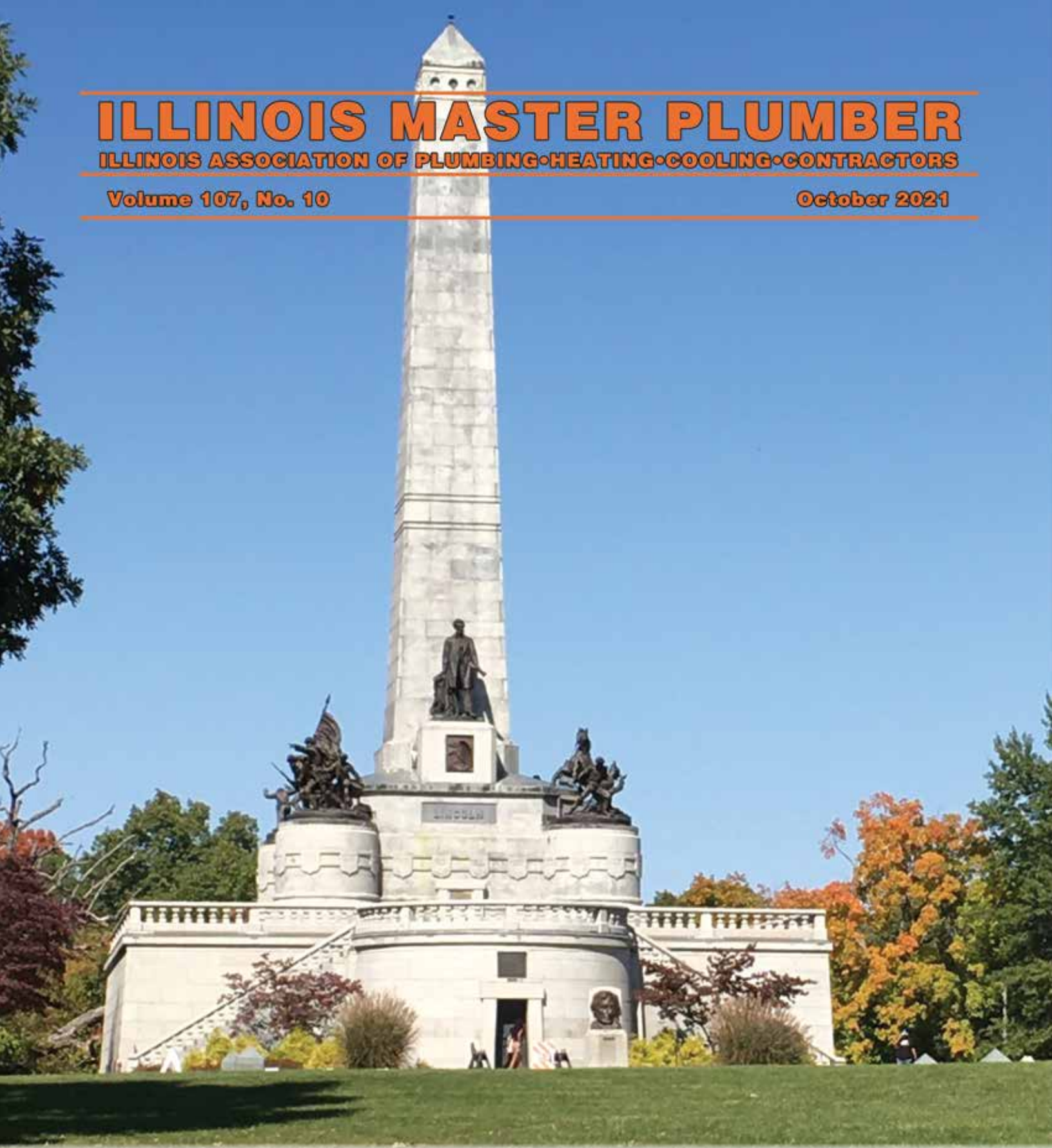


# ILLINOIS MASTER PLUMBER

ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF PLUMBING•HEATING•COOLING•CONTRACTORS

