



The Tool Box

Serving the Electrical, HVAC & Plumbing Industries Since 1912

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SPOTTING TROUBLE BEFORE IT STARTS REQUIRES AN OUTSIDER LOOK

By: Tom Frisby

In many companies, executives and managers would be astonished to learn that they've got trouble lurking undiscovered under their noses.

That's because many companies have built-in land mines, some catastrophically explosive and some simply disruptive, within their organizations. Perhaps the greatest danger of all is that executive management is too often simply unaware of it, although an outsider can spot the problems in a "New York minute."

How?

By listening to what the people in the organization have to say, including the janitor, the warehouseman, the foreman, the estimator and the administrative assistants.

The outsider looks for disconnects. A construction company is really two companies in one: the home office and the field office. Is executive management in the clouds back at the home office, not visiting job sites or being operationally involved?

I recently visited a company whose management was perplexed that the middle management and administrative people were not highly motivated. During my visit, one of the vice presidents continually talked about "them" and "those people."

There's no need to pay megabucks for a consultant to figure out what that company's problem is or how to cure it. Great companies subscribe to the concept of one plus one equals one or, better said, common purpose, unity of goals, open communication.

Some other things an outsider can see:

Dishonesty. The outsider looks for dishonesty in cost reporting and status of the jobs. If management plays games with the books, there is a virus in the company that may be untreatable. And it begins at the top.

Fear is a derivative of many things and often builds from uncertainty. People deal with reality much better than we give them credit for, yet managers like to play everything "close to the vest" and keep their people in the dark.

Toward the end of a project, employees are fearful that they will not have another project with this company. The tendency is to "drag it out" to have a paycheck. Companies can deal with this by going to the jobsite and talking about future plans.

Mediocrity. When punch lists are long, closing out jobs interminable, and re-work is eating you up, you've got trouble. I look at safety records because mediocre ones show me mediocre planning and commitment to the welfare of the employees. I also look at submittal logs to find a pattern of timely submittals and equipment deliveries as well as the material cost reports to see the company's consistency in accurately estimating material and equipment. Mediocrity doesn't build lasting companies.

The drummer. Creativity is always encouraged, but the outsider looking in may find a lot of different drummers that people are marching to. Job set-up, planning, reporting and purchasing are done inconsistently. Having a system for how a company does work profitably is essential to a company's success. It creates unity, provides a benchmark for performance and a tool for challenging the system so it can improve.

Successorship. When the outsider determines the (Continued on Page 4)

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MCASC On The Web

www.mcasc.com

Call the MCASC State Office
at (803)772-7834 for user-
name and
password.

MARK YOUR
CALENDAR!
13th Annual
Swatter-Snagger
Shagger is to be held
June 10-13, 2004

MAKE PLANS TO
ATTEND THE
WINTER RETREAT

MARCH 11-14, 2004

HILTON
MYRTLE BEACH
RESORT

Mechanical Member: Hill Plumbing & Electric Company, Inc.

THEY'RE #1 IN THE #2 BUSINESS. Hill Plumbing & Electric Company, Inc., has been serving the Carolinas for more than seventy-nine years. Hill Plumbing & Electric Company has been at the forefront of providing advanced plumbing services to shopping centers, schools, commercial office buildings, manufacturing facilities, nursing facilities and other kinds of major projects throughout the Carolinas.

Established in 1925, their third-generation, family owned business employs approximately fifty people and has an annual sales volume of over \$5 million. They understand the need for a qualified plumbing company—one with proven experience and a demonstrated track record. One with a commitment to quality.

Their expressed goal is to continue their proud tradition of service to their customers and to establish themselves through service, competitive pricing and quality work with general contractors who engage primarily in design build and negotiated work.

They offer turnkey services—taking a job from start to finish from preparing the initial drawings to guaranteeing the job through a warranty when their work is finished.

