



## Here We Go Again... PMI's Latest PCR Guidance Document In Review

By Matt Sigler, PMI Technical Director



Matt Sigler

In March 2016, Plumbing Manufacturers International (PMI), in collaboration with its members, issued a PCR Guidance Document for Kitchen and Bath Vessel Fixtures. The guidance document was developed to help program operators apply consistent rules and calculations when developing program category rules (PCRs). A PCR is defined as a process for assessing and expressing a product's environmental impact.

In October 2017, PMI's Sustainability Task Group, led by co-chairmen **Jeff Zeman**, Kohler Co., and **Danny Gleiberman**, Sloan Valve Company, issued our latest PCR Guidance Document for Kitchen and Bath Fixture Fittings (which includes faucets, flushometer valves, shower/tub valves, showerheads, etc.) to PMI's Board of Directors for initial approval before submitting to membership for review by December 1.

So why is such a document necessary? For one, there is a growing demand for environmental product declarations, which express the potential environmental impact of a product, and other transparency information related to plumbing fixture fittings. In addition, customers of PMI members will use environmental product declarations to compare products and manufacturers. Without PCRs, such a comparison of products would be impossible. Finally, our industry is in the best position to define the parameters for product transparency.

In PMI's Guidance Document for Kitchen and Bath Fixture Fittings, some of the following steps for plumbing fixture fittings are outlined:

- Conducting research (i.e. Is a PCR appropriate? Does a PCR already exist for a product?).
- Identifying stakeholders, methods for data collection and analysis, etc.

- Determining the goal and scope of the life cycle assessment, which is defined as the technique for assessing the potential environmental impact of a product.
- Analyzing a product's use phase.
- Determining fixed (i.e. product maintenance) and flexible (i.e. waste handling rules) content.
- Declaring general information (i.e. identification and description of the organization making the declaration, description of the product, identification of the program operator, etc.)

Now that the guidance document is out for review by PMI membership until December 1, the next steps for the processing of the document are:

- Vetting of all membership comments by the Sustainability Task Group.
- Addressing possible appeals.
- Final approval of the document by PMI's Board of Directors.

The hope is the document will be distributed to PMI members and all known program operators by January 2018 at the latest. Stay tuned for further developments as the guidance document is processed.

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# Approaching Challenges with a Beginner's Mind of Possibilities

By Kerry Stackpole, FASAE/CAE, PMI CEO/Executive Director



Kerry Stackpole

After long, arduous hikes into the mountains near our home, my father—a scientist and teacher—would put me and my older brother to work identifying the rocks we

had collected along the trails throughout the day. It fostered a deep curiosity and longing to understand nature.

As youngsters, we were mesmerized by the shapes, reflectivity, density of the rocks. Quartz, shale, mica, granite, lava—and those sulphur aromas. Were these igneous, metamorphic, or sedimentary rocks? Yes! Were these the same rocks dinosaurs walked on when they freely roamed the earth? Did some prehistoric cave dweller use one of these to scratch a picture into a cave wall? Maybe or maybe not. When you're a kid, your imagination runs wild and most everything seems possible.

As we get older, some of that sense of awe dissipates. Rocks along a trail, city streets, hotels, skyscrapers, airplanes, the town square and our offices all become familiar. We've seen the sun rise and set a thousand times. We have a pretty good idea of what works and what doesn't. But do we really know anymore?

Some time ago, in my leadership studies, I came across the work of **Shunryū Suzuki**, author of *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*. The book is a compilation of talks he gave to his satellite Zen center in Los Altos, California. In the opening line of the book, Suzuki writes, "In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities, in the expert's mind there are few."

As leaders, we're trained to lead, right? We know how to solve problems. We're practiced in the art of adding value—not just to our work—but in

our communities, and with family and friends. It's who we are. As a colleague often reminded me, "Leaders are born with the responsibility gene. It's in our DNA." Most likely it's in yours, too.

**Adam Bryant** has written over 525 *Corner Office* columns for *The New York Times*. He's learned a few things about successful CEOs. "First, they share a habit of mind that is best described as 'applied curiosity,' Bryant writes. "They tend to question everything. They want to know how things work, and wonder how they can be made to work better. They're curious about people and their back stories." **Kevin Tidgewell**, a scientist at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, points to the philosophy of the beginner's mind as his most important influence: "When you come at your science and when you come at questions of science, you should come with an open mind in that all things are possible, not simply the previously held beliefs and the standard beliefs of the field."

