

THE YEAR IN REVIEW, "FOCUS ISSUE" STYLE BY LINDA S. MAYER, PMI PRESIDENT



Linda Mayer

As I write this article, it seems that the latest news spectator sport has now changed from watching internet companies bite the dust to betting on whether or not we will have a president of the U.S. by January 20, 2001. It seems that nothing is sacred anymore. Start-ups can raise money without showing a profit and the greatest democracy in the world can't even elect a president. The good news is that rationality did return to the

stock market, and I'm sure we will have a president and perhaps even some reforms in the election process as an added bonus. So, while the events may make the world seem a little crazy at times, eventually there is progress. It just takes hindsight to see it.

What progress have we made as members of PMI in the year 2000? I think there have been some significant highlights in specific areas and ongoing developments in others. We are definitely not standing still!

In review, we have made substantive progress on all of our "Focus Five" Issues and are addressing the key areas of interest in the Technology arena. In fact, one of our "Focus Five" issues, material leachates, is now in the monitoring mode.

Trade show consolidation has continued its spokesman role of communicating support of fewer trade shows. We now have prepared a presentation to talk to other industry associations and garner larger support for these efforts. The recent entrance of ISH as a partner with NEX to the North American market flies in the face of consolidation — in fact it has the potential of increasing the size of that trade show. However, it will also have the effect of stirring the pot and creating a new dynamic in the market place, potentially leading to more changes in the future.

Universal conformity assessment has taken a step forward by bringing all of the players together at the Fall Meeting for a lively discussion. Admittedly, we are still at the beginning stages of making progress, but we are clearly headed down the right path.

PMI continues to monitor **fair trade** issues as well. Our Executive Director, Barb Higgins, is now a member of the

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REPUBLICAN OR DEMOCRAT? TOO CLOSE TO CALL. . . BY CECE KREMER

Uncertainty reigns on Capitol Hill as Congress prepares to return in December for a rare lame-duck session to finish work on the 2001 fiscal year budget. Six of the 13 spending bills are not yet signed into law. Without knowing who (at the time of printing this issue) will occupy the White House for the next four years, both parties are having difficulty coming up with an end-game strategy. The results of the presidential election will have a direct influence on how Congress works out partisan differences involving the contentious issues yet to be resolved in the 106th Congress.

Before adjourning for the 2000 elections, Republicans in Congress agreed in principle to a number of Clinton priorities and dropped some controversial proposals. But many disagreements remained over issues such as workplace rules (ergonomics), immigration, new Medicare financing for health maintenance organizations, an increase in the minimum wage and tax initiatives such as a \$240 billion, 10-year tax cut bill.

Take for example the 10-year feud between business and labor over the government's role in preventing repetitive stress injuries in the workplace. The fight over proposed federal ergonomics regulations will be a prime focus of the lame-duck

session.

Although early attempts by the Clinton administration to finalize the ergonomics rules were blocked by the Republican majority in Congress, Republicans have, so far, been unable to

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LEADERSHIP, INFRASTRUCTURE, COMMUNICATION AND HOLIDAY WISHES

BY BARB HIGGENS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Barb Higgins

Good management is like oxygen — you can't actually see it (but you can sure see its effects) and if you've got it you don't give it a second thought. You forget about it — you don't notice it — you take it for granted. It's when this important element is lacking that panic and mayhem set in. Our government is the most recent notable example of this. While I am no political expert — I leave that to Cece Kremer and Frank Luntz — I'll venture to say that

our government will remain standing long after the confusion over this year's election has been forgotten. The U.S. has a strong infrastructure...we have vision and a plan.

The same is true about PMI.

While most of you only see us in action a few times a year at our semi-annual meetings and at various industry functions, (of course we see the techies fairly regularly) you and your interests are on our minds all the time. (Can you believe that plans for the Spring meeting are already well underway?!) We make it a point to get out in the field to stay in tune with the industry and its developments, and to make sure we're on the right track. We network on various levels and with our counterparts in and out of this industry, domestically and abroad. We make subtle course corrections along the way to stay ahead of the power curve.

