



# THE PIPELINE

News and Information about the Eastern Massachusetts Plumbing Industry • Summer, 2005

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**“There’s a market out there, and we intend to go after it.”**  
–John Stack,  
Local No. 12

**The UA agreement will help make contractors more competitive in the residential construction industry.**

## Home is where the plumber is

### –Local No. 12 contractors pursue residential and service work

**T**hey work on the Boston Convention Center, the Big Dig, the MWRA MetroWest tunnel, and virtually every other high-profile construction project throughout the region. But Local No. 12’s signatory plumbing contractors also work on less-heralded jobs like unclogging the pipes at Mrs. Brown’s house on Elm Street and installing the shower at the Murphy’s home on Pleasant Street. And with the help of Local No. 12 and the PHCC of Greater Boston, the contractors are seeking more service and residential projects.

“There’s a market out there,” says John Stack, United Association Local No. 12’s Organizer, “and we intend to go after it.” To that end, the organizations have established a marketing campaign touting the plumbing contractors and their world-class services to homeowners. Consumers seeking residential plumbing work are directed to call a toll-free number, (800) 205-0085. Stack explains that the call center routes the jobs to a group of participating contractors on a rotating basis.

#### Calls in the middle of the night

One of the contractors is A. J. Lyne of Abington. According to owner Andy Lyne Jr., whose father is a plumber and says that plumbing service work is in his blood, the toll-free number program has worked out well. It’s generated a lot of new business for his crew, including everything from repairing a leaky faucet to remodeling a three-bathroom house. It’s also leading to repeat work as satisfied customers call him back with additional projects.

Lyne says that about 75% of the work at his two-year-old shop is residential. He’d like to generate more commercial projects so that the mix is closer to 50% residential and 50% non-residential. But he has no intention of giving up repairing leaky faucets for homeowners. Service work can have its downside, however. “Nobody likes getting out of bed in the middle of a cold winter night to respond to a freeze-up,” Lyne says. “But we’re 24/7. It comes with the territory.”

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## Local 12, PHCC target residential housing

**T**he Boston-area housing market is red-hot. And PHCC of Greater Boston contractors, along with Local No. 12, want a bigger piece of the area’s red-hot residential construction pie. As part of a nationwide effort by the United Association (UA) to target residential work, the PHCC and Local No. 12 are hammering out the details of an agreement that will help make the contractors more competitive in the industry.

Among the issues outlined in the agreement are the designation of the scope of work, the establishment of a separate residential rate, and the classification of residential employees to perform the work. It also addresses workforce portability, which would allow signatory plumbing contractors to work with general contractors on residential housing projects across UA jurisdictions. “The agreement aims to give our contractors more flexibility,” says Local No. 12 Business Manager, Kevin Cotter. “It will enhance our position in the residential market.”

“There’s a perception that union shops don’t do  
*Continued on p. 2*



## Paul Kennedy: Q&A on new plumbing code, continuing ed

*President of Dorchester’s P. J. Kennedy & Sons, Paul Kennedy also serves as chairman of the State Plumbing Board. He spoke with The Pipeline about Massachusetts’ new plumbing code and other plumbing board issues.*

**The Pipeline:** Since you took over as chairman in December 2003, what have been the State Plumbing Board’s main activities?

**Paul Kennedy:** We really have to thank all the board members and others who came before us. They laid the groundwork. But in the last couple of years, I’d say the board has accomplished some major goals.

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# Plumbers go along for the ride on T's new Silver Line



**T**he Silver Line extension to South Boston, the newest addition to the MBTA—the country's oldest subway system—opened in December and added a transportation linchpin to the burgeoning waterfront district. Local No. 12 plumbers, working under PHCC contractor Harding & Smith of Walpole, were part of the MBTA project's con-

struction team.

Among the work performed, the Harding & Smith crew handled the plumbing, gasfitting, HVAC ductwork, equipment, and ATC controls, as well as the fire protection standpipes and sprinkler systems. According to Rick Sampson of Harding & Smith, the project included the installation of thousands of feet

of piping, both above ground and buried underground.

