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Volume 9, Issue 10

**2014 General Meeting Dates**

*Mark your Calendar!*

**October 9, 2014**

Best Collection Practices for Contractors  
Tambellini's, Bridgeville

**October TBA, 2014**

2015 Planning Meeting

**November 13, 2014**

Drugs + Alcohol + Work Do Not Mix!  
Peter's Place, Bridgeville



**Air Conditioning Contractors of America**  
**ACCA**

Is a non-profit association serving more than 60,000 professionals and 4,000 businesses in the indoor environmental and energy services community.

Founded 40+ years ago, ACCA sets the standards for quality comfort systems, provides leading-edge education for contractors and their employees, and fights for the interests of professional contractors in every state in the country.

ACCA is the only nationwide organization of, by, and for small businesses that design, install and maintain indoor environment and building performance systems.



**PA State Chapter Update...**

**PA State Chapter ready to hold Executive Officer Elections!**

ACCA Contractors:

The inaugural board has been operating for the past few months. Our main goal has been to do the leg work so that the first official Executive Board can be voted in and take office January 2015. The framework would be in place and the new board can go about the business of running the PA State Chapter.

Our stated mission statement is:

***The mission of ACCA-PA is to promote quality and professionalism, to help our members become more successful, and to enhance the HVAC/R industry's image to the consumer.***

The primary functions the new board will concentrate on is State wide training opportunities and establishing a watchdog network to keep members aware of government issues that affect our industry.

We will be looking for contractors who would like to serve on the board or assist in any way. Elections will be held in November to fill the positions of:

- **President**
- **Vice President** (President in waiting)
- **Secretary**
- **Treasure**

Once the Executive Board is set, they will appoint contractor members to help carry out the work of the board.

Please contact me if you have any questions, or would like to put your name on the ballot for one of the positions or to be considered for a contractor board member.

**Bob Boyle**  
**PA State Board, Co-Chair Interim President**  
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## HVAC Contractors Wanted

Builders of new home construction projects may be eligible for financial incentives from the Pennsylvania Energy Efficient New Homes Program, a program offered by FirstEnergy's Pennsylvania utilities.

The high-efficiency systems you sell and install may be all that are needed for your builders to be eligible for thousands of dollars in program incentives. Don't let your builders miss out on this great opportunity.

### Benefits for HVAC Contractors

Contractors who market or install high-efficiency systems can leverage the Pennsylvania Energy Efficient New Homes Program's financial incentives to help increase sales.

Participants also gain access to a select group of leading builders, reduced callbacks by pairing high-efficiency equipment with quality installations, and a means to differentiate your business from contractors who compete solely on price.

### Benefits for Homebuilders

Participating builders whose homes meet ENERGY STAR® standards are eligible for a rebate of \$400 plus \$0.10/kWh saved annually over a non-certified "reference" home built to the standard 2009 IECC code. Homes with high-efficiency systems like ground-source heat pumps have received an average incentive of \$2,300.

Program incentives are offered to builders in the Met-Ed, Penelec, Penn Power and West Penn Power service territories.

In addition, ENERGY STAR homes sell faster and for more money than comparable non-certified homes. With ENERGY STAR homes typically using 15-30 percent less energy, it's no surprise that a National Association of Home Builder survey found that 91 percent of homebuyers prefer an ENERGY STAR rating for their home.

### Get Involved

Participating builders are required to hire HVAC contractors who are credentialed through a third-party oversight organization in order to receive program incentives.

Both training sessions and marketing materials are available to help contractors and builders meet the ENERGY STAR program guidelines and promote their ENERGY STAR-certified homes.