Volume 107, No. 10

October 2021



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# PRESIDENT'S THOUGHTS

by Brian Rich  
Illinois PHCC President

It's the start of a new month and as usual I'll start with a family update. It has been pretty uneventful with our children; college and work, still plugging along. Our granddaughter Rachel on the other hand, continues to amaze me. Watching her learn and grow is so different than raising two boys. She is extremely observant, speaks very well, goes a mile a minute and will be turning 3 on October 16th. Speaking of birthdays, we celebrated Garrett's 22nd birthday on September 16th and our father's 80th on September 30th. We had a surprise party for our father at the office with over 150 in attendance. The entire company was on board to pull this off and it truly was a team effort. Scott and the guys worked hard to clean up the shop where we held the event. The office staff worked diligently to clean, organize, prepare, and ultimately party. Many longtime business associates, friends and family were in attendance. Our father, Jerry was truly surprised and the event that was planned for 4 hours lasted over 6. Dad was pooped by the end of the night, but what a great time he had.

I'm putting the spotlight on my father this month even though he has never been one for the spotlight. If you looked up the definition of HUMBLE it would read, Gerald Allen Rich, and he is the one who made us who we are today. Not just me and my siblings, but many of our longtime employees and business associates have been influenced and shaped into who they are all because of G.A. One of my favorite parts of the evening was listening to all of his friends and business associates gathered together telling stories and reminiscing about the good ole days. Many compliments were shared throughout the night, but it became very evident that our culture was created and defined by G.A. and it remains to this day. Our mission statement is "We (G.A. Rich) strive to be the "And Then Some" company. To deliver what's

expected and more". My father is the definition of more. He is the one that has always stood tall and strong when times get tough. He's the first person there to lend a hand, a tool, some material, a machine or even a house when others are faced with adversity. To say I admire and adore my father is an understatement. I strive to be that man.

In 1964 our dad passed his plumbing test. 57 years later he still carries his plumbing license and attends a 4-hour CEU class. So as a reminder, plumbing license renewal time will be here before we know it. Be sure to register for one of the upcoming Illinois PHCC online CEU classes. Don't wait until the last minute to get your 4 hours in. The next class is November 13th and the deadline to register is November 4th. There will be 2 more online, one in January and one in February then on March 18, 2022 the IL PHCC will hold an in person CEU class at Drury Lane in Oakbrook prior to the Annual Trade Show. Registration information can be found in this magazine.

I've mentioned before we are always looking to improve our processes and efficiencies, both in the office and in the field. Our latest investment is Sage Paperless. This product enhances our Sage accounting system and allows for our invoices to be processed quicker with less physical handling, sending those costs into Job Cost more efficiently allowing bills to be sent out sooner, and in the end improving our overall cash flow. My sister and 4 project managers are flying to Dallas next week to attend the CCA of PHCC Project Manager's Meeting. I'll report next month on what the next improvement initiative is.

**Brian** 

# TIME FOR EDUCATION!

Fall is here and students have returned to school. Now is a good time for **Illinois Licensed Plumbers and Certified Plumbing Inspectors** to start getting their required continuing education hours.

The Illinois PHCC is offering online and in-person classes now through April of 2022. These classes offer a minimum of 3 different speakers and topics in each class. The topics include, but are not limited to, Emergency Showers & Eye Wash Stations, Diagnosing Today's Water Heaters, Excavation Safety, Cast Iron DWV Systems, Proper Methods for Installing Copper, Tool Safety, the Illinois Accessibility Code as it Relates to Plumbing, Water Quality & Waterborne Pathogens, Regulatory Updates, and more.

**All Illinois PHCC classes will provide State hours for Certified Inspectors and Licensed Plumbers.**

Go to [www.ilphcc.com](http://www.ilphcc.com) for more information and to register for a class.

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## ILLINOIS PHCC EXPO SOUTH IN COLLINSVILLE

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Due to the continuing uncertainties of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Illinois PHCC will not be holding its tradeshow and continuing education class on October 29th at the Gateway Center in Collinsville, Illinois. We feel it is in the best interest of the health and safety of our attendees, exhibitors, and members to cancel this event.