The Silver Line Waterfront tunnel extends from South Station to Silver Line Way near the World Trade Center. The route then continues above ground to Boston Marine Industrial Park. Recently, a new leg of the Silver Line opened to Logan Airport. Unlike the T's more traditional subway cars, the Silver Line uses special buses that run on a combination of low-emission compressed natural gas fuel and electric power.

## Security to a T

According to Jack McGinness, Local No. 12 business agent, the Silver Line's tunnel has incorporated a unique feature: In the event of a security breach, hydraulic ramps, capable of stopping a fifty-ton vehicle traveling at sixty mph, form barricades at either end of the underground tunnel. "Plumbers

installed the hydraulics for the barricades," he adds. "They're impressive. And they are part of Homeland Security's Terror Alert system.

John Hurley, a twenty-year veteran with Harding & Smith, served as project foreman until his retirement. Another company veteran, Jim Fitzgerald, then picked up the ball. Rick Hurley will be overseeing the warranty work.

"We're proud to have helped build this important extension," Sampson says. "The Seaport district has great potential on a number of fronts, and the Silver Line is going to play a critical role as the area grows."

Harding & Smith has a long-standing in-house contract with the MBTA. While it has refurbished a number of existing T stations, the Silver Line Waterfront represents the first new transit station work for the company.

## Residential housing construction targeted

*Continued from p. 1*

this kind of work," says the UA's Gary Hamilton, who spoke about the residential agreement with a group of contractors and Local No. 12 members at a presentation in February. "But we do—and we do it well. And we should be doing more."

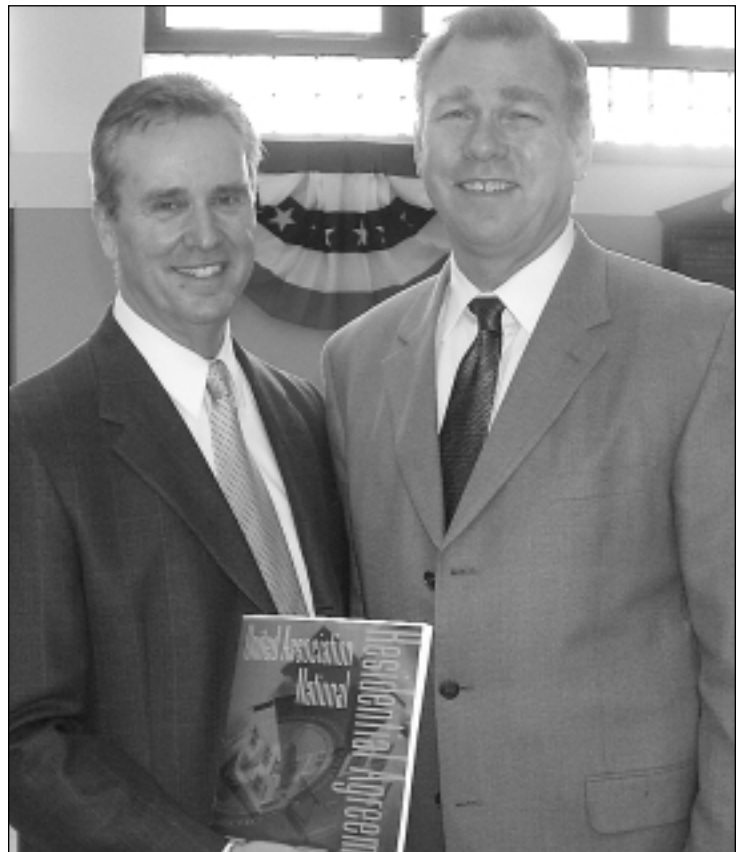
### What's at stake

With an abundance of subdivisions and huge homes rising throughout Greater Boston, the housing market represents a lot of work. According to McGraw-Hill, compared to 2003, total new U.S. construction starts climbed 10% in 2004 to \$583 billion. Of that, residential building rose 16% to \$328.5 million, or 56% of all new construction work. Boston was among the nation's top five resi-

dential construction markets ranked by dollar volume in 2004 and posted a 34% increase over the previous year.