Our success is a result of coordinated teamwork with our staff and with you our members, with most of the work being done behind the scenes. The progress of the front line people (Dave, Cece and me) is directly attributable to the support of the duo behind the cameras (Lori and Kelly). Mike Sennett, of course, is also a source of information and important contacts.

We review our progress at our weekly staff meetings to make sure we're all pulling in the right direction. (Makes us sound like a team of sled dogs...but the image works!) Each of the staff has his/her own style and has strengths in different areas and collectively we're helping to move the Focus Issues forward. None of us could do it alone! Picture a chorus line of "Rockettes" — a wonderful visualization of teamwork. What a different effect there would be if one of the "team" were kicking out of synch — higher and faster than the rest. Individual competition within the team, pitting one against another, is hardly the key to success at Radio City Music Hall — or at PMI!

I must say that I am as competitive and driven as the next person, but there is a time and a place for individual achievement. I am certainly no advocate of "dummy-ing" down! I believe in setting the performance bar high and managing by example. It is important to realize though, that sometimes even the most talented people set themselves up to

fail by not being willing to share information with the team. One of my favorite Sunday night shows is "Military Blunders" on the History Channel. It's amazing to me how often the best and most creative strategies fail, simply because no one bothered to communicate the plan to those who responsible for carrying it out! Because PMI staff and its members cast such a wide net, it is critical that we combine our information and share the details so that everyone is on the same page. There is not much worse than being blind-sided in a public forum — particularly by someone supposedly on the same team. Sharing data also enables those involved to see the complete picture. At PMI, we've seen how the combination of data gathered from different sources and then shared, better defines (perhaps even changes) the impression or impact of other data. The sum IS greater than the parts!

My mom had one of the best examples of the impact of someone not willing to share data. In the early 1950s she worked for the City of Minneapolis in the Records Office. Her boss was a woman who had a unique method of ensuring the security of her job...she did not label ANY of the files in the office! Birth certificates, marriage licenses, death certificates

for the entire city were filed using HER unique system! Everyone needed to contact only this woman for access to these important public records. Can you imagine the confusion when the woman left her job? That twisted form of job security — holding information hostage — could have brought the city to its knees.

Quite the opposite is true at PMI. In addition to sharing information, we're big believers in cross training. In fact, based upon my mom's "Minneapolis" experience, we've adopted a phrase. Whenever we are about to share an important piece of information with a co-worker, such as the whereabouts of a file or follow-up details on an important project, we begin by saying, "In case I'm hit by a bus..." A horrible thought, but you get the picture. We're working for the greater good. Our goal is that *any* member of the PMI staff will be able to address *any* question you may have. A big goal... but one that we're serious about achieving!

In short, we're working hard for you and having fun in the process. It's rewarding to see the progress of our collective efforts. We appreciate your continued support, encouragement and kind words as we forge ahead. I, for one, appreciate the great staff we have at PMI (and I know you do, too). So I offer heartfelt thanks and best wishes for the happiest of holidays to you and yours and most especially Dave, Lori, Kelly, Cece, Mike and the entire PMI Board and membership.

Happy New Year!



Happy Holidays
from PMI!!



PLUMBING PRODUCT APPROVAL MODEL RECEIVES NATIONAL RECOGNITION

By DAVID W. VIOLA, TECHNICAL DIRECTOR



Dave Viola

The Plumbing Product Approval model, developed by PMI, was approved by the National Conference on State Building Codes and Standards, Inc. (NCSBCS). This model was developed as a tool to educate and encourage state and local jurisdictions to eliminate redundant conformity assessment activities. Additionally, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) recently published a white paper

supporting the model. These endorsements are extremely important, since they come from objective authorities in the areas of code enforcement and conformity assessment. This is great news and a big boost as we begin phase two of PMI's campaign to address problematic jurisdictions.

