



Make Positive Change from the Top by Becoming a PMI Leader

By Todd Teter, PMI Board of Directors President, House of Rohl



Todd Teter

Does change start at the top, or swell up from a grassroots effort? In many cases, and I believe certainly with diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I), it's a combination of both.

Throughout history, various groups within our population have called for equitable opportunities and civil rights. Religious groups, women, racial and ethnic minorities, the LG-BTQ+ community, individuals with disabilities, young and old Americans, and other groups have demanded and gained opportunities within our society and protections under the law. Their voices are growing stronger by the day, and what were once seen as minority populations now combine to comprise a clear majority of Americans.

At the same time, industries once controlled and still mostly dominated by white males, including our own, now require the talents gained by a more diverse workforce. Slowly but surely, industry leaders have begun to understand and appreciate both the moral imperative and the business sense of creating more diverse, equitable and inclusive workplaces.

You can help add diversity to PMI leadership

Now that we have heard and understand what America is saying, it's up to Plumbing Manufacturers International to make our organization and industry more diverse, inclusive and equitable. And that starts with our own leadership.

The best way to start is to take a look at the baseline – where we are now. Our current board of directors now consists of eight men out of eight members. Out of nine committee co-chairs, we have two women. As a whole, our leadership does include several people of color, as well as several young professionals.

Our current PMI leaders have positions in codes and standards, engineering, government affairs, product certification/compliance, product management, sales, senior leadership,

sourcing/supply chain, and technical. These professional disciplines have traditionally been ones that most individuals active in PMI have represented. Several of our current leaders speak to the rewards of PMI leadership roles on page 3.

However, a recent analysis of PMI members who follow PMI on LinkedIn shows a much more diverse set of professionals. Additional areas of expertise represented by these individuals include branding, corporate responsibility, customer service, digital production, e-commerce, facility management, finance and accounting, human resources and talent, innovation, legal affairs, marketing, operations, pricing, public relations and social media, quality control, research and development, risk management, strategy and intelligence, trade shows, trades education, training and more.

As PMI becomes a more diverse and inclusive organization, we welcome the participation of individuals from demographic groups and professional disciplines not equitably represented right now. This representation will make PMI a stronger voice for progress within our industry, and our voice will make our industry better able to compete for talent and achieve other positive outcomes for our stakeholders.

If you're reading this article and feeling like it's speaking to you, the timing is perfect! PMI is now accepting nominations for 2022 board of directors (tinyurl.com/4kza4k8n) and committee co-chair (tinyurl.com/x8zknchs) positions until September 18. These positions are open to all employees of PMI manufacturing member companies. You can nominate

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Keeping Your Teams Safe During the Age of Responsibility

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



Kerry Stackpole

Are we amid a pandemic or at the start of an endemic? Said differently, is COVID-19 here to stay? If it is, what does that mean to your strategic and business

planning? Will your firm make vaccinations a condition of employment? If not, will you enforce a regular testing regimen and masking requirement on those who prefer to remain unvaccinated?

Legal issues aside, the COVID-19 pandemic has become a workplace health and safety issue akin to other risks covered by OSHA regulations. Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act, employers are responsible for providing a safe and healthy workplace free from recognized hazards likely to cause death or serious physical harm. When it comes to COVID-19, here is a brief summary of OSHA's latest guidance: ([osha.gov/coronavirus/safework](https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/safework)).

- Recommend that fully vaccinated workers in areas of substantial or high community transmission wear masks to protect unvaccinated workers.

- Recommend that fully vaccinated workers who have close contacts with people with coronavirus wear masks for up to 14 days, unless the vaccinated workers have a negative coronavirus test at least three to five days after such contact.
- Protect unvaccinated workers and other at-risk workers by facilitating employee vaccination, by instructing those who have had close contacts with people testing positive for COVID-19 to stay home, and by having them wear masks and practice physical distancing at work.

There are 11 different recommendations for employers in the OSHA guidance. In addition to the three above, they include guidelines for granting time off for vaccinations; handling employees who test positive for COVID-19; education and training; asking visitors to mask up; and assuring proper air handling, cleaning and disinfection. These steps reflect a new framework for corporate health and safety in the workplace, as explained in a related story on page 6.

Managing COVID-19's impact in the workplace puts CEOs in a tough spot. There is a clear and present danger to your employees from COVID-19. Many of the available options to protect

them and your company may be resisted by some. The ability to get and keep our economy back on track relies on reducing the spread and infection rates coursing through our hospitals, homes and communities.

President **Joe Biden** at a White House event recently said, "I'm calling on more companies in the private sector to step up with vaccine requirements... If you're a business leader, a nonprofit leader, a state or local leader, who has been waiting for full FDA approval to require vaccinations, I call on you now to do that — require it. It only makes sense to require a vaccine to stop the spread of COVID-19."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have created a Workplace COVID-19 Vaccine Toolkit ([tinyurl.com/rbf8uctp](https://www.tinyurl.com/rbf8uctp)) for employers, including a roster of best practices, ways to build confidence in COVID-19 vaccines, and ways to create vaccination opportunities both on and off site. As the CDC points out, assuring you have a sufficient number of workers relies in part on being certain your teams are vaccinated.

Plumbing product manufacturers have a clear opportunity to remove barriers to helping their teams get vaccinated against COVID-19. Every day our industry delivers safe solutions to help people gain access to clean water and sanitary living conditions. Using the trust we've earned with our teams and our communities gives us a unique position and platform. Helping our teams gain access to transportation, offering paid time-off for vaccination and recovery time for post-vaccination side effects, and making the vaccine easy to obtain with in-house or community health events will help make your teams feel safe and supported. This is truly our opportunity to end the COVID-19 pandemic.



Industry Pros Attest to Rewards of PMI Leadership Roles

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

Where can you get the opportunity to help influence the direction of the plumbing manufacturing industry while gaining career-enhancing skills such as consensus-building and strategic thinking? Serving as a Plumbing Manufacturers International leader is a great place to start.

“It’s important to serve because it’s a critical time for the plumbing industry. As the world focuses on sustainability, water quality and water scarcity, plumbing is going to be vital to how we address these issues, and we need to have a seat at the table, contributing our experience and expertise to help solve these critical societal challenges,” said **Troy Benavidez**, co-chair of the PMI Advocacy/Government Affairs Committee and leader of international government relations at LIXIL.

Give a little, get more

Many PMI leaders have said that the time they’ve invested in PMI has returned countless rewards.

“You get out of PMI what you put into it – and then some,” said **Cambria McLeod**, co-chair of the PMI Water Efficiency and Sustainability Committee and senior sales engineer for Kohler Co. She explained how she values the relationships she’s built, along with the opportunity to be at the forefront of important industry issues.

McLeod spoke of the achievements of PMI and its committees and how being a part of guiding water efficiency

regulations and standards through PMI committee work has been an exciting endeavor. “Because PMI has a recognized voice in water-efficiency legislation and has worked to establish key relationships, members have been able to apply their expertise to shape major outcomes,” McLeod said.

Some may be concerned about the time involved in being a committee co-chair or board member; however, the time commitment is reasonable and delivers a major payout, stated **Martin Knieps**, vice president of the PMI Board of Directors and senior director, operational excellence, at Viega LLC. Knieps also has co-chaired several PMI committees.

“I think actively bringing your opinions, ideas and thoughts is the biggest enjoyment I get out of serving as a PMI leader,” he said. Knieps pointed out how the PMI board provides a strong variety and balance of perspectives. As a leader, he said “I think that’s kind of the fun part of it, too. You’re not just sitting and listening, but actually doing something with your ideas and expertise as well as influencing outcomes for our industry.”

That influence is especially important in the legislative and policy environment, Benavidez added. “We know our industry better than anyone and communicating our perspective to governing authorities is important to help shape the environment. PMI’s role is to bring that perspective to lawmakers and governing authorities so they can make better-informed decisions versus making decisions for us,” he said.

Ready to step up? Nominate yourself or a colleague today!

If you’re ready to step up and serve, several positions are open for the PMI Board of Directors, as well as for co-chairs for the Advocacy/Government Affairs Committee, Technical Committee, Commerce Committee, Water Efficiency and Sustainability Committee, and the new Marketing Committee. Positions are open to employees of PMI manufacturing member companies with the goal of building a diverse and inclusive leadership team for PMI.

To nominate yourself or another individual, complete and submit the PMI Board of Directors Application (tinyurl.com/8978x3m) or the PMI Leadership Committee Application (tinyurl.com/nx4t374s) to PMI CEO/Executive Director **Kerry Stackpole** by Sept. 18, 2021. All board applications will be reviewed by the PMI Nominating Committee chaired by PMI Immediate Past President **Joel Smith** of Kohler Co. The committee will select nominees to present to the PMI Membership for election at the 67th Annual Meeting of the Membership on Nov. 17, 2021, during the PMI21 Manufacturing Success Conference in San Diego. All committee chair applications will be reviewed and appointed by the PMI board president.



Several New Speakers Add Expertise to PMI21 Agenda

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

Plumbing Manufacturers International has added several new speakers and sessions to the agenda for the Nov. 15-18 PMI21 Manufacturing Success Conference. With the current public health situation in our nation causing virtually everything to take a little longer than usual, we appreciate your patience!

Nov. 16 will feature presentations from diversity strategist and coach **Deborah Rosado Shaw**, economist **Connor Lokar** and PMI advocacy/government affairs consultants **Jerry Desmond** and **Stephanie Salmon**.

Avishai Moscovich will present on the plumbing Internet of Things connectivity protocol. He will discuss developing an ecosystem of smart and connected plumbing systems by defining a unified digital plumbing protocol that will benefit all stakeholders including plumbing manufacturers, end users, contractors and engineers.



Avishai Moscovich

Thomas Brugato, special council, Covington, has been added to the agenda to speak about the “EPA Regulation of Antimicrobials.” He will explain how the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) regulates plumbing products treated with pesticides that can kill or control pathogens and how the Environmental Protection Agency may take action regarding “misbranded” devices. With infection control top of mind among kitchen and bath product customers, Brugato’s presentation is sure to provide outstanding guidance to PMI members.



Thomas Brugato

Nov. 17 will begin with a presentation about mentorship from keynote speaker and PMI21 emcee **Ted Ma**. Next up will be **Joshua Baca**, vice president, plastics division,



Joshua Baca

American Chemistry Council, newly added to the agenda to speak about single-use plastics. Baca encourages better understanding of plastics’ advantages in key markets, including building, construction and packaging, and innovations that are helping to address some of our world’s greatest sustainability challenges.

Following Baca will be a panel addressing “How Water Efficiency/Conservation is Changing in An Era of Growth and Drought.” **Heather Cooley**, research director of the global water think tank Pacific Institute; **Jacob Atalla**, vice president of sustainability initiatives, KB Homes; and others will discuss what must be done to overcome water shortages caused by climate change, drought and other factors.



Heather Cooley



Jacob Atalla

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Award-winning science journalist **Chelsea Wald** will deliver her presentation streamed live from the Netherlands later that day. She will be followed by newly added speakers **David F. Pyke**, Ph.D., professor of operations and supply chain management, University of San Diego, and **Joan Stewart**, attorney, Wiley Rein LLP.



David F. Pyke



Joan Stewart

Dr. Pyke will present a fictional, interactive risk management scenario based on real companies that manufacture products in China for sale at big box stores in the United States and Europe. PMI21 attendees will be divided into functional areas – sales and marketing, operations and supply chain, finance, human resources, and CEO/board – and go into breakout groups to discuss what their area would do in response to a series of supply chain issues and challenges. The session will provide an overview of enterprise risk management and provide participants with a framework to identify and manage both common and catastrophic supply chain risks.

Stewart will delve into consumer data protection requirements. She regularly counsels large and small businesses on strategies to implement data governance plans that comply with stringent privacy laws including the California Consumer Privacy Act, California Privacy Rights Act, and the General Data Protection Act. She works closely with clients to evaluate data flows and advises clients on compliant cross-border data transfer mechanisms.

Nov. 18 will feature presentations from three technical experts: **Juneseok Lee**, Ph.D., associate professor, civil and

environmental engineering, Manhattan College; **Andrew Whelton**, Ph.D., associate professor of civil engineering and environmental and ecological engineering, Purdue University; and **Tim Keane**, Legionella Risk Management, Inc.

Dr. Lee's presentation, "Premise Plumbing Modeling: State-of-the-Art Reviews and Challenges," will address how water-efficient appliances increase water age and may adversely affect tap water quality. He will describe the significant spatiotemporal changes in building tap water quality his research has found. His presentation will report on a series of calibrated premise plumbing hydraulic-water quality models that predict the levels of disinfectant residuals, heavy metals, and microbial content at each fixture for known plumbing use, operational characteristics, and design layouts. The second part of the presentation will cover state-of-the-art reviews in premise plumbing modeling and challenges.



Juneseok Lee

Dr. Whelton will present on "New Studies on Building Water Systems." At Purdue, he leads the Healthy Plumbing Consortium and Center for Plumbing Safety, and several other initiatives with multiple university and industrial collaborators. The center has organized a skilled team of microbiologists, risk assessors, data scientists, civil/environmental/ecological engineers, ecologists, and political scientists.



Andrew Whelton

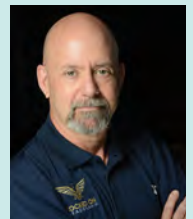
Keane will present key drivers for building water system energy efficiency and water conservation and controlling opportunistic premise plumbing pathogens. He will discuss the cascading

Capt. Steve Andres Added to Aspiring Leaders Program

USS Midway Museum docent and retired Navy captain **Steve Andres** will provide a presentation about the history of the battleship geared toward the PMI Aspiring Leaders Program participants. He will join fellow former naval officer **Dave Rosenberg** to land new leadership tools and skills on Nov. 15, the first day of PMI21. This year's program is titled "Locked on Leadership: The Secret to Self-Directed Teams." Learn more by watching our video preview and register today! safeplumbing.org/events/aspiring-leaders-program



Steve Andres



Dave Rosenberg

impact of oversized building pipe as a result of outdated codes, technologies designed to counteract the impact of oversized piping, and case studies showing the end result of this cascading impact on Legionella and equipment.

Register for PMI21/Aspiring Leaders Bundle and Save \$900!

You may register for one or both programs at safeplumbing.org/pmi21. If you've already registered for PMI21 and would like to add Aspiring Leaders participation at the bundled rate, contact PMI Association Manager Jodi Stuhrberg at jstuhrberg@safeplumbing.org.



Tim Keane

Corporate America Joins Push for Higher Vaccination Rates

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

As the coronavirus Delta variant rages across America and vaccination rates creep slowly upward in response, leading corporations and businesses have decided to require vaccination for their workers.

The list of companies requiring vaccines for their workers includes Ford, Disney, Walmart, Google, Tyson Foods, Delta and United Airlines, Uber, Lyft and McDonalds. (See longer list at tinyurl.com/e6hcsfzn). More companies may be taking steps to exclude non-vaccinated individuals from consideration for open positions. The share of job posts that require COVID-19 vaccination were up 34% on Aug. 7 when compared to the prior month, according to Indeed data, although most job listings still don't require candidates to have received COVID-19 vaccinations.

Corporate America is taking these steps as increased infection rates threaten a repeat of the economic disruption, shutdowns, unemployment, and reduced consumer confidence seen earlier in the pandemic. There is also fear that quarantines made necessary by exposure to individuals testing positive for the virus will increase absenteeism and cause production disruptions.

Another factor driving vaccination encouragement or mandates is the desire of companies to bring employees back to the office from remote working arrangements, according to CNBC reporting. Some companies are offering bonuses or other incentives to workers who get the vaccine, and employees who need to travel may need shots to board planes.

Public health experts hope the combination of incentives and requirements both in and outside of the workplace – as well as the FDA approval of the non-emergency use of the vaccines – tip the balance toward more individuals deciding to receive the shot.

More Americans have become receptive to vaccination each month since December 2020

According to a Kaiser Family Foundation survey taken in July, about 70% of American adults have received the shot or plan to soon. Of the unvaccinated 30%, about one-fourth of them (8% total) say it's very likely or likely they will receive the vaccination by the end of the year. Another 3% total say they'll get vaccinated if it's required. If all goes well, that could mean a vaccination rate of 86%, leaving 14% dead set against it. The Kaiser survey has showed improvement each month since December 2020 on Americans willingness to take the vaccine, except among those absolutely against it – that percentage has stayed in the 13-15% range.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention states that COV-

ID-19 vaccines are not mandated under emergency use authorizations; however, states, local governments, or employers may mandate vaccinations if allowed by state or other applicable laws. Employees can receive exemptions for medical or religious reasons, the CDC states.

NAM, other influencers urge more assertive corporate actions

The National Association of Manufacturers continues to promote vaccinations through its #ThisIsOurShot campaign. In a video (tinyurl.com/3ma23xb9) associated with the campaign, various manufacturing employees say they're getting the vaccine to protect co-workers and family members. In a recent news release, NAM President and CEO **Jay Timmons** stated that the organization achieved a voluntary vaccination rate of 98% and will require vaccinations by mid-September. "The recent surge in cases is a reminder that this pandemic is not over, but with these vaccines, it is within our power to dramatically change the trajectory of this virus," Timmons said.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce also announced a vaccination requirement for anyone – staff or guests – who enters its headquarters across from the White House. As the FDA approves vaccines for non-emergency use, the Chamber will make them mandatory for all employees, according to a chamber spokesperson, Politico reported.

On a recent Pivot podcast hosted by journalists **Kara Swisher** and **Stephanie Ruhle**, the hosts encouraged corporations to mandate vaccinations in return for the trillions of dollars in federal aid they received during the pandemic. "Here's something they can do to protect our country and protect our employees... If we don't do something significant, we're never getting rid of COVID," said Ruhle. "If you want to have your business flourish long-term, require it."



Pfister's 'American Plumber Stories' Elevates Trade Jobs

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

With the plumbing trade experiencing a growing shortage of workers, Plumbing Manufacturers International member Pfister wants to help recruit the next generation of plumbers. Reaching into its marketing toolbox, the company is now producing "American Plumber Stories," a bi-weekly video series highlighting the passion and drive plumbers across the United States have for their profession.

"Plumbers are an extension of who we are as a plumbing manufacturer, so it made sense for us to help young people see – not just hear about – what a great career plumbing is," said **Spencer Brown**, director of sales for Pfister and executive producer of the series. "We need to engage with young people by sharing an authentic look at the plumbing trade today and real plumbers' success stories to encourage a new workforce."

"American Plumber Stories" can be viewed on YouTube via americanplumberstories.com. The series features several plumbers sharing how they built successful careers that led to financially rewarding and fulfilling lives, as well as how some are training and supporting up-and-coming plumbers at local high schools.

Country music entertainer and Army veteran **Craig Morgan** was chosen to host the series because of his passion for the trades and support of American workers. Brown noted that Morgan was so excited about the project that he wrote the series theme song in only 24 hours.

Changing perceptions

Society's continued focus on higher education and the scarcity of skilled trade programs at high schools have left a gap for students who aren't interested in a college degree and the debt it creates or are unsure of their career path, Brown noted. A negative stigma also remains attached to the plumbing profession, he added.

"A mindset shift needs to take place to show that academic achievement isn't the only answer; that success in life can be found in the trades, too," said **Danyl Tiefenbacher**, Pfister brand manager.

Brown used his own experience to highlight the disparity that exists in promoting skilled trades as an option for high schoolers. He shared how his son recently graduated high school and out of a class of 400, only about 15 kids were recognized for awards and scholarships. "There was nothing mentioned about the trades. The reality of society and what it needs doesn't match up with how we educate right now," he said.

Pfister aims to help change those negative perceptions with "American Plumber Stories." "We also want to inspire, educate and entertain to show why this is such an excellent career," he said. "Where else can you get paid training, potentially earn a six-figure salary or more, and have job security for life?"

Creating buzz

Excitement and buzz about the series has been spreading. Several noncompeting manufacturers have joined a brand alliance with Pfister to help promote the series, including PMI members Fluidmaster and Reliance Worldwide Corporation with its Sharkbite brand, Tiefenbacher noted.



"Other manufacturers are telling us how much they love what we're doing and want to get involved," he said. "It shows how much our industry is thinking about this topic and looking for answers."

Brown said Pfister has been focusing on alerting high schools, school districts and trade schools about the series, so they can share it with their students. "Our ultimate goal is to get this series to every high school across the U.S. and then establish some type of program early on to get interested students trained," he said.

Meanwhile, Brown noted that his phone has been ringing off the hook and his email box has been filling up with comments and notes from plumbers across the country expressing their support for the series. Positive comments on the YouTube episodes and on social media have been pouring in, too. One person posted the following comment on the first episode: "This was great! Thanks Craig and thank you to all the plumbers and tradesmen that make this world go round!"



Sept. 16: CDA's Adam Estelle To Offer NSF 61 Compliance Advice

To comply with the new NSF 61 standard designed to protect vulnerable populations from lead exposure, plumbing manufacturers need to understand the lead leaching characteristics of their raw materials to make the best evidence-based design decisions.

At a Sept. 16, 1-2 p.m. CT, webinar for employees of Plumbing Manufacturers International member companies, the Copper Development Association's **Adam Estelle** will present the results of a robust study performed on several "lead-free" brass rod alloys. His insights will assist manufacturers to meet the new, lower lead testing requirements of $Q \leq 1\mu\text{g}$ for devices and $Q \leq 0.5\mu\text{g}$ for components.

The study exceeded NSF 61's rigorous testing requirements by evaluating the influence of various machining parameters and production settings with different kinds of equipment and tooling used to produce finished parts (for example: cutting speed, surface roughness, and tool wear).

Estelle's presentation will cover:

- Brass rod solutions for drinking water applications.
- Experimental design used to assess lead leaching behavior of brass.
- Extensive 'Q-statistic' results and analyses for multiple brass rod alloys.
- Application of material-level leaching results in product-level compliance scenarios.
- Influence of machining parameters and wetted surface conditions on lead leaching.
- Requirements for inclusion in NSF/ANSI 61 Annex 2: Acceptable Materials.

Estelle is the director, rod & bar, at the Copper Development Association, a not-for-profit trade association that serves as the market development and engineering services arm of the North American copper, brass and bronze industry. He manages several market development initiatives designed to defend and grow the use of copper and copper alloys, as well as of brass rods for precision-machined and forged products.

In addition, Estelle is a subject matter expert on emerging markets for copper alloy touch surfaces with inherent antimicrobial properties, having expertise in scientific evidence, antimicrobial product regulations, and supply chain development. He leads an industry working group formed to protect the viability of the copper and brass recycling stream and holds a bachelor of science in materials science and engineering from the University of Arizona.

Register at tinyurl.com/499pt7y5.

Make Positive Change from the Top (Contd.)

Continued from page 1

yourself or a colleague. We hope to make progress toward our DE&I goals this year by adding individuals with new sets of expertise. We welcome individuals from groups currently both underrepresented or represented. Any new leader adds diversity.

The intention of PMI is to make one's sex, race, ethnicity, age and other identifiers meaningless. For now, we have some catch-up to do, but all that matters is what you're able to contribute. I encourage all of you motivated to be a part of the exciting changes occurring within our industry to apply for a board or committee position. Your action will add fuel to your career advancement, as you will gain visibility within the industry while gaining skills in collaboration, consensus-building, and strategic thinking. For a reasonable time commitment, you will receive benefits that are well worth the effort.

And you'll change your position from influencing change to leading it. It is your time to make a difference!!

2021 PMI LEADERSHIP

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PMI STAFF

Kerry Stackpole, FASAE, CAE
CEO/Executive Director
kstackpole@safep plumbing.org

Jodi Stuhrberg
Association Manager
jstuhrberg@safep plumbing.org

Kyle Thompson
Technical Director
kthompson@safep plumbing.org

Stephanie Lass
Education Coordinator
sslass@safep plumbing.org

Ann Geier
Administrative Assistant
ageier@safep plumbing.org

PMI CONSULTANTS

Ray Valek
Public Relations
ray@valekco.com

Pam Taylor
Legal Consultant, Jones Day
ptaylor@jonesday.com

Maureen Baird
Graphic Design
info@mbairdgraphics.com



1750 Tysons Blvd., Ste. 1500
McLean, VA 22102
Phone: 847 481-5500
Fax: 847 481-5501
SafePlumbing.org