

# Direct Input

A Publication of the  
Florida Association of  
Plumbing, Gas and  
Mechanical Inspectors, Inc.  
Suncoast Central Chapter



October 2003

## Hillsborough County Update

By Chief Henry Stobaugh

### “Silent Defenders”

It was my honor to attend the International Code Hearings in Nashville, Tennessee in September. This was truly a memorable event. It was the very first annual banquet of the now International Code Council. The consolidation, of the three model code groups, is now final. James Lee Witt was introduced as the new CEO. Mr. Witt was the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). He is dedicated to taking the ICC to a new and higher level.



Every state in the country was represented, as well as groups from Brazil, Japan, Australia and others from around the world. . It was very impressive. U.S. Congressman, Curt Weldon was a keynote speaker. Coming from the fire industry, being a fire chief and being at ground zero on 9/11, his talk was inspiring. He spoke of the “Silent Defenders”, that’s you, the building officials,

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## Who is the Firestop Contractors International Association (FCIA)?

By Richard Kenney Firestop International, L.L.C. (Member FCIA Board of Directors)

There is a relatively new organization in our industry....the Firestop Contractors International Association or FCIA. FCIA was formed by specialty firestop contractors who specialize in the process called firestopping. FCIA members are from throughout the United States with some foreign members as well. Many of the leading manufacturers have joined as Associate Members and actively participate in the organization.

FCIA’s purpose is to promote benefits of life safety and property protection using the specialty firestopping contractor concept. To further this purpose, FCIA has written and joint ventured standards that bring higher quality and uniformity to the numerous construction companies that are offering firestopping services.

Firestopping has caught many contractors, inspectors and owners off guard with its importance and its complexity. FCIA knows that the firestopping industry is still evolving and as such, it wants to be a part of this evolution. FCIA is effectively working with its members and nonmembers, to be involved with code changes; development of a firestop contractor “standard”; education and training standards and the creation of inspection guidelines that will bring uniformity to this important fire and life safety trade.

To further these ideas, FCIA has established an independent standard for approval of contractors through FM Approvals, (formerly Factory Mutual) called FM 4991 Certification. FM 4991 requires contractors to pass rigorous requirements concerning employee training, project management, project reporting and documentation, Quality Control and continuing education to name a few. FM and FCIA have established this standard to ensure that

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inspectors and plans examiners, who do a job that is not publicized. He challenged us all, to re-educate America on the role that we play and of its importance. *We don't build houses; we ensure that they are built better.*

For those of you who were not able to attend these hearing, they are on the internet. Code hearings used to be every twelve months; they are now every eighteen months. I used to feel that men should not witness the making of sausage or the making of laws. But honestly, your input is important. Please get involved.

Need to address a couple of issues in this article. First let's discuss commercial kitchen grease ducts.

**M506.3.4 Joints, seams and penetrations of grease ducts. Joints, seams and penetrations of grease ducts shall be made with a continuous liquid-tight weld made on the external surface of the duct system.**

After some research and surveying other municipalities, I feel that to ensure that the joints, seams and penetrations are truly liquid-tight, we need to administer a light test for this installation. This test has been done in the past and is being done by some of the inspectors now. This will be required of all installations with no exceptions.

During the week of November 10 – 14, 2003, the Florida Association of Plumbing, Gas, Mechanical Inspectors Annual Educational Seminar will be held in Pensacola. It is a week of education (CEU's) and much more. The week is kicked off with a trade show, but the most valuable experience for me, is communicating with inspectors from all over the state.

Due to some of us attending the seminar, we will be shorthanded that week. We will not be able to handle existing change-outs for mechanical equipment. Due to the time that is involved and that most are made for am or pm appointments, it would put a real hardship on the department. So, with your consideration, please do not schedule these types of inspections during this week. Let me thank you all in advance for your cooperation in this matter.

Would like to leave you with this thought; "It is not important of the success that we receive, but the way we work with others that counts".

Need to give you my e-mail address again, [stobaughh@hillsboroughcounty.org](mailto:stobaughh@hillsboroughcounty.org).

It was printed wrong in a past issue. Please let me know of any topics, code sections or other areas that I may address. Be safe and we'll talk again.

every FM Certified contractor has the necessary personnel and procedures in place to handle this critical Life Safety work. Annual audits are a crucial part of the FM 4991 approval to make sure that a contractor continues to follow these standards and guidelines.

In addition to FM 4991, FCIA is developing additional guidelines for the firestopping inspection process as well. These guidelines will provide conformity to ASTM E 2174, (Standard for inspection of installed through penetration firestop systems) give continuity to the different Authorities Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) to help minimize conflicts between disciplines or from jurisdiction to jurisdiction.

FCIA will hold their Firestop Industry conference meeting November 12-15 at Disney's Contemporary Resort in Orlando, Florida.