The PMI model provides regulatory agencies with a method of determining product performance and code compliance with a high level of confidence, while eliminating duplicate product testing and certification. The model essentially establishes a recognition system for test labs and product certifiers by utilizing entities whose primary purpose is to evaluate and accredit organizations to nationally and internationally recognized competency criteria. As a result, products that are tested by an accredited test lab and certified by an accredited agency are deemed to comply with the code. Widespread adoption of the PMI model would significantly decrease the level of testing and certification duplication in the U.S. and serve as an essential step towards harmonizing international product approval requirements.

In developing the model, the Oregon Plumbing Code product approval regulation was used as a starting point because it was a working model that effectively accomplished PMI's objectives. Furthermore, the Oregon regulation was jointly developed by PMI, American National Standards Institute (ANSI), NIST and the State of Oregon, with input from the major plumbing product certification bodies, testing agencies and accreditation bodies through a series of public hearings.

In PMI's efforts to solicit assistance from other industry groups, working with NCSBCS was a logical step because of the influence of their membership, and their mission as an organization. The primary members of NCSBCS are comprised of governor-appointed delegates who are the chief regulatory officials of each state and territory. One of their primary goals as an organization is to help reform the nation's building regulatory process, which includes the promotion of regulations eliminating regulatory overlap, duplication, and costly, unnecessary and lengthy processing time. In September 1996, NCSBCS created the NCSBCS Streamlining project as mechanism for accomplishing this goal. The Streamlining project was looking for models of the best practices addressing a particular regulatory problem. The PMI Plumbing Product

Approval model was submitted and ultimately approved as a model that meets the project criteria. NCSBCS is currently developing an implementation plan to assist adopting jurisdictions. When complete, the model and implementation plan will be published on the NCSBCS website at www.ncsbc.org.

As a follow-up to last month's article, I'm happy to report that NIST has finalized their white paper distinguishing PMI's model as feasible and practical, and accomplishes the goals of eliminating duplicative testing and certification, and harmonizing plumbing product conformity assessment procedures. It goes on further to say that the model can also be used by other industries to address their conformity assessment problems. NIST developed the white paper in response to PMI's request to assist.

We've come a long way since the 1999 PMI Spring Meeting, where PMI members agreed that something needed to be done and passed a resolution to develop a model plumbing product approval procedure. Now as we enter year 2001, we are armed with the necessary tools to enter the resolution phase of our strategic plan to encourage jurisdictions to utilize a conformity assessment system based on the PMI model.

NEW ITEMS ADDED TO PMI'S WEBSITE

By LORI L. SMELSER, ASSOCIATION MANAGER

If you haven't been to www.pmihome.org in awhile, you might want to check it out! PMI recently added a new section to the web, "Consumer Information" which includes PMI's new *Consumer Guide to Low-Flow Toilets* and links to member companies who supplied PMI with customer service numbers. The section will also include an easy reference troubleshooting matrix to accompany the Guide, and new material will be added for consumers as it is developed.



How 'bout checking out the members-only site? This site includes a phone/fax/email directory of all PMI members, new regulatory sections on arsenic and hexavalent chromium, PMI semiannual meeting minutes, handouts from PMI's recent Fall Meeting, loads of technical information, and more! Much of the information on the members only site is available only in "portable document format" — also known as "pdf" — and Adobe Acrobat Reader is necessary to view and print those items.

If you haven't gotten connected to the members-only section, now is your chance to do so. Simply email pmiadmin@pmihome.org with a request, including an eight-character user name and eight-character password, and your connection to this section will be made almost immediately. *The members-only section is quickly becoming the easiest way to stay abreast of PMI activities and issues!*

PMI RETURNS TO MARCO ISLAND FOR ITS SPRING MEETING

By LORI L. SMELSER, ASSOCIATION MANAGER



Lori Smelser

Just when you think you can't take another cold, snowy day this winter, relief will be waiting for you in the form of PMI's Spring Meeting, March 4-7, 2001, in the warm comforts of Marco Island, a tropical island just off the southwest tip of Florida. PMI is returning to the Marco Island Marriott Resort & Golf Club, where the setting is prime for sailing, tanning, swimming, sports activities, and...OK...meetings too!