The UA's residential agreement is already in effect in New York City, Seattle, Las Vegas, and elsewhere. Hamilton says that about 1500 signatory contractors are currently participating in the program. The projects covered in the agreement include one- and two-family dwellings as well as apartment buildings and condos up to four stories.

In the Boston area, the agreement would open up the industry for small- and medium-sized shops. "It only makes sense for us to take a broad view of the market," Cotter says. "We have the best training program, bar none, and our members bring tremendous skills to the booming housing industry."



At a meeting with PHCC of Greater Boston contractors and Local No. 12 members, the United Association's Gary Hamilton (L) and Bill Turner discussed the UA's Residential Agreement.

## Plumbers at your service

Continued from p. 1

To encourage more residential and service work, Local No. 12 has developed a training program. In conjunction with the Small Business Administration, it is offering a one-day classroom presentation and ongoing support to help its members start their own shops. "We've got some great plumbers," explains Kevin Cotter, Local No. 12's Business Manager. "But they may not know as much about the business side. That's where our training can help."

By giving them the resources to start their own business and initial referrals from the residential service toll-free number, Cotter wants the entrepreneurs to build up their client base and maintain residential work as well as commercial projects. He explains that commercial work can ebb and flow according to the vagaries of the economy, but that residential and service work are fairly recession-proof—and offer good cash flow.

Stack says that about twenty-five students attended a residential training workshop earlier this year, and that four of them have already established their own shops. He adds that Local No. 12 will offer the program at least once annually. For more information, call John Stack at (617) 288-6200, X 148.

## Plumbing careers offer women self-sufficiency

There aren't many women working in the plumbing trades (or the construction industry in general for that matter), but their numbers have been increasing. According to a recent report from The Women's Union, a Massachusetts-based organization dedicated to helping women achieve economic self-sufficiency, more may want to consider picking up a wrench.

## Lauded licensure director has roots in plumbing industry

As the Director of the state's Division of Professional Licensure, Anne Collins oversees the credentialing of all plumbers and gasfitters within the Commonwealth, as well as approximately 330,000 professionals in the state, ranging from obstetricians to CPAs to funeral directors. She also helped shepherd approval of Massachusetts' new Plumbing Code and plays a vital role in the industry today. But her connection to the trade has deep roots. Her grandfather, William M. Collins, founded the South Boston company that bears his name. It remains one of the region's major plumbing contractors.



William M. Collins

Governor Mitt Romney appointed Collins to head the Licensure Division in 2003. The governor recently cited her leadership in transforming the once-beleaguered bureau. Beset by a backlog of disciplinary cases, Collins and her team streamlined the process, thereby resolving far more cases and cutting the average resolution time by nearly 70%—even as the number of new complaints increased over the past two years. "What this

agency has accomplished is an example of what building a more efficient government is all about," Romney stated.

Collins plans to bring her knack for efficiency to other areas that will specifically benefit the plumbing industry. For example, the Licensing Board will begin administering a new plumbing and gasfitting exam by computer this year that will allow for more frequent test dates and faster score reporting.

Online license renewals are on tap for next year.

Collins says that the division's most significant accomplishment has been the passage of new enforcement powers legislation which gives it the teeth to aggressively pursue unlicensed practitioners and fine licensees for improper conduct.

### Stories of carting bathtubs up triple-deckers

A graduate of Northeastern University's School of Law, Collins pursued a career in state government "out of an interest to serve the public and a desire to see government programs run efficiently so as to earn the respect of the public." Based on her

One of the roadblocks to landing a job on the list is training. With its state-of-the-art training center, Local No. 12 offers access, regardless of gender, to a sustainable career in the plumbing trades.

For more information about Local No. 12's Apprenticeship Program, call 617-288-1010.

Log on to the LMCT  
[www.massplumbers.com](http://www.massplumbers.com)



Anne Collins, Director of the Division of Professional Licensure tenure at the Licensure Division, it's a case of mission accomplished. But Collins' ideology has guided her throughout her career.

