

- 2024 Meetings Update
- Elevate Your Cybersecurity
- 5 HVAC Emergencies Avoid

## 2024

### Meeting Dates

## 2024

### February 7<sup>th</sup>

Board Meeting Only

### March 14<sup>th</sup>

Board & General Mtg.

Topic: Risk Managing Your Fleet

Speaker: Bobby Oehling  
Federated Insurance

Meeting Place: Carmody's

### April 11<sup>th</sup>

Board & General Mtg.

Topic: A2L Refrigerants

Speaker: Standard Air

Meeting Place: TBD

### May 9<sup>th</sup>

Board Mtg. & 2024

Apprentice Graduation

Topic & Speaker: TBD

Meeting Place: TBD



*The mission of the Air Conditioning Contractors of Western PA is to assist its members in managing their companies more efficiently, therefore becoming more profitable, together with increasing their exposure and credibility within the community.*

## Elevate Your Cybersecurity Awareness. . .

Becky Huss, Lennox IT Security 2024

Hey EVERYONE! IN A WORLD DRIVEN BY DIGITAL CONNECTIONS, IT'S CRUCIAL TO STAY VIGILANT AGAINST SOCIAL ENGINEERING ATTACKS. LET'S TALK ABOUT SOME BEST PRACTICES TO KEEP YOUR ONLINE PRESENCE SECURE!

- 1. VERIFY BEFORE YOU TRUST:** ALWAYS DOUBLE-CHECK THE SENDER'S IDENTITY, ESPECIALLY IF A MESSAGE SEEMS URGENT OR REQUESTS SENSITIVE INFORMATION. DON'T HESITATE TO CONFIRM WITH THE PERSON THROUGH A TRUSTED CHANNEL.
- 2. BEWARE OF PHISHING LINKS:** HOVER OVER LINKS TO PREVIEW THE ACTUAL URL BEFORE CLICKING. IF IT LOOKS SUSPICIOUS OR DOESN'T MATCH THE SUPPOSED SENDER, STEER CLEAR!
- 3. GUARD YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION:** BE CAUTIOUS ABOUT SHARING PERSONAL DETAILS ONLINE, EVEN IF IT SEEMS LIKE A LEGITIMATE REQUEST. LEGITIMATE ORGANIZATIONS WON'T ASK FOR SENSITIVE INFO THROUGH UNSOLICITED MESSAGES.
- 4. USE MULTI-FACTOR AUTHENTICATION (MFA):** ADD AN EXTRA LAYER OF SECURITY TO YOUR ACCOUNTS WITH MFA. THIS ENSURES THAT EVEN IF YOUR PASSWORD IS COMPROMISED, YOUR ACCOUNTS REMAIN PROTECTED.
- 5. STAY INFORMED:** STAY UPDATED ON COMMON SOCIAL ENGINEERING TACTICS. KNOWLEDGE IS YOUR  BEST DEFENSE!

REMEMBER, CYBER THREATS EVOLVE, BUT SO CAN OUR DEFENSES. LET'S BUILD A COMMUNITY THAT'S CYBER-SMART AND CYBER-SAFE! #CYBERSECURITY #ONLINE SAFETY #BECYBERSAFE

♥ SECURITY MATTERS SHARE  
THIS POST SPREAD AWARENESS! ♥

## 5 HVAC Emergencies and How to Avoid Them

By Grainger Editorial Staff

Do you suspect that your building may be having heating or ventilation problems? Whether you are experiencing issues now or are working on HVAC emergency planning, learning to identify common problems in your HVAC system can help you be more proactive to your facility's climate control needs.

### 1. Refrigerant Leak

Air conditioning systems use refrigerant to absorb heat and provide your system with cooled air. The refrigerant lines run between the compressor in the outside unit and the evaporator coils in the indoor unit. A leak in this line would cause a loss of refrigerant which could have a negative impact on your system. It will start running more frequently because it isn't reaching the cooled ambient temperature that would trigger it to stop. This could cause your compressor to overheat or even burn out. Ice buildup on your lines and coils could cause system damage as well.

Signs of a refrigerant leak may include:

- The air coming from the vents isn't as cool as it should be
- System is overrunning
- Ice buildup on refrigerant lines
- Refrigerant lines are hissing

Routine checks of your coils, refrigerant lines and compressor can help spot a leak before it causes damage to your system and in some cases prevent a leak before it starts. If you suspect a leak, you can use refrigerant leak detection to help identify the source before it worsens.

### 2. Clogged Lines

Air conditioning units build drain lines into the system to drain off water from the evaporator coil. Water can accumulate from the condensation that occurs naturally by the air conditioning process. Sometimes these drain lines can become clogged or blocked, which can cause a water backup into or around your system. A backup could mean serious water damage, especially if the clog goes unchecked for a long time. This isn't just water damage to your system, but water damage to your building as well.

Signs of a clogged drain line may include:

- Water leaking from indoor unit
- Dampness in the air
- Mold or rust on or near the unit

Inspect your drain pan and the area around your indoor unit on a monthly basis. Annual flushing of the drain may help prevent clogs before they begin and help keep your system running properly.