At Hill, they take a team approach philosophy to each project, building successful alliances with firms who share a common vision of quality and service. These relationships expand their capabilities and result in quality work and lasting relationships.

Licensed in North and South Carolina, they enjoy strategic alliances with mechanical design firms that enable them to develop the proper scope and performance program, whether design build or conventional, to meet all project requirements, regardless of size, complexity and schedule demands. Building successful alliances with firms who share their vision of quality service is a key focus of the Hill philosophy.

In addition to commercial work, they have a service department with nine service trucks and perform everything from minor service repairs to jet cleaning, videoing lines and backflow certifications.

It is the goal of Hill Plumbing & Electric Company to build durable relationships with their commercial partners and provide first-class services to their clients—creating a win-win situation for all involved. In addition, their service department is committed to providing first-class service to individuals, real estate professionals and their clients.

Hill Plumbing & Electric Company, Inc.

438 N Main Street, Sumter, SC 29150

Phone: (800) 849-8884 or (803) 773-6689 Fax: (803) 775-2783

website: www.hillplumb.com



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Happy Birthday!!

Carol Coleman	February 2	Walker-White, Inc.	Wife of Harvey
Lewis Henderson	February 2	Henderson & Associates	
Richard Miller	February 2	City Plumbing	
Margi Hancock	February 6	H. R. Allen	Wife of Guy
Al Hitchcock	February 10	C. R. Hipp Construction, Inc.	
Sandra Bishop	February 12	Waldrop Heating & A/C, Inc.	Wife of David
Billy Zimmerman	February 13	Charlotte Pipe & Foundry	
Ann Cullum	February 17	Cullum Mechanical	Wife of Furman
John Williams	February 19	Cashion Electricians	
Bob Smith	February 21	Rep South	
Rosa Williams	February 21	Cashion Electricians	Wife of Eddie
Brenda Poplin	February 25	B & L Electric	Wife of Henry
Donnie Smith	February 27	Easley Mechanical	

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY MEMBERS! WE WOULD LIKE TO ANNOUNCE YOURS!
PLEASE CALL THE BIRTHDAY HOTLINE AT (803) 772-7834 OR EMAIL TO mcasc@bellsouth.net**

PROJECTS FOR BID & BID FORECAST

MECHANICAL CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH CAROLINA
 P.O. Box 384, Columbia, South Carolina 29202 · 1504 Morninghill Drive, Columbia, South Carolina 29210
 PHONE (803)772-7834 · FAX (803)731-0390 · E-MAIL: mcasc@bellsouth.net WEBSITE: www.mcasc.com

JOBS TO BE BID THROUGH THE MCASC BID PROCEDURE.
 ALL MECHANICAL CONTRACTORS WHO ARE NOT MEMBERS OF THIS ASSOCIATION BIDDING ON THESE ADVERTISED JOBS ARE INVITED AND URGED TO UTILIZE THE MCASC BID PROCEDURE PUBLISHED HEREIN.
 INFORMATION PUBLISHED BY THE MECHANICAL CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH CAROLINA

NOTES:

1. ALL JOBS LISTED WITHOUT REFERENCE TO THE MCASC FOUR-HOUR DESIGNATION ARE EITHER ZERO OR TWO-HOUR BID JOBS.
2. ALL ASPECTS OF THE MCASC FOUR-HOUR BID PLAN APPLY TO JOBS DESIGNATED AS EITHER ZERO OR TWO-HOUR JOBS WITH THE EXCEPTION OF TIME & BID PROCEDURE OFFICE/SIGNATORY GENERAL CONTRACTOR INTERFACING.