After law school, she was the prosecuting counsel for the Division of Registration (precursor to the Licensure Division), which led to a stint at the Registry of Motor Vehicles. As the Deputy Registrar for Operations, Collins helped implement online transactions, developed a new driver licensing system, and significantly reduced RMV customer wait times. Then she moved to the Office for Consumer Affairs where she implemented the state's Do Not Call program. She came back full circle to the Division of Professional Licensure two years ago.

While Collins' role in the industry continues a family tradition, she says that, sadly, 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 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 (under the leadership of Ed Strickland)," Collins says. "I feel a connection when I see his name go by on a truck."

# OSHA safety program takes effect in 2006

At its state-of-the-art facility, Local No. 12 has trained hundreds of its members in the OSHA 10-Hour safety program. Members of the construction trades who have not had training, however, can help make a site unsafe for everyone on the job. Statistics show that construction continues to be one of the nation's most dangerous occupations.

That's why Local No. 12 and the PHCC of Greater Boston lent their support to legislation, passed in 2004, that requires OSHA training for all construction workers on publicly funded projects. The law takes effect next year.

According to Frank Callahan, legislative director for the Mass. Building Trades Council, factories and workplaces can engineer safety into their environments; construction sites change daily, however, and the best way—really the only way—to insure safety is through training. “We’ve done a great job with the unions,” Callahan says. “But we need to have all workers on board.”

Rhode Island was among the first states in the nation to require OSHA 10-Hour training for its state-funded projects.

## Plumbing legends online at [massplumbers.com](http://massplumbers.com)

Would you like to learn about some of the men who played a key role in building the region's plumbing industry? Go to [www.massplumbers.com](http://www.massplumbers.com) and click on the “Legends of Boston Plumbing” for interesting profiles and photos of John Cannistraro, Sr., Eddie Duggan, Jack Fandel, John O’Leary, Sr., and Lou Visco.

If you gathered these five legendary plumbers in a car and

After the legislation passed, however, the construction trades had problems meeting its requirements and getting their workers trained. Based on its neighboring state's difficulties, Massachusetts included a two-year window between the time it passed the OSHA legislation and the time it takes effect. Members of the construction industry have until July 1, 2006 to complete OSHA 10-Hour training or, according to the legislation, they will not be allowed to work on state-funded jobs over \$10 million.

In addition to safer work environments, Callahan says that the OSHA training requirement should lead to lower workers comp premiums. The legislation targets public construction, but “the hope is that it will spill over to the entire industry,” he notes. “It only makes sense that everyone would want to be safe on the job.”

*Plumbers interested in Local No. 12's OSHA 10-Hour program can contact the Training Center at (617) 288-1010. The names of Local No. 12 members who have completed OSHA 10-hour training will be entered into a raffle drawing for a 2006 Caribbean vacation.*

drove around the city, you would be unlikely to find a building that one of them didn't help build, reconstruct, or inspect when it was done. Systems that they built over a half-century ago are working well to this day.

Whether a union member, contractor, plumbing instructor, inspector, or state official, each of these men has earned a place of special recognition in our business. Read their unique stories online.



## Commonwealth takes a flier with Logan's new Terminal A

**T**here are changes a plenty at Logan as Boston's busy airport undergoes an ambitious modernization program. A key piece of the overhaul has been the resurrection of Terminal A, which was demolished, rebuilt, and recently opened as Delta's new Boston home. According to Tom Hannon, the PHCC of Greater Boston's president and the president of Commonwealth Plumbing Corp., the new Terminal A was a “basic plumbing job,” with one caveat: Its enormous size and scope posed some interesting challenges.

Some of the project's stats reinforce its sheer size: 7 miles of piping, 320 fixtures, and a cavernous 150,000-square-foot building that occupies an area larger than 3 football fields. More than the footprint, however, Hannon says that the height of the structure introduced complications. “We had to do a lot of our work using lifts,” he explains.



Lou Visco is one of five legends featured online at [massplumbers.com](http://massplumbers.com)

“Some days, we didn't spend much time on the ground.”

According to Local No. 12 Business Agent Jack McGinness, the new Delta terminal was a \$450-million project. He says that the new terminal, with its separate entrance and exit ramps, has helped ease congestion at Logan. Because it was built after 9/11, McGinness notes that the terminal is designed from the ground up to handle today's security needs.

