



# THE PIPELINE

News and Information about the Eastern Massachusetts Plumbing Industry • June 2010

[www.massplumbers.com](http://www.massplumbers.com)

**“As far as my dad was concerned, the bigger the pipe, and the more difficult the job, the better.”**

-Ed Strickland

See page 2

**“With PLAs, projects get the benefit of increased productivity on the front end,”**

- Mary Vogel

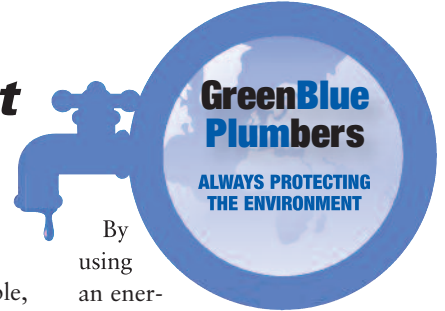
See page 5

## Plumbers play key role in \$63m BHA retrofit project

It is the largest energy efficiency project ever planned for US public housing, and Local 12 plumbers will be doing much of the work. According to an announcement made by Mayor Thomas M. Menino, 13 Boston Housing Authority developments, with a total of 4,300 units, will get a \$63 million makeover. The improvements will include new toilets, showerheads, faucet aerators, hot water system replacements, boiler controls, and other water conservation and modernization

improvements that will keep plumbers on the job for what is expected to be a three-year project.

Low-flow toilets, for example, will replace leaky ones at BHA developments such as Bromley Park in Roslindale, Commonwealth in Brighton, and Whittier Street in Roxbury. Oil-hogging boilers, some dating back decades, will be changed out with more efficient boilers fired by natural gas at Franklin Field in Dorchester and other developments.



By using an energy performance contract, the massive program won't cost the city or its taxpayers a dime. In fact, it will end up saving money. Here's how it will work: The energy service company Ameresco, which is handling the design and overseeing

*Continued on p. 3*

## Recession takes its toll on building trades

**D**espite promising signs that the economy is stabilizing and predictions that it is poised to improve in the coming months, the construction industry has been hit particularly hard and continues its struggle to recover. According to government figures, Massachusetts lost 22,000 construction positions in the 12-month period ending November 2009. While there are some pockets of hope, prospects for new projects and job offers generally remain bleak.

The federal stimulus program has sent \$437 million to the Bay State, but the funded projects have tended to be more horizontal construction, for highway, bridge, and other transportation projects, rather than vertical construction. Recovery funds have largely bypassed most construction workers, including plumbers and gasfitters.



A RARE DRAPE SINK made of hand-blown glass is on display at The Plumbing Museum. See page 5.

Kevin Cotter. “With so many plumbers out of work, it's been a difficult time for us,” he says. “We're hoping for a turnaround. We understand that economic trends are cyclical. But we've never seen conditions like this before.” The downturn, says Cotter, is truly national. With virtually every area affected, there is nowhere to turn for opportunities.

“The construction industry is experiencing a sustained decline,” says Jim Brett, president and CEO of the New England Council, a business organization that focuses on federal issues and their impact on the region. “We need more relief than what is in the current bill.” Brett is hoping for a second round of stimulus funds that would kick-start construction projects in the state.

Without an infusion of federal dollars, things may get worse, before they get better. The New England Economic Partnership, a not-for-profit forecasting organization, estimates that the construction industry may shed more jobs through the end of 2010 before recovering. Information such as that highlights a sharp contrast between construction workers and the general workforce.

According to a report conducted by Northeastern University's Center for Labor Market Studies for example, an estimated 65 unemployed construction workers are vying for each available position in the

*Continued on p. 4*



Plumbing-Heating-Cooling  
Contractors of Greater Boston  
978-777-8764  
[www.massplumbers.com](http://www.massplumbers.com)  
[www.phccboston.com](http://www.phccboston.com)



United Association  
Plumbers and Gasfitters  
Boston Local 12  
617-288-6200  
[www.plumbersandgasfitterslocal12.org](http://www.plumbersandgasfitterslocal12.org)

### ***This company thinks big—real big***

**A**lthough it is among the region's major plumbing contractors, the William M. Collins Company attracts relatively little attention. According to its president, Ed Strickland, the shop largely flies under the radar. It's ironic, however, because nearly everything about Collins is big.

