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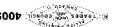
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# PRESIDENT'S THOUGHTS

- by Kevin Kuhn  
Illinois PHCC President

## Welcoming the 'Next Chapter' in Our IL State Chapter's Leadership

You, my industry peers, have made the past year that I have spent as your state PHCC chapter President a very worthwhile and satisfying experience. After all, the clear purpose of a trade association is to bring together professionals from the same occupation who are driven to improve it, grow it, and guide it. I see our contractor members of the IL PHCC as individual links in a long and strong chain, with everyone pulling jointly for the benefit of all of us who belong. We're further reinforced by our associate members, on whom we count on for the tools, equipment, products, supplies, and services to best fulfill our obligation to our customers. The Board leads our state association in collaboration with our Executive Director (Bev) and Associate Director (Shelly). The PHCC National fortifies us further with the comradery and power of over 3,000 members coast to coast. Our local chapter officers and executive directors take care of us "close to home." And the dedicated helping hands of the Auxiliary and all our other volunteers complete the picture. It's a tapestry of people devoted to our industry and livelihood. It's been said before, and it's always true: *None of us is as strong as all of us.*

The annual meeting and installation for the incoming IL PHCC Board will take place on June 11 at the Par-A-Dice Hotel in East Peoria. Your incoming President is my friend and fellow contractor Tom Mahoney from "Little Tommy's Plumbing Shop," and you can rest assured that our state chapter will continue to be in good hands. Tom will benefit – as I did – from committed Board members who generously donate their time to ensure that we represent our members by



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planning pertinent educational topics through our CE offerings; by monitoring and being responsive to legislative developments affecting all aspects of the plumbing and HVAC industries; by maintaining and continually enhancing our “Expo,” meetings, and events; by keeping a watchful eye on regulatory matters; by informing our members through the monthly “Illinois Master Plumber” print newsletter, email communiques, and the chapter’s website; and by being available to provide practical resources and services to our contractor and associate members. It’s been a privilege to help lead the IL PHCC with the backing and input of the Board, the members, the staff and the Auxiliary.

In closing, I would like to sincerely thank those who have served with me throughout my years on the IL PHCC Board, and I look forward to my ongoing involvement in our local, state and national associations. I also would like to recognize and express my appreciation to my colleagues at *RJ Kuhn Plumbing, Heating & Cooling* for their unwavering support, encouragement and assistance throughout my term as your state chapter President. Lastly, I am proud to acknowledge and share my gratitude for the amazing, talented and hard-working staff of the IL PHCC. Bev and Shelly often serve “behind the scenes” so I realize it can be easy to overlook how crucial their organizational skills, experience and know-how truly are to what makes our state chapter among the best of the best. I salute these fine people for all they do for us.

*Congratulations to our Board as the next term begins in June!*

*All the best - Kevin*



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# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**MAY 20, 2026**

Plumbing Code Advisory Council  
Springfield, IL

**SEPTEMBER 9-11, 2026**

CCA Fall Meeting  
Kohler, WI

**JUNE 11, 2026**

IL PHCC Annual Meeting & Installation Dinner  
Par-a-Dice Hotel  
East Peoria, IL

**SEPTEMBER 25, 2026**

Online CEU Class

**JUNE 12, 2026**

IL PHCC Annual Meeting & Installation Dinner  
Par-a-Dice Hotel  
East Peoria, IL

**OCTOBER 19-22, 2026**

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MEMORIAL DAY

REMEMBER. HONOR. NEVER FORGET.

ALL GAVE SOME.  
SOME GAVE ALL.



*We Remember*

## **THOSE WHO GAVE ALL**

---

Memorial Day is a federal holiday in the United States for mourning the U.S. military personnel who died while serving in the United States Armed Forces. It is observed on the last Monday of May. It is also considered to be the unofficial beginning of summer.

Memorial Day is a time for visiting cemeteries and memorials to mourn the military personnel who died in the line of duty. Volunteers will place American flags on the graves of those military personnel in national cemeteries.