Commonwealth, which handled the plumbing sub-contract for the Delta terminal, worked on the project for about two years. At any one point, Hannon says that he had about fifteen plumbers at the East Boston site. The project included eight large gang toilet rooms, underground piping, and storm water systems. The restrooms featured oversized WC stalls to accommodate passengers' luggage.

Hannon says that the new Terminal A is a handsome facility and he's proud to have worked on it. The new gates will give Delta the capacity to handle more than 100 daily flights. The terminal includes eleven restaurants, seven lounges, retail shops, and two Delta Crown Room Clubs.

McGinness says that work continues at Logan, with the renovations of Terminals B and C going out for bids.

# Plumbing Board chairman weighs in on new code and continuing ed

Continued from p. 1

The most dramatic one, so far, has been the new plumbing and gas code.

**TP:** How did the new code come about?

**PK:** We got enormous help from Joe Peluso, the new executive director for the State Board. Also from the state investigators, and all the members of the board. Anne Collins, who heads up the Division of Registration, was also essential in getting this through the political hoops up at the State House.

**TP:** Is the new code in effect?

**PK:** Plumbers can use either the old or the new codes until September. At that point, only the new code will be acceptable.

**TP:** What's different in the code?

**PK:** One big change is that Pex-type tubing for water piping is now acceptable, as is corrugated stainless steel tubing, CSST, for gas piping. But there are literally hundreds of changes, and an entirely new format. So I would advise every plumber to get a copy. You can read the plumbing portion of the code online: [www.mass.gov/dpl/boards/pl/](http://www.mass.gov/dpl/boards/pl/). Information on the gas sections are posted at [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org). Look for the National Fuel Gas Code (NFPA 54) and the Liquefied Petroleum Gas Code (NFPA 58).

**TP:** Will there be more changes in the future?

**PK:** Definitely. Let's face it: Our industry is changing all the time. In Massachusetts we really do have a special pride in our trade, and we don't want to just jump on board a new technology just

because it's new. Take CSST, for instance. It will definitely change the way gas piping is done. It can be useful, but when we looked at it for Massachusetts, we wanted to make sure that we maintained the highest standards of safety. So yes, you can use CSST, but we put seventeen special conditions on its installation so that the consumer can be guaranteed a safe installation.

But to return to your question, yes, we will continue to review the code. I expect that every couple of years we will see an updated version.

**TP:** Beyond the code, what other changes can we expect?

**PK:** One of the other big changes you'll be seeing is continuing education for all plumbers. We want to move our industry into the 21st century. Continuing education is essential for every profession. One example: Every plumber should become familiar with the new code, and continuing ed will be a way to accomplish that. Last year we convinced the legislature to pass a law which calls for continuing ed, and for expanded

training of apprentices.

**TP:** How will the process work?

**PK:** Over the coming months we'll be working on the logistics. For continuing education, it will be a modest number of hours, maybe four to six, every two years. The Board will help define the curriculum. You won't be allowed to renew your license unless you have fulfilled this requirement. The one exception might be for those over 65 who are not operating a business and no longer fully active in the trade. They should have the right to keep their licenses for as long as they want to without the education requirement. This is an issue I will bring to the board for approval.

**TP:** What about changes in apprentice requirements?

**PK:** Right now, we're at 300 classroom hours. That is far below the national average. In other parts of the country, you see apprentices receiving over 500 hours in the classroom. We also expect the field requirement to increase from the current three years, to probably



In addition to his role as president of Dorchester's P. J. Kennedy & Sons, PHCC of Greater Boston member Paul Kennedy serves as chairman of the State Plumbing Board.

four or more.

**TP:** These are a lot of changes.

**PK:** We're taking it one step at a time. We have a great working relationship now, with all groups in our industry really sitting down, working on things, and pushing in the same direction.

**TP:** Sounds like you enjoy this work.

**PK:** I love it! I love the people I work with. Some people like golf. I like opening the code, and dealing with people.

