



# PIPELINE

FUEL FOR YOUR BUSINESS

JUL/AUG 2022

THE NEWSLETTER OF UTAH'S HVACR INDUSTRY

153 SOUTH 900 EAST, #3 • SLC, UT 84102 • WWW.UTRMGA.ORG

## RMGA Certifies First Sponsored Apprentice



JASON HERRE



Jason Herre, with Davis County Facilities Management, is RMGA's first sponsored apprentice, and the first technician to use the

RMGA Apprenticeship Log Book.

Reflecting on his apprenticeship, **Jason appreciated the ability to gain knowledge while working with the safety net of a mentor all while building confidence in his own skills.** He is ready to

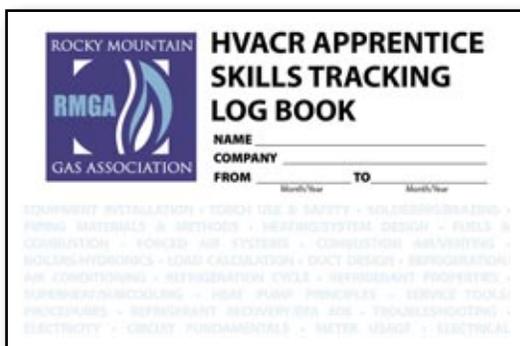
start mentoring others, whom he would advise: **“Don’t be afraid to ask questions, none of us learned it all overnight.”** And “everyday brings new challenges, so you never get bored.”

Jason also learned the value of quality tools, which save you lots of frustration. In praise of his mentor, Jason encourages all supervisors to be patient and remember that every mistake can be made into a learning experience.

RMGA wants to sponsor your next HVACR apprentice! Go to <https://utrmga.org/rmga-apprenticeship-program> and fill out an apprenticeship agreement and we'll help you train your future workforce! ■

## RMGA Apprenticeship Log Book: Ready When You Are!

This tracking booklet will help your apprentices and their supervisors track and shape the apprentice's HVACR training and career. Encourage your apprentices to get in the habit of tracking what they learn every day, and have your supervisors review and sign-off on their progress every week. Apprentices are entitled to set wage increases every six months as long as they continue to hone their technical skills and become more valuable members of your company team. ■



Booklet folds open with tracking logs for 3 months PLUS room for notes!

Jamie Schumacher  
jamie@gunthers.com  
801-756-9683 ext 230



**MESSAGE  
FROM OUR  
PRESIDENT**  
JAMIE SCHUMACHER

*Dear RMGA Members & Friends,*

*For more than 30 years I have witnessed many changes in our industry, some changes have been positive, others have been more difficult to deal with. We are on the cusp of some significant changes once again, with the upcoming adoption of the new building and energy codes, new efficiency standards, and even new refrigerants; change is the only real constant in our industry. Despite all the demands on your time, make learning a priority, or you may find yourself left behind. The RMGA Education Summit and RMGA trainings are great ways to keep up with what is going on in our industry. Make plans now to attend and be involved!*

Best,

Jamie Schumacher

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 13



DOWNTOWN SLC, UTAH

## RMGA BOARD BRIEFING MAY & JUNE 2022

In May, the board discussed offering the RMGA Certification Exam in Spanish. It was decided that before we have the exam questions translated, the RMGA Exam Review Committee should first finish their work on revising the current exam question bank in English.

The Exam Review Committee asked the board whether aspects of Manual D (duct design) should be included in the class and exam, but the board decided to let the Review Committee decide.

Ryan Rentmeister attended a recent Northern Utah Home Builders Association meeting and got support from some of their members to allow some homes to be tested to start a database for the Problem House Study. RMGA is submitting an article for a Northern Home Builders newsletter and see if we can get some contractors on board. From there, we will share the newsletter article with the other 7 local HBA chapters to solicit interest in the study across the state.

**Our next board meeting will be on at Johnstone Supply, 2940 South 300 West, Salt Lake City at 11:00 a.m., on Wednesday, July 13. Everyone is invited to attend, ask to be invited: john@utrmga.com. ■**

## WELCOME OUR NEW RMGA MEMBERS

### K LUND MECHANICAL

Kelly Lund  
415 W 9800 S  
Sandy, Utah 84070  
801-244-3133  
www.klundmechanical.com

### VANCON CONSTRUCTION

Brett Nielsen  
352 E 1100 S  
Nephi, Utah 84648  
801-834-0703



# RMGA GAS CERTIFICATION CLASSES

CALL 801.521.8340  
OR EMAIL  
RMGAUTAH@GMAIL.COM  
TO REGISTER

**JULY In-Person  
class sold out.  
Zoom  
available!**

Now you can register on the new RMGA website:  
<https://utrmga.org/certification>

## JULY IN-PERSON

(And on Zoom)