The first national observance of what would become Memorial Day occurred on May 30, 1868. Then known as Decoration Day, the holiday was proclaimed by Commander-in-Chief John A. Logan of the Grand Army of the Republic – a fraternal organization of veterans – to honor Union soldiers who had died in the American Civil War. This national observance followed the example of many local observances which were begun between the end of the Civil War and Logan’s declaration. Many cities and people have claimed to be the first to observe it, however, the National Cemetery Administration, a division of the Department of Veterans Affairs, credits Mary Ann Williams of the Ladies Memorial Association of Columbus, Georgia with originating the idea of an annual date to decorate the graves of Civil War veterans with flowers.

Official recognition as a holiday spread among the states, beginning with New York in 1873. By 1890, every union state had adopted it. The world wars turned it into a day of remembrance for all members of the U.S. military who fought and died in service. In 1968, Congress changed its observance to the last Monday in May, and in 1971 standardized its name as “Memorial Day.” Two other days celebrate those who have served or are serving in the U.S. military: Armed Forces Day, which is earlier in May, a ceremonial U.S. day of commemoration for honoring those currently serving in the armed forces, and Veterans Day on November 11, a legal holiday which honors all those who have served in the United States Armed Forces.



## Illinois PHCC Annual Meeting & Installation Event

The Illinois PHCC would like to invite you to our 133rd annual meeting and dinner to be held on June 11<sup>th</sup> at the Par-a-Dice Hotel in East Peoria. Please join us in East Peoria as we thank our outgoing officers and install our newly elected leaders.

The annual meeting and installation of officers will be held at 5:30pm on Thursday, followed by dinner at 6:30pm and the Auxiliary's Silent Auction.

The event concludes on Friday morning with breakfast & meetings of the Illinois PHCC and the Auxiliary Board of Directors. As always, these meetings are open to all members.

There is no charge for PHCC contractor members and Auxiliary members (and spouses/guests) to attend, but you will need to RSVP by May 26, 2026 so that you don't miss this great opportunity for networking and participating in your state association's meetings. Please RSVP to shelly@ilphcc.com. We look forward to seeing you in East Peoria.

Illinois PHCC has a special group rate of \$109.00. Reservations can be made by calling 309-326-4562 and reference group code PHCF26C. The special rate will be available until May 25, 2026. Online Reservations— Visit the following web address: <https://paradice.boydgaming.com/groups-and-weddings/group-reservation>

Scroll down and enter code PHCF26C. Guests will then select your group name and choose both their check-in and check-out dates. Please note that the system defaults to June 10 check-in and June 11 check-out, so dates must be adjusted if needed.

Attire for the event is business casual.

### Thursday, June 11, 2026

- 5:30 pm Annual Meeting/Installation Reception
- 6:30 pm Dinner/Auxiliary's Silent Auction

### Friday, June 12, 2026

- 7:30 am Breakfast
- 8:30 am PHCC Board Meeting
- 8:30 am Auxiliary Board Meeting

Name (s) _____
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# 2026 *Silent* AUCTION

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The Auxiliary's Silent Auction will be held on Thursday night, June 11<sup>th</sup> at the Illinois PHCC annual meeting and dinner at the Par-A-Dice Hotel in East Peoria. The auction will include individual items, as well as baskets and we are asking Auxiliary members, local associations, and anyone who would like, to contribute items to be auctioned. Proceeds from the auction go to Auxiliary scholarships and industry projects. Following are some ideas for baskets and items. You are not limited to these suggestions. Use your imagination and surprise us with some new ideas!

