

Happy New Year! I can't believe that another year has passed. That means that it is time to select the Smitty Award recipient. As most of you know, one Field Technician is selected each year for recognition as the "Technician of the Year". The award is named for Smitty who retired several years ago and who exemplified many of the best attributes of a Hotwork Technician – technical knowledge, tireless work ethic, customer service orientation, willingness to teach, desire to go above and beyond to get it done. In addition to the recognition such as this plaque in the Hotwork lobby, there is a monetary award. We definitely want and value your input on the selection of the individual. Please give Larry or me your suggestions as soon as possible.



Year end is also the time where we calculate and report our OSHA incidence rates. These rates indicate for every employer how many injuries they had per 100 employees working. Since no employer has exactly 100 employees, OSHA provides the formulas to calculate the rate based on the total number of hours worked. For 2012, Hotwork had a recordable accident and injury rate of 1.98. For your reference, the 2011 rate for all manufacturing companies was 4.4 and for all construction companies it was 3.9. So this would appear to be good news – Hotwork accident rates are about ½ of the industry average. Unfortunately, many of our most demanding companies only want to do business with the "safety superstars" who have rates below 1.0. We have to keep working to prevent accidents and to get these rates down. For a company our size, even one recordable accident in a year could take us over a 1.0 rate.

We had two senior Technicians return to work recently after health issues. Ted Drach is back after heart surgery and Allen Rumbaugh has another replacement joint. It's great to have these wise and experienced Techs back on board. Our newer Techs would do well to learn everything that they can from these guys who have seen it all in long careers in our industry.

Speaking of new Techs, how are they doing? I hope that they have been welcomed into the Hotwork community and that they are being "mentored" by guys with experience. And from the newer guys,

we'd like to hear from you about who really goes out of their way to help and teach you. It may be valuable input to the Smitty Award decision.

In the US, there is currently an outbreak of flu. Several people in the office have gotten it and it has been pretty severe. For those on the road and out in public all of the time, it is especially important that you follow the recommendations to prevent the spread of it. The number one recommendation is frequent hand washing.



We are concluding an extended stove hold hot job in Italy right now. It appears that the job is successful but we had a series of incidents that are of some concern. During blow in, the plant back pressured the stove which resulted in our equipment getting fried. There was a collision between a plant forklift (with poor visibility) and a rental car driven by one of our guys, and another Tech experienced an attempted mugging as he was trying to enter his hotel room (he also had a theft from his room). Although all of these things were largely out of our control, we have to be alert and on the defensive to try to prevent them. I'm pretty sure that these guys are ready to get home.

Lastly, we would like to make the login area of the new website as useful as possible for you. I've noticed that some people have never even logged in to take a look. I encourage you to do so. In the future, we will be posting things like the phone list here instead of emailing it out. I hope to make some informational/training videos soon. If you have ideas about information that might be useful here, please let me know.

Be safe, stay well, avoid the flu and Happy New Year.

Tom