### Salt Lake City

Thursday, July 14  
Friday, July 15 &  
Saturday, July 16  
8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

**SOLD OUT  
In-Person**

## SEP/OCT IN-PERSON

(And on Zoom)

### Salt Lake City

Thursday, September 29  
Friday, September 30 &  
Saturday, October 1  
8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Dominion Energy CTC Room  
1000 West 100 South  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84104

## NOV IN-PERSON

(And on Zoom)

### Salt Lake City

Thursday, November 10  
Friday, November 11 &  
Saturday, November 12  
8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Dominion Energy CTC Room  
1000 West 100 South  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84104

All Certification Classes are \$400. Price includes the RMGA Study Guide, IFGC, online video access, 24 hours of instruction, and 2 attempts at the exam (if necessary). Technicians should attend ALL sessions. In-person attendees should bring lunch or plan to visit a local restaurant during the lunch hour. **Take the Pre-Test to evaluate your readiness for the exam at <https://utrmga.org/pre-test/>**

*Partial funding of RMGA training programs have been provided by the Division of Occupational & Professional Licensing from the 1% surcharge funds on all building permits.*

## Spanish Language Certification Exam in the Works

The RMGA Board recently voted to develop a Spanish language version of the RMGA Certification Exam and Certification Study Guide.

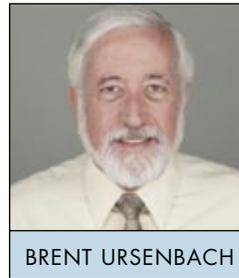
After the Exam Review Committee updates the current English version of the Exam, a Spanish translation will be developed along with a new study guide. The International Fuel Code is already in Spanish.

Our search is on for a Spanish-speaking Certification Instructor to teach our class in Spanish.



# MECHANICAL CODE DISCUSSION

## Energy & Mechanical Code Failure — Access to HVAC Systems in Attics



BRENT URSEBACH

### BRENT URSEBACH

HVAC EDUCATOR/  
EXPERT WITNESS

bursenbach@gmail.com  
801-381-1449

#### Please Reply to These Questions!

Is there anyone out there who loves crawling through knee deep insulation in a 140+ degree attic, digging around with your foot for trusses to step on, carry a tool bag and/or parts, to service or repair a heating and cooling system? Have you discovered the attic insulation ‘black hole’ which captures for the eternities, any dropped screws, small parts, or small tools? Do you love the trek back out, then back in to get another tool or part?

Let’s not forget the flashlight experiencing battery failure partway through your adventure, or the ducts you must cross. Anyone ever slipped or failed to find the truss, putting your foot through the ceiling? I had an employee finding ‘solid’ footing on a ceiling light box supporting a chandelier. He weighed in at about 240 pounds, more than the box could support.

I recently received a call from good friends who purchased a getaway home in Southern Utah, with questions including several on their HVAC system. As we discussed their questions over the course of several weeks, I asked if they could provide a few photos of the HVAC system in the attic, specifically the furnace, coil, and duct, expecting they could easily access the service platform in front of the furnace. Hmmm . . . no, this is what I received

from their son-in-law who lives close by:



Yes, that’s the furnace, 24’ from the access. I will not quote my exact comments uttered when I received this as some might be offended.

We find in the **2000 IRC**, Section M1305.1.3, requirements including access size, a distance not more than 20’ from appliance to access, a continuous

24” wide floor/catwalk above the insulation, a level service platform minimum 30” deep in front of sides requiring access, a light at the appliance controlled at the access, and a service receptacle near the appliance. Isn’t 22 years long enough for the design professionals, code officials, contractors, and sub-contractors to get up to speed?

In the **2006 IRC**, an exception was added allowing a 22” wide catwalk, 50’ long if there is 6’ high clearance from the access to the appliance. This section remains unchanged in the **2009, 2012, 2015, 2018, and 2021 IRC**. If the height is less than 6’, the distance from access to appliance is limited to 20’.

Why am I addressing this in the RMGA Pipeline? Because it’s in the mechanical and energy codes and you are required by your license to comply with the adopted codes. No, I don’t expect you to build the platforms and catwalks, but you can surely educate builders to this requirement. Please don’t be shy in asking inspectors, “doesn’t the code require the builder to provide a light, receptacle, platform, and catwalk?” Further, I’m going to share this with each of the four ICC Code Chapters in Utah, on the **www.utahenergycode.com** website, and in upcoming classes.

In my opinion, this is an important

➤ (Continues top of next page)

issue, desperately needing attention. Please consider:

1. Where access is poor, maintenance is rarely performed, failures more common and require greater time and expense. I appreciate how many of you install filter grills; however, the appliance needs more than a simply filter change. Don't you sell service plans, performing much more?
2. This home is in Climate Zone 3, in an area where virtually all the furnaces are installed in attics. Logically, this area should be the most proactive in compliance with this section?
3. Crawling through the insulation disturbs and packs down the insulation, reducing the effective R-value of the attic insulation. Referring the photo above, is it

possible to return the insulation to this fluffed up effective condition, after multiple trips to and from the appliance? Also, notice the return plenum does not appear to be insulated.