For professionals trained to add value, the temptation to jump to "how" questions long before "why" finds its feet is a common hazard. As organization consultant **Peter Block** points out in *The Answer to How Is Yes*, asking "how" questions too early in strategic change discussions tends to create boundaries for the way we approach the task at hand. Doing so too soon "may actually postpone the future and keep us encased in our present way of thinking," he writes.

So how do you get ideas to flow? **Alex Pentland**, the Toshiba Professor of Media Arts and Science, directs MIT's Human Dynamics Laboratory and the MIT Media Lab Entrepreneurship Program and has explored this question. He has examined the nature of social networks and found that sharing information and creating strong horizontal relationships improves the effectiveness of everything in business and elsewhere. The research

coming out of the MIT Media Lab show clearly that idea flow across social media generates real value. However, they also create online "echo chambers," foster panic actions, and cause crowds to react in illogical fashion. Pentland's research work shows that in "face-to-face" communications and engagements, people have a far better capability to recognize and screen out the echo chambers. He points out that while many people say they would never take stock tips from a cab driver, many do exactly the opposite when that same cab driver makes the same recommendation on a social network. It seems the mantra for the 21st century is "take a closer look" at all your information resources.

And that's exactly what the PMI Board of Directors and members of the PMI Strategic Advisory Council (SAC) did during this year's PMI Strategy Retreat. Once the pump was primed by our expert facilitator, the torrent of questions poured like Class 5 whitewater rapids—lots of ups and downs, heavy paddling, and expert finesse to find the real meaning behind the flood of questions. While the questions were too plentiful to trot out here, the board and SAC explored a range of serious strategic questions and worked through issues facing PMI member companies.

One thing is crystal clear. The PMI leadership views its strategic work as a living, breathing thing. PMI is the trusted resource and voice of the plumbing fixture and fittings industry. We are proactive, and we lead and collaborate to get results essential to your business success. PMI is agile and brings a laser-like focus to providing value to you and your company each and every day.

As we look ahead to 2018 and beyond, we're excited to hear your ideas about how PMI can help you in today's uncertain and ever-changing landscape. Don't be shy. After all, it's your participation that makes all the difference.

# Symmons Promotes Innovative Thinking with Hydroponic Farm

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

In an inconspicuous shed-like building on the edge of its parking lot, Symmons Industries has found a way to promote employee health and engagement, innovative thinking, and community involvement.

The modest, green-and-white, 10 x 9 x 8-foot building happens to be a powerhouse of agricultural efficiency and sustainability – a hydroponic, Internet of Things (IoT)-connected Freight Farm capable of producing 0.3 of an acre of crops per week at 15 percent of a standard farm's operating expenses.



*Symmons Freight Farm*

Through a team of employee volunteers, the farm has been producing leafy green vegetables and herbs, free for its employees and local food banks, since June.

With his family-owned Plumbing Manufacturers International member company located in the Boston suburb of Braintree, Mass., Symmons CEO **Tim O’Keeffe** said the decision to invest in the farm came from the company’s desire to attract and retain outstanding employees. “We want to differentiate ourselves from other employers in the Boston area,” which has a tight labor market for skilled, educated workers, “and attract an innovative type of employee into our space,” O’Keeffe said.

The farm depends on motivated employees to operate. O’Keeffe said the

team of 30-plus volunteers are organized into teams of three. On a rotating schedule, each team member commits three hours during his or her assigned week to plant, monitor and harvest the crops, with the entire growing cycle lasting only a week. He said the company had an “overwhelming” response to the call for volunteers. The farm is capable of producing lettuce, arugula, basil, cabbage leaves, cilantro, dill,

frisee, kale, oregano, parsley, radishes, sage and more, according to the company blog.

The farm’s IoT capability enables the volunteer team to manage humidity, nutrient levels, plant growth, temperature, water quality and pH from a simple phone app. The company purchased the hydroponic farm from a South Boston startup, Freight Farms, which is creating physical and digital solutions for creating local

produce ecosystems on a global scale. “By decentralizing the food supply chain and bringing production closer to consumers,” the company’s website says. “Freight Farms is drastically



*Symmons' CFO John Graves and CEO Tim O'Keeffe planting the seeds*

reducing the environmental impact of traditional agriculture and empowering any individual, community or organization to sustainably grow fresh produce year-round, no matter their location, background or climate.”