To learn more about FCIA visit the FCIA website at <http://www.fcia.org> or write/call:

Bill McHugh Executive Director

1257 Golf Circle ~ Wheaton, IL 60187

Telephone: 630-690-0682 ~ Fax: 630-690-2871

## New Members

- ❖ **Louis Michalove** - Legends Plumbing
- ❖ **Scott A. DeRosa** - Scott's Plumbing of Pinellas, Inc.
- ❖ **Edward Winkowski** - Metro Air
- ❖ **Bill Flynn** - Air Conditioning Consultant
- ❖ **John Skidmore** - Sarasota County Government
- ❖ **Eric D. Toft** - Eric D. Toft HVAC&R
- ❖ **John J. Coughlin** - All Dung Sewer & Drain Cleaning, Inc.



### Plumbing Inspector Needed

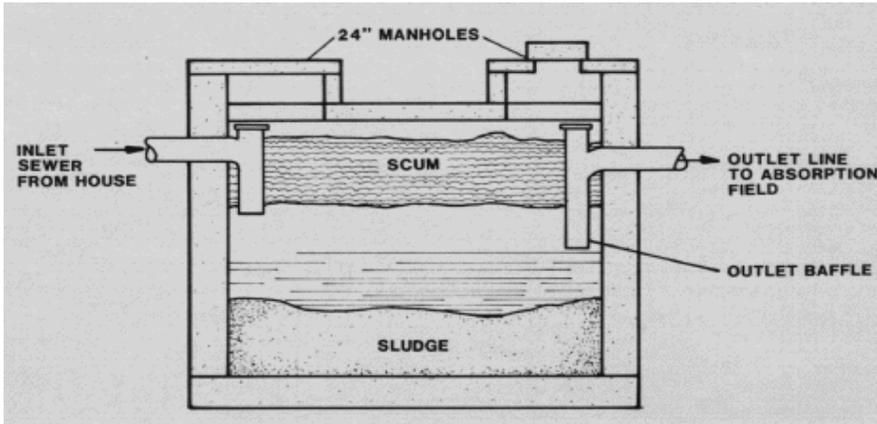
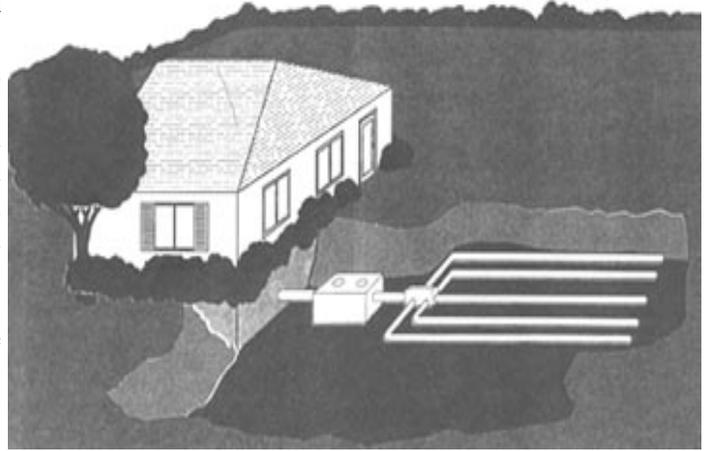
City of St. Petersburg. Apply at One 4<sup>th</sup> Street North, fourth floor Human Resources, Monday, Wednesday or Friday 8:00am to 4:00pm. The job qualifications are posted on the City of St. Petersburg web site:

[www.stpete.org](http://www.stpete.org)

# Septic Systems

By Jim Paleveda

Households not served by public sewers usually depend on a septic system to dispose of wastewater. In a typical system, waste water flows from the household sewer into an underground septic tank. There the waste components separate the heavier solids (sludge) settling to the bottom, the grease and fatty solids (scum) floating to the top, and the more liquid portion (effluent) flowing through an outlet to the soil absorption field. The absorption field usually consists of a series of parallel trenches (fingers), each containing a distribution pipe or tile embedded in coarse gravel. The effluent leaks out through holes in the pipe or seams between tile sections, then down through the gravel and into the soil. The soil filters out the remaining minute solids, and nutrients are taken up by the roots of growing plants or slowly percolate down to groundwater.



A septic system should effectively accept liquid wastes from your house and prevent biological and nutrient contaminants from getting into your well or nearby lakes and streams. Anytime these things do not happen, the system is failing. By far the most common reason for early failure is improper maintenance by homeowners. When a system is poorly maintained and not pumped out on a regular basis, sludge (solid material) builds up inside the septic tank, then flows into the absorption field, clogging it beyond repair.

The frequency with which you will need to pump depends primarily on these variables: 1) the size of your tank, 2) the number of people in the household contributing to the volume of your wastewater, 3) the volume of solids in your wastewater and 4) use of a garbage disposal.

The primary maintenance point in a septic system is the septic tank. Inspection is accomplished by measuring the scum depth and sludge depth in the tank once a year. The tank should be pumped if the sludge layer has built up to within 18 inches of the tank outlet or if the scum layer thickens to within 3 inches of the bottom of the outlet baffle or sanitary tee. Because the inspection process of measuring the scum and sludge depth can be somewhat unpleasant to the olfactory, the best solution is to have the tank pumped by a certified contractor on a routine basis. Table 1 lists how often you need to pump out your tank on average, given the size of the tank and the number of persons living in the household. These figures were calculated assuming there was no garbage disposal unit hooked up to the system. The use of a kitchen garbage disposal will increase the amount of solids in the holding tank by as much as 50 percent.