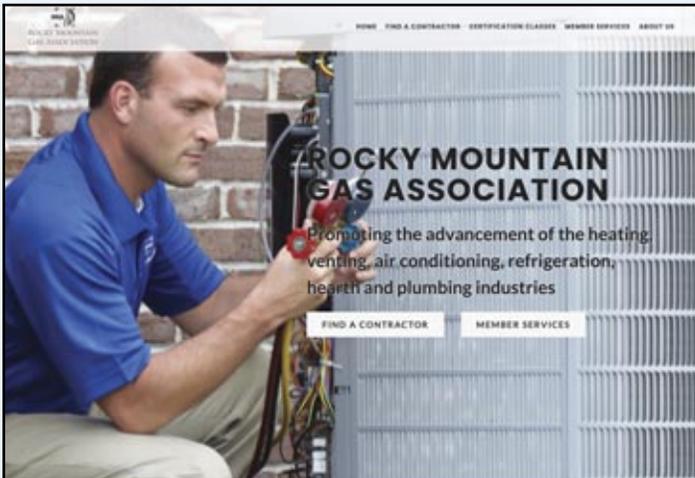
4. Ducts in attics are damaged, crushed, and pulled apart by individuals traversing the attic.
5. Catwalks and platforms minimize disturbing the insulation and reduces the respiratory hazards of breathing the particles suspended in the air.
6. Improved access reduces the time required in extreme unhealthy high temperatures.
7. Why is the access so far from the appliance location?
8. The intent of the code includes safeguarding the public safety,

health, and general welfare through affordability.... light and ventilation, energy conservation and safety to life and property from fire and other hazards attributed to the built environment. **This includes safeguarding the HVAC tech.**

9. Lastly, a reminder, IRC N1102.2.4 requires full depth insulation to be permanently attached to the access panel, baffles to prevent insulation spilling, a weather strip on the panel and access to appliance which prevents damaging or compressing the insulation.

Maybe the best solution is getting the furnace out of the . . . attic.

*Please reply to my opening questions, or with other comments. I welcome you input on jurisdictions who fail to recognize the importance of these requirements. Best Regards, Brent ■*



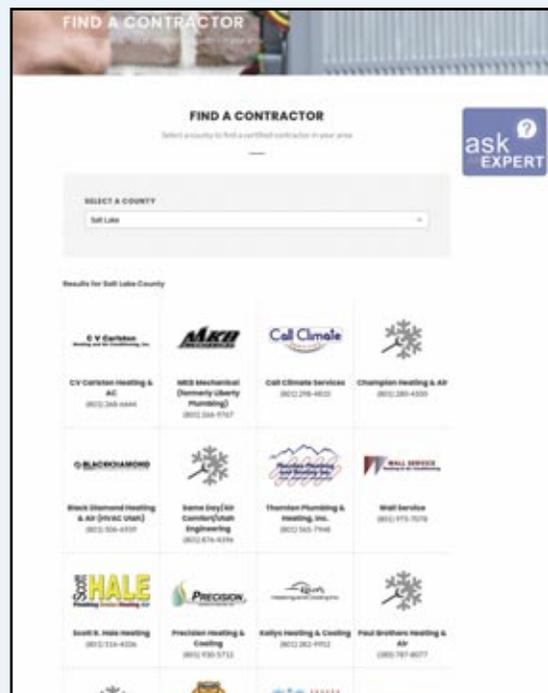
### FREE RMGA REFERRAL SERVICE

RMGA members can participate in our 24/7 referral service, with a company listing and link to your website, in every county where you provide HVACR services. Check your current listing and contact information at <https://utrmga.org/listings> to make sure it is correct and includes all the counties where you provide services.

Contact Amy at [Amy@utrmga.com](mailto:Amy@utrmga.com) to make corrections or to get additional county referrals.

## Check out the New RMGA Website!

Same location: [www.utrmga.org](http://www.utrmga.org)  
Cleaner Look and Better Functionality



# Meet and Get to Know: COLTEN SPERRY



COLTEN SPERRY & FAMILY

**Q.** Tell us about your company. . .

**A.** For more than 25 years, our team at Absolute Air has been tending to the heating, cooling, weatherization, and plumbing needs of the residents in Utah and Salt Lake counties. We are proud of our A+ Better Business Bureau rating and the loyal customer following we have gained throughout the years. Our honest business practices, work integrity, and premium customer service makes us who we are—a company that stands out among our competitors.