O’Keeffe said the farm requires about \$150 a month in water and energy costs to maintain. For this investment, Symmons has boosted employee pride and involvement while continually producing healthy food for the benefit of employees and the community. Once the farm reaches its production capacity, it will produce about 17 acres of produce a year. Not a bad yield – from human resources, altruistic and agricultural perspectives – for a company that, by the way, produces faucets, showers, valves, and bath accessories.



*Linda Monteiro, customer support manager, Kim DiCarlo, senior developer analyst, and Tim O'Keeffe, CEO, sample the first crop*

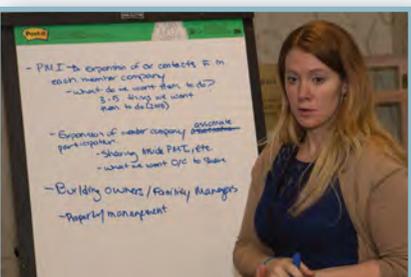
# PMI 2017 Conference: The Spirit of Collaboration



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# PMI 2017 Conference: The Spirit of Collaboration



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## Barb Higgens Sends Thanks for Dinner in Her Honor

“A heartfelt thank you for the overwhelming send off in Sonoma Wine Country just prior to the 2017 Conference. The evening was absolutely perfect – complete with plumbing industry icons, Elvis, a ukulele, and a government proclamation! Thank you to Pete and the Board of Directors and especially to Kerry, Jodi, Matt and Ann for putting it all together.

“As I said in my remarks that night, I have a hunch that you all know that PMI holds a special place in my heart. PMI’s success and effectiveness rest on some ba-

sic but important principles. While with new leadership, changes are expected and welcomed, PMI has a solid foundation to build on and I suspect that PMI’s core values and processes will continue with the momentum already underway.

“The endless list of those to whom I am grateful spans nearly 20 years. I must thank Ralph, Yvonne, Billy, Russ, Pete, Shahin, Mary Ann, Jay, Tonya, Ugo, Holger, Dave, Maria, Gary, Salim, Veronica and my husband Trey for their ongoing inspiration and support. Sincere appreciation to the Strategic



*PMI President Pete Jahrling with Barb Higgens*



*Elvis serenades Barb, seated with Trey Higgens*



*Barb acknowledges a toast to her outstanding work on behalf of PMI*

Advisory Council and the Board for generously volunteering their time, and to our small but mighty stable of PMI staff and consultants: Jerry, Stephanie, Frederick, Ray, Maureen, Mike and Erin who work tirelessly to further PMI initiatives. Thank you to those who originally provided me with the opportunity in 1998 and to those who offered their support along the way, including Claude Theisen and Chuck Dowd who attended the dinner, and all of those on that great video farewell! Thank you all for everything you’ve done and continue to do. I very much appreciate the many business relationships that have blossomed into personal friendships – a real bonus for me.

“PMI is on a great path and has a robust future ahead. I’m proud to have worked with – and for you. And whether it’s from a golf course or a poolside lounge chair, or perhaps even a business office, I’ll continue to be your biggest fan.

“All the best to Kerry and crew. I wish you all continued success. Thanks for the memories! It was a blast! To quote Elvis, we did it the PMI-Way!”

Her full farewell speech can be read here: [goo.gl/t2LnDz](http://goo.gl/t2LnDz)

And a great profile of Barb Higgens is here: [goo.gl/ncGe9U](http://goo.gl/ncGe9U)

# Collaborating on a Commitment to Sustainability

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

## A PMI Value Case Study

### Overview

With Colorado's population expected to double to 10 million sometime between 2050 and 2060, the Colorado Water Conservation Board estimates the state will need more than 400,000 acre feet of additional water by 2050 to meet municipal and industrial needs. For the past decade, state agencies, water providers and other stakeholders have worked to develop long-term plans to fill that gap.

Working with PMI and other key stakeholders, Denver Water, Colorado's largest municipal water provider, set out to establish specific conservation and efficiency tactics, including legislation requiring manufacturers to sell only WaterSense-labeled fixtures in Colorado, to achieve substantial water savings in the long term that would benefit the entire state.

