



# WASHINGTON DC CHAPTER

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# News

May 2008 Issue

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF PLUMBING ENGINEERS

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## *President's Message*



James Yang, CPD, President



## **Golf Outing Update**

Dear ASPE-DC supporters,

In our online survey from February, 2008, we found that more than 95% of our golf players from the ASPE-DC chapter are in favor of the golf outing being moved from July to September. In response to the survey results the chapter officers took a vote and agreed to move the golf outing date to the second or third Monday in September.

There were no objections to the outing being held at Holly Hill as long as the September dates were available to us. Because the Holly Hill course is unavailable on those dates, the officers voted unanimously to move the golf outing location to West Wind for this year's golf outing.

As a group, we need to be flexible and work with the differing needs and priorities of the growing group of professionals affiliated with our chapter. We sincerely hope everyone will support the chapter and join in the event. We are here to serve all the members and professional trade men and women. The bottom line is that we hope everybody will have a good time and get to share some time with friends.

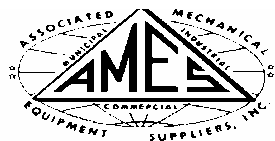
If you have any concerns or good suggestions, please let me know.

Yours truly,

James Yang, President  
ASPE DC Chapter

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## Code Updates

Ron Ball, VP Legislative

### May 2008

In the past month the ICC wrapped up their plumbing code revision session. Several changes to the code for 2009 will have an impact upon future projects from not only design and calculation standpoints but also code enforcement. One area that will be affected is grease interceptors. I would like to hear from the membership what impact the revised code will have on your designs and /or products. The chapter is looking into having a code official speak on the new changes.

In other news:

### IAPMO Symposium/Webinar to Address Emerging Technology

The International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials will convene an International Emerging Technology Symposium, Aug. 19-20, then broadcast the event worldwide via the Internet as a Webinar. At the event, presenters and panelists will discuss how they have responded to regulations governing water, sanitation and health, water and energy efficiency, water reuse, water quality, as well as FOG discharges. The location of the event will be announced soon.

**PME Enewsletter**, 03/28/2008, [www.pmengineer.com](http://www.pmengineer.com). Jim Camillo, Editor of *PM Engineer*

### NFPA

The NFPA 2008 World Safety Conference & Exposition is slated for June 2-5 in Las Vegas. More information can be found at the NFPA website <http://www.nfpa.org>

### Adoption of the 2006 Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code

On May 1, 2008, the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development will adopt the 2006 Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code. The technical provisions of the 2006 USBC reference the codes listed below and include specific Virginia amendments.

- 2006 International Building Code
- 2006 International Residential Code
- 2006 International Existing Building Code
- 2006 International Mechanical Code
- 2006 International Fuel Gas Code
- 2006 International Plumbing Code
- 2005 National Electrical Code
- 2006 International Energy Conservation Code
- 2006 International Property Maintenance Code

From May 1, 2008 until April 30, 2009, permit applicants may choose to use the technical provisions of the 2003 or 2006 USBC. Mixing provisions between the two editions of the code is prohibited. Beginning May 1, 2009, all applications and plans must meet the 2006 USBC.

Thanks to our President James Yang for the above update.



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## Chapter Meeting Location

**Washington Chapter** meetings are currently being held at the Olive Garden located on Route 7 (8133 Leesburg Pike) in Tyson's Corner. Please join us for our **General Meeting May 21, 2008**

Call for directions: (703) 893-3175



**All Reservations for dinner are requested by:**  
Noon, Tuesday May 20, 2008

RSVP to the evite

Email Justin Lego at [nfuegolego@hotmail.com](mailto:nfuegolego@hotmail.com) to be added to mailing list.

Dinner:	Member:	\$28.00
	Non-Member	\$30.00

## *Quality and Plumbing System Design*

*Juan Rojas, VP Technical*

The plumbing engineer role in the MEP industry, as high technology grows and buildings are more innovative, the plumbing design requirements are also more challenging than just the conventional water, waste drainage and vent systems. Occasionally a project will have a client with other than standard plumbing system. This system could be as simple as a non-potable water system to a full process piping system like those found in laboratories.

When it comes to this other systems they can become an anomaly when engineers and designers are not prepared and/or do not understand the system. It is the engineer and designer's responsibility to increase their knowledge of nonstandard systems.

Granted, some MEP firms will view the plumbing design as the low end of the project and of the project fee and not really pay attention to the quality of the product that comes out of their office. However there are pitfalls that can cause true hardship on a project if the plumbing engineer and/or designer do not have a fundamental understanding of plumbing systems.

Also there are those that design these nonstandard systems everyday and think that they know it all, and that they don't need to increase their knowledge, since this is not a rocket science. Well this category of plumbing engineers and designers need to be more abreast of all new technology and plumbing engineering developments. Most of these clients have an entire engineering department dedicated for the design, installation and maintenance of these facilities. They can be a very tough group to please, when it comes to their specific requirements.

Overall quality control in plumbing system design is very important, even though a lot of us are so caught up in the design-build world and leave the most important details of the installation up to the contractors.

Stop, think, and layout your design intent. Express your thoughts concisely, indicating the proper required installation.

As always thank you for attending and supporting your local DC chapter.

Looking forward to see you at the next meeting.

Respectfully,

Juan Rojas\VP Tech

ASPE DC Chapter



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## *Is Cheaper Always Better?*

*James Yang, President*

As plumbing designers, we deal with daily challenges that we try to resolve in the best way. One thing we all try to do is "save the building owner money".

Easier said than done. When we talk about savings, there are a few ways to achieve it: one is by sacrificing quality; the other way is by providing something more "expensive" from the beginning, which most of the time leaves value engineering out.

Let's take a specific example: under sink kitchen grease interceptors.

There are three price ranges here. Which would be your choice: a manual grease interceptor, a semi-auto grease interceptor or a full automatic grease interceptor?

The cheapest is the manual one and the most expensive one is the automatic type. My goal is to save the owner money over the long term, so I would specify the automatic grease trap. You may opt to specify the cheapest based on price alone, however, you have to take a good look at the whole picture.

When specifying fixtures and equipment, do you think about the maintenance issue for the owner? Do you think about the space that is required to install? Of course, you will not be the one who is going to maintain the grease trap daily, but the owner will. The owner may have to manually remove the grease trap everyday, a very messy job. Not to mention safety to their staff—any drops spilled on the floor is a potential danger for the workers. In addition, the amount of space that is required to install and remove the grease trap cover. Furthermore, if the manual grease trap is not maintained on time, what kind of odor it will generate? If the customers smell this once, you can pretty much tell the impact to business.

Did the contractor who installed the grease trap cleaning the grease trap during the operation? No. Did the contractor give the owner a big discount because it is a manual type? In addition, we all know how tight kitchen space is. The manual type usually will cost much more space to install and service. On the other hand, the automatic type requires minimum maintenance. At the end of day, the worker can see how much oil or grease is in the container, easily removes it, and properly disposes of it.

As of now, we all see the real savings. As good plumbing designers, we need to look at the whole picture in the owner's best interest.

Next time you specify plumbing fixtures, think about it. Because you are the engineer who is designing the system, you know where the real savings are for the owner. Contractors are only responsible for one year of their workmanship but the engineer's responsibility has a much longer liability. Any changes in the field after the project is complete will most likely cost the owner a fortune. So if you want to save the owner money, put quality first. The savings will be realized for a long time to come.





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