The company handles some of the area's biggest projects. It was heavily involved in the Big Dig and installed over \$34 million of bridge drains, pump stations, standpipes, and steam utility piping. But its most unique feature is the size of the pipe with which it often works. It's big. Collins is the go-to contractor for projects that call for big pipe. How big? For the Walnut Hill Water Treatment Plant in Marlborough, a Massachusetts Water Resources Authority project, Collins worked with pipe as big as 120 inches in diameter. That's 10 feet, or 2 feet taller than the height of an average ceiling. That's big.

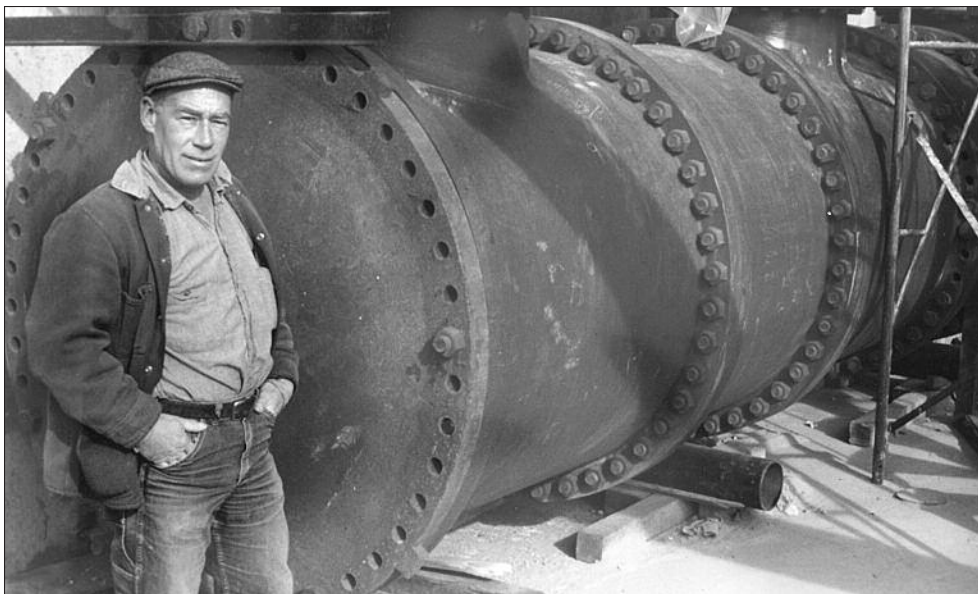
While it is known today for tackling big projects, the Collins company has humble roots that stretch far back. Established in 1927, Strickland says that William M. Collins was originally a "jobbing plumbing shop." That is, rather than working on new construction, the Boston shop handled main-

tenance, service, and repair jobs for both residential and commercial customers. Some of its early accounts included the Filene's and R. H. Stearn stores in Boston's Downtown Crossing.

Anne Collins, the associate general counsel for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' bridge program and the former registrar of the state's Department of Motor Vehicles, is William M. Collins' granddaughter. She never met her grandfather, who passed away when her father, William J. Collins, was young.

"I heard many a tale from my dad about packing boilers with asbestos insulation alongside his father," she says. Collins also recalls stories of her grandfather plumbing triple-deckers and carrying bathtubs up three flights on his back. "It gives my family great pride to see the William M. Collins Company thriving today," she says. "I feel a connection when I see his name go by on a truck."

In the 1940s, John McMasters purchased the shop from the Collins family, but retained the William M. Collins name. In 1964, William Strickland, Ed's father, bought the company. During the 1960s, the shop began growing and evolving into new specialties under William's direction.



**THIS LARGE PIPE** is part of a project Collins did for the Fitchburg Wastewater Treatment Plant in 1968. Standing in front of the pipe is foreman Hillary "Scotty" Scott.



**NO GRAIN IN THESE SILOS** Collins built silos at the Gillette plant that hold pelletized plastic for razors and other products.

