



PIPELINE

FUEL FOR YOUR BUSINESS

JAN/FEB 2020

THE NEWSLETTER OF UTAH'S HVACR INDUSTRY

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Legislature Passes Tax Reform Bill with \$160 Million Tax Cut

After many months of deliberation and hours of public meetings, the Utah Legislature passed Tax Restructuring Revisions in a special session on December 12, 2019 which provides a significant tax cut to Utah taxpayers. It delivers a \$348 million income tax cut by lowering the rate from 4.95% to 4.66% that goes into effect in 2020.

The new law also slashes \$18 million in taxes on social security for senior citizens, and restores the statewide portion of the sales tax on unprepared groceries.

Taxpayers that may be strongly

impacted by the increased food tax are actually likely to see a reduction in taxes once the income tax rate cut kicks in, and the higher dependent deduction amount. And for low- and middle-income taxpayers, there is a refundable grocery tax credit, which will put an additional \$500 (\$125 per person) in the pocket of a family of four. Any family larger than that will receive an additional \$50 per person for this newly-created credit.

Come April 2020, a sales tax on motor fuel will increase the cost of gasoline by about 10 cents per gallon.

The bill also places sales tax on certain services, including pet grooming, ride-sharing services, and streaming music and video. **RMGA and UPHCA were able to convince legislators not to add sales tax on "installation charges" when building materials and equipment are permanently attached to real property.**

All of the tax cuts in the bill add up to a total cut of \$639 million. That not only offsets the additional \$478 million in taxes on fuel, groceries and additional services, but delivers a net tax cut of \$160 million dollars. ■

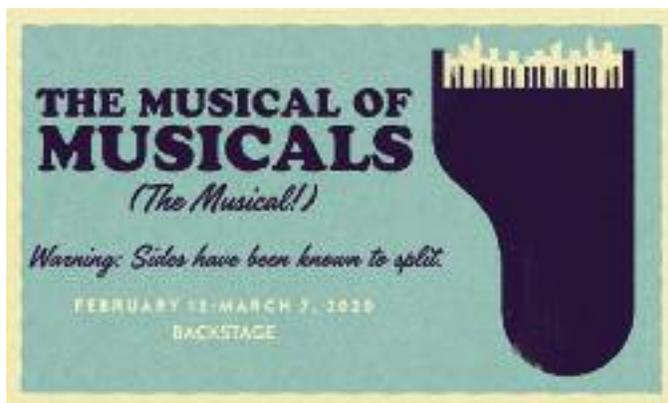
RMGA Sweetheart Social February 15, 2020

RMGA Members are invited to dinner and a show, and a chance to win great raffle prizes!

RMGA's Sweetheart Social begins at 5:30 PM at OMBU Grill, 1438 S. State Street, Salt Lake City, where we will enjoy delicious Korean barbecue and take part in a raffle with lots of fun prizes. Then it is off to the Grand Theater at 1575 S. State Street for a 7:30 PM performance of **The Musical of Musicals (The Musical!)**, a hilarious satire of musical theater!

The Musical of Musicals takes the story of a young ingenue, June, struggling to pay her rent, and plagued by an evil landlord and spins it into five mini musicals written in the distinctive style of various Broadway composers from Rogers and Hammerstein to Stephen Sondheim.

Couples (\$80) and Singles (\$40) welcome! Call the RMGA office at 801-521-8340 or send an email to john@utrmga.com. ■



Jamie Schumacher
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**MESSAGE
FROM OUR
PRESIDENT**
JAMIE SCHUMACHER



Dear RMGA Members & Friends,

With each new year many of us make New Year's resolutions, many of which only last a short time. I read an article with some recommendations that I liked and decided to share:

- 1. Find what makes you happy: "We do not become happy because we are successful; we become successful because we are happy."*
- 2. Do hard things: accomplishing "easy" goals doesn't do much for use, accomplishing "hard" goals builds self-esteem and pride.*
- 3. Take more risk: "Nothing ventured nothing gained." The happiest people among us have also been found to be risk takers, who don't quit when the going gets hard, so don't give up!*

And last but definitely not least:

- 4. Make a difference in someone else's life: "Make time to volunteer; there is no better way to put your own life in perspective than to selflessly serve, it changes your heart and helps you become a better human."*

I wish you all the best in 2020!

