercial Fire

walk away. Look for NACs that offer favorable quick payment terms that work for you.

The Volume of Phone Calls. Spikes in phone call frequency can happen. However, it mostly occurs when work is not done on time. When a customer has 500 locations, and fifty companies are late getting one location done, this becomes fifty inspections past due and a glaring red flag for the customer that wants to comply. There is a lot of pressure on national account companies to complete inspections on time.

Paperwork and IVR (Interactive Voice Response). Nobody loves paperwork or having to check in and out before doing work. I certainly do not. This is another FM demand that is only increasing. The good news is that many NACs are investing in technology and process management to mitigate the impact of paperwork and IVR. Look for NACs that offer modern, technician-friendly technologies—or will soon. They are out there.

I have made some generalizations but have done my best to describe NAC work accurately. It is important to understand that not all national account companies are the same, so do your research. Some specialize in

fire prevention, and some are generalists. Additionally, some complete the bulk of their work through their branches, while others exclusively outsource their work.

Should you decide that NAC work is right for your business, you now have some considerations. There may be long-term value in having NAC work as part of your overall business model. ♦

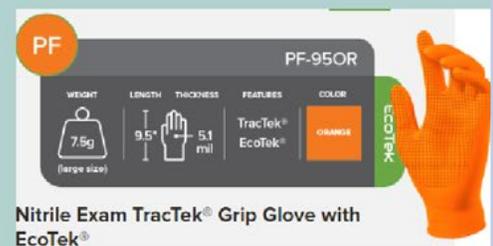
Bill Dayton, author, is the Director of the Affiliate Network at Commercial Fire in Jacksonville, Florida.



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Forewarned is Forearmed

Chuck Gallagher



Every business leader is familiar with the tantalizing scent of growth, the electric charge of scaling up. Yet, for every entrepreneurial success story, a dozen ventures face setbacks or outright failure. The question is, what sets them apart?

Through my years of experience and witnessing the highs and lows of business life, I've pinpointed five recurrent mistakes that send businesses spiraling. And

today, I'm sharing them with the hope that you, can sidestep these pitfalls.

1. The Rushed Recruitment Catastrophe

The pressing need for staffing in the initial stages often blinds businesses. This hurried approach can lead to mismatched hiring, causing long-term consequences. Relying on my experience in the outsourcing realm, I've

always valued the essence of team building. When I laid the foundation of my company, I sought leaders who resonated with my vision. This strategy has cemented our culture and resulted in a low attrition rate amid our team.

"For every setback, there's an opportunity to learn and grow."

2. Customer-Obsessed? It's a Slippery Slope

Are you prioritizing customers at the expense of your employees? A grave mistake. Your people are the backbone of your business. Even in the rocky phases of establishing my business, my commitment never wavered. I ensured timely paychecks, even if it meant

Continues on page 28

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Forewarned is Forearmed, *continued*

Chuck Gallagher

digging into my pockets. Remember, when your team thrives, your customers benefit too.

3. The Bureaucracy Blunder

Layers upon layers of communication hierarchy can stifle feedback, distancing top management from invaluable frontline insights. Tired of redundant bureaucracies, I aimed for a direct communication line in my company. This pillar of open dialogue encourages feedback and fosters a more collaborative environment.

4. The Micromanagement Misstep

Scaling your business while clinging to every detail is like catching water in a net. I learned this in 2018. Growth demands delegation, trust, and building a team of experts. My guiding principle? Hire those who can teach you something and whose skills surpass yours. When your leadership is strong, the cascading effect attracts talent.

5. All Work and No Play – A Dire Strategy

Success isn't only measured in numbers and achievements; it's also in the bonds we forge. Stepping out of the strict business setting to unwind and connect per-

sonally is essential. We organize social get-togethers that allow for genuine, relaxed connections.

In Conclusion

Navigating the tumultuous sea of business isn't for the faint-hearted. It requires intuition, patience, and an innate ability to sidestep pitfalls. As you digest these insights, remember that being forewarned is being forearmed. For every setback, there's an opportunity to learn and grow. And for every business dream, there's a path to success that avoids these fatal five. Equip yourself, connect genuinely, and remember that every failure is a stepping stone to your successive triumph. ♦

Chuck Gallagher, a seasoned entrepreneur, and a Certified Speaking Professional, extends his gratitude to the Association for this platform. He offers this piece free of charge, hoping it aids in shaping brighter entrepreneurial futures.