### Results

Colorado Senate Bill (SB14-103), Phase in High-Efficiency Water Fixture Options, was signed into law, requiring manufacturers to sell only WaterSense fixtures to distributors, wholesalers, retailers, developers and homebuilders in Colorado. The legislation went into effect on September 1, 2016, allowing sufficient time for all stakeholders to phase out their inventory of low-efficiency plumbing fixtures. To begin measuring the percentages of low-efficiency and WaterSense fixtures sold in Colorado in 2016, all manufacturers were asked to file a one-time report by March 1, 2017.

"PMI has been an outstanding partner in many ways, but especially in helping us reach out to manufacturers about how the WaterSense standards will work and what their responsibilities will be as part of the new legislation," said **Chris Piper**, government relations manager, Denver Water.

### Goals

Denver Water's early research identified legislation requiring the sale of only high-efficiency plumbing fixtures. Similar legislation was passed in Texas, California and Georgia.

"We reached out to PMI for support because we saw how successful their water efficiency efforts had been with those states," Piper said. "We already had a strong relationship with PMI and they were ready and willing to help us."

Denver Water set a goal to gain bipartisan support for legislation requiring state water efficiency standards that meet or exceed the Environmental Protection Agency's WaterSense fixture and appliance specifications in all indoor building codes.

Based on their research, including end-use studies, PMI input and real estate development plans, Denver Water estimated the state could save 40,000 acre feet of water annually by 2050 by simply requiring the sale of only WaterSense toilets, urinals, faucets and showerheads. WaterSense fixtures meet the aim of saving water while maintaining high performance, which contributes to consumer confidence in the products.

### Challenges

With the understanding that getting legislation passed could take several attempts, Denver Water began working closely with the Colorado Water Resources Review Committee in the summer of 2010. Their first try at introducing the legislation that fall did not pass.

Over the next several years, Denver Water worked with PMI staff led by **Barbara Higgins**, then PMI CEO/executive director, to conduct an intensive series of meetings with local plumbers, manufacturers and retailers. In addition, the team completed a deep research dive on everything from manufacturers' concerns, to potential consumer ques-

tions, to retailers' feelings about selling only WaterSense plumbing fixtures. They also worked to ensure the fixtures met safety guidelines and did not result in unintended consequences, such as drainline-carry issues.

PMI sent several targeted letters to key committees and legislators in support of SB 14-103. Proponents of the legislation faced pushback from some state Republican senators and representatives, who had a history of opposing additional regulatory requirements. The Denver Water team scored both environmental and business community support and Democratic sponsorship of their bill, but still faced some Republican resistance. Also, Colorado's Democratic governor was up for re-election and, because of the partisan nature of the bill in the legislature, was under significant pressure to veto SB 14-103.

### Solutions

With PMI's assistance, Denver Water crafted a detailed plan based on significant technical research and communication with stakeholders, including retailers, plumbers, homebuilders, realtors and real estate developers, along with the organizations that represent them. The plan also included collaboration with local environmental protection and other industry groups. PMI supported Denver Water in several key areas, providing:

- Technical support and guidance with access to PMI's technical team, including **Matt Sigler**, PMI's technical director, and several PMI members to help answer questions about flush and waste volumes, performance criteria and other factors.
- Connections to significant political contacts, including **Jerry Desmond**, a legislative advocate and lawyer representing PMI in California, who helped pass similar water efficiency legislation there; **Stephanie Salmon**, PMI's

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# Scientific Approach to Recycled Water Use Wins in California

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

Working together, PMI and its members recently influenced an important decision for the plumbing manufacturing industry by helping place a “hold” on California regulations mandating residential recycled water use indoors.

While supporting both indoor and outdoor use of recycled water in various applications for many years, California released draft regulations in 2016 that would have mandated the use of recycled water for toilets and urinals in new residential and commercial construction, where recycled water was readily available.

The state water regulatory agencies reached out to PMI for input when the draft regulations were first proposed. PMI’s involvement permeated the entire regulatory process, from forming a member task group with several member companies helping to research the issue, to providing feedback and specific language to be included in the regulations, to suggesting supplementary research and next steps. In addition, PMI encouraged the state regulatory agencies to form issues-specific stakeholder groups and then helped place appropriate member companies in each of the groups.

PMI’s member task group focused on addressing two main concerns: 1) how recycled water will affect plumbing fixtures and components, and 2) what impact indoor use of recycled water will have on public health and safety. Working closely with **Matt Sigler**, PMI technical director, and **Jerry Desmond**, PMI California government relations consultant, the group wrote a series of letters to the California Building Standards Commission, Department of Water Resources and Department of Housing and Community Development recommending delaying adoption of regulations requiring recycled water plumbing systems in indoor applications in new commercial and residential

construction until further research is completed.