RMGA BOARD BRIEFING NOV & DEC 2019

Two RMGA members were named as new board members: Justin Vigh with AMS, Inc. and Scott Carpenter with Legends Mechanical and three contractors were approved for membership.

The Apprenticeship Committee reviewed and approved 10 additional grandfathering applications, and RMGA board members were asked to reach out to fellow contractors to introduce them to the apprenticeship program.

The board awarded six RMGA \$500 Scholarships, with checks sent to Technical College administrators to give to their instructors, who are to present them to the winning students and take pictures for the next newsletter.

The board approved a \$2,000 legislative tracking expense to be paid for 2020 legislative tracking for members of the Utah Subcontractors Association (USA), of which RMGA is a charter member.

We reviewed a tentative agreement for WC-3's creation of an on-line video series of RMGA's recent Manual J, D and S classes. The board wants a follow-up test developed to help monitor whether technicians are paying attention.

13 Technicians attended a Certification class in Evanston. Jeff Bybee, Dominion Energy's Wyoming Region Manager, expressed support of RMGA's move to develop a RMGA Referral program for South Western Wyoming, and creating referral cards for Dominion employees to hand out to local home and business owners, encouraging them to ask for a "certified technician" when they hire an HVACR contractor.

Jamie Schumacher discussed UHBA proposed 2020 legislation that would require DOPL field inspectors to check HVACR Contractors for proof of RMGA Certification.

Scott Carpenter attended the Dept. of Workforce Services job fair for RMGA, and reported seeing a lot of interest in the HVACR industry. ■

WELCOME NEW RMGA MEMBERS!



**B. Keith Huntsman
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RMGA GAS CERTIFICATION CLASSES

**CALL
801-521-8340
TO REGISTER**



Salt Lake City

Thursday, February 20,
Friday, February 21 &
Saturday, February 21
8 am - 5 pm

Classes held at:

Dominion Energy
CTC Training Room

1000 West 100 South, SLC, UT

Salt Lake City

Thursday, March 12,
Friday, March 13 &
Saturday, March 14
8 am - 5 pm

Classes held at:

Dominion Energy
CTC Training Room

1000 West 100 South, SLC, UT

Salt Lake City

Thursday, May 7
Friday, May 8 &
Saturday, May 9
8 am - 5 pm

Classes held at:

Dominion Energy
CTC Training Room

1000 West 100 South, SLC, UT

Gas Certification Classes price: \$400

Price includes the RMGA Study Guide, IFGC Book, online videos, instruction and lunch all 3 days and two attempts at exam* (if necessary). *New Pre-test evaluates technician readiness.

Important RMGA Certification Class Info

- HVAC technicians will have a 4 hours and 10 minutes to complete the RMGA Certification Exam. This 10 minutes is to allow for a break, should one be needed. The time continues to run on the clock.
- A basic understanding of geometry is very beneficial to succeeding on the exam, as is, our pre-test which is available on our website.
- Free exam retakes are limited to six months from the last date of your class. For example, if the last day of your class is June 16th, you have until December 16th, 2019 to use your retake voucher.
- A technician can Audit the class (bring their RMGA training materials) for \$150. If the RMGA Study Guide is prior to January 2019, the updated tabs and pages are an additional \$25, plus any required testing fees.
- Technicians attending an RMGA Certification class will be issued a test voucher in the class. All test vouchers are pre-paid, so testers not taking an RMGA Class can obtain a voucher by calling or emailing RMGA. Testers are required to pay any proctor fee directly to the testing center they choose. **Effective January 1, 2020 all test vouchers/retest vouchers expire within 6 months.**

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.

MECHANICAL CODE DISCUSSION

Combustion Air from Inside a Newer Building



BRENT URSEBACH

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HVAC EDUCATOR/
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Recently, I've become aware of a couple of troubling conditions where new apartment buildings have water heaters installed within the units, using the indoor combustion air, drawn from the living space. These units are experiencing high carbon monoxide conditions and sooting in the heat exchangers. Apparently, the design professionals, jurisdictions, and contractors notice the code allows indoor combustion air, but have *failed* to carefully read and correctly apply the code section.