Travel Basket  
Gift Cards  
Chocolate Lovers Basket  
Sports/Event Tickets & Items  
Regional Food Items  
Electronic Items  
Fourth of July Basket  
Book Readers Basket  
Jewelry

Kids Fun Basket  
Golf Putters/Clubs/Bags  
Fire Pit Basket  
Fishing Basket  
Wine/Liquor  
Vacation Stays  
Picnic/Cookout Basket  
Gardening Basket  
Industry Logo Clothing/Items

I/We will be donating the following item(s) to the 2026 Silent Auction:

\_\_\_\_\_

Approximate Value: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please email or mail this form to Becky Davis prior to May 28, 2026:

Becky Davis

[bpotts97@hotmail.com](mailto:bpotts97@hotmail.com)

P.O. Box 21

Deer Creek, IL 61733-0021

***Thank you for your support of this Auxiliary project!***



## 2026 Illinois PHCC *Sponsorship Opportunities*

(Please check one)

This year our annual meeting and installation of officers will be held at the Par-a-Dice Hotel in East Peoria, Illinois at 5:30pm on Thursday, June 11<sup>th</sup> followed by dinner at 6:30pm and the Auxiliary's Silent Auction.

- Platinum Sponsor—\$2500.00**  
Platinum sponsorship would include a column in the Illinois Master Plumber magazine; 2 complimentary dinners; recognition and signage at the event; 5 minutes at the podium.
- Gold Sponsor — \$1000.00**  
Gold sponsorship would include mention in the Illinois Master Plumber; 1 complimentary dinner at the event; recognition at the event; recognition and signage at the event.
- Silver Sponsor — \$500.00**  
Silver sponsorship would include a mention in the Illinois Master Plumber; recognition with signage at the event.
- Bronze Sponsor— \$250.00**  
Bronze sponsorship would include a mention in the Illinois Master Plumber and recognition with signage at the event.
- Copper Sponsor— \$100.00**  
Copper sponsorship would include recognition with signage at the event.

**Please call the Illinois PHCC office at (217) 522-7219  
if you need additional information.**

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# KUHN BROTHERS: PARTNERS IN BUSINESS. LEADERS FOR THE INDUSTRY.

---

*While managing a busy plumbing and HVACR business, Kevin and Rick Kuhn explain what motivates them to serve as leaders for both state and local contractor associations.*

*By S. J. Peters*

*PCA of Greater Chicago Executive Director*

The Kuhn brothers – Kevin and Rick – have been the co-owners and operators of **RJ Kuhn Plumbing, Heating & Cooling** in Oswego, Illinois, since taking over from founder and father Dick Kuhn in 2012, who started the company in 1972. Most plumbing and HVAC contractors likely would agree that the challenges, competition, and stresses of managing technicians, serving customers, and navigating a maze of regulations and codes already abundantly fill a typical day. Yet both brothers simultaneously and willingly have taken on voluntary leadership roles for two separate but inter-related employer associations.

## **Stepping Up to Lead**

Last June, after holding increasingly responsible officer board positions for PHCC of Illinois for the six previous years, elder brother and company vice president Kevin was elected the state chapter's president. Half a year later (in January 2026), Rick began his two-year term as the Plumbing Contractors Association of Greater Chicago's 82nd President while continuing as RJ Kuhn's company president and while a Trustee for the Plumbers Local 130 UA's Health & Welfare Fund.

In both cases, the willingness of both brothers to respectively fulfill the “top spot” for the state and local associations occurs in the midst of careers that were first launched through their Plumbers & Pipefitters' five-year apprenticeships that provided their technical training. Their dad, Dick, helped complete the brothers' preparedness on how to “run the business” as Kevin and Rick observed his oversight of company operations and as he also took an active role throughout the years in the local contractors' associations.

“We both embrace the fact that contractors have a stake and an obligation to add their voices to guiding our trades,” according to local chapter president Rick, who has served on the PCA's board for a dozen years. “As a united group, we're best able to offer education, best practices advice, networking and practical resources – while at the same time we aim to monitor legislation, protect strong codes and licensing, and collaborate on training with our union counterparts. As I often say: none of us is as strong as all of us.”

Kevin adds: “Moving our industry forward means that contractors should be willing to ‘step up’ for a turn at leadership. He continues: “Our state PHCC ties together the five local chapters in Illinois including the PCA, and it connects them further with an informative monthly newsletter, meetings, an annual Expo & Education Day, interacting with the PHCC—National's 3,000 fellow members, and much more.”

