

ACCWPA

Air Conditioning Contractors Western Pennsylvania

**MAY
2026**

Inside:

- 2026 Meetings Update
- Apprentice Graduation
- Giant Oaks Winery - Finleyville

Volume 21, Issue 5

**2026
Meeting Dates**

2026

May 14th

ACCWPA APPRENTICE
GRADUATION
Carmody's

June 11th

ACCWPA Social –
Giant Oaks Winery
Finleyville

July - August

NO ACCWPA - BOARD OR
GENERAL MEETINGS

ACCWPA
Air Conditioning Contractors Western Pennsylvania

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.

**FOR FURTHER
INFORMATION...
ACCWPA
724-687-7860
pforke@accwpa.org**



2026 APPRENTICE GRADUATION

2026 ACCWPA Apprentice



Graduation Time!



Thursday, May 14th



4905 Grand Avenue (Neville Island)
Pittsburgh, PA 15225 – 412-458-1813
Upstairs Meeting Room



3:00 pm – Board Meeting
5:30 – 6:00 pm - Social (cash bar)
6:00 – 7:00 pm – Guest Speaker Robert Pelles

Graduation Diploma Presentations

7:00 pm – Dinner Buffet and Social resumes (cash bar)

Dinner Buffet - \$55.00

RSVP: 724-687-7860 (phone, email, or fax)

NO cancellations after May 6th, noon!

No Shows will be billed.

Join us to celebrate our graduates!!!



REGISTRATION FORM ON PAGE 3

Please RSVP no later than **May 6th noon!**

ACCWPA

Air Conditioning Contractors Western Pennsylvania

WE'RE THE EXPERTS YOU COUNT ON
WITH 7 PITTSBURGH AREA LOCATIONS

Monaca • Butler • N. Hills
S. Hills • Monroeville
Strip District • Greensburg



WWW.JOHNSTONESUPPLY.COM

THAT'S THE POWER OF
JOHNSTONE™

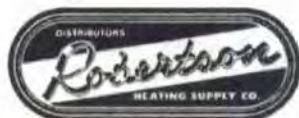
DAIKIN **Goodman**
Air Conditioning & Heating

MUELLER
INDUSTRIES

AprilAire

resideo

ARKEMA



RELAX. IT'S RHEEM. Rely on Ruud Service That Satisfies Since 1934

- BEAVER FALLS.....500 Seventh Ave.724-843-4500
- BUTLER.....678 E. Butler Rd.724-282-8200
- CRANBERRY TWP.....1245 Freedom Rd.724-772-3855
- GREENSBURG.....990 Broad St.724-836-6319
- MONROEVILLE.....1616 McClure Rd.724-733-7577
- PITTSBURGH.....952 Noblestown Rd.412-922-0500
- WHEATLAND.....10 Mill St.724-347-3774
- WASHINGTON.....84 Stewart Ave.724-222-6720

ACCWPA

Air Conditioning Contractors Western Pennsylvania

ACCWPA

Air Conditioning Contractors Western Pennsylvania

PROUD AFFILIATE PARTNER WITH!!

Service Roundtable Affiliate Association



AWESOME CONTRACTOR BENEFIT!

2026 Century Club Members

Federated Insurance
Kevin Sundberg,
559-547-9694

Standard Air & Lite Co.
Tom Baney, 412-920-6505

Johnstone Supply
Ken Swank - 724-331-1663

2026 Vo-Tech Members

PENN COMMERCIAL INC.
Marianne albert, 724-222-5330

ROSEDALE TECHNICAL COLLEGE
Kara Chan - 412-512-6200

PITTSBURGH PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Mike Angela, 412-529-8680

WESTERN AREA CAREER
& TECHNOLOGY CENTER
Rob Rossell - 724-809-4047

Be There Fund™

(Must be an ACCWPA member to Win!)

Next General Meeting - \$120.00

2026 ACCWPA Apprentice



Graduation Time!



Thursday, May 14th



4905 Grand Avenue (on Neville Island)
Pittsburgh, Pa 15225
412-458-1813
Upstairs meeting room.



3:00 pm – Board Meeting ♦ 5:30 – 6:00 pm - Social (cash bar)

6:00 - 7:00 pm – Guest Speaker Robert Pelles

Graduation Certificate Presentation

7:00 pm – Dinner Buffet and Social resumes (cash bar)

Dinner Buffet - \$55.00

RSVP – 724-687-7860, fax or email • No Cancellations after May 6th noon!

*** Important – RSVP is a must! ***

Email: pforke@accwpa.org or fax (724) 687-7860

Company _____

Name _____

Email address _____ Cell # _____

Carmody's - \$55.00

**NO Cancellations after May 6th - NOON. No shows will be invoiced.
IF YOU ALREADY MADE RESERVATIONS, THANKS!**

ChatGPT Said it Was the Capacitor

By Maria Taylor

"I get it," the post continued. "AI is here and has a lot of uses and whatnot. But remember why you called a technician: because ChatGPT couldn't fix your system. Learn to trust humans again and not just technology."