The Resort boasts three outdoor pools, three and one-half miles of beach, various water sports, health-related activities, tours, shopping and other enjoyable recreational leisures.

The meeting kicks off with PMI's semi-annual golf tournament on Sunday, March 4, with a 9 a.m. tee-off at Lely Golf Resort & Country Club on the Flamingo Island Club Course, the only signature public golf course in nearby Naples. The Robert Trent Jones-designed course has been listed as one of "America's Best" by *Golfweek*, while *Golf Digest* gives it four stars.

A special treat is once again in store as part of PMI's Family/Companion program. On Monday morning, March 5, registered spouses, family members and/or companions will embark on a large catamaran for a two and one-half hour sailing and shelling expedition. We'll be chartering a private sail to a deserted island where the shells are exquisite! This program will be strictly limited to the first 12 registrants.

PMI will conduct the business of its product groups and issue committees at Marco Island, and a new focus issue has been added to the already-busy lineup.

At the Spring Meeting, we're ushering in a new millennium at PMI — striving to become even *more* in touch with our members, and identifying and reacting to every issue facing our membership and our industry! Come join us next March!!

IMPORTANT HOTEL INFORMATION!!!

The Marco Island Marriott
Reservation Deadline is
January 30, 2001!!

Call (941) 642-2794 to reserve your

DRAFT Schedule (Subject to revisions)

Sunday, March 4

- 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Golf
- 2:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. Registration
- 3:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. First Board of Directors Meeting
- 6:30 p.m. - 7:15 p.m. Welcome Reception
- 7:15 p.m. Welcome Dinner

Monday, March 5

- 7:15 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. Breakfast and Registration
- 8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. **PRODUCT GROUPS:**
Flushing Devices/Fixture
Companion/Family Program
- 9:00 a.m. **PRODUCT GROUPS:**
Faucet & Shower/Tub-Shower Fittings
- 9:45 a.m. - 11:15 a.m. Showerhead Ad Hoc
- 11:30 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. Luncheon
- 12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. **FOCUS ISSUE:** Trade Show Consolidation
- 1:45 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. **FOCUS ISSUE:** Water Conservation/Gov't Affairs
- 3:45 p.m. - 5:15 p.m. **PRODUCT GROUP:** Specialty Finishing
- 5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. Dinner on your own

Tuesday, March 6

- 7:15 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. Breakfast Buffet
- 8:00 a.m. - 9:15 a.m. Small Business Committee (Qualifying members only)
- 9:30 a.m. - 11:45 a.m. **FOCUS ISSUE:** Universal Conformity Assessment
- 12:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Luncheon
- 1:15 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Marketing Committee
- 2:45 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. **FOCUS ISSUE:** Information Technology
- 4:45p.m. - 5:15 p.m. **FOCUS ISSUE:** Fair Trade
- 5:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. General Membership Meeting
- 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Reception
- 7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. Dinner (keynote speaker)

Wednesday, March 7

- 7:15 a.m. - 8:00 a.m. Continental Breakfast
- 8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. Technical Committee
- 9:45 a.m. - 11:15 a.m. Final Board of Directors Meeting

Remember: You won't want to miss the General Membership meeting and the important vote to revise our by-laws!

Price Pfister

Pf Pfreshest Ideas in Pfaucets.

Ninety years ago, the cost of a first class stamp was \$0.02 and that same year, 1910, founders Emil Price and William Pfister with 10 employees began manufacturing garden valves which were delivered by bicycle to customers. Today, Price Pfister, a Black and Decker Company, is a leading manufacturer in the residential and commercial faucets market producing quality lines of lavatory and kitchen faucets, bath accessories and lighting. In 1960, Price Pfister moved its headquarters and manufacturing facility from Los Angeles to its current location in Pacoima, Calif.