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Finding the Hard Solution for Your Client

Charles Cochrane, CECS, BCCS / Cochrane Ventilation



An existing facility built during the early 1980s has a down draft system. The hoods are waterwash style with a short horizontal, then two vertical ducts that transition down under the slab on grade. The sub slab duct is approximately 36 inches in diameter and 60 feet long before it transitions to a vertical shaft that terminates at the roof.

The facility calls for a quote to clean the system because the current vendor

is unresponsive.

The facility has few mechanical drawings but one access point to the ductwork is located at the end of the sub-slab duct approximately 5 feet up the shaft leading to the roof.

With only one access point and an unknown condition in the sub-slab duct, it is suggested to use robotics to determine the condition of the ductwork which has been reportedly cleaned quarterly.

A robotic system was lowered to the bottom of the shaft to view the duct condition. The ductwork was found to have grease 5 inches deep and the duct was crisscrossed with stiffening bars for much of its viewable length.

It was clear that the ductwork was not being cleaned and could not be cleaned due to confined space and the cross bracing within the ductwork. The client was informed of the situation and a strategy was developed.

The kitchen is on the ground floor with two exterior walls. The recommendation was to put together a plan to reroute the ductwork outside and install a pollution control Unit on an outside pad. An engineering firm was contacted and a formal plan was completed. As part of the plan, the client would clean the accessible ductwork and hoods monthly until the renovation was completed. The plan was approved by the client and presented to the AHJ in hopes that it would be accepted.

The AHJ accepted the plan and required that monthly reports be sent to them to ensure that things were moving forward. ♦



Don't Miss In *This Issue*

IKECA Certifications Offer ADA, Other Accommodations

Meazure Learning

For over a year now, IKECA has been administering its certification examinations by way of online testing, in combination with “live remote proctoring” or LRP technology to ensure the integrity of the IKECA certification exams and the test-taking process. Now, IKECA Certification exam dates and times are chosen by the candidate based on their own schedule, and candidates can choose to use their own home or office or travel to a local testing center if they prefer.

IKECA's Board of Directors saw online testing as a large investment but a necessary one, to ensure all interested parties could have access to IKECA Certification testing, and brought in an industry-recognized services provider, Meazure Learning, to support the technology needs. Now, over 100 candidates have taken their IKECA certification exams via Meazure Learning's online system.

IKECA accommodates all candidates and some may have special requirements that require testing accommodations. Testing accommodations are any adjustments made to testing conditions or environments divergent from the standard exam parameters. In fact,

IKECA's Certification Handbook states the following: “The IKECA Certification Examination shall be administered in accordance with the requirements set forth in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you require special assistance or unique conditions in taking an IKECA certification examination as a result of a disability or physical impairment, please contact IKECA at info@ikeca.org for more information.”

When partnering with Meazure Learning for the IKECA testing platform, IKECA was sure to engage with a provider that could fulfill these policies and provide the necessary testing accommodations.

Testing Accommodations Process

This article will walk you through Meazure Learning's testing accommodations process, for both remote proctoring and in-person testing, as well as provide helpful information to make the accommodations process as efficient as possible to ensure a seamless testing process.

Meazure Learning's informational website and online proctoring applications comply with Section 508 of the



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Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Meazure's support resources have been developed using accessibility best practice guidelines and have been tested with various assistive technology products to provide candidates with choices while ensuring the best possible experience for all users.

Your candidate has notified you that they would like accommodation. What next?

Candidates must inform IKECA, during the Certification Exam registration process, that they require an accommodation.

IKECA will provide Meazure Learning with the required information **at least thirty (30) days prior to the scheduled testing date** to ensure the requested accommodation can be successfully implemented. Both IKECA and Meazure Learning take candidate privacy seriously and will not request additional documentation about the accommodation.

Are there additional fees for testing accommodation?

Some accommodation(s) may require additional fees billed to the exam candidate. Examples of accommodations requiring additional fees include providing a reader, special proctor, extended testing time, or private room for the candidate.

How will the candidate know an accommodation has been applied?

Candidates receiving accommodation(s) who are testing at a physical testing location will receive an updated confirmation notice that lists each of the accommodation(s) they receive.