Back in the mid 1980s, fuel gas codes introduced the term unusually tight construction to the building construction industry. Through testing and experience it was determined home building practices and codes produced structure significantly tighter than earlier construction. Subsequently, there was insufficient leakage to provide the air required for gas appliance combustion. In the opinion of many including myself, an over-reaction occurred, resulting in the ridiculous excessive two pipe combustion air

requirements mandated for all newly constructed homes. An example of this absurdity is a 100,000 BTU/hr. furnace with a 40,000 BTU/hr. water heater:

Considering horizontal CA ducts with 2 sq. in. per 1,000 BTU/hr. per opening: $140 \div 2 = 70$ sq. in. or *two 10" pipes to outside*. Several years later the fuel gas codes introduced the 1 sq. in. per 3,000 BTU/hr. single opening option, an obvious improvement.

Jump forward to 2003, the International Fuel Gas Code re-introduced/modified *indoor combustion air options* for any building—See IFGC 404.5, IRC G2407.5. The code recognizes *if we know the air infiltration rate into a building [air changes per hour (ACH)]*, calculations can be made to identify an interior volume sufficient to satisfy the combustion air needs of a gas appliance. The key here is *knowing our infiltration rates*. FYI, the building codes no longer include the term *unusually tight construction*.

Manual J Table 5B, simplified Infiltration Rates for one or two exposures, a typical multi-family building:

1000 sq. ft. apartment unit of tight construction; Heating ACH = 0.18 and Cooling ACH = 0.09

Please notice during heating seasons the air infiltration rate is higher due to stack action or heat rising through ceilings, pulling outside air into the building to replace ceiling leakage. Water heaters of course operate in the summer, when the ACH is lowest. Let's consider a calculation for the required

interior volume if the indoor combustion air option is selected.

IFGC Equation 3-1 for nat. draft, where $I = 40,000$ input BTU/hr. water heater, ACH cooling = 0.09:

$$\text{Required Volume}_{\text{air}} \geq \frac{21B^3}{ACH} \left(\frac{I_{\text{other}}}{1,000 \text{ Btu/h}} \right)$$

Required Volume = $21 \div 0.09 \times 40 = 9333$ cubic feet. Divide by 8' ceiling hgt. = 1167 sq. ft.

Recalling the volume used in any indoor CA calculation is based on open areas that cannot be closed off with doors. The total volume of the apartment is too small to use indoor combustion air. Considering bedroom, bathroom and laundry room doors may be closed, typically no more than half the volume is available for combustion air. Volume is insufficient for both heating and cooling conditions.

Other conditions which might compound the problem include continuously operating fans, dryer and range hood operations, and extraordinary sealing practices resulting in even lower ACH rates.

Conclusion: combustion air for gas furnaces, boilers, and water heaters for virtually all buildings built today must come from outside. Either provide an outside combustion air duct, to a room sealed/separated from the living space or install direct vent appliance. I strongly recommend the later.

Please feel free to contact me for further information or if you have other questions. Best wishes for a joyful and successful 2020! —Brent ■

What's the best interview question you've asked?

Interview questions range from the simple: "Tell me about yourself," to the silly: "If you were an animal, what kind would you be?" Here are some suggestions of effective questions from readers of the HR Specialist Forum.

What makes you proud?

It's a cliché question, but I like to ask, "What professional accomplishment are you most proud of?" Then you can follow up with more detailed questions about how they accomplished that. I look for folks who don't set themselves up as the star (even if they are) and who give credit to the efforts of everyone on the team. I also look for evidence that they can accomplish goals—and care about doing so—through influence and not just hierarchical power.

All smiles

The best one I've ever heard is, "Do you smile often?" The answer—and whether the person smiles while doing so—will tell you a lot about a person.

Most friendly, easygoing people (the kind you want to work with) will unconsciously smile when answering.