Price Pfister has stood for quality and precision and is the third largest manufacturer of faucets, fittings and lighting in North America. Its reputation and growth has been providing customers with high quality beautiful products at the best price possible. Price Pfister prides itself with innovative products supported by an unbeatable warranty and fast, friendly service.

Let's take a stroll down Price Pfister memory lane . . .

- 1910 The Los Angeles factory was built to be one of the most modern factories in the West.
- 1920 Price Pfister product line expanded to include faucets, valves and hose nozzles.
- 1930 "Make a Shower" unit allowed customers to now have a bathing choice.
- 1940 During World War II, women joined Price Pfister to make aircraft fittings and hand grenade shells.
- 1950 Price Pfister salesmen were called "Jobbers." Between 1950 and 1953, under government contract, Price Pfister manufactured shell fuses and hand grenades to aid the Korean War.
- 1960 The Flowmatic shower handle featured a finger tip control lever that was used to control water temperature and volume.
- 1970 (1972) Price Pfister opened warehouses in Georgia and Texas. Approximately 1,500 faucets and fittings were being manufactured a day.
- 1980 The campaign of "Pf fabulous Pfaucet with a Pfunny Name" originated. First major manufacturer to convert ceramic cartridge technology on all product lines with Pforever Seal™ to protect against leaks and drips.
- 1990 The new campaign of "Pf fabulous Pfaucet Pforever" originated. First major manufacturer to offer a lifetime warranty which covers the finish and function for life. Price Pfister has an interactive website, www.pricepfister.com to create and see different faucet designs.
- 2000 Price Pfister achieved certification for ISO 14001 and ISO 9002. A successful future continues!!

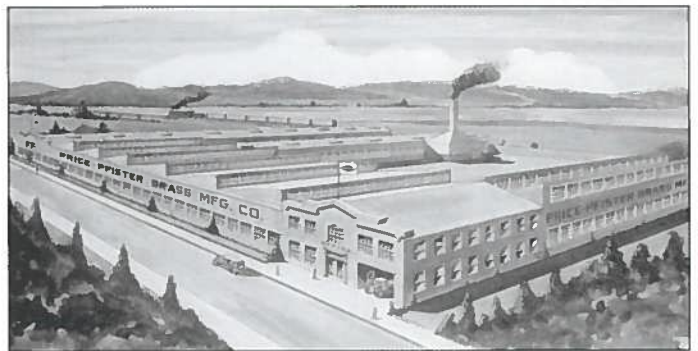
Price Pfister is celebrating in a unique way its 90th Anniversary of art and innovation of the products that have made the company what it is today. Price Pfister has created a

historical exhibit called "Price Pfister's Walk Through Time" which can be viewed at www.pricepfister.com.

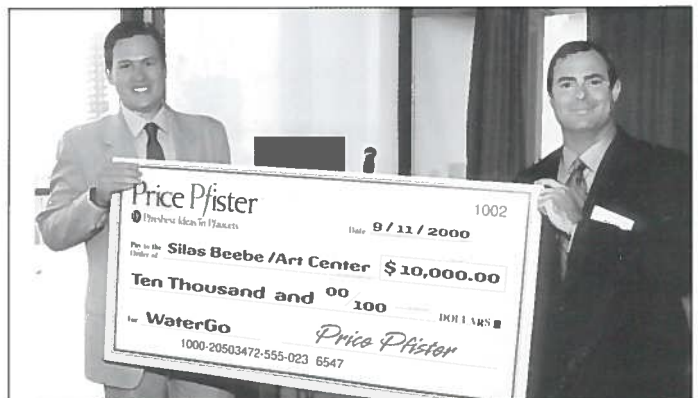
Also in celebration of the continuing advancements in the art of industrial design, Price Pfister partnered with the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, Calif., and Parsons Art School in New York to award nearly \$20,000 in scholarship money to top industrial art students who design the most innovative "Pfaucet of the Pfuture." The scholarship program was designed for students to stretch their creative talents to develop kitchen, bath and shower faucets that were not only original and inventive, but functional and practical as well. The 11 finalists were judged by a national panel of industry experts to determine the top three winners. The winners were announced September 11 in New York at a special event. The prize money was split between the winner and its school.

