

Last week was the annual glass industry conference hosted in Lexington by Hotwork and Fosbel. The conference is known as Hotbels and many of our clients look forward to attending.



George and Donna do most of the planning and execution for this conference. With about 100 of the most important people in the glass industry in attendance, we always want to put our best foot forward. As usual, the feedback from the clients who attended has been overwhelmingly positive.

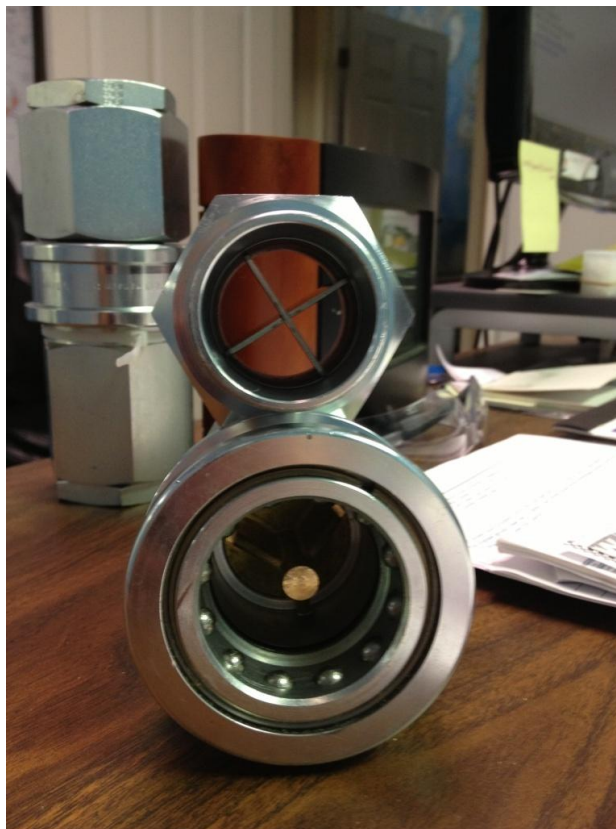
We would like to have some senior glass Technicians attend the conference both to represent Hotwork and to make the Techs aware of some of the issues being faced by our glass clients. In spite of our good intentions this year, the order book did not allow it to happen. We were blessed once again to have Smitty back to help out and to be a Hotwork Ambassador. Someone was able to obtain this picture which shows how Smitty is spending most of his days since retirement.



I have previously mentioned the effort that was started by Chuck Calvert to collect contributions for the benefit of Mr. Chu's family. Included with this email is the memo sent to Mrs. Chu when the contributions were wired to her. Although this effort was made up of the personal decisions of individuals and was not in any way company sponsored, it is inspiring that the Hotwork group supports one of their own in this way. I'd like to personally thank everyone who chose to contribute.

Generally I like to keep personal and business issues quite separate but I feel obligated to say something after the unfortunate and unexpected passing of Mr. Chu. I hope that everyone will take this opportunity to think about what may happen to their families if they were to pass away unexpectedly. Although Mr. Chu's coworkers were quite generous in their support, it clearly will not replace Mr. Chu's earnings for the rest of what would have been his working life. His family will be left to cope with the loss of the family breadwinner. Everyone has to make their own decisions but, especially if you have young children, I encourage you to make some provision for them in case something unexpected happens to you.

We had an incident recently with some of the new equipment. Five days into a firing, the QD connection to the client supply suddenly popped off. The good news is that these new fittings have an internal safety that cutoff the flow of gas.



These fittings operate similar to the oil fittings where an outside collar must slide forward to lock the fitting closed. The fitting is designed such that if the collar is forward, the fitting is locked. When the collar goes forward, there is a distinctive click.

The investigation of this incident is not complete and the fitting in question will be investigated in detail, but it appears that there are only two possibilities:

- 1.) Someone released the fitting (inadvertent or intentional), or
- 2.) The fitting was not completely snapped forward and it managed to survive five days before releasing.

Our Technicians report that they were standing near the fitting (at our recorder) when it popped loose. There was no one in the vicinity and it just let go. Unless we find something physically wrong with the fitting, the most probable cause is that the fitting was not snapped tight on initial installation.

After the incident, the crew shutoff the client supply valve and tried to reattach the connection. Since there was still pressurized gas between the client valve and the flapper in the fitting, it is nearly impossible to make the connection. The pressure behind the flapper must be released in order to remake the connection.

Shane has been on a project in Mexico and he has reported a number of observations of hazardous conditions that generally would not be tolerated on most worksites in the US. Open unprotected holes in the floor, taped temporary 480v connections being run over by a forklift, people working at multiple elevations without regard to sparks or grinding debris affecting workers nearby. He even sent in this photo of one person's attempt to anchor a fall protection lanyard.



Unfortunately, we cannot assume uniform safety practices worldwide (or even on different sites in the U.S.). Hazard recognition and awareness are critically important and we need to be on our guard - even more so when we're at a site that doesn't seem to demonstrate standard safety awareness. No matter where we're working, if you feel that it is unsafe to continue to work, stop and address the hazards. Sometimes you can do it on your own. Sometimes you may have to get the client involved in addressing the issues. In the event that you can't get it done onsite and you feel the hazards must be addressed,

call for help. I appreciate that our Techs are often faced with decisions about how far to push an issue that is a concern of ours and may not be a concern of the client. I think that anyone honestly trying to solve a safety issue, especially when they communicate it clearly, will be given a fair hearing.

Lastly, I'd just like to remind everyone about a couple of sensitivities with regard to communicating company business to people outside of Hotwork. Social media (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc) put information out in public where it cannot be controlled. Please do not put company or client images or information out there in the public domain. Another issue is how much to communicate to employees of other companies who may be on a project with us (furnace builders, contractors, installers, etc). The reality is that Hotwork may have very good relationships with some companies and other companies may have very good relationships with a competitor of ours. Innocent conversations disclosed to the wrong people could potentially be very detrimental to the company. So please think twice when chatting about where you've been or where you're going next or how another client does something or what design is better. If you don't know whether the information would be used against us by the person that you're talking to, it's best to just not give it to them.

We continue to be surprised by the business levels that we have been experiencing. It keeps looking like a slowdown is just around the corner but last minute orders roll in to fill us up. A little more lead time and a few less last minute changes would certainly be appreciated. But we appreciate the business and will do our best to respond.

Tom