Candidates testing via remote proctoring can review their accommodation(s) during the pre-check process on their exam day. If candidates do not see an accommodation listed during pre-check, they should notify their proctor.

On Exam Day

If a candidate feels they should be receiving an accommodation that is not listed on their documentation, they can request their proctor reach out to Test Delivery to confirm; however, it is important to note that if the client has not approved an accommodation prior to exam day, the candidate may be asked to test without their requested accommodation, or be offered the opportunity to reschedule to a new date. ♦



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What Does it Mean to Work Remotely?

Grant Mogford, CFPS, CECS, CESI / Flue Steam, Inc.



How well does your business run if you as an owner are away for a long weekend, or if you decide to take a 10-day vacation? Do you have systems in place to ensure that things do not get overlooked during your absence? Do you perform certain tasks that no one else is even aware of? Are there some vendors you have that only you order from?

What happens if one day you wake up and you do not feel well and you end up in the emergency room? Who takes care of your normal business day-to-day activities?

I found myself in the hospital for what ended up being 19 days and because of a major surgery, not being able to return to work for at least six weeks. Fortunately, my wife who was my caretaker in and out of the hospital, was able to head into the office for some of her normal work activities and she was also able to work remotely for many other days. I also was able to work remotely on most days after my wife reluctantly brought my laptop to the hospital.

What does it take to work remotely?

Late in 2019 we installed a new phone system in our offices. We opted to go with a "VOIP" or Voice over Internet Protocol system. This phone system was more robust than our previous system and gave us many more features and expansion capabilities. This proved very helpful in the early pandemic as I was able to take a phone from our offices and plug it into the internet at home and it worked just the same as if I was sitting at my desk 20 miles away. Customer calls were answered or responded to without delay, and it appeared to callers that I was in fact in my office.

Many years ago, we upgraded our computer network to include secure remote access that allowed me to log in and work, just like I was sitting at my desk in my office. This too was very beneficial during the pandemic shutdown.

You may already have similar features that allow you connectivity to your phones and computers, but what other tasks do you perform that can only be done with

you physically being at your office? And what tasks do you perform that no one else in your organization has access to?

While I was in the hospital, my right-hand man was taking care of many of my normal activities, but he was also calling or emailing me with questions and situations that needed answers that I was mostly available to answer, but as I lay in the hospital bed, I began to realize that my team was able to handle most situations, but not all of them. There were websites for some activities that I was the only "user" and only I had the passwords for, there were vendors that I would speak to on a regular basis that did not have any relationship with or even know my office staff. There are AHJs that I speak to regularly that only ask for me when they call. I realized that although I trust my staff to take care of business, I was not giving them the tools they needed to do so.

I started emailing or calling my frequent vendor contacts and introducing them to my team and giving my team authorization for placing orders and following up on open items. I introduced my assistant to many of the AHJs that I work with on a regular basis. I logged into the third-party vendor sites and some of the other web-based ordering sites and I created new users for my office crew.

I am still at home, and now the Doctors are allowing me to go into the office one or two partial days a week. I am working from home, but my office is carrying most of the weight of "my" job and they are doing spectacularly at it. I have been in my office for five half days since the middle of May this year and I am incredibly proud that my team, our team, has held down the fort and kept the business running in my absence.

I do recommend that you consider for a moment that you too may not be able to perform your daily functions for a week, a month, or longer. How will your team be able to run the business for you and keep your customers serviced and happy?

Some of the productivity tools that have proven invaluable to me include:

- VOIP phone system
- Cloud-based photo management (for keeping an eye on your job sites)
- Remote access and remote control computer software (allows remote computer access)
- Live video conferencing, like Zoom®
- Microsoft Teams® for communications ♦

Don't Miss In *This Issue*

Why is Industrial Hood Cleaning So Important?

Nathan Willard / HOODZ International



Cooking produces a number of effluents including grease, moisture, and smoke. A commercial kitchen exhaust system is designed to pull effluents up and out of a restaurant. However, over time, grease and other debris build up on the interior of the hood, throughout the ductwork, and the exhaust fan. If not regularly cleaned according to code, the buildup can turn into a serious fire hazard. According to the

National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), nearly one-third of all restaurant fires are caused by grease buildup in kitchen exhaust systems.