TABLE 1. Estimated Septic Tank Pumping Frequencies

| Tank Size | HOUSEHOLD SIZE (number of people) |      |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
|           | 1                                 | 2    | 3   | 4   | 5   | 6   | 7   | 8   | 9   | 10  |
| 500       | 5.8                               | 2.6  | 1.3 | 1.0 | 0.7 | 0.4 | 0.3 | 0.2 | 0.1 | -   |
| 750       | 9.1                               | 4.2  | 2.6 | 1.8 | 1.3 | 1.0 | 0.7 | 0.6 | 0.4 | 0.5 |
| 900       | 11.0                              | 5.2  | 3.3 | 2.3 | 1.7 | 1.3 | 1.0 | 0.8 | 0.7 | 0.7 |
| 1000      | 12.4                              | 5.9  | 3.7 | 2.6 | 2.0 | 1.3 | 1.2 | 1.0 | 0.8 | 1.0 |
| 1250      | 15.6                              | 7.5  | 4.8 | 3.4 | 2.6 | 2.0 | 1.7 | 1.4 | 1.2 | 1.3 |
| 1500      | 18.9                              | 9.1  | 5.9 | 4.2 | 3.3 | 2.6 | 2.1 | 1.8 | 1.5 | 1.6 |
| 1750      | 22.1                              | 10.7 | 6.9 | 5.0 | 3.9 | 3.1 | 2.6 | 2.2 | 1.9 | 2.0 |
| 2000      | 25.4                              | 12.4 | 8.0 | 5.9 | 4.5 | 3.7 | 3.1 | 2.6 | 2.2 | 2.3 |

## Next Meeting

**What:** 1 - Hour CEU

**Who:** Rich Grimes; Lochinvar Corporation

**When:** Wednesday October 8, 2003

**Time:** 1:00 - 2:00PM

**Where:** Netpark 5701 E. Hillsborough Ave. Tampa

**Topic:** Boilers

**Course:** #004 0006474

**Sponsor:** #0000919

**NOTE:** 2:00PM Joe Rosenberger with Sunstate Mechanical will speak on High Efficiency Residential, Variable Speed Heat Pumps.

**NOTE:** There will be an officers and directors meeting following the CEU class. All members are invited.

## Last Meeting

Michael Jackson, Regional Representative from the Cast Iron Soil Pipe Institute presented a one-hour continuing education class on Cast Iron pipe and fittings. Michael shared some history about when cast iron was first used and how it is manufactured. He also discussed CISPI standards, ASTM specifications and testing methods. Michael talked about some of the Plumbing codes concerning the installation of cast iron, trust forces created by changes of direction and the manufacturers recommended installation of hangers, support and sway bracing. He also stressed the importance of fire stopping cast iron and choosing the proper pipe material for the intended use. Of course we all know cast iron is the quite pipe.

The class was very informative with 20 members in attendance. If anyone has question concerning cast iron Michael can be reached at 407-963-7326 or [mjackson001@sprintmail.com](mailto:mjackson001@sprintmail.com)  
Plan to attend next month's class October 8, at 1 o'clock.

## St. Petersburg Code Update

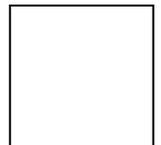
*By Inspector of the Year Herman Vargas*

I would like to start this month by saying that its been a long and busy summer. I also hope to see everyone at our conference on November 10<sup>th</sup> through November 14<sup>th</sup> in Pensacola.

Below are some of the most common problems our mechanical inspectors encounter:

1. Mechanically attached plenums.
2. Check all breakers before calling for inspection.
3. Insulate all horizontal condensation drain lines in unconditioned spaces
4. Outside equipment in flood zone "A" not elevated above base flood elevation.
5. Auxiliary drains are to be installed or a float switch on vertical units. Horizontal units need auxiliary pan and float switch.
6. If air handler is installed in attic in new construction, it must comply with the following requirements of Chapter 13 of the Florida Building Code. (aka Florida Energy Efficiency Code)
  - a. Must provide a permanent notice at the power distribution panel to alert the home owner that there is an air handler installed in the attic.
  - b. Air handler service panel must be within 6'-0" of the attic access panel.
  - c. Electric light required to be installed at the attic access.
  - d. A 110v receptacle located by the air handler.
7. A GFI receptacle not within site of the condensing unit.
8. P-traps must be installed per manufacturers installation instructions.
9. Permit application does not match scope of work.
10. Strapping of duct work incomplete or spacing too far.
11. Copper and PVC piping supports exceed spacing shown in table 305.4 of the mechanical code.
12. Equipment clearances are less than required per manufacturer's installation instructions.
13. Equipment installation instructions not left on job site for inspector.

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED