

PMI's Approach to EPA's WaterSense Program: Voluntary! Unless...

By Matt Sigler, PMI Technical Director



Matt Sigler

The Trump Administration has proposed cuts to the EPA's 2018 budget that include eliminating the EPA WaterSense program. PMI is fighting these cuts aggressively by meeting with the staffs of dozens of U.S. congressional offices and writing letters to the EPA administrator and key U.S. lawmakers. It is a good time to revisit PMI's policy, based on direction from our Board of Directors,

toward proposed changes to WaterSense water consumption levels for plumbing fixtures and fittings at different levels of government.

PMI supports WaterSense as a voluntary program. EPA WaterSense is a partnership program sponsored by the U.S. EPA. The program works to promote water efficiency and enhance the market for water-efficient plumbing products. Like the EnergyStar program that helps consumers choose energy-efficient appliances, WaterSense helps consumers choose water-efficient plumbing products that use 20% less water than those that only meet Federal regulations, without sacrificing performance.

However, when a jurisdiction is looking to mandate lower consumption levels in response to water shortages, PMI promotes harmonization on proven, efficient, effective WaterSense levels. Only then does PMI support "mandating" WaterSense products. It should be noted that on December 22, 2010, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) waived the preemption requirement that prohibited states from going lower than federal regulations (Energy Policy Act of 1992) for faucets, showerheads, water closets and urinals. Therefore, it is perfectly legal for a city or state to consider lower water consumption requirements for such plumbing fixtures and fittings. When a city or state has made the decision to go lower, we do not want them to consider going to levels lower than the WaterSense program that have not been

tested to the same performance requirements as WaterSense products, and that are commonly pushed by environmental organizations. PMI's goal is to ensure that such legislation is technically accurate and does not cause an undue burden on our members. Most recently, PMI took this approach with legislation in New York (A5699 and S4591) and Massachusetts (H.3404).

On a national level, or in the base plumbing codes such as the International Plumbing Code or Uniform Plumbing Code, PMI's approach is much different. When proposals are made to lower the water consumption requirements for plumbing fixtures and fittings to WaterSense levels on the national level or in the base plumbing codes, PMI objects to such actions since federal regulations govern water consumption requirements on the national level, undermining our foundational belief that participation in WaterSense should be voluntary. In addition, PMI opposes efforts to adopt WaterSense levels at the national level or in base plumbing codes as this adoption would force EPA or code/standard organizations with green codes and standards to lower their water consumption requirements below those currently prescribed by the WaterSense program. Such water consumption levels could prove to be detrimental not only to public health, but system performance as well.

PMI believes that the WaterSense program must be allowed to continue its mission of "market transformation." The PMI Water Sense Penetration Study (goo.gl/fqPmNF) shows there is tremendous potential for water savings to be had by encouraging wider adoption of effective, efficient WaterSense products which are readily available now. The key to increased water efficiency throughout the U.S. exists today! PMI encourages state and local levels of government and consumers to focus on wider adoption of the WaterSense program and products, rather than looking to new, lower and untested flow rates. WaterSense products cannot save water if they are sitting on store shelves. PMI promotes the need for increased collaboration by state and local level policy makers to encourage greater penetration of the products for greater

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A Look Back at 20 Years of PMI Volunteer Leadership

By Barbara C. Higgins, PMI CEO/Executive Director



Barbara C. Higgins

This issue of *Ripple Effect* features a look back at our PMI Board of Directors presidents (and one chairman) from the date of PMI's re-birth in 1998. Each

one left his/her own unique imprint on the organization. Some led from the front with innovative ideas and fanfare. Others moved quietly behind the scenes and affected changes in a more subtle but equally effective way. Much has been written about individuals like **Abraham Lincoln**, who history seems to have put in place to achieve a particular goal. The same can be said about our PMI board leadership, starting with **Bill O'Keeffe** (Symmons) who was the last to carry the title of "Chairman of the PMI Board of Directors" before the bylaws changed the role to "Board President."

In those early days of 1998, Mr. O'Keeffe provided guidance from a 30,000-foot level, leaving the business of constructing the new PMI to staff. His response to questions about operations decisions was always the now classic, "Barbara, you're the CEO." In other words, figure it out, sister. That's what we're paying you for!

In 1999, **Fred Luedke's** (Neoperl) focus was on implementing the vision and promoting member involvement. He promoted the concept that all PMI members wear two hats; one as a representative of their company and the other as a PMI member.

And so, it goes ... all presidents picked up where their predecessors left off and added their own unique twists. Here's a quick look back at the various themes and focus of our PMI board presidents:

2000 Linda Mayer (Moen Inc.): The impending uncertainty of "Y2K" and future impact of internet. The 25th anniversary of emergence of Plumbing Manufacturing Institute from Plumbing Brass Institute.

2001 Frank Evans (Chicago Faucet Co.): The power of working together as an association. 9/11 attack on U.S., causing PMI to move fall conference venue from Washington, D.C., to Chicago. 25th anniversary PMI time capsule sealed and industry mourned passing of **Patrick Higgins**. First PMI CEO Member Breakfast to engage members in PMI's mission. First PMI board president to attend CEIR.

2002 Todd Talbot (then, Alsons): Strong emphasis on enhancing PMI value equation, return-on-investment and on promoting growth of the association.

2003 Ralph Herrbach (Cifal Brass): Proactive response to industry growth and increasing PMI's influence by reaching beyond traditional borders. Variety of stand-alone workshops were offered, ranging from supply chain management to leveraging e-business opportunities.

2004 Jim Westdorp (Kohler Co.): Proactive approach to cement PMI's industry leadership role. Great proponent of importance and value of networking.

2005 John Lauer (Sloan Valve Co.): Development of new PMI mission statement with changes to PMI by-laws to reflect international influence and encourage participation by global members. Continued focus on international relationships through CEIR and BMA, with which PMI signed an MOU. First PMI president to attend BMA conference.

2006 Claude Theisen (T&S Brass and Bronze Works): Focus on cyclical nature

of industry issues and PMI's consistent work to represent and defend members' interests concerning flow rates and product material content (including first mention of AB 1953).

2007 Ken Martin (Delta Faucet): Value of networking and amplifying PMI's voice worldwide.

2008 Rod Ward (Speakman Co.): Celebrated the 10 years since PMI restructuring; executed humanitarian effort in Orme, Tenn., (goo.gl/zirvCT), introduced new safeplumbing.org microsite, and cited need to focus on "green" technology, education, and being proactive.

2009 Walt Strader (Pfister): Positioned and encouraged PMI and membership to "lead the legacy" by unifying and strengthening the industry.

2010 Lee Mercer (Moen Inc): Challenged PMI to stay ahead of curve and to be relevant by expanding PMI's influence with proactive approach and increased focus on government affairs. Shepherded Reduction of Lead in Drinking Water Act into law for 2014 implementation. "Institute" became "International."

2011 Jack Kreck (Elkay Manufacturing): Implemented PMI name change to reflect expansion to "International," updated look and logo and revamped *PMI News*, and introduced first "dine-around" event. Introduced concept of strategy map to graphically depict PMI's vision and mission.

2012 Stu Yang (Kohler Co.): Remaining relevant, recognized and heard. Introduced concept of board champions for committees (today called "liaisons"). Engaged consultant to enhance strategic value of PMI board. *PMI News* increased publication volume to 10 issues per year from six.

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Advocacy Centers on WaterSense, Safe Water, Infrastructure

By Ray Valek, PMI Communications Team, Valek and Co.

During a three-hour “virtual listening session” in early May, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) received public comments by telephone from both organizations and taxpayers expressing their opinions on issues ranging from clean air and safe water to regulations on business.

PMI CEO/Executive Director **Barbara C. Higgins** was invited to listen in on the discussion and to submit written comments on PMI’s behalf. “We were eager to tell the EPA that WaterSense is a regulation that works,” she said. “Like the Reduction of Lead in Drinking Water Act that PMI led in developing and passing, WaterSense is a program that enjoys broad support among plumbing manufacturers.”

PMI sends letter to EPA about WaterSense

Within the past several weeks, PMI has joined many of its allies in urging the

EPA to preserve and maintain the WaterSense. In a letter (goo.gl/K0K5Yq) sent to EPA Administrator **Scott Pruitt**, PMI stressed how the voluntary, public-private WaterSense partnership encourages voluntary reduction of water consumption by consumers and businesses.

Barb emphasized that “plumbing manufacturers are proud to partner with EPA’s WaterSense program. The WaterSense label is the most widely recognized symbol for water-efficient plumbing products that meet high performance standards.”

PMI expresses concerns on draft regulation expanding installation of recycled water systems

In California, PMI has expressed concerns about a draft regulation that would expand the installation of recycled water systems that use non-potable water in toilets and urinals and with personal hygiene devices (bidet

seats) installed by consumers after construction.

Along with other stakeholders and several state legislators, PMI has requested that these regulations be delayed until scientific studies determine whether or not recycled water used in this fashion poses any risks to health and safety or may cause issues with plumbing product performance.

In addition, PMI has expressed warnings in the past over low flow rates potentially having an adverse effect on public health and safety and product performance. A PMI study, now in progress under the direction of **Dr. Paul Sturman** of Montana State University, that is testing the hypothesis that low flow rates yield a greater proliferation of opportunistic waterborne pathogens, such as legionella, in potable water and create unsafe conditions.

PMI continues to encourage national investment in aging underground water infrastructure

PMI remains hopeful that Congress will turn its attention to a jobs bill that includes a national investment in infrastructure, including water infrastructure. With an aging underground water infrastructure having been identified as a contributor to lead-in-water crises in Flint and other locations, Congressional leaders from both parties have expressed interest in legislation of this nature.

Last summer, PMI introduced its water infrastructure advocacy through a position paper (goo.gl/v1tgiH) and infographic (goo.gl/u4HJaz). According to PMI’s water infrastructure Google survey of 1,000 U.S. residents of all ages conducted in July, U.S. citizens are concerned about the aging underground water infrastructure and its potential adverse impact on public health. Sixty-four percent of survey respondents identified drinking water safety as a concerning consequence of an aging underground water infrastructure.

A Look Back at 20 Years of PMI (contd.)

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2013 Jeff Baldwin (T&S Brass and Bronze Works): Focused on importance of having clear vision, core values and getting back to basics. Revitalized Strategic Advisory Council, which had been dormant since 1998. Put “meat on the bone” of strategy map. Continued to compliment staff on its ability to “pinch pennies twice” to maximize member dues dollars. *PMI News* renamed *Ripple Effect* in July 2013.

2014 Tim Kilbane (Symmons): Announced single, annual PMI conferences beginning in 2015, eliminating the spring conference, with goal of increasing staff on productivity vs. meeting planning. CEOs took responsibility for and now lead annual fly-ins to Washington, D.C., and Sacramento. SAC restructured PMI dues, introducing new schedule.

2015 Fernando Fernandez (TOTO USA): Leveraged and maximized momentum to increase presence and influence. Strategy map expanded to separate outreach and advocacy into two distinct areas of focus, resulting in three-pronged member value proposition.

2016 Paul Patton (Delta Faucet Company): Focused on member involvement and empowered committees to take more active leadership roles with access to the board through liaisons. Introduced PMI logo wear.

2017 Pete Jahrling (Sloan Valve Company): Midway through his term, Pete has focused on the transition to a new PMI CEO and on delivering effective messages of the organization’s strength and stability, which form the foundation for an exciting new future ahead with a continued focus on collaboration.

Hail to the Chiefs: A Look Back at Two Decades of PMI

2017

*Spirit of
Collaboration*



*Pete Jahrling
Sloan Valve Company*

2016

*Proactively Engaging
Influencers*



*Paul Patton
Delta Faucet Company*

2015

*The Future of Water:
Wins, Woes and Worries*



*Fernando Fernandez
TOTO USA*

2014

*Making a World of
Difference Together
Setting the Pace*



*Tim Kilbane
Symmons Industries, Inc.*

2013

*Focusing on Core Values
A Solid Foundation
for the Future*



*Jeff Baldwin
T&S Brass and Bronze Works*

2012

*Raising the Volume!
Promoting the Professionalism
of Plumbing*



*Stewart Yang
Kohler Co.*

2011

*Let The Good Times Roll...
Again!
People + Purpose = Progress!*



*Jack Krecek
Elkay Manufacturing*

2010

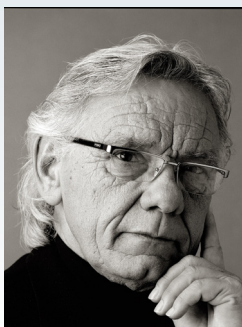
*Expanding the Value
Taking Charge of Change*



*Lee Mercer
Moen Incorporated*

2009

*Leading the Legacy
Shaping the Legacy for a
Sustainable Future*



*Walt Strader
Pfister*

2008

*Celebrating a Decade of PMI
Progress and Growth
Promoting a Healthy Balance!*

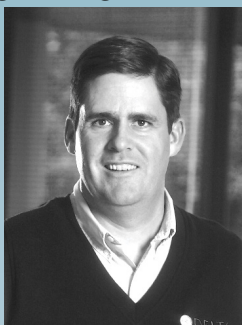


*Rod Ward
Speakman Company*

Board Presidents and Conference/Administration Themes

2007

The Future is Now
Safeguarding Our Resources



Ken Martin
Delta Faucet Company

2006

PMI – Back To The Future!
United We Stand



Claude Theisen
T&S Brass and Bronze Works

2005

PMI – The Right Thing To Do!
PMI - Securing the Future



John Lauer
Sloan Valve Company

2004

Charting the Course
PMI – The Right Choice



Jim Westdorp
Kohler Co.

2003

Growing Stronger Together
PMI: Shaping the Future



Ralph Herrbach
Cifial USA

2002

Now... More Than Ever!
PMI: United We Stand



Todd Talbot
BrassCraft Mfg. Co.

2001

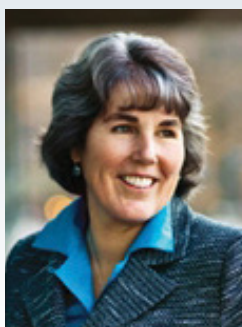
PMI – Pulling Together for Change!



Frank Evans
Chicago Faucet Company

2000

PMI Celebrates 25 Years



Linda Mayer
Moen Incorporated

1999

Proactive
Member
Involvement



Fred Luedke
NEOPERL

1998

Re-Tooling for the Next Millennium
Promoting Members' Interests



William O'Keeffe
Symmons Industries, Inc.

Terry Burger Aims to Do What's Right for PMI and Industry

By Judy Wohlt, PMI Communications Team, Valek and Co.

Riding around the world in a Navy submarine not only immersed **Terry Burger** in learning all aspects of nuclear power, but also produced a travel log that might have made Christopher Columbus jealous. The principal engineer in mechanical plumbing at NSF International, Terry credits the Navy for his solid footing in mechanical engineering that launched his now robust career in plumbing standards, codes and compliance.



Terry taking the helm – and taking in the sights – on a family outing on Lake Chautauqua in New York.

As the new chair of PMI's Allied Member Committee, he's looking forward to a productive and open exchange of ideas between the committee and PMI's manufacturing members on top priorities, including water efficiency, water conservation and the WaterSense program. "One of our goals is to approach any issue or program improvement with one collective industry voice, from working with the EPA on WaterSense to helping establish new plumbing codes and standards," he said.

Terry strives to always keep the industry's best interests as the top priority, whether he's working on PMI initiatives or collaborating with his colleagues at NSF International, a global independent organization that writes standards and tests and certifies products for the food, water and consumer goods industries. "It

can be challenging especially when you have to make a decision for the greater good of our industry over your own organization, but I'm proud to act as a non-partisan contributor," he said.

A devoted PMI member, Terry does all he can to learn and share as much information as possible. He regularly runs training sessions with his NSF colleagues and staff after attending PMI conferences and events. Recently, he shared highlights from the last PMI annual meeting, focusing on the unforeseen consequences of water conservation and the push to continue lowering flush volumes and flow rates. "My NSF colleagues are happy to hear about the latest industry trends, legislation, and codes and standards, which gives context to our work at NSF while keeping them engaged in the plumbing industry," he said.

Since Terry deeply values his work with codes and standards, he was grateful to be part of the WaterSense program from the start and notes his involvement as a "career and PMI highlight." Terry was a member of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers/CSA International Standards Committee, where lab work and testing first began on creating the WaterSense showerhead standards used today. "It was exciting to see how everyone, from the certification bodies to the manufacturers to PMI, worked together to make it so successful," he said.

It's clear Terry enjoys a good challenge as well as building consensus among diverse groups and opinions. Another case in point was his work to help harmonize the plumbing standards for supply fittings and fixtures across the U.S. and Canada. In addition, as a member of NSF and PMI, he is currently working in support of the Mexican government to create fittings standards for all plumbing fixtures, including faucets and showerheads.

"What's so exciting about all of this is that we're all working together to make things better. What we do today will stand the test of time," he said.

As a life-long student, Terry is always ready to learn and grow. The same applies to his hobbies. An avid reader, he's currently enjoying three books including "Writer, Sailor, Soldier, Spy: Ernest Hemingway's Secret Adventures" by Nicholas Reynolds and a biography about President Franklin Pierce. When he's not flipping book pages, he can be found in his yard tending his flower and vegetable gardens.



Terry enjoying digging in the dirt, one of his favorite weekend activities.

Terry also recently moved from Ohio to plant roots in Michigan. His son **Alex** stayed behind to attend Ohio State University while his daughter **Kassie** prepares to start her freshman year at Slippery Rock University in Pennsylvania. "They're both studying to be physical therapists and I have no idea why. They certainly didn't get that from their dad," Terry said with a chuckle.

Save the Date

PMI Annual Conference

November 13 – 17, 2017

in Sonoma Wine Country

Valek & Company Brings Value, ROI to PMI Communications

By Judy Wohlt, PMI Communications Team, Valek and Co.

Ray Valek of Valek & Company Communications, PMI's public relations firm, said he and his team serve as PMI's rhythm section, maintaining a steady tempo of communica-



Ray Valek

tions that support PMI's voice and influence in the industry. "We're the bass and drums, and we create opportunities for PMI members and leaders to be in the spotlight," he explained.

In summer 2014, Ray began working with PMI to spread the word about the WaterSense program. PMI's communications needs were quickly growing and required a strategic communications plan with regular support from a public relations (PR) consultancy. Valek & Co. stepped up with a competitive bid and was thrilled to win the job.

Since PMI had already established itself as a credible resource among policymakers and within its industry, Ray's team was brought on to help enhance PMI's communications approach. The team created a strategic plan directed at PMI's key external audiences, including policymakers, advocacy partners and prospective members, and established tools to quantify the value of PMI's communications.

PMI's communications team boosted output and set an aggressive agenda that supported PMI's business goals – promoting the value of plumbing products relating to water efficiency, health and safety, while leading and advocating for sound public policies.

"I'm proud of what we've accomplished so far," Ray said. "We've produced strong, consistent and effective communications and we've been able to

measure our impact." A primary team goal is to assign an expense to its media outreach on behalf of PMI, such as news releases, story pitches to news outlets and social media messages, and then assign a value to the outcomes of those efforts, including media placements, social media likes and shares and website page views. Through the end of April 2017, PMI's communications expense was about \$32,000 and generated a "media value" (paid advertising equivalency) of almost \$201,000, which is a 6.3 to 1 return on investment.

In addition to Ray, the Valek & Company team includes **Judy Wohlt**, a former journalist and veteran PR manager, and his daughter **Genevieve**, a recent graduate of Illinois State



Judy Wohlt

University with a bachelor's degree in broadcast journalism. Ray also enjoys a strong working relationship with **Maureen Baird**, PMI's web and graphics



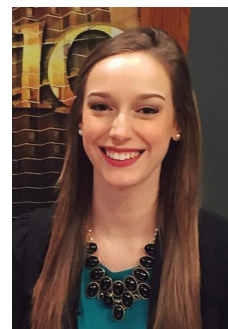
Maureen Baird

expert, who also works with Ray on behalf of other Valek & Co. clients. The team also brings in additional people and resources on an as-needed basis, such as illustrators, video producers, and media monitoring and news distribution services.

With degrees in journalism and public relations, Ray has logged 125 hours in classes at The Second City in Chicago, a world premier comedy club and improvisational school. "I took the improv classes to become better on my

feet in business situations," he said. He also learned about The Second City's primary mantra -- "Yes and ..." which he said he uses to guide his everyday decision making. He said those two words help him to deal with any challenge, from a tight work deadline to a family issue. "The 'yes' is acknowledging what's happening. The 'and ...' helps you to focus on how to build upon or respond to what's happening," he said.

Ray noted that public relations changes quickly from year to year, with social media now established as a prominent tool for amplifying an organization's messages more quickly



Genevieve Valek

and broadly. Internet search optimization is another important tool that helps people find PMI-branded information. "We've worked hard to strengthen PMI's search optimization, which helps a good local story, like PMI's aid and support in Flint, Michigan, become global almost instantly," he said. To achieve optimal results, the team takes a layered communications approach, including face-to-face interactions, social media, traditional media placements, and robust website content.

Outside of work, Ray enjoys playing hockey twice a week as a member of the hockey club Max Achium, which means "great aches" in Latin. After spending hours on the ice, Ray and his teammates agree the name is apropos. "But, overall, hockey makes me feel better physically," Ray said. He also uses hockey as a metaphor for his work. "In hockey, you have to keep your feet moving and keep trying to move the puck toward the goal. It's all about persistence," he said. "We bring the same qualities to our work with PMI. We try new strategies, never give up and always keep moving forward."

PMI's Approach to EPA's WaterSense Program

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water efficiency and savings. We continue to be an enthusiastic advocate for the WaterSense program. PMI recently sent a letter to the EPA Administrator underscoring the need to preserve and maintain WaterSense and our lobbyist, Stephanie Salmon, has made over 50 Hill visits already this year, advocating for the longevity of EPA Water Sense. We are actively working with Senate

staff on a water bill which includes WaterSense authorization.

As PMI aggressively fights to preserve the WaterSense program, we will stay true to our WaterSense policy as we work with different levels of government and code bodies. Learn more about the EPA WaterSense program here: goo.gl/VQLECP

#PMIValue Videos on YouTube, Social Media

PMI has begun to promote the value members obtain through membership with a series of videos featuring member testimonials. These videos can be viewed on YouTube and on PMI's Safe Plumbing social media platforms, as well as on PMI's website.

The videos were assembled from footage recorded at the 2016 PMI Conference. Members were asked to provide examples of how PMI provides value to both



member organizations and individuals. Thanks for all members who provided insights during the videotaping session!

See videos at youtube.com/SafePlumbing

Executive Fly-Ins Scheduled for June and September

The California Executive Fly-In will be held **June 13–14, 2017**, in Sacramento, Calif.

The Washington D.C. Executive Forum and Fly-In is scheduled for **September 13–14, 2017**.

Be sure to make your hotel reservation now as September is a busy time in Washington, D.C., and the hotels will sell out!

Both events are by invitation only. For more information contact **Jodi Stuhrberg** at 847-481-5500 ext. 107, or jstuhrberg@safeplumbing.org.

CEOs Receive Membership Value Survey

A membership value survey designed to collect CEO assessments of PMI value and to quantify that value has been distributed. With responses due at the end of May, the results will be used in future outreach initiatives to members and prospective members.

The survey was developed by the Outreach/Communications Committee under the leadership of co-chairs **Amy Scherer**, Speakman Company, and **Mary Ahlbrand**, Delta Faucet Company, with input from the committee's board liaison, **Rick Reles**, Kohler Co., and PMI staff.

2017 PMI LEADERSHIP

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Scott McDonald, Fluidmaster, Inc.
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Nate Kogler, Bradley Corporation
Secretary-Treasurer

Paul Patton, Delta Faucet Company
Immediate Past President

Michael Miller, LSP
(1/16–12/17)

Todd Teter, Moen Incorporated
(1/16–12/17)

Joel Smith, Kohler Co.
(1/17–12/18)

Chip Way, Lavelle Industries
(1/17–12/18)

PMI STAFF

Barbara C. Higgins
CEO/Executive Director
bhiggins@safeplumbing.org

Matt Sigler
Technical Director
msigler@safeplumbing.org

Jodi Stuhrberg
Association Manager
jstuhrberg@safeplumbing.org

Ann Geier
Administrative Assistant
ageier@safeplumbing.org

PMI CONSULTANTS

Ray Valek
Public Relations
ray@valekco.com

Frederick Desborough
Technical Consultant
frd@flex-fluss.com

Erin Shencopp
Legal Consultant, Jones Day
eshencopp@jonesday.com

Newsletter Design By:
Maureen Baird Graphic Design
info@mbairdgraphics.com



1921 Rohlwing Road, Unit G
Rolling Meadows, IL 60008
Phone: 847 481-5500
Fax: 847 481-5501
www.safeplumbing.org