AI itself isn't the real problem. Contractors have been dealing with self-informed customers since dial-up internet. What's changed is the confidence — and speed — with which bad information spreads.

For decades, HVAC contractors — like professionals in any field — have been plagued by self-proclaimed "experts" who Google equipment prices and then demand to know why the thermostat install is \$300 when the part is "only \$50 on Amazon." This time, though, the difficulty level feels higher. Google would spit out videos and links to articles, or maybe the manufacturer's website. These days, you'll get a whole essay on the topic. Wrong information? It's confidently wrong.

Now, this is not to discount AI's potential uses to tradespeople. If you've got the background to distinguish between what is helpful and what is utter nonsense — and the sense not to take its answer in blind faith — ChatGPT can come in handy. Even the HVAC pros on the Reddit thread acknowledged that. Nope, I'm talking about the homeowners who treat its word as gospel.

"ChatGPT said it's the capacitor."

[Narrator]: It was not the capacitor.

Contractors aren't the only ones noticing the trend. Manufacturers and software companies are seeing it, too. Ben Reed, technical marketing specialist at MeasureQuick, talked about this at the Midea press conference at AHR.

"I completely agree that it is hard to combat a lot of the 'self-informed' homeowners that are out there, especially now, with AI," he said, "which is just a big consensus engine." Simply put, it repeats what most people online already believe.

But if there's one thing people trust more than AI, it's their neighbors. That's how contractors combat AI misinformation, Reed said: by outperforming it in the one way AI never can — through real, authentic human experience.

"What I've found is one of the most important things to shift people's perspective and overcome some of that doubt or misinformation is experiential information," Reed said. "So you just do the top-notch job on a couple of installs in your neighborhood, you can get people into a comfort experience that they've never thought was possible."

Then, help the word spread.

Case in point is longtime HVAC educator Jim Bergmann, Reed's colleague at MeasureQuick. For years, Bergmann was staunchly anti-heat pump.

Continued on Page 6

**ACCWPA
Corner**



*Integrity is the
essence of
everything
successful.*

**PEACE, LOVE
and JOY
thru out 2026!**

**Smart Words
One Kind
Word can
change
someone's
entire day!**

Inspiration





Not a Contractor or Associate member?

We'd love to serve you, too.

For additional information visit

www.accwpa.org

or call 724-687-7860

Email: 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!

2026

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

CARRIER ENTERPRISE BRYANT PGH.

Mike Marhefky, 412-568-3404

COMFORT SUPPLY

Dave Heckler – 412-921-6600

FEDERATED INSURANCE

Kevin Sundberg – 559-547-9694

FILTECH INC.

Andy Komar – 412-461-1400

GEO. V. HAMILTON, INC.

Ed Wallace – 412-777-4405

H. GERHARDT SUPPLY

Harry R. Gerhardt – 412-279-4880

HABEGGER HVAC CORP.

C.J. Cameron – 412-469-1010

HVAC DISTRIBUTORS

Stan Polivka – 412-629-5500

JOHNSTONE SUPPLY

Ken Swank – 724-331-1663

RTI Insurance Services

Victor Wilkstrom – 724-485-9997

ROBERTSON HEATING SUPPLY

Tim Leja – 412-922-4001

STANDARD AIR & LITE CORP.

Chris Belculfine – 412-920-6505



ACCWPA
Air Conditioning Contractors Western Pennsylvania

"It wasn't until he got a heat pump installed in his house — and it was installed properly — that he switched sides," Reed said.

And it's not just heat pumps — the principle holds true in all kinds of experiences.

Back to combating "ChatGPT told me." According to a study we did in 2024, 67% of homeowners reported finding their HVAC contractor via word of mouth or recommendation, including social media.

I know I did.

Last month, my tub wouldn't drain. Sure, we tried fixing it ourselves first, but it soon became clear the little 2-foot plastic snake wasn't going to handle it this time. I called Jen the Plumber, because everyone on Nextdoor had been singing her praises for months.

Jen was fabulous and diagnosed the issue quickly, but her team didn't have equipment heavy-duty enough to clear a rusty drum trap.

"Call Rootmasters," she said. So I did — and they came right out and fixed it. Both plumbers get five stars in my book. I've been hyping them up every time someone mentions a drain.

And that is what you want.

"Have some local homeowner testimonials — maybe even five — and make sure those are highlighted on your website," Reed said. "If you have video testimonials from customers talking about how it changed their lives (because for some people, it changes their life), make that pronounced, and then that will make a difference."

You can offer incentives for customers to record those videos, or for techs who line them up. Think of it like the new version of putting a sign in their front yard for 30 days. Kind of old-school, huh? Sometimes it feels like the more technologically advanced our communication becomes, the more the "old-school" method cuts through the noise. It just has to be supercharged for the digital era — and fortunately, filming videos is something anyone with a smartphone can do.