**Plan to attend an upcoming early 2015 ACCA general meeting and find out how you or your builders can participate in this program! Date, time and location will be listed soon!**

*The costs of energy efficiency programs are recovered through customer rates in accordance with Pennsylvania Act 129 of 2008. For a complete list of commercial, industrial, residential and low income energy efficiency programs, please visit [energysavePA.com](http://energysavePA.com). and [www.energysavepa-newhomes.com](http://www.energysavepa-newhomes.com)*

## EDUCATION & EVENTS

To register : [www.acca.org](http://www.acca.org)

### **Building Performance Forum**

October 7 & 8, 2014

### **Service Managers Forum**

October 9 & 10, 2014

### **Residential Design For Quality Installation**

Nov. 18 - 20, 2014



### **SmartWords You Must Remember**

*"Get your affairs in order before it's too late. Your loved-ones will appreciate your consideration."*

*- David Humes*

## Product Spotlight

### **Mastering Core Service**

Learn how to successfully take and pass the NATE Service Core Exam – the fundamentals to general, construction and HVACR-specific knowledge required for certification.

To learn more about this and other tools ACCA has to offer, visit: [www.acca.org/store](http://www.acca.org/store).

## March 16/19, 2015 ACCA National Convention

The single largest source of contractor education in the country!



### Employee Fraud:

Continued →→

## What You Can Do About It

Employees are one of your biggest assets, even though they don't appear on your balance sheet. They help you operate your business and are the faces of your company brand. But employees can also be a big liability if they steal from you. What can you do to protect yourself?

Acknowledge the problem: Recent statistics found that companies lose 5% of their revenues each year to employee fraud. Companies with fewer than 100 employees had 28% higher fraud losses than larger companies.

Fraud can take many forms, including outright theft of property (from paper clips to expensive inventory items), subtle theft by wasting time (focus on personal matters, sports events or other distractions), to embezzlement of company funds. Employees can be very creative in devising ways to steal from you, including creating bogus customers and invoices to siphon funds from the company.

### Wise staffing practices

Having the best employees on your staff can go a long way in minimizing or avoiding fraud inside your company.

Do background checks before hiring anyone new. You can check public records to look for bankruptcies and criminal records without permission from the job applicant. If you want to do a credit check (there's debate about whether a bad credit rating is any indication of potential employee fraud), you'll need permission. Note: About a dozen states bar employers from doing credit checks of job applicants and employees and Congress is considering similar federal legislation

Get to know your staff so you can detect potentially bad situations. Those with financial difficulties, such as an employee experiencing a home foreclosure or one with a gambling problem, may feel impelled to steal. Those displaying unaccounted wealth, such as a Lamborghini suddenly being driven by an employee who was previously driving a Ford Focus, may raise suspicions.

## ACCA – How Do We Do IT!!!

We write the standards for the design, maintenance, installation, testing, and performance of indoor environment systems. We bring contractors together with other contractors through unique learning opportunities and online communities. We provide exclusive technical, legal, and marketing resources. We bring customers to our members, since they come to our website trying to find quality contractors. And we fight aggressively for contracting business interests in Washington, DC and in every state in the country.

### Employee Fraud - continued

## What You Can Do About It...

Create the right company culture. Let employees know how seriously you view any theft.

### Implement systems for protection

As with the three branches of the federal government, checks and balances can prevent an employee from manipulating financial data. The less opportunity that employees have to steal, the lower the incidence of such action will be.

Frequent inventories can monitor and detect any employee theft of company property. Bring your accountant in to review your inventory and other financial information.

Make it clear that employee theft will not be tolerated and that violators will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. Unfortunately, some small business owners ignore illegal activity, which then breeds more of the same.

### Be vigilant

As the business owner, it's up to you to oversee what's going on in your business. Look for clues that something nefarious may be going on, such as a bookkeeper who never takes a vacation or declines to delegate work. Limit review of the monthly bank statement to you and, perhaps, your accountant; don't leave it to the bookkeeper to review the statement before you see it.

Create an anonymous reporting system for employees to tell you about suspected fraud without fear of retaliation. Tips are the most common method of detection, yet fewer than 20% of small companies have a system in place, compared with 70% of larger firms. If you want to implement a reporting system, it can be a web based system or a special phone hotline for this purpose.

And keep your ears open to any talk from staff members about possible thefts that may be going on.

(Source: US Small Business Administration @ [sba.gov](http://sba.gov))