#### **Water treatment a specialty**

"My father liked things that involved pipe. He also tended to focus on things that were out of the norm, because he found them interesting," says Strickland. That led to a few projects involving process piping as well as water and wastewater treatment plants. "As far as my dad was concerned, the bigger the pipe, and the more difficult the job, the better."

Ed Strickland became president of the company in 1984. His father, who has since passed away, stayed active with the company until 1993. Ed's brother, Bob, a former PHCC of Greater Boston president, was also a principal in the company, but left in 2002 and has since retired.

From those early projects, the Collins company developed a reputation for its water treatment work and its handling of big pipe, which continues to this day. Strickland says the shop's largest contract to date was the Walnut Hill Water Treatment Plant. Collins completed the four-year MWRA project, which was in excess of \$14 million, in 2007. The plant uses ozonation and chloramination to treat drinking water for 41 communities in the eastern part of the state. Collins did all of the process piping for the project, which Strickland calls, "the meat and potatoes of what makes the plant run."

Collins was also among the plumbing contractors that worked on the mother of all water treatment projects at Deer Island. Do you ever wonder what happens to the sludge generated by the Deer Island facility? It's shipped to a pelletizing plant in Quincy that converts the sludge into fertilizer. Collins installed the process piping for that MWRA project as well.

*Continued on p. 3*

# Collins thinks big

Continued from p. 2

## Contractors cannot survive on water (treatment plant projects) alone

The company is now working on a three-year project for the MWRA, helping the agency shore up its pump stations that move sewage to Deer Island.

While water treatment projects have provided lots of work for Collins, Strickland says that the jobs tend to cycle up and down and are subject to the whims of government funding. He has been expanding into other areas and developed a sprinkler division in 2000. "Pipe is pipe," Strickland says. He adds that the company's projects are now split fairly evenly among sprinkler, plumbing, and heating.

With the often-unsteady stream of municipal projects, Strickland has also steered the company to more commercial jobs. For example, Collins recently wrapped a project for Bristol-Meyers Squibb at its Devens stem cell laboratory. The \$10 million plumbing and fire

## Local 12 recognized for supporting military

The National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, in conjunction with the Department of Defense, presented an award to Plumbers Local 12 in recognition for its support of members who serve in the nation's military.

Sgt. Robert Smith, a Local 12 member who is currently stationed in Iraq, recommended the award. The union has been sending care packages to Smith and other members serving overseas. As part of the award ceremony, Local 12 officials signed a statement pledging to recognize and support the country's service members and their families.

protection job included an all-stainless steel process sanitary system. The company also conducted a \$7 million HVAC and sprinkler renovation at Gillette's headquarters in South Boston. Strickland is pursuing college and university work as well, and Collins has been on the crews that have been remodeling dorms at Harvard.

When a job like Squibb requires Collins to suddenly add dozens of workers to his crew, Strickland says that he is grateful that he can access a large pool of skilled tradespeople at Local 12. "It's one of the benefits of being a union shop," he notes. "At the Devens job, we found we needed to compress eight months of work into a three-month schedule. The union made it possible."

Collins has always been a signatory contractor. Strickland's father, uncle, and two brothers were Local 12 members.

As with nearly all construction contractors, the economy has dealt a blow to Collins, and he is bracing for a tough 2010. For the near term, Strickland says, "I try to be optimistic, but I know that we need to be realistic." He plans to stay the course and focus on the company's strengths.

"We may be under the radar," he says, "but general contractors and project owners know our reputation."

# Nation's largest energy efficiency project

Continued from p. 1

the implementation of the upgrade program, will finance the project. For the next 20 years, the federal agency HUD will continue paying the BHA for the utility costs at the 13 developments using current, pre-upgrade charges. The BHA will repay Amersco's loan with the savings it will reap based on lower energy costs made possible by the renovations. Framingham-based Amersco anticipates that the city will save \$7 million annually in utility payments.

Bromley Park will be getting more than \$11.5 million in energy improvements. In addition to low-flow toilets, the project calls for dismantling the development's central steam heating plant and replacing it with a hot water heating system in each building. Instead of a single development-operated heating control, apartments will be fitted with individual thermostats. Tenants will be able to adjust their own settings without resorting to the common—and wasteful—practice of opening the windows in mid-winter to lower too-high temperatures.