A 'values check'

I work for a nonprofit that works with low-income residents. One standard interview question is, "Why do you think people are poor?" Even if this person is just going to be crunching numbers as an accountant, we still want to make sure they are in tune with the agency's mission and values. The answers to an unexpected question can be very telling.

Modernize, criticize

I find these two questions to be helpful: "What, if any, processes did you improve?" This can be very helpful if you seek continuous process improvement in your company. We are a small firm and are always happy to



hear how we can do things better. Also, "Who was your least favorite (or most favorite) boss . . . and why?" This can really bring out some interesting information.

Useful criticism

The one that I get the best feedback from is: "What is the most useful criticism you have ever received?" It helps me see the growth in people if they answer honestly.

Fans and critics

"What would your biggest fan say about you?" Likewise, "Who is your biggest critic and what would he/she say about you?"

Your biggest bomb

"What is the biggest work disaster you've been a part of? What role did you play? What did you learn? Looking back on it, what would you do differently?"

If I can't get a straight answer, I learn a lot. If I can get an honest answer, I learn even more. ■

You Can be Sued for Commuting Accidents

Don't let employees who feel ill or impaired in any way drive home from work. Reason: You could be found liable for any accidents they cause.

EMPLOYMENT LAW



An important court ruling throws out the conventional wisdom that says companies aren't liable for employees' actions during their typical commute. This ruling says that if an employee can show that the job contributed to the accident, your company can be held liable.

Recent case: The day after a company sprayed its factory for bugs, an employee complained

that she felt ill at work. A supervisor offered to send her to the company doctor, but she declined. While

driving home, she rear-ended another car. She told police she felt lightheaded before the accident.

The person in the other car sued the company for her injuries. An appeals court let the case go to trial. **Reason:** Companies are usually liable for injuries caused by employees only when the employee is "acting within the course of employment." But an exception

exists: If the company could have foreseen a potential risk and didn't stop it, it can be held liable for the resulting injuries. (*Bussard v. Minimed Inc.*, 105 Cal. App. 4th 798, Cal. App., 2nd Dist.)

Bottom line: Pay attention to any illness or injury complaints that could be related to work. Be proactive. Provide transportation to medical care or home. Do the same in other cases in which driving might be impaired, such as after late-night work or where alcohol has been served. The cab fare will be a bargain next to defending a lawsuit. ■

It's a New Decade! Make it Profitable!

NOW IS A GREAT TIME to review how you can make your HVAC business more profitable in the 2020s. **If you are not living these profitable proverbs, pick a few and decide what you need to do in order to implement them.** Once you do, you will see how they can increase your business efficiency, making it more profitable!

After-hours calls are not interruptions or burdens. They represent real people who desperately want someone to solve a problem and will pay for it.

Some people are not meant to be your customers. If you cannot deliver the service they want at the price you require. Fire them.

The more people you know, the more business will flow your way. Network through service clubs, alumni organizations and the chamber of commerce.

Smart business owners use incentive pay systems tied to better performance to motivate employees.

Social media is not a waste of time. It's a place where you can find customers, prospects and future employees.

Your success is a reflection of the value you deliver to society. To become more successful find ways to deliver more value.

Owners should study the craft of business harder than they studied their HVAC craft. Business success depends on business acumen, not technical aptitude.

Training is not an expense, it's an investment with a strong, positive, short and long term return.

It costs too much to make the phone ring to trust the least paid person you can find to answer it.

Your financial statements are your scoreboard. Without them, you do not know whether you are winning or losing.

Hire slow. Fire fast. Be careful and deliberate before introducing new personnel into your company culture, but do not hesitate to remove those who are adversely affecting it.

Without goals, you lack a destination. Without a plan, you lack a map.

Stupid HVAC technicians know it all. Smart HVAC technicians learn from everyone they can.

This is a reprint from CONTRACTOR, the Newsmagazine of Mechanical Contracting.

Meet and Get to Know: JUSTIN VIGH



Q. Tell us about your company?

A. AMS was founded in 1985 and I became president in 2012. AMS is a commercial HVAC company specializing in medium-to-large projects.