### 3. Ventilation Problems

Common ventilation problems are often found in the air ducts. Items creating blockages in your facility's ductwork will prevent your heated or cooled air from distributing properly throughout the building. Causes of blockages in ducts include loose or fallen insulation and dirt, or dirty coils and filters. Ducts can also become damaged and leak conditioned air, making the system less effective overall. It is also possible for your vents to become blocked. Blockages are often caused by a piece of furniture or equipment being placed on or in front of the vent, though it is possible for debris to get stuck in the vents and cause an obstruction as well.

Signs of duct problems may include:

- Uneven temperatures among your facility's space
- Unit running more than usual
- Lower overall indoor air quality

Continued on page 6

## Misc. Info . . . .

Every Job is a

**SELF-  
PORTRAIT**

Of the Person  
who does it.  
Autograph your  
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Air Conditioning Contractors Western Pennsylvania



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**WHEATLAND**.....10 Mill St. ....724-347-3774  
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**Service Roundtable Affiliate Association**



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## "Be There Fund"

*(Must be an ACCWPA member to Win!)*

**Next General Meeting - \$60.00**

## Membership Benefits...

### Air Conditioning of Western PA

will continue to be your local industry partner,  
as we have been since 1950.

#### Annual Membership Brings You the Following Benefits:

- Networking events
- Discounts on seminar
- Current info from local suppliers
- Legislative efforts
- Local website
- Technical training courses
- Apprenticeship program  
State recognized
- Monthly newsletter
- Information of industry news  
changes within the industry
- Insurance for member's company discount
- Code enforcement updates
- ACCWPA Apprenticeship School
- Voice for the local contractors
- Golf Outing
- Education opportunities for your technicians  
office staff
- Advocacy agenda promote contractor interest.
- Labor and HR legal advice before utilities
- Helping members to stay ahead of the curve
- 8 Monthly informative meetings



## PAY QUESTION OF THE MONTH

By ... ZYWARE for Federated Insurance

### Question

Our HR employees have access to other employees' confidential information, such as pay. One HR employee is talking to non-HR employees in our company about other employees' pay. Are we allowed to prevent her from sharing other employees' pay? I thought we weren't allowed to prevent employees from discussing pay.

### Answer

Under the federal National Labor Relations Act, employees have the right to communicate with other employees at their workplaces about their wages. Wages are a vital term and condition of employment, and discussions of wages are often preliminary to organizing or other actions for mutual aid or protection. Employee discussions about their own compensation are protected by law even in workplaces where no union is present and/or no organizing is underfoot.

That said, managerial, HR and other employees who have access to compensation data for their subordinates or other employees in the organization (in the ordinary course of business) do not have the right to disclose that data to others in the company who do not have a legitimate need to know it. Such discussions are not the same as employee discussions about their own compensation with each other for their mutual aid and protection. Employers must safeguard employees' personal information. In this regard, an employer should seek to prohibit managerial, supervisory, HR and other employees who legitimately have access to employee compensation data from discussing it with other employees who do not need to know it for appropriate business purposes.

Employers, of course, should nonetheless be cautious to avoid violating any employee's right to discuss his or her own wages. An employer may wish to consult with local counsel for assistance with drafting a policy that addresses these issues without running afoul of applicable law.

*The HR Question of the Month is provided by Zyware®, a company wholly independent from Federated Insurance. Federated provides its clients access to this information through the Federated Employment Practices Network with the understanding that neither Federated nor its employees provide legal or employment advice. As such, Federated does not warrant the accuracy, adequacy, or completeness of the information herein. This information may be subject to restrictions and regulation in your state. Consult with your own qualified legal counsel regarding your specific facts and circumstances.*

## Upcoming Meetings!

# 2024

### Meetings Schedule!

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Board & General Mtg.  
Topic: Risk Managing Your Fleet  
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Apprentice Graduation  
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**Work Hard in  
Silence,  
Let Success  
make the Noise!**

Make  
Today  
Amazing



# ACCWPA MISSION STATEMENT

Air Conditioning Contractors of Western Pennsylvania (ACCWPA) is a non-profit trade association of service to the independent heating, ventilation, air conditioning, and refrigeration (HVACR) contractors.

ACCWPA's objectives have been to promote and protect the interest and welfare of the HVACR industry, its members, and the public which it serves.

In doing so, its members maintain the highest ethical standards of selling, advertising, pricing, installation, and service guided by the principles of honesty and integrity. While competing in our free enterprise system, the members of ACCWPA share certain goals and aspirations designed to improve the quality of service provided to the American people.



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## DEEPEST SYMPATHY

**1982 ACCA Pittsburgh Chapter President**

**Lauson S. Hafer**

L. S. Hafer Company, Bethel Park, PA

It is with great sadness to inform all  
ACCWPA members of Lauson's passing on December 9, 2023  
in Bradenton, Florida.