The BHA program will include window replacements, lighting upgrades, weatherstripping, roof replacements, and other energy improvements along with the plumbing enhancements. "We're saving

energy, creating almost 600 jobs, saving the taxpayers' money, and improving low-income neighborhoods," said Mayor Menino at the announcement of the initiative. "On all fronts, it's clearly a win-win."

Kevin Cotter, Plumbers Local 12 business manager, says that the \$63-million BHA project is so big, there will probably be more than one plumbing subcontractor handling the work. The project is scheduled to begin in 2010, which is good news for plumbers and other construction trades who have been unemployed or under-employed in large numbers during the difficult recession. "Local 12 appreciates the efforts of Mayor Menino," Cotter says. "When we need the work, it's great to see that this Boston project will be 100% union."

The concept of energy performance contracts began in the late 1970s, but has gained momentum recently. The prospect of paying for today's energy and water system upgrades with tomorrow's energy and water savings has great appeal to cash-strapped communities. By lowering utility costs, reducing carbon footprints, and easing a municipality's impact on the environment, energy performance contracts also have enormous green appeal.

With the BHA project setting a national example, perhaps other cities and towns in the Commonwealth will take a more serious look at their energy infrastructures and the benefits that energy performance contracts could bring them. Brockton, Lowell, Worcester, and Fall River are among the municipalities that are in the process of developing performance contracting projects. According to industry estimates, the improvements backlog across the state could yield \$1 billion or more in new work.



## Continuing Ed Classes

Six hours MUST be completed annually!

IAPMO continuing education classes for both union and non-union plumbers are offered at the Plumbers Local 12 Training Center in Boston.

To register or for more info, contact Peter DeFreitas: peter.defreitas@iapmo.org or 508-394-3572.

# Construction industry takes hard recession hit

Continued from p. 1

state compared to two white-collar employees for each job. That's a considerable disparity and points to the frustration which Local 12 members and other construction workers are facing in the economic meltdown. "The recession has been hard for everybody," says Cotter. "But, it's hitting the building trades disproportionately."

## Potential signs of activity

Still, the state may be faring better than the rest of the country. The general unemployment rate is marginally lower here. And certain sectors that have a strong presence in the region, such as hospitals and healthcare, are weathering the financial storms better than others and are forging ahead with some building projects. Partners Healthcare, for example, is in the midst of a large expansion project at its flagship Mass General Hospital location. Cotter says that the pharmaceutical industry is also a bright spot in an otherwise gloomy construction landscape.

Another key sector, colleges and universities, has not been as fortunate, and many schools have placed planned projects on hold. "University endowments have taken a large hit," says Barry Bluestone, Ph.D., professor of political economy at Northeastern University and director of the Center for Urban and Regional Policy. "It will take some time for them to build again." Harvard University shut down one of the largest projects in the state, its Allston campus expansion, after its endowment suffered enormous losses.

But Bluestone does see some potential signs of activity besides hospital construc-

tion. Should it move forward, plans to expand the Boston Convention Center, which would likely include additional hotel rooms, could provide some work. The project could spur more development in South Boston's Seaport District as well.

And while it may not lead to many construction projects, Bluestone is also bullish on manufacturing. "It may sound amazing, but manufacturing could lead the recovery," he says. "The weak dollar makes our exports cheaper and more in demand." Green technologies, high tech, hospitality and leisure, and biotech may also be on the fast track to recovery and boost the state's economy.

Cotter says that there are some hopeful signs that stimulus funds may translate into building trades work. Three Boston Housing Authority projects, for instance, are moving forward with the help of stimulus dollars and HUD financing. Commonwealth Plumbing will be working on a renovation project at the Mary Ellen McCormack development in South Boston, while contractor P. J. Dionne is slated to work on a rebuilding project for the Charlestown Apartments. D. J. Plumbing and P. J. Kennedy will be working on a rebuilding project at the Washington-Beech development in Roslindale.

Another area that is providing some signs of hope—and work—is public school construction. Since 2004, the state has been setting aside 20% of all state sales tax revenue for school building and now has 180 projects in the planning or construction phase. "We are seeing a steady increase in school projects," says Hugh Kelleher, executive director of the PHCC of Greater Boston.

Both Bluestone and Brett think it may take a while longer before the economy fully recovers. The factors that somewhat shielded the state from the depths of the country's collapse may play against it as it struggles to recover. "Massachusetts got into the recession about four months later than the rest of the nation," says Brett. "We may be a few months later coming out of it."

## UA activity picks up north of Boston

It has been four years since UA Local 138, which had covered 30 cities and towns in the northeastern part of Massachusetts and seven communities in southern New Hampshire, merged with Local 12 and Boston Pipefitters Local 537. With its larger contractor base, bigger pool of plumbers and gasfitters, and more robust resources, Local 12 has been able to bring a larger roster of area projects under the union umbrella.

"We have more to offer, and we are more aggressively pursuing opportunities," explains Tim Fandel, a Local 12 business agent. For example, signatory shops with the PHCC of Greater Boston handled subcontract work on a recent expansion of the Northshore Mall in Peabody, which included the addition of Nordstrom's and a wing with 22 new tenants. "Had it not been for the presence of Local 12 in the region, this work would have been nonunion," Fandel says.

Both Fandel and Harry Brett, the business agents who share responsibility for representing Local 12 in the northeastern part of the state, have been reaching out to and establishing connections with end users, including colleges and hospitals in the area. Despite the gloomy economy and dismal construction outlook, their persistence has helped generate work for Local 12 members.

Affiliated projects in the former Local 138 district that are now under construction, have been recently completed, or are scheduled to begin shortly include:

Children's Hospital North (new facility) in Peabody, Salem State College dormitories, Hewlett-Packard mechanical upgrades in Andover, North Shore Medical Center intensive care unit floors in Salem, Internal Revenue Service renovations in Andover, Beverly Hospital expansion and remodeling, and Raytheon expansion in N. Andover.



**We Do it Right the First Time**  
*Expert Residential Plumbing and Heating Services*

**We'll connect you with a licensed and insured plumbing and heating specialist.**

- Emergency repairs
- Water heaters
- Boilers and furnaces
- Drain cleaning
- Energy and water conservation needs.
- All plumbing, heating, and cooling services.

**PROMPT AND DEPENDABLE**

**\$35 off a service call\***

\*With this coupon. Offer does not expire. Cannot be combined with any other offer. All work under warranty.

**MASSPLUMBERS.COM**      **800-205-0085**

# PLAs insure harmony on construction projects

Complex construction jobs can be difficult enough to manage without the additional burden of having to sort through and individually negotiate with each of the trades. When a project has a dozen or more crafts, each with its own collective bargaining agreement, the logistics can get overwhelming. However, by standardizing the process and uniting the agreements into a single covenant, a project labor agreement (PLA) offers labor, management, and owners a blueprint for project efficiency. With everyone in sync and aware of what is expected of them and of each other in advance, the PLA model routinely results in productive work environments and projects that come in under budget and on time.

**PLAs enable projects, even those that are complex in size and scope, to maintain tight schedules.**

While much is made of the key provisions of PLAs, including guarantees of no strikes or lockouts by workers and well-defined dispute resolution procedures, industry insiders say that they primarily reduce uncertainty and make it possible to control projects that might otherwise be a challenge to tame. “It’s more of a management tool than anything else,” says Mary Vogel, executive director of The Construction Institute. By establishing uniform policies regarding schedules, overtime, and other critical issues, PLAs enable projects, even those that are complex in size and scope, to maintain tight schedules. Upcoming projects that will incorporate PLAs include the relocation of Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital to Charlestown and the construction of a two-story, 29,300 square-foot addition to Lynn Community Health Center.

Smaller projects can benefit from PLAs also. For example, the town of Braintree upgraded mechanical systems at the South Middle School as part of a renovation project in 2009.

“We had a short window,” explains Kevin Cotter, Local 12’s business manager. “Using the PLA, we were able to start work at the close of the school year and finish everything before classes began the following September. Mayor Sullivan understood the benefits of a PLA.”

Since their inception during the 1930s, PLAs have been designed to accommodate the specific needs of individual projects. More recently, however, the concept has evolved to encompass community needs as well. For example, some PLAs now include provisions requiring that local residents be hired and that the local economy be considered. There have also been stipulations regarding the percentage of women and minorities to be hired or the environmental impact a project makes. The expanded PLAs even have a new name: community workforce agreements.

“PLAs can be a way to create more diversity in the building trades and on projects,” says Vogel. “With the demographics of the workforce changing, we need to embrace the change.” It’s

likely that the term, community workforce agreement (and the inevitable acronym, CWA), as well as the broader goals it represents will be included more in public and private projects, both locally and nationally.

PLAs have not been without their detractors. Some argue that PLA requirements add costs to projects. Studies, including those conducted by Cornell and UCLA, have shown that not to be the case, however. While workers may receive higher wages and benefits than on comparable non-PLA projects, overall costs are typically the same or lower.

“With PLAs, projects get the benefit of increased productivity on the front end,” Vogel says. And when PLA-driven projects meet or beat schedules, there are tangible and intangible savings and benefits as well. “Without the management tool of a PLA, there are bound to be costly and time-consuming change orders,” notes Vogel.

Then there is the charge that PLAs reduce the number of bidders and shut out nonunion shops. Those claims have been refuted as well, since nonunion shops can and do bid on PLA projects. The real concern would seem to be that nonunion shops don’t like having to hire through union halls, as is required by PLAs. But the union provision guarantees that projects have access to a large pool of highly trained and skilled workers, thereby ensuring that projects are always properly staffed—and helping to ensure an efficient and under-budget project.

## Plumbing Museum seeks members and volunteers

In its mission to grow and become self-sustaining, The Plumbing Museum has developed a membership program. For a \$50 donation, members receive unlimited admission for one year, a souvenir T-shirt, and the satisfaction of knowing that their gift helps support the only known museum of its kind in the world. Members also get 10% off all gift shop merchandise—another addition to the museum. Imprinted coffee mugs, pens, and other items help generate funds and get the word out about the museum. To become a member, visit the museum’s Web site, [www.theplumbingmuseum.org](http://www.theplumbingmuseum.org).

In order to expand its hours, the museum is seeking volunteers to help staff its exhibit halls. Anyone with a connection to or interest in the industry would be welcome. Retired plumbers who could share their expertise with visitors would especially be encouraged to consider volunteering. Email [info@plumbingmuseum.org](mailto:info@plumbingmuseum.org) or call 617-926-2111 for more info.

Visitors to The Plumbing Museum can see some of its recent acquisitions, including an old pantry sink lined with silver plate and a unique drape sink made of hand-blown glass. The latter comes from Germany and was donated to the museum by American Standard. Another addition to the exhibit halls is a soapstone urinal that came from a bowling alley in Newton, MA.

To keep up to date with The Plumbing Museum and industry info, check out the new blog, the Water Closet, at [theplumbingmuseum.blogspot.com](http://theplumbingmuseum.blogspot.com).

The museum is located at 80 Rosedale Road in Watertown, adjacent to PHCC of Greater Boston signatory contractor, J. C. Cannistraro. Tours are available on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 AM until 2 PM and other days and times by appointment.



**PLUMBING MUSEUM TRUSTEES (L TO R):** Mike Kohler of the Kohler Company, Hugh Kelleher of the PHCC of Greater Boston, John Cannistraro, Jr. of J. C. Cannistraro, and Russ Manoog, the founder of the original museum.

# Privatized Plumbing Inspections: Penny-Wise but Safety-Foolish

The contracted economy has municipalities scrambling to cut costs. Some cities and towns, such as Randolph, have considered outsourcing their plumbing inspections as a way to help salvage their ravaged budgets. In Massachusetts, however, the option to privatize inspections is not available. Even if communities could outsource the service, the cost-saving measure raises a lot of red flags.

“We understand the dilemma,” says Paul Kennedy, chairman of the State Plumbing Board in the Commonwealth. “But we can’t sacrifice public safety for money.” The board’s commitment to protect citizens, Kennedy says, is why state law clearly forbids privatization—and why the board would never allow it.

If the individual conducting an inspection were not a public employee, the board reasons, the temptation to cut corners and spend as little time as possible inspecting projects would inevitably trump safety. The bottom line for a private inspection company would be, well, its bottom line. “It would be like letting the wolf into the henhouse,” says Kennedy.

Even worse, notes Gordon MacEwan, the field service manager for the New England region of the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials (IAPMO), privatization would introduce the possibility of graft. Developers could offer low-paid inspectors hush money to overlook code violations and shoddy work. Or there might be an incentive for inspectors to fail a job in order to collect additional re-inspection fees. Cities and towns might save a few dollars, MacEwan reasons, “but they would get what they paid for.”

There are other issues to consider, such as qualifications and accountability. States that allow communities to outsource plumbing inspections often have little control over the inspection process. Inspectors may have some background in the construction industry, but no direct experience with or knowledge about the plumbing and mechanical systems they inspect. Training may be non-existent. And who is watching over the private inspection companies and their inspectors? What recourse would a building owner, contractor, plumber, or others have to dispute an inspection decision? Would the municipality be liable or would the burden fall on the private company?

The temptation to tap into the permit fees is strong. Part of the problem is that the fees, which

have been rising—in some cases dramatically—are typically funneled into a municipality’s general fund. “Towns lose sight of the fact that revenues derived from gas and plumbing permits are supposed to be used to pay for inspectional services first,” says Harry Brett, business agent for Local 12. “Instead, they see it as a revenue source. Local 12 has always supported a strong inspectional community.”

Massachusetts has strict continuing education requirements for licensed inspectors. And the code requires communities to pay inspectors directly. Any other arrangement compromises safety and the integrity of the plumbing profession, asserts Kennedy. “Unscrupulous developers could become both judge and jury,” he says. “Privatization is simply not a good situation.”

## Hospitals ink agreements

Most members of Local No. 12 work on crews building or renovating projects. They bounce around from one construction site to the next and lead something of a nomadic work life. A few plumbers, however, know where they are going to be day-to-day—and year-to-year. That’s because they are part of an onsite maintenance team helping to keep hospitals, research labs, universities, and other facilities operating at peak efficiency. The Carney Hospital in Dorchester, St. Elizabeth’s Medical Center in Boston, and Norwood Hospital in Norwood, all part of the Caritas Christi Health Care chain, are the latest facilities to bring

plumbers and other union trades onto their staffs.

The maintenance work is the result of a neutrality agreement signed between Caritas, the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), and the Area Trades Council. Local 12 is a member of the Area Trades Council along with construction unions representing the electricians, painters, carpenters and cabinetmakers, and operating engineers.

According to George Donahue, Local 12 business agent, it is expected that each hospital will have one or two plumbers on staff. “It’s good for our members,” Donahue says. “But it’s good for the Caritas hospitals also. The union trades workers bring specialized expertise, licensing, and certification to the job, and they can take advantage of the continuing education and other amenities offered by their locals.”

**ONLINE**  
at  
**massplumbers.com**

## Building trades donate labor for new school

With the recession hitting the retail market, many malls are saddled with empty stores. The Northshore Mall in Peabody has proposed a creative use for its unused space: an alternative high school program for at-risk students.

The Simon Properties-owned mall is making the space available rent-free to the city and will cover one-third of the project’s capital expenses through its Simon Youth Foundation. The Mass Building Trades, which includes Plumbers Local 12, is offering to provide the labor at no charge to construct the 4,000-square-foot classroom space.

“We are pleased to support this project, and our members are only too happy to help,” says Tim Fandel, business agent for Local 12. “This is another example of the many ways we give back to the community.”

The goal of the mall’s satellite high school program is to reduce the number of dropouts. Similar alternative school programs in other parts of the country led to higher graduation rates.

## THE PIPELINE

### Labor and Management Working Together

Labor-Management Cooperation Trust  
Plumbers & Gasfitters Boston Local 12  
1240 Massachusetts Avenue  
Boston, MA 02125  
617-288-5400

#### Editorial Board

Kevin Cotter  
Business Manager,  
U.A. Local 12

Michael Petrilli  
President, PHCC of Greater Boston

George Donahue  
Business Agent, U.A. Local 12

Hugh Kelleher  
Executive Director,  
PHCC of Greater Boston

Roger Gill  
Funds Administrator, U.A. Local 12