The Illinois PHCC continues to provide online CEU classes for licensed plumbers and

Certified Plumbing Inspectors. Please go to our website at [www.ilphcc.com](http://www.ilphcc.com) to register for one of our Fall classes. Class sizes are limited, so register soon.

We are still on track to hold our **Illinois PHCC Expo at Drury Lane, Oakbrook Terrace, on March 18, 2022**. Save the date to attend the biggest and best p-h-c tradeshow in the Midwest, along with our 800 seat CEU class! 🚗

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# 2021-22 ILLINOIS PHCC CEU SCHEDULE

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Below is our current schedule of continuing education classes for Illinois licensed plumbers. As classes are added, they will be posted on our website at [www.ilphcc.com](http://www.ilphcc.com). Please visit the website often for the latest information and to register for a class. **Registration links will be live at least 6 weeks prior to the class date.** All Illinois PHCC classes also provide State hours for Certified Plumbing Inspectors.

## 2021-2022 Continuing Education Dates

**Friday, October 8, 2021 – 12:00 pm - 4:00 pm (Online)**

**Saturday, November 13, 2021 – 8:00 am - 12:00 pm (Online)**

**Friday, January 7, 2022 – 12:00 pm - 4:00 pm (Online)**

**Saturday, February 19, 2022 – 8:00 am - 12:00 pm (Online)**

**Friday, March 18, 2022 – 9:00 am – 1:00 pm -  
Drury Lane Conference Center, Oakbrook Terrace, IL**

**Friday, April 22, 2022 – 12:00 pm-4:00 pm (Online)**

Registration information is at  
**[www.ilphcc.com](http://www.ilphcc.com).**

Click the link for the class you would like to attend.

Registration links will be live at least 6 weeks prior to the class date.



# 15 FOR 12 MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN! 3 MONTHS FREE!

If you are not currently a PHCC member, now is the perfect time to join! Any new member who joins PHCC between now and December of 2021, will have their dues paid through December 31, 2022. That is 3 months of membership benefits for FREE! See the membership application in this issue. Questions? Call or email the Illinois PHCC at 800-795-PHCC, bev@ilphcc.com or shelly@ilphcc.com.

## MANDATORY SEXUAL HARASSMENT PREVENTION TRAINING

Public Act 101-0221 (commonly referred to as the Workplace Transparency Act), requires Illinois employers to provide sexual harassment prevention training to their employees on an annual basis, regardless of the size of the company.

**Under this law, Illinois employers have until December 31st each year to train employees on sexual harassment prevention.** The Act provides minimum standards that must be included in the training. To assist your business in complying with this new law, the Illinois Department of Human Rights has posted the following information on its website:

- A FAQ for Sexual Harassment Prevention

### Training

- Minimum Sexual Harassment Prevention Training Standards for All Employers

Employers must either develop their own sexual harassment prevention training program that equals or exceeds the minimum standards for sexual harassment prevention training outlined in Section 2-109(B) of the Illinois Human Rights Act, or they may use the model training provided by the IDHR. The model training program can be downloaded by visiting <https://www2.illinois.gov/dhr/Training/Pages/State-of-Illinois-Sexual-Harassment-Prevention-Training-Model.aspx>

**For more information** please visit IDHR's website at [www.illinois.gov/dhr/training](http://www.illinois.gov/dhr/training).





# Help small businesses fully reopen. **Get vaccinated.**

Find vaccines near you at [vaccines.gov](https://vaccines.gov)



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# NEWS FROM OSHA

## What is an Emergency Temporary Standard?

OSHA issues an emergency temporary standard (ETS) under limited circumstances. The agency must determine that workers are exposed to a grave danger from new hazards or toxic substances or agents determined to be physically harmful and that an ETS is needed to protect them. Once published in the Federal Register, an ETS takes effect immediately and remains in effect until replaced by a permanent standard. The ETS also serves as a proposal for a permanent standard and is subject to the usual notice and comment rulemaking procedure for adopting a permanent standard except that it must be finalized within six months. State Plans are required to have an ETS that is at least as effective as an ETS issued by federal OSHA 30 days following publication. OSHA's newly published ETS to protect healthcare workers from COVID-19 is the first one issued in 38 years.