Currently, there is no consistent federal standard for recycled water, so every state follows different standards. And while there are requirements for recycled water to be disinfected before being released into a distribution system, there are no maximum requirements for residual chlorine use. In addition, when recycled water is used in various California jurisdictions, few examples exist where recycled water is being used indoors for toilet and urinal flushing in residential applications.

**Fernando Fernandez**, a member of the PMI task group and director of codes and standards for TOTO USA, said he appreciates being an active participant in the PMI group and is pleased with the progress that has been made. “Through PMI, we have advocated for a science-based approach through research to identify any potential concerns and risks and then look at the individual applications of recycled water to see how we can best arrive at a final solution,” Fernando said.

One of the key pieces of research PMI will use is a study on recycled water use indoors and its effects on public health currently being conducted by **Dr. Marc Edwards**, with funding through the American Water Works Association (AWWA) and National Science Foundation (NSF).

“The state water and building agencies have been very receptive to our input and we’ve built quite a coalition of support,” said **Cambria McLeod**, a member of the PMI task group and staff engineer working on codes and standards at Kohler Co. “We considered what was important to all PMI members – issues like product performance, durability, public health and safety, and customer expectations – while also better understanding the agencies’ perspective. When this issue comes

around again, we’ll be better prepared to decide as an industry how to move forward on it.”

These regulations will likely surface again in 2018 with California water and building agencies not only pursuing possible mandates for the use of recycled water for toilets and urinals in new residential construction but potentially for faucets and showerheads, too. “We’re grateful for the time we now have to help our members prepare for this issue,” Matt said. “We’ll continue being proactive, coordinating with members on research efforts and fully vetting all concerns surrounding public health and safety and product performance.”

## Global OEM Corporation Joins PMI As Allied Member

PMI welcomes our newest allied member, Global OEM Corporation, an original equipment manufacturer (OEM) and original design manufacturer (ODM) for brass manufacturing. Global OEM offers a full range of machining capabilities for an array of brass alloys including compliant, lead-free alloys and dezincification resistant (DZR) approved for potable water applications. Global OEM has an IAPMO-certified in-house laboratory, advanced technology research and support center, and years of experience in joint programs with worldwide well-known plumbing manufacturers. These capabilities allow Global OEM to offer a broad range of plumbing products, OEM/ODM/DIY projects, manufacturing service, and shared tooling costs to meet clients’ various procurement needs. Learn more at [techoem.com](http://techoem.com)



# PMI Members Celebrate National Manufacturing Day

PMI member companies opened their doors to the public in honor of National Manufacturing Day on October 6, an annual celebration of modern manufacturing that draws attention to the roles manufacturers play in their communities and underscores the economic and social significance of manufacturing. Sloan Valve Company hosted students and visitors from local high schools, colleges and the Village of Franklin Park, Ill., for a presentation and plant tour. Viega LLC hosted tours of its facilities in McPherson, Kan., for about 200 students and members of the public.



*National Manufacturing Day plant tour at Sloan Valve Company*



*Visitors try out the custom-made chopper at Viega LLC on National Manufacturing Day*

## PMI Members TOTO USA, American Standard Make Marketing Headlines

Featured in *Ad Week*, a new TOTO USA ad campaign for the TOTO Washlet high-tech bidet finds a clever way to talk about the unspeakable with a dose of humor and a guy spraying stuff with a hose. If you love puns and double entendres, especially those relating to human anatomy, this campaign is a must see. [goo.gl/54R9sT](http://goo.gl/54R9sT)

To put its company on a par with Silicon Valley innovators, American Standard launched its “Porcelain Valley” campaign, which features a cast of nerdy product engineers developing

revolutionary plumbing inventions in a laboratory environment, according to a story in *Marketing Daily*. In a nod to **Steve Jobs**, one campaign spot features a yellow turtleneck-clad character talking about a self-cleaning toilet to enthusiastic applause. “Silicon Valley is [perceived] as always thinking of something that can improve someone’s life,” says **Shawn Hansen**, account director at Solve (the agency behind the effort). “But when we look at American Standard, they’re thinking of things we don’t even know we need yet.” [goo.gl/xbVEVS](http://goo.gl/xbVEVS)

## Collaborating on a Commitment to Sustainability

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Washington, D.C., government affairs consultant; and **Karen Guz**, conservation director with the San Antonio Water System, who helped change local code in Texas to require WaterSense fixtures on all new construction.