## **A Family Business Built on Industry Commitment**

In addition to the extra responsibilities that go with being lead officers for their respective association Boards, the brothers also are active in a “sister company” – *Remodeling Pros* – which appropriately includes Kevin's

and Rick’s sister Tracy who manages the day-to-day operations of their second firm. “We’ve seen Oswego go from a small town of 5,000 residents to 40,000 as we were growing up and as our family’s business evolved,” Rick recalls. “Between RJ Kuhn and Remodeling Pros, we’ve expanded to serve our customers in a larger area than we imagined at the start. Doing things right is exactly why we’re still here.”

Kevin further emphasizes the common vision reflected at both companies, but also through the associations. “Plumbing and HVAC, when competently performed, provide value, comfort, and safety to those we serve.

PHCC and PCA are made up of professional contractors who have joined together to promote and maintain the integrity of our industries. We’re grateful for the confidence our peers have shown by entrusting us as their association leaders, and we’re doing our best to exceed their expectations.”

*An advisor to the PHCC’s Union-Affiliated Contractors (UAC) Enhanced Service Group, S. J. Peters is the full-time executive director of the PCA of Greater Chicago, the Northern Illinois chapter with 300+ signatory contractor members in 17 counties.*



(l-r) RJ Kuhn President Rick Kuhn; company founder and father Dick Kuhn; and Vice President Kevin Kuhn at the PHCC of Illinois June 2025 event that began Kevin’s state chapter presidency.



(l-r) Kevin Kuhn poses with mom Annetta, brother Rick Kuhn, and sister Tracy Kuhn.



The Kuhn Family celebrates leadership in the industry at PCA’s Winter Social in January.



Rick Kuhn takes the Oath of Office (by Plumbers’ Local 130 Business Manager James Coyne) along with the entire PCA Board for the 300-member association at the installation event in January.

## How Driving Choices Can Impact Your Reputation

Your company vehicles are highly visible markers of your business in the local community. Every time your employees drive in a branded vehicle, they carry your company's reputation with them.

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[Distracted driving](#) isn't just about using a phone — it includes eating, adjusting navigation, frustration and emotional fatigue, or anything that takes attention from the road. Most importantly, distracted driving puts lives at serious risk.

### Building a Culture of Safe Choices

As a business owner, it's up to you to lead by example. Give clear direction that safety comes before a quick response. Consider the following tips:

- Encourage employees to pull over before [returning calls or texts](#).
- Create policies that clearly outline acceptable and unacceptable behavior while driving.
- Hold regular safety meetings to discuss safe driving behavior and expectations behind the wheel.
- Give drivers the [training and support](#) they need to eliminate distractions.

### Protect Your Reputation

By addressing distracted driving, you can help protect your employees, the communities you serve, and your reputation. Recognize and reward safe driving behavior, and make safety a key part of your company's culture. This can help build trust, strengthen your brand's reputation, and make roads safer.

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# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

by Bev Potts

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The Spring Session of the 104th Illinois General Assembly is nearing the adjournment deadline of May 31st. House bills listed in House Rules or Senate bills listed in Assignments are considered dead for this session unless they have been granted an extension. There are several bills that address building requirements and housing that we are watching along with other bills that may be amended. These are not included in this report as they are very fluid at this time. Below are some other industry related bills that we have been watching and working on.

## **Plumbing/Piping/Trade Related Bills:**

**HB 1612 (K. BUCKNER)** Creates the Illinois Appliance Standards Act. Directs the Illinois EPA to adopt minimum efficiency standards for covered products. Provides for testing, certification, and labeling of covered products. These standards will apply to commercial and residential faucets, water coolers, water heaters, toilets, urinals, showers, irrigation controllers and more. Re-referred to House Rules.

**HB 4272 (M. CRAWFORD)** Provides that no person shall sell to a consumer in the State a non-externally vented natural gas appliance unless a label on the gas appliance bears a specified warning message. Re-referred to House Rules.

**HB 4361 (K. STUART)** Provides that an individual performing plumbing inspections shall be licensed under the Illinois Plumbing License Law and shall be exempt from the certification requirements of the Warehouse Tornado Preparedness Act. Amended and Passed in the House, and is now in the Senate. The amendment extends the time to obtain certifications, exempts building inspectors conducting inspections prior to January 1, 2026 with 5 years' experience, those accredited through an approved apprenticeship program, and others.