## Surge in Construction Worker Suicides.

While the hazards most often associated with workplace deaths in the U.S. construction industry – falling, being struck-by or crushed by equipment or other objects, or suffering electrocution are well-known – a recent study finds that another potential killer is taking lives at an alarming rate.

In 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that men working in construction have one of the highest suicide rates compared to other industries. Their rate of suicide is about four times higher than the general population.

While the CDC continues its research to understand the disparity, the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health

Administration has formed a task force of industry partners, unions and educators to raise awareness of the types of stress that can push construction workers into depression and toward suicide. In addition to alerting stakeholders, the task force encourages industry employers to share and discuss available resources with their workers.

Visit [osha.gov](https://www.osha.gov) for additional information on suicide prevention in the construction industry.



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# NEWS FROM PHCC NATIONAL

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## **PRESIDENT ISSUES EXECUTIVE ORDER ON VACCINE MANDATES**

**by Chuck White,  
VP of Regulatory Affairs**

President Biden recently announced a sweeping executive order that will require all federal employees, federal contractors, and workers in workplaces with 100 or more employees to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. As with all rulemakings, one branch of the Executive Department will be tasked with implementing the rule; they must establish and publish the procedures to be followed. In this case, the Executive Order directs the U.S. Department of Labor to fast-track a rulemaking; no date has been set for the publication of the rule. It is likely that the rule will be effective immediately upon publication, with the Department considering submitted comments after the fact. As the situation develops, PHCC will provide its members with timely updates and guidance to be in compliance with the rule.



## **Updated Crisis Action Plan Available to Members**

PHCC recently updated its Crisis Management Plan and is making it available to PHCC members and chapters for customization. Sections include: Information Assurance and Cybersecurity, Crisis Communication, Continuity of Operations, Pandemic Response and Active Shooter. Let it serve as a springboard for developing a plan that suits your organization! To access the template, log in to the PHCC Resource Library and click on “Sample Crisis Action Plan” in the Member Resources folder. Email [customercare@naphcc.org](mailto:customercare@naphcc.org) for any assistance. 

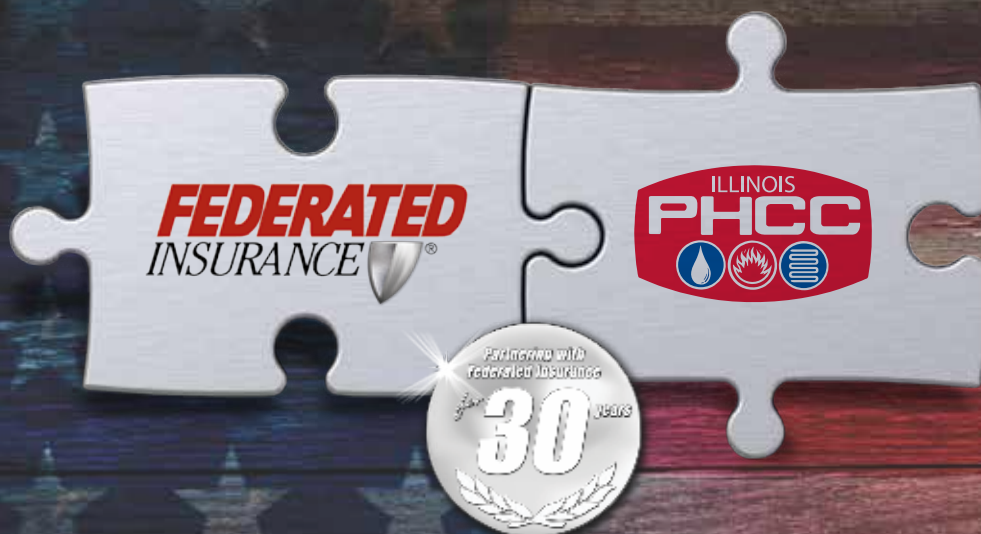
## **Upcoming Free Member Webinars from PHCC**

As a PHCC member, you and your employees have free, easy access to valuable information on updates on the EPA’s revised lead and copper rule, and product information from Moen. Check out these opportunities over the next few months, and register today!