"We're celebrating the detailed thinking and innovative design that goes into creating everyday household items by honoring our design leaders of tomorrow," stated then-president of Price Pfister, Les Ireland. On October 1, Mark Gold was appointed vice president and general manager and will assume the duties of principal representative to PMI.

After all these years and all these milestones, Price Pfister defines themselves to be an industry leader recognized for the reliability of its technically superior products. And their nearly 40 years of membership in PMI has helped shape our Institute and the industry. PMI applauds their industry commitment and their 90 years of success!



The Los Angeles Price Pfister factory in 1910.



Les Ireland, immediate past President of Price Pfister (right), awards a \$10,000 scholarship to Silas Beebe at the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, Calif., for winning the Price Pfister Pfaucet of the Pfuture competition.

Department of Commerce Industry Sector Advisory Committee (ISAC 9) which offers our organization a unique conduit to bring issues of concern for manufacturers to the forefront of the International Trade Administration, as well as to keep current on the Department's priorities in the fair trade arena. And PMI continues in its role as a vehicle to report noncompliant manufacturers relative to the Safe Drinking Water and EPA 92 requirements through its labeling violation form. Members may obtain this form by contacting PMI headquarters or visiting the members only section of www.pmihome.org.

While Rep. Knollenberg and his bill — H.R. 623 — may have been issued a temporary setback this spring, it is becoming clear that he, and the issue of *water conservation's* uniform national efficiency standards, is not leaving manufacturers. Rep. Knollenberg may try and push H.R. 623 through yet this year, or early next year, and he has also introduced a new bill dealing with repealing the new uniform national energy efficiency standards for washing machines. In addition to our efforts on the Hill, PMI continues to monitor other water conservation initiatives by states and local government agencies. The saga continues...

Over the past year, PMI has also added two new Focus Issues. *Information technology* was added to the radar screen this spring, and the first Information Technology (IT) Forum held in August set the stage for future gatherings on the topic of what's happening in the technology arena that affects us as



manufacturers. At the Fall Meeting, we decided to continue the discussion and invite key players from distribution and internet companies to address the membership. If you have not already signed up for the next Information Technology (IT) Forum, I encourage you to do so. It is being held December 11-12 in Chicago. We will have several guest speakers followed by break out discussion groups. The Forum will also be an excellent opportunity for IT personnel to meet and share ideas.

Issues affecting *small- to medium-sized businesses* was also added as a PMI Focus Issue this fall, and the response has been great among our small- to medium-sized members. The first meeting of this newest Focus Issue will be held during the 2001 Spring Meeting.

In addition to the Focus Issues, an area of major emphasis is to increase the membership ranks of PMI. We have been successful in moving forward on our agenda and now it is time to ensure that we represent the broad range of plumbing manufacturers. The broader the representation, the more worthwhile it will be for each of us as members.

As we head into the year 2001, I can honestly say that I have enjoyed my tenure as President of PMI. It was truly an honor to serve the organization and promote the interests of our manufacturer community. It is exciting to part of a dynamic organization with a sense of purpose and mission.

Happy Holidays!

PMI PRIMER ON DUES INVESTMENTS BY LORI L. SMELSER, ASSOCIATION MANAGER



As we close the book on a successful, action-packed 25th anniversary year at PMI, we're now entering a new millennium poised to continue our role as the Voice of the Industry. PMI's continued success, however, depends on the support of our PMI membership. By now all principal members of PMI should have received — or will be receiving shortly — information on dues investments in PMI for the 2001 calendar year. We've prepared this "primer" to help you sort through some changes and new features in our dues collection for 2001.