Q. What is your position within the company?

A. President.

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

A. I have always wanted to be in business so I guess I would strive to own any business I was in.

Q. What was your most unusual work experience?

A. Working in an active prison and having the guards count your tools before and after work.

Q. What are your favorite aspects of your job?

A. Taking 2D drawings and turning them into a 3D functioning product.

Q. What is a motto that you live by?

A. No motto per se but definitely karma!

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

A. Easter island to see the Moai statues.

Q. What is your favorite hobby and when did you last do it?

A. Travel and I had the chance to go to Havana, Cuba last March.

Q. What is your hidden talent?

A. Finish Carpentry.

Q. Do you have a favorite movie?

A. All Star Wars movies.

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

A. Benjamin Franklin, for his great mind; Julius Caesar, for his mind; and Bobby Flay, because someone has to cook.

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

A. Disappear.

Q. People would be surprised to know...

A. I love finish carpentry and have built many pieces of furniture in my house.

Justin can be reached at justin.amsinc@yahoo.com or 801-755-0623. <http://www.amsprohvac.com> ■

Join RMGA Members at the 2020 Pathways to Professions Showcase February 19-20 at Mountain America Expo Center. From 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., over 10,000 high school students will be bused to learn about the HVACR industry. We're encouraging members to send



Service Technicians to meet with the students during three 2-hour shifts. RMGA will have giveaways and skill testing

activities to engage the students.

Call the RMGA office at 801-521-8340 to get involved. ■

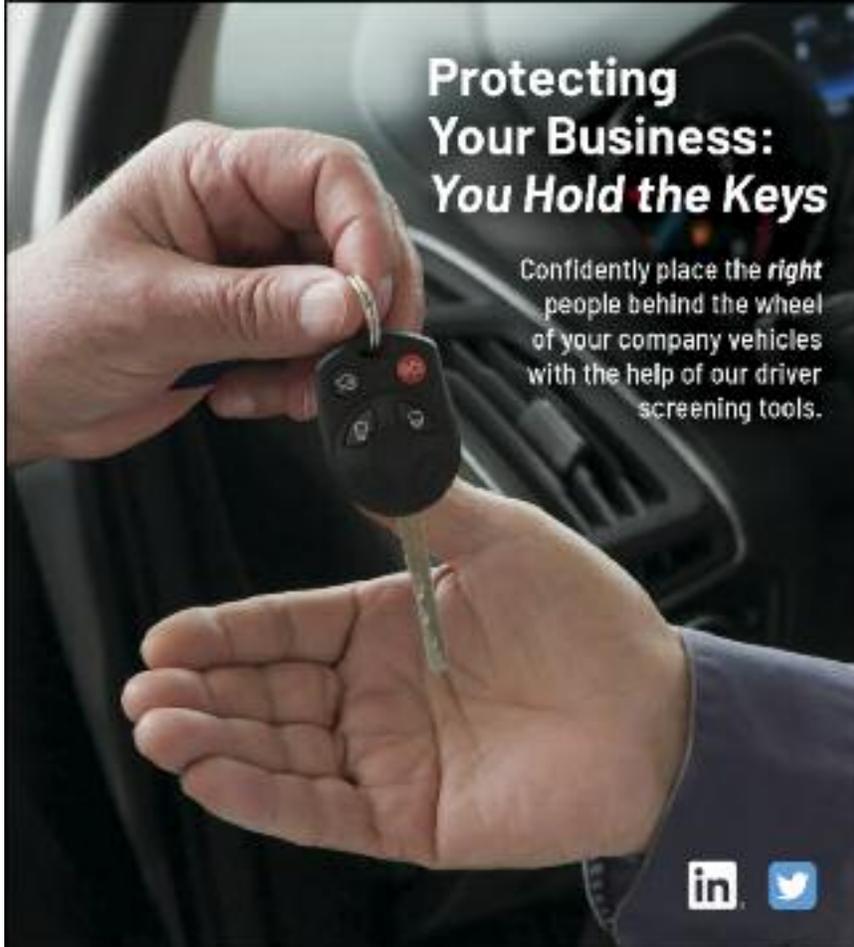


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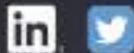
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SALT LAKE CITY, UT 84102

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