



# SAABE TIMES

A publication of the San Antonio Association of Building Engineers

September 2003

Mark Your Calendar—

## JOIN US FOR OUR SEPTEMBER LUNCHEON

*Please join us on Wednesday, September 17 at the Old San Francisco Steakhouse for our monthly luncheon. The meeting will feature George Perez, chief building inspector for the City of San Antonio, and Patrick Poloskey, chief electrical inspector for the city. They'll talk about what's new in building inspections, upcoming codes, and more. Chicken Monterrey will be served.*

*Please RSVP to (210) 408-1699 by Tuesday, September 16. PLEASE RSVP so we can be sure to have enough meals on hand!*

*We hope to see you there! ❖*

### RSVPs are Important!

Please RSVP if you plan to attend the monthly luncheon. RSVPs are very important – they let us know how many meals to order! ❖

## Education Corner

### CFC Refrigerant Recycling

- Sponsored by the Texas Engineering Extension Service
- September 19, Houston
- September 26, San Antonio
- Cost: \$108
- Call 1-800-824-7303 or visit [www.teex.com](http://www.teex.com) for more information.

### Backflow Prevention Assembly Testing School

- Sponsored by the Texas Engineering Extension Service
- October 6-10, Houston
- Cost: \$495
- Call 1-800-824-7303 or visit [www.teex.com](http://www.teex.com) for more information.

### Basic Plumbing Code

- Sponsored by the Texas Engineering Extension Service
- September 22-24, Mesquite, TX
- Cost: \$640
- Call 1-800-824-7303 or visit [www.teex.com](http://www.teex.com) for more information.

### Molds & Fungi, Part I

- Sponsored by the Texas Engineering Extension Service
- September 23, Houston
- Cost: \$200
- Call 1-800-824-7303 or visit [www.teex.com](http://www.teex.com) for more information.

### Molds & Fungi, Part II

- Sponsored by the Texas Engineering Extension Service
- September 24-25, Houston
- Cost: \$345
- Call 1-800-824-7303 or visit [www.teex.com](http://www.teex.com) for more information.

Contact Education Director Jock Tilghman (681-2494) if you know of other courses. ❖

## A Message from the President

by Bob Beal

### New Sponsor Opportunities

In every organization, the needs of the members can vary. For example, SAABE membership consists of engineers of high rise facilities, condominiums, large and small hotels, and single story strip centers. Our vendor members cover so many trades I can't even start to write them all down. In the past, we have had some great topics at our luncheons and have covered many aspects of our jobs. However, there is always a few that did not need as much out of the topic as others did. With that in mind, Tim Young (SAABE Vendor Representative) made a wonderful suggestion. Tim suggested that we use a program that our friends at AAFAME (Austin Area Facility and Maintenance Engineers) have been using. A couple of times a year, we will have "Vendor Showcases" instead of the usual single sponsor. The Vendor Showcase will feature booths of up to 10 different sponsors in a trade show environment. This will give 10 different opportunities to get something out of the meeting. This new idea presents some challenges. Where do we have it (the steak house doesn't have a large enough

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room)? How long will it be? It needs to be a couple of hours long. What about food? If it is not at a restaurant, we will need to hire a caterer. At our last committee meeting, we talked about having it at someone's building and have it catered. At the time, none of the committee members have a place large enough to do the trade show. I am positive we will work these bugs out. If you have any ideas where to have our Vendor Showcase or if you have a big enough place to have it, please let us know.

### CBE Committee

This month will be the first month that our CBE committee will meet and discuss our Certified Building Engineer (CBE) program. Jock Tilghman, Doug Graves, Rhondo Jauer, Charlie Mikolajczyk, Robert Ramos, and I (among others) will meet the last Thursday of each month and review and revamp the CBE program if needed. I would like everyone to get a copy of the CBE application and read it. (It will be available on the web site soon.) We would like some suggestions and opinions. We are going to put a suggestion box at our luncheons, or call me at 210-377-2626 with any suggestions.

In closing, I would to give a big thanks to Laura Bray, our SAABE coordinator. We have started some new projects in the committee (Doug and Rhondo's engineer surveys, Jock's CBE committee, Tim's new sponsorship and trade show ideas, and this year, the SABOMA/SAABE trade show). Along with that, she puts the newsletter together and handles all the agendas for all our meetings. Without her, it would be chaos. She is the first person you see at the luncheon so give her a big thanks for all she does.