At the end of the day, AI can suggest all it wants. Comfort still requires someone with gauges and a truck. Build a reputation strong enough that customers never feel the need to consult AI in the first place.

Or if you're feeling snarky, you could always just respond like redditor Alternative-Land-334 does: "Cool — when's ChatGPT available to fix?"

Maria Taylor is Senior Managing Editor for The ACHR NEWS. Maria holds a bachelor's in English from Alma College and has worked in journalism since 2013. Contact her at 248-786-1741 or mariataylor@achrnews.com.

Every Job is a

**SELF-
PORTRAIT**

Of the Person
who does it.

Autograph your
work
with

Excellence!

AUTHOR UNKNOWN



**ACCWPA
Newsletter and
all notices:**

If you like to get our
ACCWPA Newsletter
send your
email address to:
pforke@accwpa.org



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 / Trap Shoot
- Education opportunities for your technicians
office staff – Associates bring in Mfg. Reps.
- Advocacy agenda promote contractor interest.
- Labor and HR legal advice before utilities
- Helping members to stay ahead of the curve
- 6-8 Monthly informative meetings
- Local lobbying



At-Risk HVAC Jobs

Though installation and technician jobs are safe, other aspects of the HVAC industry are at risk.

Jobs like secretaries and administrative assistants, office clerks, bookkeeping and accounting, marketing managers, and customer service representatives are all at high risk, scoring an 8 or 9 out of 10 on the digital exposure scale.

The study's justification is that most of the tasks completed by these jobs, such as scheduling, managing databases, and information processing, are all fundamentally digital and align with the capabilities of AI.

Jason Dolan, vice president of strategic partnerships for Hatch, notes that the most common issue HVAC contractors face is missed calls. Through AI, contractors can have a virtual agent available 24/7 to answer after-hours calls.

"A homeowner calls, nobody picks up, and that lead is gone," Dolan said. "After that, it's a slow follow-up on form fills and estimates. A lead comes in from Yelp, Angi, or Google and sits for hours or days before anyone reaches out. And then there's the database problem. Contractors are sitting on thousands of past leads and customers they've never re-engaged.

"AI can handle all three of those without adding headcount."

The report does have caveats, mainly that these are "rough LLM estimates, not rigorous predictions." For example, a job with high exposure doesn't necessarily predict that it will disappear. The predictions don't account for demand elasticity, latent demand, regulatory barriers, or social preferences.

"Many high-exposure jobs will be reshaped, not replaced," the report said.

The overall average AI digital exposure across the 143 million jobs tracked by the analysis is 4.9 out of 10.

Upcoming Meetings!

2026 Meetings Schedule!

May 14th

ACCWPA APPRENTICE GRADUATION
Carmody's

June 11th

ACCWPA Social –
Giant Oaks Winery
Finleyville

July - August

NO ACCWPA -BOARD OR
GENERAL MEETINGS



**Work Hard in
Silence, Let
Success makes
the Noise!**



**FOR FURTHER
INFORMATION...**

**ACCWPA
724-687-7860
pforaker@accwpa.org**



Memorial Day

MEMORIAL DAY MAY 25th !!!



126 Resolution Drive • Mars, PA 16046-3719 • 724-687-7860

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 provides.

Contributions or suggestions can be emailed to pforker@accwpa.org

ACCWPA is proud to be a Service Roundtable Affiliate Associate.



ACCWPA Upcoming Events

2026

May 14th

ACCWPA APPRENTICE GRADUATION
Carmody's

June 11th

ACCWPA Social –
Giant Oaks Winery - *Finleyville*

July - August

NO ACCWPA - GENERAL MEETINGS
Board Meetings when necessary.

August 18TH

ACCWPA GOLF OUTING
QuickSilver Golf Club



2026 Officers and Directors



PRESIDENT:

John Wilcox, SUREWAY Htg. & Clg. & Plbg. 412-706-2477

VICE PRESIDENT:

Steve Boehmer, Boehmer HVAC 412-381-4100

TREASURER:

Chuck Rauch, Shearer Heating & Cooling 724-222-1830

SECRETARY:

Dave Williams, A-Air Company 412-728-5148

CONTRACTOR DIRECTORS:

James Murphy, Pelles Heating & Cooling 724-625-2444
Rob Champe, Shearer Heating & Cooling 724-222-1830

ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS:

Brent Davis, Carrier Enterprise 412-471-1419
Keith McCann, Habegger Corp. 412-913-5815

SPECIAL ADVISOR:

Kevin Ernst, Boehmer HVAC 412-381-4100
Steve Woodring, Wade Heating & Cooling 412-787-1341

Executive Director:

Pat Forker
pforker@accwpa.org

Office/Fax 724-687-7860
Cell 412-760-5792