Overview of EPA’s Revised Lead and Copper Rule, Thursday, Oct. 14, at 2 p.m. ET. Presented by Missouri-American Water Company.

Moen Garbage Disposal Product Knowledge, on Wednesday, Nov. 17, at 2 p.m. ET. Presented by Moen. 





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# HR Question OF THE MONTH

## REQUEST PROOF OF VACCINATION?

### Question

We provide catering food and services. Some of our clients are requesting that our catering staff be COVID 19 vaccinated to work at their event. To accommodate the client, can we, as an employer, ask our employees if they have been vaccinated and can we ask them for proof of vaccination? Is it legal for us as the employer to prohibit an employee who is not vaccinated from working catering events when the client requests all catering employees be vaccinated?

### ANSWER

The current guidance from the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) suggests that an employer may generally require employees to obtain the COVID-19 vaccine, so long as a reasonable accommodation is provided for those with a disability (as required by the federal Americans with Disabilities Act/ADA) and/or a religious belief (as required by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964) that may interfere with any such requirement. Specifically, the EEOC addresses the issue “**What You Should Know About Covid 19 and ADA Rehabilitation Act and Other EEO Laws**” as follows:

“K.1. Under the ADA, Title VII, and other federal employment nondiscrimination laws, may an employer require all employees physically entering the workplace to be vaccinated for COVID-19? (5/28/21)

The federal EEO laws do not prevent an employer from requiring all employees physically entering the workplace to be vaccinated for COVID-19, subject to the **reasonable accommodation provisions of Title VII and the ADA and other EEO considerations discussed below.** These principles apply if an employee gets the vaccine in the community or from the employer.

In some circumstances, Title VII and the ADA require an employer to provide reasonable accommodations for employees who, because of a disability or a sincerely held religious belief, practice, or observance, do not get vaccinated for COVID-19, unless providing an accommodation would pose an undue hardship on the operation of the employer’s business. The analysis for undue hardship depends on whether the accommodation is for a disability (including pregnancy-related conditions that constitute a disability) (see K.6) or for religion (see K.12).

As with any employment policy, employers that have a vaccine requirement may need to respond to allegations that the requirement has a disparate impact on—or disproportionately excludes—employees based on their race, color, religion, sex, or national origin under Title VII (or age under the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (40+)). Employers should keep in mind that because some individuals or demographic groups may face greater barriers to receiving a COVID-19 vaccination than others, some employees may be more likely to be



negatively impacted by a vaccination requirement.

It would also be unlawful to apply a vaccination requirement to employees in a way that treats employees differently based on disability, race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation and gender identity), national origin, age, or genetic information, unless there is a legitimate non-discriminatory reason.”

With respect to a form for medical documentation for disability accommodation requests, we make a Medical Request for Accommodation form available on our website that you can access through your portal. If timely returned, the employer and employee should then engage in an interactive dialogue to determine whether a disability exists and if so, whether it can be reasonably accommodated without undue hardship to the employer. For more information on the duty to reasonably accommodate both as to disability and sincerely held religious belief, please see **Enforcement Guidance on Reasonable Accommodation and Undue Hardship under the ADA** and **EEOC Religious Discrimination** respectively. Inquiries about COVID-19 vaccination status should be made individually and not in a group setting. The employer should determine the appropriate representative/agent to make such inquiries of employees if it does so. Individual managers or supervisors can be tasked with securing this information, or perhaps HR personnel may do so. Regardless, the employer has an obligation to ensure that those asking the questions and receiving the answers do so in a manner that maintains confidentiality as required by law. If the employer will require vaccination against COVID-19 as a condition of employment, it can require that employees provide evidence of the same. Employers ordinarily have several options in this regard:

- Employees provide proof of vaccination (vaccine card, image of vaccine card or

health care document showing vaccination status) and employer maintains a copy.

- Employees provide proof of vaccination and the employer maintains a record of the employees who presented proof, but not the vaccine record itself.
- Employees self-attest to vaccination status and employer maintains a record of who self-attests. Note that this option leaves open the possibility that employees may be dishonest, even in an attestation otherwise.

