

## The Plumbing Connection

# SARS

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome



Public health officials in Hong Kong have recently found evidence of the SARS virus in fecal matter and have confirmed that the virus can spread through sewage. The outbreaks of the disease in Hong Kong can be directly traced to a high rise apartment building where the virus is believed to have been transmitted through the waste piping system.

Modern waste piping systems provide safe atmospheric venting of sewer gases. Connected fixtures utilize deep water traps to prevent sewer gases from entering the living space. However, water traps must be filled with water in order to work properly. An investigation by Hong Kong health authorities found many had dried out. The faulty traps apparently allowed sewage particles to escape and seep into the bathrooms. Exhaust fans then sucked the particles through the pipes and circulated them through the air.

Experts say it is unlikely that SARS would spread through sewage in the United States, as it has done in Hong Kong. In the U.S. we have one of the best sanitary systems in the world. Our keen attention to public health further limits our chances of a similar incident here in the U.S. Now might be a good time to survey and fill drain traps that have a tendency to dry out, such as floor drains, etc.

**ACE** Career Directions for Students in  
**Architecture, Construction and Engineering**

ACE was born in 1994 when seventeen firms banded together into 3 teams, each organized like a typical design and construction team, and "adopted" about 90 students from local high schools. Volunteers from each of the firms, serving as mentors, worked directly with the students to introduce them to the broad range of people and projects within the construction industry.

**The mission of the ACE Mentor Program**

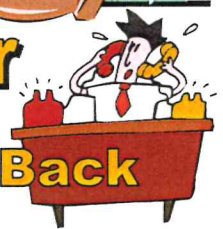
- To enlighten and motivate students toward architecture, construction, engineering, and related careers.
- To provide mentoring opportunities for future designers and constructors.

ACE makes a special attempt to reach students that otherwise may not become aware of the challenges and rewards of a career in the design and construction industry. Our interest in the students extends to their eventual successful employment in the design and construction industry. To this end, several other activities are important facets of the program.

If you would like additional information on the Connecticut ACE Program or would like to join the team as a mentor, please contact Maria Makin, at Montagno Construction, Inc. at 203-597-9014, or go to the ACE website at <http://www.acementor.org/index.php>

## Clutter

### 5 Ways To Fight Back



Having trouble finding your desk underneath all the papers? You're not alone. Like time, organization seems to be in short supply these days. Problem is disorganization creates inefficiency, something small business owners can't afford. The average worker spends 150 hours a year looking for misplaced information.

Here's some advice from experts for cleaning up the clutter.

- 1) Clutter equals postponed decisions. As information comes in, either file, act on it or toss it out immediately.
- 2) Create an effective filing system. Whether your files are online, paper or both, you need a system. If you don't know you have something, or can't find it, then it's of no value to you.
- 3) 80 percent of filed paperwork is never used again. Give each paper a toss date and then do it.
- 4) Forget the past. Start with today's mail, faxes and e-mails and work backwards. When people try to tackle the backlog first, they get overwhelmed.
- 5) Reorganizing your office and changing habits will not occur overnight. Keep with a system, and you'll see results. Staying organized eventually becomes second nature.

(Condensed form an article in myBusiness magazine written by Julie Bawden Davis)



## George Says...

- "The only job that starts at the top is digging a hole."
- "The important thing about your lot in life is whether you use it for building or parking."
- "Vision without action is a daydream, action without vision is a nightmare."
- "If you continue to live in the past, your life is history."
- "The happiest people don't necessarily have the best of everything, they just make the best of everything."

## Squeezing Compressed Air

Although air is FREE, the generation and distribution of this wonderful stuff is quite expensive. Even small leaks in piping and associated air lines can cost a bundle. Did you know that the average mid-size industrial user of compressed air loses about \$8,000 per year due to leaks and bad applications?

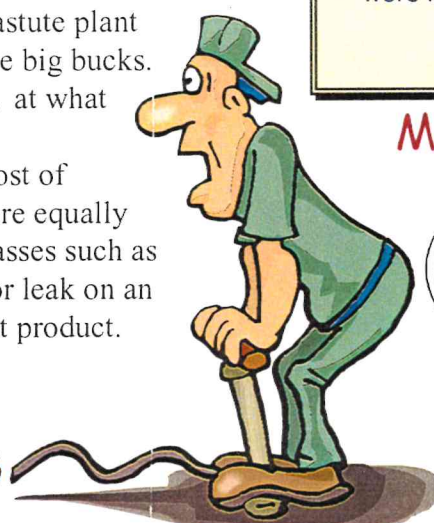
Leaky pipe fittings, blow guns, hose connections and control equipment are a big loss. However use of high pressure air for low pressure applications can gobble up your profits in no time. If you have low pressure applications at or under 30 psi, such as bubble aeration and mixing uses, a far more economical choice would be low pressure blowers.

Based upon existing data, there is no question that an astute plant engineer or facility manager, with just a little effort, can save big bucks. Those who invest in a little time and effort will be surprised at what they discover and the savings they can capture.

We have focused on compressed air due to the high cost of generation. However anyone with bulk gas piping systems are equally exposed to immense money losses due to leaks. Specialty gasses such as nitrogen, helium and argon are expensive. Even a very minor leak on an argon piping system can result in thousands of dollars of lost product.

Keep a close eye on leaks and special applications and you will be rewarded with lower overall operating costs.

# Hisssss



### What's Goin' On?

June 17<sup>th</sup> **Facilities 203** Facilities Management Expo to be held at the Harbor Yard Arena, Bridgeport CT

June 18<sup>th</sup> **Construction Institute** "Avoiding the Environmental Money Pit" held at Bristol Myers-Squibb, Wallingford, CT

June 28<sup>th</sup> - July 2<sup>nd</sup> - **ASHRAE Annual Meeting**, Kansas City, MO

Oct 19<sup>th</sup>-Oct 21<sup>st</sup> - **AFE Facilities America 2003** Dallas Convention Center, Dallas, TX

**Win!**

### DINNER for TWO

What's mightier than God and more evil than the Devil? The poor have it. The rich need it. If you eat it, you will eventually die.

Give us the correct answer and **WIN Dinner for Two**. If more than one correct entry is received, a winner will be selected at random.

The answer to the "Quote Quiz" from last time was "**Herbert Hoover and Will Rogers**". There were 4 correct responses.

Tom Orzech, Nestles  
Bob Balkun, Belimo Air Controls  
Rich Bonomo, PDC-USA  
Robert Wilklestern, Ridgefield, Pub. Schools

A final winner will be selected at random.

We apologize that 2 additional winners from the last edition were inadvertently omitted from the newsletter. They were:  
Andy McBeth, JM Coull, Inc.  
Art Saunders, Hoffmann Architects

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