**Q.** What is your position within the company?

**A.** Service Manager.

**Q.** If you weren't an HVACR contractor, what would you like to be?

**A.** Not sure! I feel super lucky to have found something I can obsess about and not get tired of doing.

**Q.** What was your most unusual work experience?

**A.** Don't know where to start or end!

**Q.** What are your favorite aspects of your job?

**A.** Change. Every day is different and brings its own challenges and rewards.

**Q.** Do you have a motto to live by?

**A.** Seek out discomfort, regret is an appalling waste of energy.

**Q.** If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go?

**A.** Ireland.

**Q.** What is your favorite hobby? When did you last do it?

**A.** Hunting/Fishing — leaving on a trip to Alaska this July.

**Q.** Tell us about your hidden talent.

**A.** Animal noise maker, and ability to

flip my eyelids inside out.

**Q.** If you won a \$50,000,000 lottery, what would you do?

**A.** Whatever I want! In all reality, invest the majority, plan a few vacations and show up to work the next day as if nothing ever happened.

**Q.** Do you have a favorite movie?

**A.** The Sandlot.

**Q.** If you could invite any three people to dinner (dead or alive), whom would you invite and why?

**A.** Chris Farley — He's hilarious, and keeps it entertaining. Elon Musk — Interesting guy that makes things happen. My wife — Someone has to back up my story of having dinner with Chris Farley and Elon Musk!

**Q.** People would be surprised to know . . .

**A.** I can speak Portuguese. ■

*Colten Sperry is with Absolute Air. He can be reached at [coltens@absoluteair.com](mailto:coltens@absoluteair.com).*

# YOUR BUSINESS • Tips of the Trade

IDEAS AND INFORMATION GLEANED FROM SERVICE ROUNDTABLE MEMBERS AND OTHER SOURCES.  
COMPILED BY JIM OLSZTYNSKI



## Stressed out?

Who isn't from time to time? Try these seven techniques to gain relief:

1. Focus on what you can control, and stop sweating what you can't.
2. Find comfort in your core values. Fulfilling them may be causing some of your stress, but it's for a good cause.
3. Gather all the information you need to make wise decisions. Uncertainty breeds stress.
4. Be physically fit. Lack of physical stamina leads to mental stress. Be sure to exercise and eat for health.
5. Fight panic with controlled breathing. Inhale and exhale deeply. It's a technique used by everyone from Tibetan monks to Navy SEALs.
6. Look beyond the present. Once the problem causing you stress gets solved — and it will — focus on what comes next.
7. Break the problem into segments. Be like top golfers who focus intently on each shot at hand. They erase bad shots from memory.

## Promote your "evangelists."

I'm referring to customers who absolutely love you and your people and constantly refer others to you. You probably have at least one or two

of these superfans among your clients. Record them on video singing your praises and post the video to your website — and share on social media.

## Get God (or at least his spokesperson) on your side!

I heard of a contractor who kicked in a fairly sizable contribution to his church for every parishioner referral. He actually had the minister plug his business in sermons, telling everyone the church would benefit if they used this company's services.

## Two-way referral discounts.

Steve Scott shared this tip on the HVAC idea Exchange, saying he learned it from Tom McCart: "On the back of your business card have a \$25 discount for both the new customer and existing customer. Have existing customers put their name on them and give them to friends and family. We had decent success with these. Hand two or three to everyone."

## A way to cut down on tool losses.

Provide your workers with a "lifetime guarantee" on the tools you furnish them. That is, if a tool gets broken or worn out through customary usage, you replace it. But if it gets lost, the replacement comes out of the worker's pocket.

## Striking signage.

I was driving through my neighborhood when I came across a house with a torn-up lawn. A colorful sign explained: "Crawl space to basement conversion taking place." It's fairly common for renovation contractors to put up signs

announcing their presence, but this one added a lot of character to the presentation, including a color photo of the backhoe at work. Think of something similar for "Furnace conversion in progress . . . Broken sewer/water line being replaced," etc.

## Free money.

Do you take advantage of the 2% discount offered by most wholesalers for prompt payments? If not, why not? Cash flow should not be a problem for service contractors who accept credit cards and checks for instant payment.

## Training works best in small chunks.

Don't try to teach people everything in a single day or week of concentrated effort. People get bored easily. Do it an hour or two at a time and they'll absorb more. It also helps to change up instruction methodology. Move from lectures to slides to group breakouts to hands-on sessions.

## Try peer-to-peer training.

Rely on your more experienced people to share their tricks of the trade. Having different faces conduct training sessions helps keep the experience interesting. Also, have the experienced pros mentor newcomers while on the job. Ride-alongs can work wonders in getting newbies up to snuff.

## Which half are you wasting?

An old saying holds that half of all advertising is wasted, it's just that nobody knows which half. Keep track of what's working and what's not, and don't be afraid to trim stuff that's not pulling its weight. ■



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