***MCASC BID PROCEDURE SIGNATORY GC'S INDICATED WITH "O"**

PIEDMONT AREA

CHAIRMAN DESIGNATING COMMITTEE

DAVID BISHOP

TEL: (864) 578-7252 FAX: 578-3419

1. **GREENVILLE** Adn. & Renov. Sevier Mid.Sch, IFB 388-552000-C-004-A, Best "Building Equity Sooner for Tomorrow", Owner. McMillan, Smith & February 10 **CM: Institutional Resources, LLC, 225 South Pleasantburg Drive, Ste. B-10, GreenvillePartners, Spartanburg, Archts..**
 BIDS DUE MCASC: 3:00 PM GENRL OPEN: 3:00 PM
 Bidders Include:
 o Brantley Construction Company, Inc., Charleston Devere Construction Company, Inc., Alpena, MI
 James R. Vannoy & Sons Constr., Anderson M. B. Kahn Constr Co., Inc., Kahn/Argo Div., Greenville
 Denark Construction, Inc., Knoxville, TN R. W. Allen & Assocs., Inc., Augusta, GA

CHAIRMAN DESIGNATING COMMITTEE

MIDLANDS AREA

NO JOBS LISTED

	CHAIRMAN DESIGN, COMMITTEE	PAUL PREVATEE	JIMMY LEE
PEE DEE AREA	WILLIAM L. SELF TEL: (803) 432-8519 FAX: 432-8519	G'TOWN HRY & MARION TEL: (843) 272-4915 FAX: 272-6071	FLO, DAR, DIL, C'FLD & M'BORO TEL:(843) 669-8243 FAX: 673-0826

NO JOBS LISTED

COASTAL AREA

CHAIRMAN DESIGNATING COMMITTEE

RON RUNYON

TEL: (843) 556-5636 FAX: 763-3091

NO JOBS LISTED

SAFETY FROM THE HEART MESSAGE

The Shell Oil Company recently issued a warning after three incidents in which mobile phones (cell phones) ignited fumes during fueling operations.

In the first case, the phone was placed on the car's trunk lid during fueling; it rang and the ensuing fire destroyed the car and the gasoline pump.

In the second, an individual suffered severe burns to their face when fumes ignited as they answered a call while refueling their car.

And in the third, an individual suffered burns to the thigh, and groin as fumes ignited when the phone, which was in their pocket, rang while they were refueling the car.

You should know that mobile phones can ignite fuel or fumes. Mobile phones that light up when switched on or when they ring release enough energy to provide a spark for ignition. Mobile phones should not be used in filling stations, or when fueling lawn mowers, boat, etc.

Mobile phones should not be used, or should be turned off, around other materials that generate flammable or explosive fumes or dust, i.e., solvents, chemicals, gases, grain dust, etc.

(see next page)

BID FORECAST

<u>WEEK OF FEBRUARY 9,-2004- FEBRUARY 13, 2004</u>						
<u>DAY</u>	<u>JOB NO.</u>	<u>4/HR</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>BID DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>
Tuesday	1-4073		Greenville	Addn. & Renov. Sevier Mid. Sch.	02/10/04	3:00 PM

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

CORLEY SECURITY SYSTEMS - COLUMBIA - RICK CORLEY
 LOVELESS COMMERCIAL CONTRACTING - COLUMBIA - KEN LOVELESS
 MCCORMICK INSULATION & SUPPLY CO., INC. - N. CHARLESTON - MICHAEL SEWELL
 NOLAND COMPANY - CHARLESTON - JIMMY JOHNSON
 PALMETTO PROPANE - BATESBURG-LEESVILLE - TODD SHEALY
 S & S INSULATION - HARTSVILLE - TIM FERRENCE

SYMPATHY

MCASC would like to extend thoughts and prayers to the following families:

Patricia Jones (Mother of Francis {Junior} Jones, Jr. -W. B. Guimarin & Co., Inc., Columbia)

Louis J. Alfeiri (father of Betty Wing, CAGC-Charleston)

CONCERNS

MCASC would like to extend thoughts and prayers to the following families:

Miriam Tankersley, Burkett Systems, Columbia, Richland Memorial Hospital
 Preston (Big Daddy) Mitchell (Tommy Burkett's stepfather/Burkett Systems) hospital, Charlotte

MAKE PLANS FOR THE 13th ANNUAL
SWATTER - SNAGGER - SHAGGER

GOLF AND FISHING SCHOLARSHIP
TOURNAMENT

JUNE 11, 12, 13, 2004

Thanks for all the support
on the Initial Website Offering which ended
January 15, 2004!