What's Not Changed This Year! We're pleased to announce that, for the third straight year, **the dues levels will remain unchanged.** We continue to increase the number and levels of services we provide to members and to the industry, stretching your dues dollar even further than ever before. Plus, staff carefully assesses administrative costs and implements cost-cutting measures whenever possible to ensure headquarters runs smoothly and efficiently.

Monthly Dues Option Continues. A procedure begun last year, offers PMI members the opportunity to pay their dues on a monthly basis. If your company is interested in taking advantage of this option, simply indicate on the dues declaration form and include your first month's payment (1/12 your total annual dues investment).

The New Word in Dues is...NAFTA! At the Fall Meeting, the general membership voted to revise the dues requirement for all member manufacturers, to include sales within NAFTA countries (U.S., Canada and Mexico) as the basis for calculating annual dues levels.

Verification of Products. On the dues declaration form, you'll note a new section called "Verification of Products Included in PMI Dues Investment." This section reminds manufacturers that **sales of all plumbing products manufactured by a company which are covered within PMI's scope must be included in computing the annual dues level. Members may not pay only on a particular product line.** The checklist found on the dues declaration form will guide company officers as to the products covered within PMI's scope.

Also this year, there will not be a separate dues declaration form that will need to be mailed to PMI's contracted accounting firm. A reminder for all dues payers: Dues declaration forms and payments (full, half or first month) are due February 1 to Wallace Data Comp, PMI's third party dues collector. PMI will be assessing penalties for late dues payers this year.

If you have any non-confidential questions regarding PMI's dues collection procedure, contact PMI headquarters. Confidential questions should be directed to Chuck Wodrich of Wallace Data Comp at (630) 378-9695.



stop OSHA from finalizing the proposed rules. These newly published regulations would require millions of employers to set up programs designed to curtail repetitive motion injuries. The cost to business is estimated in the billions of dollars.

If the Republicans fail to stop OSHA during the lame-duck session, the agency will be able to go forward with plans to finalize these rules, fervently supported by the Democrats and the unions, by the end of the year. The final rules would then take effect on January 16, 2001, four days before a new president takes office.

The highly charged, partisan atmosphere during a lame-duck session also allows for a unique form of congressional mischief known as "riders"—unrelated pieces of legislation attached to must-pass spending bills. Riders often make it possible to enact legislation that would otherwise be bottled up in committee or otherwise be difficult to bring to the House or Senate for approval. Anything becomes possible including repeal of the uniform national water efficiency standards first enacted in EPAct.

Several House races and one Senate race remain officially undecided. The election narrowed the Republican advantage in the House from 13 (223-210) to nine (221-212), the narrowest majority in 45 years. That means that Democrats have to pick up only a handful of Republicans to win an otherwise straight party-line vote. And the tenuous hold Republicans have in the House could become even weaker depending on the outcome in possible recounts still being discussed in four congressional districts.

In one of their first actions since the elections, House Republicans reelected House Speaker Hastert, Majority Leader Armey, Majority Whip DeLay, Conference Chairman Watts, and Conference Secretary Deborah Pryce.

Further, the House Republicans have voted to retain a rule

that committee chairman can serve only six years (three terms). This means that some powerful committee and subcommittee chairmen will lose their leadership positions when the 107th Congress convenes in January. Candidates for committee chairmen will formally vie for positions in December, with the party leadership recommending committee assignments in January.

The Senate will be even more closely divided (50-49) in favor of Republicans, with the results of one race still too close to call. If that final seat goes to the Democrats, then the vice president will cast the tie-breaking vote in the Senate. If Vice President Gore becomes president, then Democrats will lose an additional seat in the Senate when Joe Lieberman gives up his seat to become vice president. (His replacement will be appointed by Connecticut's Republican governor.)

But the party in the minority will wield considerable power because it takes 60 votes to kill a filibuster and force a vote on any piece of legislation. So the minority side will need only a relative handful of crossover votes to block any controversial matter. Put another way, it will require only 41 votes to keep any measure from passing.