Other Risks of Neglecting Your Exhaust System

While lowering the risk of fire is the main priority, a dirty hood can also lead to a decline in kitchen hygiene. Grease and other debris can accumulate on surfaces and equipment, which can lead to the growth of bacteria and other harmful microorganisms. This can create an odor that deters guests, but more importantly, can lead to foodborne illness and other health problems.

Furthermore, dirty hoods, ducts, and fans force kitchen exhaust systems to run harder and less efficiently. An inefficient system traps heat from cooking equipment, creating an uncomfortable work environment for restaurant staff. This can also lead to increased energy bills, lower equipment lifespan, and higher and more frequent maintenance and repair costs.

How to Maintain and Clean Your Kitchen Hood

To maintain your kitchen hood and exhaust system, it is important to have it inspected and cleaned regularly. The frequency of cleaning will depend on the volume of cooking and the type of food that is being cooked. Cleaning operations must comply with the *NFPA 96 Standard for Ventilation Control and Fire Protection of Commercial Cooking Operations*, the industry's most common and widely-used fire code standard. Because NFPA 96 defines strict regulations for kitchen exhaust system cleaning, it is recommended that you hire a professional to ensure your system is cleaned to the proper regulatory standards and to avoid unsafe operations.

When cleaning a commercial kitchen hood, the proper equipment and cleaning products are essential for a thorough and code-compliant outcome. In addition, preparation and care is necessary inside the kitchen to protect kitchen cooking equipment and to ensure food safety is maintained. A professional cleaning company will have the specialized equipment and expertise to clean your entire kitchen exhaust system safely and effectively.

In addition to regular cleaning, inspecting your hood and exhaust system regularly for signs of concern is vital. If any damage or deficiencies are found, it should be repaired as soon as possible to ensure that the system continues to function properly.

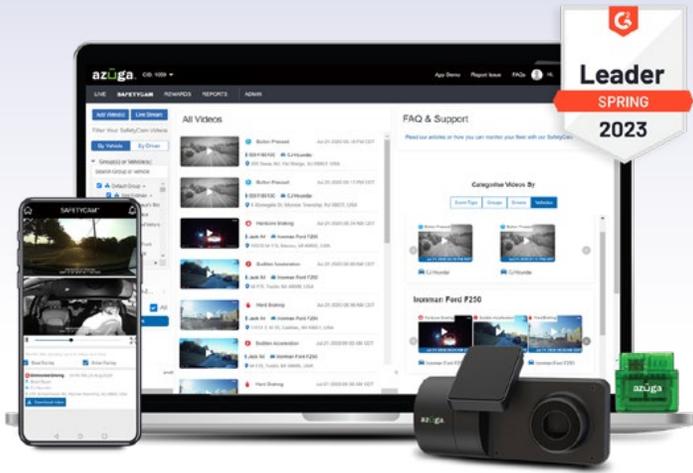
Cleaning your industrial kitchen exhaust system is essential for maintaining a safe and healthy kitchen environment. A dirty system can lead to a variety of problems, including an increased risk of fire, poor air quality and work environment, and a decline in overall kitchen hygiene. By maintaining and cleaning your kitchen hood regularly, you can ensure that your kitchen is safe, efficient, and healthy. ♦

Nathan Willard is the president of HOODZ International, a franchise network of commercial kitchen exhaust cleaning experts. He started working in the franchising industry 20 years ago in Ann Arbor, MI. Since then, he has worked in a variety of capacities, ranging from franchisee to franchisor.

Don't Miss In *This Issue*

Are You Getting the Most Out of Your Current GPS Vendor?

Azuga Inc.



Technology has changed many industries, and there has been a tremendous change in recent years in GPS tracking. Fleet tracking is not just about tracking your vehicles and dots on a map anymore. Modern GPS tracking leverages telematics from every vehicle in the fleet to improve driver safety by monitoring speeding, hard braking, and other risky driving habits.

This, in turn, helps reduce carbon emissions, and routes drivers more efficiently to improve customer service and on-time services, alleviates revenue gaps by taking on more business without adding drivers or vehicles, and offers a competitive advantage by improving the overall fleet efficiently.

Have you taken the time to assess your GPS services and whether you are capitalizing on all the potential benefits it could offer?

Ask yourself the following questions to assess your current GPS tools:

- Are you able to help protect your drivers from potential false claims and provide proof of service?
- Do you want to simplify the yard management?
- Can you recover stolen equipment and assets?
- Can you detect and prevent unauthorized use?
- How can you save time and labor?