**Next month's SAABE Spotlight:** Past SAABE Secretary Kendal Langenberg ❖



## Tech Talk #76

by The Charlie

### How Long Has It Been?

Almost every piece of equipment comes with an owner's manual or operation and maintenance (O & M) manual. Prescribed services are dictated throughout these books, or you can readily obtain copies of the manufacturers recommended service intervals. Just as simple as changing the oil in your vehicle every 3,000 miles or 3 months (which ever comes first), the length of time before something should be serviced is broken down by a common element...length of time. Whether it is the use of an odometer, hour meter, or start counter, these devices are handy tools when determining when service is required. Using a calendar to determine time between services may actually be less than, or possibly too frequent than, the manufacturer recommends. Therefore, the use of actual timing devices greatly comes into play. Timers also play a big part in determining when a piece of equipment needs to be rebuilt.

**New Equipment:** When purchasing new equipment, always determine if an hour meter is available. Typically, equipment with microprocessor controls already incorporate timers. Some have capabilities such as total time, operating time, and a re-settable timer. If it is not a function, have one installed or included in the pricing...it will save you from installing later. On some instances, a start counter should be included as well. A tachometer/hour meter on gasoline-powered equipment is another handy device. They're about the size of a small box of matches, have an internal battery, and only require one wire connected to a spark plug.

**Existing Equipment:** Many styles and types of timing devices are available, from surface or flush mount, to electronic, to mechanical. They will all work; it is just your needs or preferences as to which to install. The only real and critical difference is what voltage is required (6, 12, 24, 120, 208VAC/DC, etc.). Once this has been established for the piece of equipment, it is usually as simple as connecting two wires. For a cleaner installation, flush mounted styles are nice, but use caution...measure twice, measure thrice, cut once! Most 2" installations actually require a special 1-7/8" hole saw! *Handy tip: If a caliper is not available for an accurate measurement, punch a sample hole in a piece of scrap to check for fit!*

**Uses:** The use of these devices not only gives you more information about a piece of equipment, but it can also surprise you. For instance, a specific manufacturer of air compressors recommends 2,000 hours between oil changes using the recommended lubricants. There are variables here which make calculating this time difficult without an hour meter. One, it is a duplex system. Two, run time is not continuous. Three, air consumption during the day is different than that of night. Fourth, do both compressors take the same amount of time to reach shut-off pressure once started? Finally, is the existing system under- or over-sized. Go ahead,


do the math. In most instances, a compressor with good valves and rings, no leaks in the pneumatic system, and of proper size may take over 2 years of operation to reach 2,000 hours of service. Now, for some lubricants, this may be too long of a time period between intervals, but if you're using the required lubricant, you should be fine. By abiding by the manufacturer's recommendations, you should easily reach or surpass the expected useful life for this equipment. In addition, you have gathered baseline data that will come in handy later on down the road (i. e., "it used to take one year for 1,000 hours, but now it only takes 6 months" would indicate either a weak compressor or a leaking system).

**Drawback:** There are many, many benefits from timers, counters, etc., but sometimes, these recorders can come back and bite you! On one instance, a really nice power washer was purchased with all the bells and whistles. After about 8 months of use, it was noted that the pressure was diminishing (this was determined by the optional installation of gauges). No big deal, it's under warranty! About the same period of time once again...decrease in pressure. Sure enough...pump weak and no big deal because it was under warranty. The next time this occurred, a phone call was received. The phone call was to notify the owner that the tachometer/hour meter (an installed option) indicated there were several hundreds of hours on the meter. "Yes, there sure is," was the reply. "The oil and filter are changed in the motor every hundred hours, and the oil is changed in the pump just like the O&M says." The response was that the O&M also stated that the pump had exceeded warranty limitations and required a rebuild at 300-hour intervals...about the same time the unit was in the shop under warranty...Uh-oh! Oops, lets go back to the start of the article regarding the O&M manuals. Did I mention to read all of it?

Next Month: Who's Looking After Whom?

**CHARLIE'S LAW: Borrow money from pessimists. They don't expect it back!**

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## It Pays to Advertise in *SAABE TIMES*

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Quarter page	\$30	\$75	\$280
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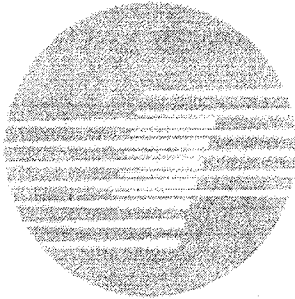
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### Building Codes

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<http://www.sanantonio.gov/dsd/> ❖



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## Luncheon Guest Fees & RSVPs

The guest fee for attending a SAABE luncheon is now \$20. Regular members may still attend luncheons at no charge, and the cost to affiliate members is still \$15.

Our luncheons are a great way to meet new people and share ideas. When you RSVP for a meeting, we order a meal for you at the Old San Francisco Steak House. If you then don't attend the meeting, your meal sits there uneaten.

Everyone has last minute emergencies. But if you have RSVP'd for a lunch and cannot attend, **please** call or email Laura Bray (210-408-1699, laurabray@braycommunications.com) and let her know that you cannot attend.

Regular members who RSVP and do not attend will be billed \$5 to help defray the cost of the uneaten meal. As usual, associate members who RSVP and do not attend be invoiced for the full cost of the meal (\$15).

It's also important to RSVP when you plan to attend. If you don't RSVP, we might not have enough food!

Please help us use your membership dues wisely and **cancel** your RSVP if you cannot attend! We appreciate your help! ❖

## "What Is It?" Contest

Log on to SAABE's web site at [www.saabe.org](http://www.saabe.org) for a new contest called "What is It?" Each month, we'll post a new photo of some piece of equipment. If you know what it is, send an email to laurabray@braycommunications.com. The member who has the most right guesses by the December holiday luncheon will receive a nice prize. ❖

### Email Addresses

Send your email address to laurabray@braycommunications.com to make sure you stay informed of the latest events! ❖

## Job Listings

**BUILDING ENGINEER:** Trammell Crow Company has an immediate opening for a qualified building engineer. The applicant should have a high school diploma (or GED), have at least 3+ years building engineer work experience, hold a City electrical maintenance license and a universal refrigerant license. Resumes may be faxed to Edna Geckler at 223-5740.

Are you looking for someone to add to your staff? Post your open positions on SAABE's web site, [www.saabe.org](http://www.saabe.org). This service is free of charge to SAABE members. Send your job listing to Laura Bray (fax 210-408-1799, email laurabray@braycommunications.com). ❖

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## Equipment Survey

SAABE has begun the process of developing a database of installed equipment in the buildings of SAABE members. When completed, this database will provide SAABE members an invaluable resource when troubleshooting problems or purchasing new equipment. You can look up specific equipment and equipment types in the database, then give that engineer a call to find out more.

But we can't do it without your input! At the next several SAABE membership meetings, you'll receive a section of the survey to complete (each section pertains to one category of equipment, such as HVAC). You'll complete the survey at the meeting and leave it at the registration desk. SAABE will take care of the rest.

Please participate in this important new member benefit. If you have any questions, please call SAABE treasurer Doug Graves at (210) 828-7712. ❖

## Are You Prepared?

The City of San Antonio provides the following information in an effort to encourage citizens to plan for unexpected emergencies. Families with school-age children should be familiar with their school's emergency plan. Although local officials do all they can to help, it is really up to you when it comes to the comfort and safety of you, your loved ones, and your co-workers and tenants.

- Prepare to deal with a terrorist incident by adapting many of the same techniques used to prepare for other crises.
- Be alert and aware of the surrounding area. The very nature of terrorism suggests that there may be little or no warning.
- Take precautions when traveling.
- Be aware of conspicuous or unusual behavior.
- Do not accept packages from strangers.
- Do not leave luggage unattended.
- Learn where emergency exits are located. In an unfamiliar building be aware of your immediate surroundings including your closest exits.
- Be aware of heavy or breakable objects that could move, fall or break in an explosion.
- Review emergency evacuation procedures and know where fire exits are located.
- Create an emergency communications plan with an out-of-town family member or friend that will be unlikely to be affected by the same emergency.

*From the City of San Antonio web site. ❖*

## Meeting Topic Survey

We need your input on topics for future meetings. Please visit the SAABE web site ([www.saabe.org](http://www.saabe.org)) and print out the "topic survey" to let us know what topics you'd like to see at future meetings. You can email your completed survey to [laurabray@braycommunications.com](mailto:laurabray@braycommunications.com) or fax it to her at 210-408-1799.

If you have any questions about the survey, please call SAABE treasurer Doug Graves at (210) 828-7712. ❖



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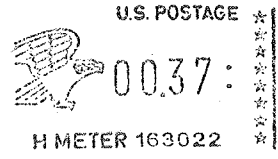
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## SAABE TIMES September Issue

### *Final Thought:*

*"Pick battles big enough to matter, small enough to win."*

— Jonathan Kozol

### 2003 Board of Directors

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Laura Bray 408-1699  
 Association Coordinator  
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### Membership Luncheon September 17, 2003

**Time:** 11:30 a.m.

**Location:** Old San Francisco Steakhouse

**Program:**

City of San Antonio Building and Electrical Codes

**Upcoming Luncheon:**

**October 15, 2003**

Program to be Announced

The *SAABE Times* is edited by Laura Bray and printed monthly for the San Antonio Association of Building Engineers by:



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