- Help on the ground in Colorado, delivering expert testimony in legislative and committee hearings, writing and revising sections of the legislation, and sending letters of support to the legislature and governor.
- Communications, including a fact sheet about “Colorado’s Indoor WaterSense Fixture Requirement” that was widely shared with all stakeholder groups.

At the end of the legislative session, Denver Water also mounted an aggressive, very successful letter-writing campaign, which included more than 35 letters of support from various Colorado organizations and a letter of endorsement from PMI, urging Governor **John Hickenlooper** to sign SB14-103.

In addition to the new law, Denver Water and more than 20 other Colorado water providers have for several years offered rebates to residents and business owners who replace toilets with WaterSense models and replace irrigation controllers with WaterSense smart controllers. Other commercial incentives from Denver Water include rebates for WaterSense-labeled urinals and for flushometer bowl and valve combinations.



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## Recent Visits to PMI Member Companies

PMI's CEO/Executive Director **Kerry Stackpole** met with Bradley Corporation President/CEO **Bryan Mullett** and the Bradley leadership team recently to share ideas at the company's corporate headquarters in Menomonee Falls, Wis. He also recently visited with Speakman Company President & CEO **Robert Knoll** (left) and Speakman Vice President of Compliance & Safety and PMI Board of Directors member **Imants Stiebris** in New Castle, Del.



*Bryan Mullett, Bradley Corporation, with Kerry Stackpole, PMI*

PMI's Technical Director **Matt Sigler** visited Haws Corporation in Sparks, Nev., where he met with **Adam Pruitt**, senior product manager. Matt also met with **Rich Houle**, Reliance Worldwide Corporation's director of codes and standards, in Atlanta, Ga.



*Kerry Stackpole joins Robert Knoll (left) and Imants Stiebris (right)*



*Matt Sigler, PMI, and Adam Pruitt, Haws Corporation*



*Rich Houle, Reliance Worldwide Corporation, with Matt Sigler, PMI*

## Happy Holidays!

**PMI's office will be closed from December 26 through January 1.**

## PMI to Proudly Sponsor Jan. 10 Crystal Vision Award Breakfast

PMI is pleased to sponsor the 2018 Crystal Vision Award breakfast on Wednesday, January 10, 2018, in Orlando, Fla., during KBIS 2018. **Benoit Bazin**, senior vice president of Saint Gobain and president and CEO of Construction Products Sector, will be the keynote speaker at the breakfast. As part of Design & Construction Week, the Storehouse of World Vision will present the Crystal Vision Award along with the Partnership and Lifetime Achievement Awards during the breakfast, which is open to KBIS conference attendees, as well as to local home builders, manufacturers, vendors, designers, and architects. The Storehouse of World Vision is a network of six warehouses that receive donated goods, including building materials, and distributes them to more than 2.2 million people in low-income communities. [goo.gl/g78nWP](http://goo.gl/g78nWP)

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### PMI STAFF

**Kerry Stackpole, FASAE, CAE**  
CEO/Executive Director  
[kstackpole@safep plumbing.org](mailto:kstackpole@safep plumbing.org)

**Matt Sigler**  
Technical Director  
[msigler@safep plumbing.org](mailto:msigler@safep plumbing.org)

**Jodi Stuhberg**  
Association Manager  
[jstuhberg@safep plumbing.org](mailto:jstuhberg@safep plumbing.org)

**Ann Geier**  
Administrative Assistant  
[ageier@safep plumbing.org](mailto:ageier@safep plumbing.org)

### PMI CONSULTANTS

**Ray Valek**  
Public Relations  
[ray@valekco.com](mailto:ray@valekco.com)

**Frederick Desborough**  
Technical Consultant  
[frd@flex-fluss.com](mailto:frd@flex-fluss.com)

**Erin Shencopp**  
Legal Consultant, Jones Day  
[eshencopp@jonesday.com](mailto:eshencopp@jonesday.com)

Newsletter Design By:  
**Maureen Baird Graphic Design**  
[info@mbairdgraphics.com](mailto:info@mbairdgraphics.com)



1921 Rohlwing Road, Unit G  
Rolling Meadows, IL 60008  
Phone: 847 481-5500  
Fax: 847 481-5501  
[SafePlumbing.org](http://SafePlumbing.org)