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.

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
inspectors and planners 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. 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.
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.

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<th>HOUSEHOLD SIZE (number of people)</th>
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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
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 10th through November 14th 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