Whatever information and/or documentation the employer secures in response to an inquiry about vaccination status is subject to confidential record-keeping requirements under the ADA. This means that employers ordinarily cannot disclose such information to third parties, such as clients. For more information, please see **The ADA: A Primer for Small Business** and particularly the section titled, “Confidentiality.”

Please note that this response does not constitute legal advice. As well, information about industry specific and local statutory or similar requirements, as well as document drafting and review, fall outside the scope of this service. As such, you may wish to consult local counsel who can assist with advice as to any applicable food-service or similar industry-specific obligations and drafting accommodation forms and related documents as the employer may need or desire. He or she can also assist in developing and establishing a vaccine policy that comports with the employer’s objectives and applicable law on this issue. Any such policy should then be clearly communicated to all employees in advance of its implementation, and uniformly and consistently enforced by managers, supervisors and HR personnel who have been properly trained as to its terms, conditions and application in the organization.



The Question of the Month is provided by Enquiron, a company wholly independent from Federated Insurance. Federated provides its clients access to this information through the Federated Employment Practices Network with the understanding that neither Federated nor its employees provide legal or employment advice. As such, Federated does not warrant the accuracy, adequacy, or completeness of the information herein. This information may be subject to restrictions and regulation in your state. Consult with your own qualified legal counsel regarding your specific facts and circumstances.





# SCORPION BECOMES NEW PHCC CORPORATE PARTNER TO PROVIDE DIGITAL MARKETING ASSISTANCE TO MEMBERS

The Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors—National Association (PHCC) announces that Scorpion, a leading provider of technology and services helping local businesses thrive, is the newest PHCC Corporate Partner.

“Scorpion’s decision to elevate its involvement with our association means PHCC members will have exposure to many new benefits and opportunities, including the latest tools and technologies that can help them grow their businesses,” said PHCC President Hunter Botto. “Often small business owners do not have the resources to access expert marketing assistance. Through this new partnership with a full-service marketing and technology provider, our members will learn of upcoming changes, insights and best practices that will help them operate and grow their business faster than their competition.”

As part of its partnership, Scorpion will conduct free business audits for PHCC members, help members unlock additional revenue opportunities and continue hosting monthly educational webinars that began this summer. Members of PHCC will also receive a five percent discount to use Scorpion’s platform.

Some upcoming topics planned for the recurring webinar series include how technicians can increase their average number of job tickets, how to communicate and work in today’s multi-generational office, and how to retain and attract

employees. “We’ve already received a lot of positive feedback about the company’s educational webinars, which members describe as very informative, as well as engaging, interactive and fun,” Botto said.

In addition to educational offerings, PHCC members will also gain access to Scorpion experts in business, management, sales, leadership and marketing who will help them stay up to date on recent developments, strategies and best practices in the home services industry.

Local businesses are faced with more competition than they ever have before, but the business tools available to larger brands are not typically available to them,” said Michael Sauer, executive vice president of partnerships at Scorpion. “As part of our enhanced relationship with PHCC, Scorpion is looking forward to providing its local contractor members with cutting-edge tools, education and guidance to help them navigate the many challenges and changes in the home services industry, so they can grow their businesses and thrive.”

Scorpion is a sponsor and presenter at the annual PHCCCONNECT2021 conference October 20-22 in Kansas City, Missouri. During one of the sessions, Scorpion EVP Michael Sauer will share a presentation with PHCC members titled, Instant Demand: What Your Customers Expect in This New World.

## SCORPION BECOMES NEW PHCC CORPORATE PARTNER TO PROVIDE DIGITAL MARKETING ASSISTANCE TO MEMBERS . . . CONTINUED

Since 2015, Scorpion has supported PHCC with past sponsorships of PHCCCONNECT and Quality Service Contractor (QSC) events. The company has also been an active participant with many of PHCC's state and local chapters. One way Scorpion plans to increase its involvement with PHCC chapters is to help share the benefits of considering a skilled trade career with students and young professionals.

