

In celebration of the season, I thought that I would share this holiday greeting with you.



I'm sure that it seems like just yesterday Karl.

We are in the season of glass furnace drains. Next week we will have 22 Techs on two drains at the same time in Texas. The weather is creating challenges and the one drain run may be one of our most difficult ones.



We just experienced some problems on a drain in Asia and I appreciate everyone's efforts to work thru a bad situation. First, we once again had problems with our Asian based drain pumps. These are the only pumps that we have mounted on wheels and we currently believe that they are rolling around and being damaged during transit. Our plan now is to base them in Sydney, get them off wheels and onto a skid/cage, and get them the proper maintenance attention to make them reliable. They are good performing pumps when couplings aren't broken etc. In addition to the pump problems, Rob Ward experienced a health problem and had to be relieved from the job. I understand that he is doing much better after receiving treatment and returning home. Mark Randle and Chris Barker worked a difficult drain short-handed until we could get Jason Tomkins to site. We had trouble getting the drain started as we drilled the hole too low in a dark grey glass tank and we encountered cold glass. This hole location was decided in conjunction with the client. Eventually we drilled higher and found hotter glass. Due to the pump problems, we ended up draining using only the client's cold water supply pressure. This resulted in a very slow drain rate and the project was delayed both due to the difficulties starting and due to the slow rate. In spite of exceptional efforts by several individuals, we did not perform well in the eyes of the client. We need to learn from these incidents and implement corrective actions.

Weather has been unusually cold in the US so far this winter with a number of storms creating havoc for travel. We have an upcoming propane job in Minnesota and this has challenges of its own. The jobsite had a high temperature of 1F yesterday. Propane evaporates at a much slower rate at these cold

temperatures and the vapor pressure is much lower. At 0F, propane vapor in the raw storage tank is only at 24 psi. Running a propane job in these cold temperatures requires special practices. A vaporizer can help to boost the vapor capacity of the system but it will not increase the system pressure. Special care is needed to prevent propane gas from condensing back to liquid in our hoses. If you are going to be working a job under these conditions, ask Larry or the Industry Manager about special precautions that may be required.

In other news, Chuck Calvert and Todd Zantene spent about six weeks recently on a HPI jobsite in central China (Terry Swory too). We recently got approved as a vendor to work directly for US Steel. We have been working at Clairton and Gary for 30+ years but always as a sub to an installer. Since receiving this approval for direct work, we have done some coke oven work at Granite City.



Please be alert and focused on your job during the holiday season. It appears that we will have people out and working throughout the season. Take special care both on the job and in transit so that you will have a safe holiday season to spend with your loved ones. My personal best wishes to you all and thank you for your efforts this year.

Kyle Hurlbut continues to face health challenges and we wish him the best in his recovery. I'm pleased to report that Paul Monismith has returned to work and a number of you may see him soon in Texas.

Merry Christmas.

Tom