Leaders of both parties agree that the closely divided Congress and the even closer election of the president will leave the government without a clear mandate. First to go by the congressional wayside would be the ambitious campaign agendas and campaign promises made by both candidates. Without a clear mandate, neither man will be able to deliver major legislative victories. Even relatively non-controversial proposals will face tough sledding in such a closely divided atmosphere.

This, in turn, will only heighten the necessity for cooperation between Republicans and Democrats. Coalition-building will be the name of the game for any major legislative proposal. But as we have seen in recent years, bipartisanship is easier to talk about than to achieve. In fact, gridlock could increase because of the close elections.

PMI ATTENDS NEX SHOW; ISH AND NEX INK AGREEMENT "IN PRINCIPLE"

PMI made good use of its complimentary trade show booth at the NEX show in Chicago October 6 and 7.

The show provided a valuable opportunity for networking with PMI members and prospects. PMI staff distributed PMI literature and Jelly Belly® candy, securing some good leads in the process.

During the Expo, Executive Director Barb Higgins and 2001 First Vice President Todd Talbot, Alsons Corporation, attended a follow-up meeting with Dirk Ebener, ISH international marketing manager, and other ISH representatives regarding their plans for a North American version of their behemoth plumbing show held every other year in Frankfurt, Germany. Following NEX, it was announced that an agreement "in principle" has been reached between ISH and the NEX partners, and a press conference on this announcement is scheduled for December.



Here are Barb Higgins (left) and Kelly Enright (right) on duty at the PMI booth. Lori Smelser and Dave Viola also staffed the booth during the Expo.

PMI'S NEWEST ISSUE COMMITTEE ADDRESSES NEEDS OF SMALL/MEDIUM BUSINESSES

By LORI L. SMELSER, ASSOCIATION MANAGER

Once again, PMI members expressed a need, and PMI reacted. At the Fall Meeting in September, the members asked that a survey be conducted to gauge interest in developing a committee geared issues faced by "small-" or "medium-sized" companies (generally those companies with under \$100 million revenue in sales). PMI staff has contacted each member company and has found that, indeed, there's a call for action! Eight member companies have indicated their willingness to become active participants in a structured committee format to begin assessing and addressing specific concerns and needs either faced solely by small- or medium-sized companies, or faced by all plumbing manufacturers but with increased or decreased effect on smaller companies.

PMI is thus implementing a new "Focus Issue" committee — the Small/Medium Business Issue Committee — with the inaugural meeting taking place at PMI's 2001 Spring Meeting in Marco Island, Fla. Among the issues identified in PMI's canvass are marketing information, distribution channel issues, e-commerce and Internet/website development, codes and standards, trade show booth location, mergers/acquisitions/buying groups, government regulation and

legislation, stimulating small/medium-sized business interest in PMI membership. At the Spring Meeting, Small/Medium Business Issue Committee members will prioritize these and other identified issues, determine the best format(s) to address the priority issues (i.e., forum format, speaker format, interactive/audience "sounding board" format), and draft a plan for action. Gene Shiner of WCM Industries will chair this new committee.

Thanks to the following companies for their invaluable input into this "Focus Issue" and their participation in its development: **Electro Chemical Finishing; Gerber Plumbing Fixtures Corp.; Haws Corporation; Interbath, Inc.; KWC Faucets; NEOPERL Inc.; Symmons Industries, Inc., and WCM Industries, Inc.**



"CHICOWGO, MY KIND OF TOWN"



As a follow-up to last issue's "Holy Cow! Got Gerber?" article, we were honored to "rope in" the other lucky recipient of a piece of Chicago's "Cows on Parade" event last year. "Chicowgo, My Kind of Town" was purchased by **Sloan Valve Company** at an auction held last January, with proceeds going to the "Make-A-Wish Foundation®". The handsome bovine details Chicago's waterfront and bridges, and is the work of Chicago artist Ann Primack.



2000 PMI LEADERSHIP

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