**HB 4379 (A. BRIEL)** Amends the Equitable Restrooms Act to provide that the owner or operator of each State-owned building and the owner or operator of each public building shall ensure that one or more of the public restrooms is designated as an adult changing station, with certain requirements. Passed in the House and on 1st Reading in the Senate.

**HB 4489 (A. STAVA)** Amends the Construction Site Temporary Restroom Facility Act to change the short title to the Construction Site Temporary Restroom Facility and Sanitary Conditions for Menstruation and Lactation Act. Repeals a provision which specifies that separate toileting facilities are not required for males and females if individual portable toilet facilities are used by an owner of a portable building or building under construction to provide access to a restroom. Other provisions. Re-referred to House Rules.

**HB 4760 (T. MAH)** Same as HB 4489. Re-referred to House Rules.

**SB 3465 (G. GUZMAN)** Same as HB 4489 & 4760. Passed the Senate and in the House.

**HB 5366 (M. CANTY)** Creates the Illinois Appliance Standards Act. Directs the IEPA to adopt minimum efficiency standards for covered products. Provides for testing, certification, and labeling of covered products. Re-referred to House Rules.

**HB 5519 (J. MASON)** Amends the Illinois Plumbing License Law. Provides that the Department of Public Health shall provide notices to each licensee regarding application for registration on or before July 1 of each year. Referred to House Rules.

**SB 2828 (S. BELT)** Provides that an individual performing plumbing inspections shall be licensed under the Illinois Plumbing License Law and shall be exempt from the certification requirements of the Warehouse Tornado Preparedness Act. Re-referred to Senate Assignments.

**SB 4025 (R. VILLIVALAM)** Amends the Environmental Protection Act. Provides that an owner or operator of a community water supply that performs at least 4,000 lead service line replacements per year or exceeds a statutorily prescribed lead service line replacement rate is exempt from a provision that prohibits partial lead service line replacements. Other provisions. On 3rd Reading in the House. Deadline extended.

**SB 4063 (L. ELLMAN)** Provides that a municipality shall complete its initial plan review within a designated timeframe and if they fail to do so, then the applicant may retain a qualified third-party plan reviewer. If a municipality fails to conduct a required inspection within 2 business days, then the applicant may retain a qualified third-party inspector. The bill does not require inspectors to be licensed plumbers, but requires ICC or IAPMO certification. Referred to Senate Assignments.

**Construction/Business Related Bills:**

**HB 3762 (E. GONZALEZ, JR.)** Creates the Workplace Extreme Temperature Safety Act. Provides that the Director of Labor shall adopt rules to establish excessive heat and excessive cold standards. Re-referred to House Rules.

**HB 4076 (J. GORDON-BOOTH)** Amends the Paid Leave for All Workers Act. Removes a provision that exempts from the Act any employee working in the construction industry who is covered by a bona fide collective bargaining agreement. Referred to House Rules.

**HB 4412 (D. BLAIR-SHERLOCK)** Provides that the Capital Development Board may enter into contracts and manage construction projects pursuant to a public-private partnership. Re-referred to House Rules.

**HB 4751 (J. HOFFMAN)** Amends the Prevailing Wage Act to restore certain provisions of the Act to the form in which they existed before Public Act 104-17 took effect. Provides that nothing in the Act prohibits the payment of wages and fringe benefits for work performed under the Act that are paid in accordance with a collective bargaining agreement. Effective July 1, 2026. Referred to House Rules.

**HB 4800 (D. VELLA)** Creates the Local Government Building Permit Act. Provides that the Act only applies to units of local government that require a person to obtain a permit before they may construct a building. Re-referred to House Rules.