MARCH 11 - 14, 2004 – Hilton Myrtle Beach Resort

PLEASE COMPLETE AND FAX THIS PAGE TO THE MCASC STATE OFFICE AT
(803) 731-0390 BY JAN. 30TH (EXTENDED UNTIL FRIDAY, FEB. 13TH, 2004).

COMPANY NAME _____

I AM REGISTERING _____ PEOPLE FROM MY COMPANY FOR THE WINTER RETREAT SCHEDULED MARCH 11-14, 2004. PLEASE LIST ALL NAMES OF THOSE ATTENDING BELOW.

REGISTRATION FEE IS ONLY \$225.00 PER PERSON - MCASC WILL BILL YOU LATER

NOTE: A full refund of MCASC Winter Retreat Registration Fees will be made on cancellations received prior to Friday, January 30, 2004. After that date, only 50% will be refunded up until Friday, February 13, 2004. Substitutions will be allowed.

PLEASE INDICATE IF YOU PLAN TO PLAY GOLF ON FRIDAY AT ARCADIAN SHORES

GOLF ???

_____	Y N	_____	Y N
_____	Y N	_____	Y N
_____	Y N	_____	Y N
_____	Y N	_____	Y N

TENTATIVE AGENDA

MCASC Winter Retreat, March 11 - 14, 2004 *Hilton Myrtle Beach Resort - Myrtle Beach, South Carolina*

THURSDAY

4:00 PM – Until	Check In (Hilton Myrtle Beach Resort)	
4:00 PM – 12:00 AM	Hospitality Suite Open	Room 402

FRIDAY

6:30 AM - 11:00 AM	Buffet Breakfast	Café Amalfi
9:00 AM - 12:00 Noon	Workshop	Palmetto
12:30 PM	Golf: \$57.00 Box Lunch: \$10.75	Arcadian Shores
FREE AFTERNOON	On Your Own	
4:00 PM - 7:00 PM	Hospitality Suite Open	Room 402
6:30 PM - 7:00 PM	Past Presidents' Meeting	Room 402
7:30 PM	Dinner, Fun & Silent Auction	Dunes Ballroom
After Dinner-12:00 AM	Hospitality Suite Open	Room 402

SATURDAY

6:30 AM – 11:00 AM	Buffet Breakfast	Café Amalfi
9:00 AM – 11:00 AM	Workshop	Palmetto
11:00 AM - 12:00 Noon	Open Business Meeting	West Ballroom
12:30 PM	Lunch	Beach Combers
FREE AFTERNOON	On Your Own	
4:00 PM - 6:00 PM	Hospitality Suite Open	Room 402
7:00 PM	Cocktails	The House of Blues
7:30 PM - 10:00 PM	Murder Mystery Dinner Theater	The House of Blues
After Dinner-12:00 AM	Hospitality Suite Open	Room 402

SUNDAY

6:30 AM - 11:00 AM	Buffet Breakfast	Café Amalfi
12:00 Noon	Hotel Check-Out	Have a Safe Trip Home

**Associate Member:
Simpson & Associates, LLC**

The objective of Simpson & Associates, LLC is to provide outstanding accounting services at a reasonable price. The quality of their work and the level of service they provide separates them from other accounting firms. Their professionals understand that the client always comes first. They seek to become not just your tax prepare or auditor but your business partner and consultant as well. Examples of services available to their clients:

- Accounting:** ► Providing bookkeeping services on a monthly basis for clients and preparation of reports for management.
 - Preparing quarterly and annual federal and state payroll tax returns.
 - Compiling and reviewing financial statements with full disclosures in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.
- Tax:** ► Preparation of individual, corporate, not-for-profit, and partnership tax returns.
 - Consulting with clients on tax issues such as the effects of transfer of business ownership among family members or planning for a change in a company's accounting methods..
- Management Advisory Services:** ► Assisting clients in designing, implementing and improving accounting systems to increase productivity and efficiency,
 - Devising financial strategies to help businesses meet both long and short-term business needs.
- Audit:** ► Auditing and assisting in the preparation of year-end financial statements with full disclosures in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.
 - Assisting with internal audit training and the performance of interal audit procedures.

*Simpson & Associates, LLC
PO Box 8174, Columbia SC 29202
Phone: (803) 252-3000 Fax: (803) 252-2226*

**Congratulations to our next Associate & Mechanical Members who will be highlighted in the upcoming issue of 'The Tool Box':
Bear Mechanical Services, LLC — Lexington
Cregger Company — Greenville**

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2004 MONTHLY AREA MEETINGS

PIEDMONT AREA:

Tuesday, February 10, 2004 @ 6:00 PM
Location: 1708 Poplar Street, Greer
Sponsored By: AAA Supply

Speaker: Charlene Meetze of Meetze Plumbing, Irmo, to speak on "MEP"

PEE DEE AREA:

Thursday, February 19, 2004 @ 6:30 PM
Location: Damon's Rest. -4810 Hwy 17, N Myr.Bch.
Sponsored By: Carrier Southeast & North Strand Mechanical

Speaker: Doug Smith, Regional Mgr. of Sterile Aire to present a program on "Mold Control with UV Lighting"

COASTAL AREA:

Thursday, February 26, 2004 @ 6:00 PM
Location: James Island Yacht Club

ANNUAL OYSTER ROAST

MIDLANDS AREA:

Thursday, March 4, 2004 @ 6:00 PM
Location: 10009 Broad River Road, Irmo
Sponsored By: Meetze Plumbing Company

Speaker: TBA



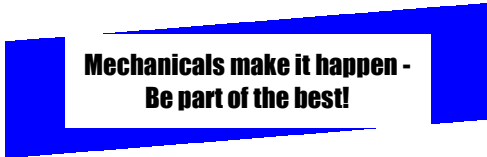
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**Serving mechanical contractors in
 South Carolina since 1912.**

MCASC Executive Board & Staff

- Tommy Burkett, President**
- Ned Forsberg, Vice-President**
- Darlene McGee, Treasurer**
- John Minor, Secretary**
- Billy Starrett, Associate President**
- Mona Flowers, Managing Director**
- Carol Fore, Administrative Assistant**



Spotting Trouble Before It Starts..... (Continued from Page 1)

president has not developed a successorship plan and that a qualified candidate does not exist in the company, he realizes right off there has been a problem for years: this is a one-man company, probably a “command and control” type of management approach without attention to the development of people.

If you were a surety, how interested would you be in bonding such a company, knowing that its survival is dependent upon the heartbeat of one person? Equally important is knowing that the people below that person have not been afforded the growth opportunities to take over if the president steps aside (voluntarily or otherwise).

The next time you’re wondering how your company is doing, try to take an outside look.

*Reprinted with permission from the publication Real Estate & Construction of Charleston, Best Practices in Construction—
 Dec. 15-28, 2003 Edition. Lawyer, mediator, author, consultant and educator Tom Frisby has managed
 Charleston-based construction-consulting firm Frisby Consulting for 40 years. He can be reached at thomasfrisby@msn.com.*

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

When you elected me President in June of 2003, I stated that I would make an effort to attend all of the area meetings. I have not been able to fulfill this due to medical reasons in my family.

I will make every effort to make my commitment to attend all that I can. Please accept my apology.

Thank You,
 Tommy Burkett
 President MCASC

**Are you ready for some fun in the sun?
 Look inside for details of the events at the Winter Retreat !**