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**MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR ACCWPA'S OUTING OF 2024!!**

**Quicksilver Golf Outing**

August 20, 2024

**ACCWPA Trap Shoot**

October 8, 2024

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## 5 HVAC Emergencies and How to Avoid Them

– Grainger Editorial Staff

Continued from page 3

Before turning on your system, check your vent locations to make sure they are clear of obstructions. You can also remove the vent covers and perform preventive sight checks of your duct system to ensure it is clear of debris.

### 4. Electrical Problems

If your system is not running, it could be that there is an interruption in the electrical system somewhere. The first place to check is always your breaker; it's very possible your unit has blown a fuse. Contactors are also a frequent culprit for electrical problems. Sometimes the contactor may stick, keeping the unit running. Contactors can also become worn, which can prevent electrical connections from being made and the current from making its full circuit.

Signs of an electrical problem may include:

- System not turning on
- System running continuously.
- Burning smell

Routine maintenance of your electrical components can help prevent electrical problems. It's important to regularly maintain your system by changing out worn parts and frayed or damaged wires.

### 5. Gas Leak

Of all heating problems, a gas leak can be the most dangerous. If your heating system runs on natural gas, you can be at risk for a gas leak. Leaks are usually caused by a crack or a break in the gas line. These should always be taken seriously and fixed immediately; gas leaks can and do cause explosions.

Signs of a gas leak may include:

- Smell of gas or rotting egg

Professional HVAC contractors should offer inspections that include checking your gas lines for potential hazards. Heading off a leak before it starts is the best measure of safety and success.

### Preventive HVAC Maintenance

Inspect your system annually, during the off-season, if possible, to make sure it is in its best running condition. Fixing heating problems or ventilation problems when the system is not in use can enable you to make any necessary upgrades without causing an interruption in your facility's climate-control needs.

Preventive maintenance can help the system achieve maximum efficiency, and as well as help you avoid replacing your HVAC system before it's necessary.

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essence of  
everything  
successful.*

**PEACE, LOVE  
and JOY  
thru out 2023!**

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One Kind  
Word can  
change  
someone's  
entire day!

**Inspiration**

**Work  
HARD  
Dream  
BIG  
Never  
GIVE UP**





## Not a Contractor or Associate member? We'd love to serve you, too.

For additional information visit

[www.accwpa.org](http://www.accwpa.org)

or call 724-687-7860

Email: [pforker@accwpa.org](mailto:pforker@accwpa.org)

### Additional reasons for membership are:

- Company membership applies to all employees of your firm.
- **NEW!! Contractors Free Associate Membership in Service RoundTable!!**
- Networking!!!
- Monthly meetings with informative presentations that benefit both the Contractor and Supplier.
- Relevant technical training and educational classes.
- 4-year Apprenticeship School with curriculum that is focused only on the HVAC industry!
- Monthly newsletters and email communications filled with industry information and updates.
- Insurance for member's company discount.
- Social Outings that everyone can participate
- And much more to come!



**Join today!**

**ACCWPA is the Professional Alliance  
designed exclusively for today's HVAC/R  
Contractor!**

## 2023 – 2024 members ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

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## Happy New Year!



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# ACCWPA is the Professional Alliance designed exclusively for today's HVAC/R Contractor!

## Membership Advantages:

Networking with other contractors. This source of information is invaluable in handling problems within your own company. ACCWPA members help fellow members to be successful!



ACCWPA distributes ACCWPA Newsletters monthly to members and selected non-members, so that all those in the HVAC/R industry can keep informed of issues regarding our trade, and Chapter activities. We hope the non-members will see this newsletter as an example of the quality services that ACCWPA provide.

Contributions or suggestions can be emailed to [pforke@accwpa.org](mailto:pforke@accwpa.org)

## ACCWPA is proud to be a Service Roundtable Affiliate Associate.



### ACCWPA Upcoming Events

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#### May 9<sup>th</sup>

Board Meeting and

2024 Apprentice Graduation

### 2024 Officers and Directors



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Sue Pelles, Pelles Heating & Cooling

724-625-2444

#### VICE PRESIDENT:

John Wilcox, Wilcox Plbg & Htg

412-212-7525

#### TREASURER:

Chuck Rauch, Shearer Heating & Cooling

724-222-1830

#### SECRETARY:

Dave Williams, A-Air Company

412-728-5148

#### CONTRACTOR DIRECTORS:

Steve Woodring, Wade Heating & Cooling

412-787-1341

Rob Champe, Shearer Heating & Cooling (ACCWPA Past-President)

724-222-1830

#### ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS:

Mike Marhefky, Carrier Enterprise

724-989-9555

Keith McCann, Habegger Corp.

412-913-5815

Colleen Karnes, Standard Air & Lite

412-920-6505

#### SPECIAL ADVISOR:

NONE

#### Executive Director:

Pat Forker

[pforke@accwpa.org](mailto:pforke@accwpa.org)

Office/Fax 724-687-7860

Cell 412-760-5792