**HB 5454 (D. AVELAR)** A housing merchant implied warranty shall mean that: (1) one year from and after the warranty date the home will be free from defects due to a failure to have been constructed in a skillful manner; (2) two years from and after the warranty date the plumbing, electrical, heating, cooling, and ventilation systems will be free from defects due to a failure by the builder to have installed the systems in a skillful manner; and (3) six years from and after the warranty date the home will be free from material defects. Referred to House Rules.

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# RUTHLESS PRAGMATISM, DEFAULT DECISIONS & THE RAT TAIL

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*By Mark Breslin*

*It's 10:47 PM a month ago. On the road, few good options exist to eat. Waffle House, Dennys and more than a few gas stations have served me well in the past. But 11pm is usually the desperation deadline, and Panera is the only option within miles.*

Leaders often make default decisions on the basis of ruthless pragmatism. As in what works now. Put the fire out. Get the box checked. One more item done. Got that person out of your face. Worked for me in the past so I'm going to "rinse and repeat". But with great frequency in our industry, pragmatism does not always serve us well. Because when we add speed, frustration, urgency or old/bad habits it starts to work against us. And often we don't even see it.

*A Fuji apple salad with extra apple chips. I'm the last customer. They're turning off the lights. Sweeping the floors. Wire brushing the grill. The silent efforts of a long shift ending.*

One sin of pragmatic default action is my favorite: reactively choosing the least worst option. Instead of thinking it through. Sifting for strategy or alternatives. Weighing the action against values, interests or longer-term consequences. No. The kick-in factor becomes. F-ck it. I need to get this done and over with. And there is where we can do ourselves wrong.

*I get my food. It's actually dark in the restaurant now. The girl is sweeping under my feet. I'm chewing fast and politely. She moves over near the front door with her little metal dustbin. And I hear a sound from her. It's weird. And in not a good way. I look at her. She looks at me. We both look at her dustbin. And there it is, a good eight-inch rat tail sticking out. And it's moving.*

The default for many of us, particularly construction field leadership, when faced with those obstacles of urgency and old habits becomes; "I'll just do it myself." Or a lesser version where you start getting over involved. Leading to misalignment of time and effort on your part. And taking even more of your valuable time. But worst of all we self-sabotage by not remaining focused on staying up at the "leader level" and doing our own jobs instead of just ruthlessly and foolishly defaulting to "moving the item" and doing the jobs of others.

*We both now have decisions to make. Strategic or pragmatic? Thoughtful or just expedited? Both are not great alternatives. But for sure, the default calls out to move the item. I say, “is that what I think it is?”. She just looks at me. I look at my salad, analyzing the likelihood of it having tiny rat nuggets as well as apple chips. We both stand up. She walks over to the big trash can **inside the kitchen**. And without a word, dumps the bin, wriggling rat and all. I go back over to my table. Stare at it for a second and finish my salad.*

We end this “tail” of pragmatic default decision making with three questions for all of you.

1. How much of your time, energy, talent, and ability at work do you spend doing other people’s jobs?
2. How much of that is on you because of urgency, default decision making, old habits, lack of trust, poor time management, control issues, impatience, or reactive responses?
3. What do you need to do better or differently to balance “strategic pragmatism” with more effective leadership decision-making overall?

*So, I guess it worked out. Sorta. Yes, I was too hungry to deal with the fact that the place I am eating at has rat infestation. So, I decided to eat it anyway and didn’t die. The employee decided to expedite the solution by dumping it to become someone else’s problem at some later date, so she could go home. Good on her, not so much Panera. And the little furry grey problem? It didn’t go away. It actually benefited and grew in scope, as most problems do when addressed with default or reactive decisions. Hope he liked the apple chips.*

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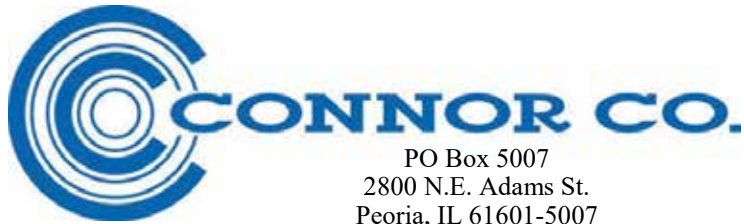
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