For more information about PHCC Partner and Sponsorship programs contact Vice President of Business Development Elicia Magruder at [magruder@naphcc.org](mailto:magruder@naphcc.org) or call 800-533-7694.

### About PHCC

The PHCC National Association, formed in 1883, provides legislative advocacy, education and training to approximately 3,500 plumbing and HVACR businesses and 65,000 technicians. Members of PHCC have access to a wide variety of services designed to increase their professionalism, grow their business and improve profitability. For more information about PHCC, visit [phccweb.org](http://phccweb.org).

### About Scorpion

Scorpion is the leading provider of technology and services helping local businesses thrive. It helps local service providers understand their unique market dynamics, maximize their marketing efforts, and delight their customers. Scorpion offers SEO, Reviews, Advertising, Email Marketing, Chat and Messaging, Social Media, Websites, Lead Management, Appointment Scheduling, and more. The

company brings everything together in a way that's easy to understand and manage, blending AI and teams of real people with vertical expertise to support customers in setting, measuring, and reaching their goals.

Scorpion is Headquartered in the Salt Lake City area, with offices in California, Texas, and New York. For more information, please visit <https://www.scorpion.co/about-us/>.



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## Ignite Safety – Not Flames

It can happen in an instant; one spark, one combustion, or one overheated piece of equipment — a fire can start quickly and often stems from common workplace items or environments. Have you considered the devastating losses a commercial fire could cause your business?

For this year's National Fire Prevention Week, October 3-9, Federated Insurance encourages employers to conduct fire safety meetings. Vigilant employees who know what to look for could be the reason a blaze doesn't begin, and it all starts with educating your staff on hazardous fire risks.

### A Year-Round Effort

National Fire Prevention Week serves to bring awareness to fire risks, but actively working throughout the year to prevent fires is the name of the game. Though the vast majority of non-residential fires are preventable, understanding the hazards that exist in the first place is where prevention truly starts. Strategies include:

- Conducting employee safety meetings on fire safety and common fire hazards at workplaces.
- Helping employees understand that each and every one of them has a responsibility to take an active role in fire prevention.
- Understanding the risks of not taking action when hazards exist — fires can result in life-changing injuries, death, property damage, smoke-damaged inventory, and lost revenue.
- Implementing regular safety meetings to brush up on safety topics, and staying in the loop with new ones.

### Long-term Effects

Have you considered the long-term effects of a fire at your workplace? Forty percent of businesses do not reopen after a fire or other natural disaster.<sup>1</sup> Even if you are able to reopen after a fire it will take time, and that may mean you and your employees are out of work until the building can safely be repaired and reopened. Not to mention that a loss of inventory or equipment can leave you scrambling to recover financially.

In order to help prevent potential property damage and life-changing injuries or death, work with your employees to help them understand the ramifications of a workplace fire. If you haven't already, utilize Federated's resources, available through mySHIELD®, to create a fire prevention plan. And keep in mind that teaching your employees about fire safety is one thing, but helping them realize the responsibility they each have in protecting their workplace can be just as important.

Work with your employees now to have successful fire safety meetings. The more information they have in their arsenal, the better they will be at detecting potential hazards and stopping a fire before it starts. Federated Insurance clients can access a variety of fire prevention risk management resources, including employee training posters, sample industry-specific fire hazard checklists, and more by logging in to mySHIELD.

1. Insurance Information Institute. FEMA Information. [www.iii.org/article/when-disaster-strikes-preparation-response-and-recovery](http://www.iii.org/article/when-disaster-strikes-preparation-response-and-recovery). Accessed July 20, 2021.

*This article is for general information and risk prevention only and should not be considered legal or other expert advice. The recommendations herein may help reduce, but are not guaranteed to eliminate, any or all risk of loss. The information herein may be subject to, and is not a substitute for, any laws or regulations that may apply. Qualified counsel should be sought with questions specific to your circumstances. © 2021 Federated Mutual Insurance Company.*



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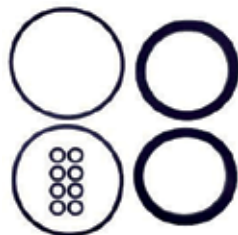


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