Here are some must-have fleet management tools you could consider and how they can positively impact your operations:

Fuel Management:

- It should allow you to track fueling events such as increases and decreases in fuel levels that ex-

ceed a certain percentage, and determine which drivers filled up their tank, and which location.

- It should help your drivers find the nearest and cheapest fueling station with some built-in driver alert mechanism.
- It should offer the capability to seamlessly integrate fuel cards with the fleet tracking system to compare fuel purchases versus fuel used and vehicle maintenance costs.
- It should allow you to proactively monitor and determine potential savings and opportunity costs of the fuel purchases which helps to improve ROI.

Safety:

- Safety must be #1 priority for your fleet business because it helps save lives and prevent damage to your fleet.
- Your GPS tool should have feature capabilities that help reduce distractions when drivers are behind the wheel.
- You should be able to monitor drivers' use of email, texting, and apps on their mobile devices when they are on the road
- Your GPS tools should enable you to set custom policies for each driver to allow access for phone numbers, handling of calls when on a headset, and the ability to use apps (including navigation). This ensures maximum safety for your vehicles by discouraging distracted driving habits.

Accountability

It would be great if you could assign jobs and hold your employees accountable for the work they do, ensuring they are delivering a high level of service for your customers.

You should be able to assign trips to your drivers and also tag them if they are on a work-related trip or personal trip. This helps you bring transparency and hence improves efficiency.

A timecard feature helps you log the working hours and idle time of your driver, enabling you to pay them based on the number of hours they clock.

Asset Tracker

Using GPS tracking on trucks and assets helps you track the movement and location of equipment and trailers, making it easier to identify specific loads or pieces for queuing. Geofencing alerts give advance notice on the arrival of loads of equipment for the advance organiza-

Don't Miss In *This Issue*

tion of unloading or service teams.

According to the National Insurance Crime Bureau, stolen construction equipment tips more than \$1 billion annually, with less than 20% of stolen equipment recovered. Asset tracking real-time alerts notify supervisors if the equipment is being moved outside a predefined zone, or at unexpected times. The tracking hardware can be set to ping once per day or ping once per hour, so asset recovery work can begin immediately, and law enforcement can locate equipment.

Just as alerts and reports aid in locating stolen equipment and assets, they can also help detect and prevent unauthorized use of equipment for side jobs, which accelerates depreciation and increases maintenance costs.

Asset tracking data and reports simplify everything from yard checks to inventory to billing and insurance documentation. This reduces administrative labor from low-value tasks and enables redeployment to perform higher-value functions in the business.

Dashcam

A dashcam helps prevent false claims and exonerate your drivers with evidence from your most accurate witness. The dashcam helps your drivers when they need it most and hence makes them feel protected and positive.

- You'll want a camera with multiple lenses for front – and rear–facing coverage. This allows you to record what's happening on the road, but also what's happening in the driver's seat.
- Dashcams are a great way to help your driver with training. A good commercial dashcam setup will allow you to communicate with your drivers, allowing you to provide feedback now and to correct unsafe behavior before an accident happens.

A good dashcam:

- Should include a video resolution of at least 1080p.
- Should be able to capture video footage in low light and ideally should include a night vision function
- Should have built-in Wi-Fi for easy file transfer

ROI Calculator

It is extremely important to be able to calculate your Return on Investment. That way, you know where your business curve is heading. Your GPS tracking service provider should be able to provide you with a tool that will help you calculate ROI for your fleet business. ♦



About Azuga

Azuga, now a Bridgestone Company, was founded with the vision to continuously improve safety and productivity within the fleet ecosystem. Azuga helps customers turn data from vehicles and drivers into intelligence that improves operations and safety while reducing cost and risk. Azuga provides innovative end-to-end solutions for commercial fleets, through an integrated approach of hardware technology, fleet management applications, driver gamification, video telematics and data analytics. The award-winning Azuga Fleet Solutions powers over 11,000 commercial fleets, from small to large enterprises. Azuga is headquartered in Ferret, California, with office across the globe.



I TRUST KASON.

As a Hood Service Professional, I keep restaurants operating safely. My reputation depends on installing quality products and I trust Kason to help keep my customers' kitchens running smoothly.

Demand the best – demand genuine Kason products.



It's Better with Kason.

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