## Local 12 journeyman to play safety at Super Bowl

Will the Pats be back at the Super Bowl in 2006? The dynasty may—or may not—continue its streak, but one thing is for certain: A Local No. 12 journeyman and his or her guest will be at Ford Field in Detroit next February courtesy of the Plumbing Heating Cooling Contractors of Greater Boston.

A Local No. 12 member who completes twenty hours of continuing education during 2005 will qualify to have his or her name entered into a raffle. The lucky winner will be Super-Bowl

bound on a once-in-a-lifetime trip. Local No. 12 members who complete OSHA 10-hour training will also have their names entered into another drawing for a 2006 Caribbean vacation for two.

The raffles reflect the commitment of the PHCC and the UA to safety. "Our goal is to establish the finest safety record in the industry by working together with Local 12," says Tom Hannon, head of Commonwealth Plumbing Corp. and the president of the PHCC of Greater



Boston. "We have developed a great working relationship with the Local. Our joint safety program is another way we cooperate together to benefit our industry."

For more information, contact the PHCC of Greater Boston at 978-777-8764.

# Commonwealth's Tom Hannon takes reins as PHCC President

**P**HCC of Greater Boston President, Tom Hannon, who was elected to the position in April, has a lot on his plate as he begins his two-year term. There will be contract negotiations with Local No. 12, the rollout of the UA's new Residential Agreement, and a renewed push to recruit contractor members, to name a few. But Hannon, head of Commonwealth Plumbing Corp. in Rockland and a 28-year veteran of the industry, is looking forward to giving back to the PHCC and the Labor-Management Cooperation Trust. "They've always been there for me," he says. "Now, it's my turn to step up to the plate."

In addition to bringing new contractor members on board, Hannon says that he wants to energize current members and get them more active. From the outside, it may seem counterintuitive for a group of potential competitors to want to work together. But Hannon says the PHCC is all about finding common ground, sharing resources, and uniting to present a common voice. "A healthy industry is in everybody's best interest," he adds.

Similarly, the conventional wisdom is that PHCC contractors and members of Local No. 12 are inherently at odds with each other. But Hannon says that the two groups disprove that notion through their work

together with the Labor-Management Cooperation Trust (LMCT). As part of his duties as PHCC President, Hannon will represent the contractors as an LMCT Trustee. "One can't survive without the other," he says. "We need the front-line labor from Local 12, and they need us to provide the work."

## All in the family

Hannon has been providing work since 1990 when he opened Commonwealth Plumbing. For thirteen years before that, he worked for another shop. But his industry roots run even deeper. Tom's father, Ed, was a plumber and an instructor at Local No. 12's training center.

Tom's brother, Peter, is vice president of the company and is in charge of estimating and CAD. Kevin Duffy is the shop's purchasing agent. Tom says that Commonwealth is a medium-sized shop and has anywhere from twenty to forty plumbers and gasfitters in the field depending on the workload. He adds that a core of about twenty plumbers has been with him since Commonwealth opened. "It really helps that they know what we want, and we know how they work. We let our key foremen run jobs as they see fit."

Commonwealth often works on hospital and medical gas system projects, such as an addition at South Shore Hospital, a dialysis center at St. Elizabeth's Hos-

pital, and ongoing work at Beth Israel. Health care work is a bit slow now, and Commonwealth has been pursuing other specialty areas as well including high-end restaurant projects like Legal's Seafood and educational institutions such as Harvard and MIT. Among other project highlights, the shop did the plumbing subcontract work at Lowell's Tsongas arena and recently completed work at Delta's new Terminal A at Logan Airport. (See related article, "Commonwealth takes a flier" elsewhere in this issue.)

As he steps into the leadership position, Hannon will be juggling his busy schedule to accommodate Commonwealth's bustling slate of projects and his PHCC work. "I welcome the challenge," he says.

## In the news

OSHA AWARDED ITS 2005 EGAN-VOLPE AWARD for worker safety to Local No. 12 Training Director, **Joe Conley**. He is the director of the Local No. 12- and PHCC of Greater Boston-sponsored training program, which has one of the nation's highest rates of OSHA-trained members.

THE UNITED ASSOCIATION, LOCAL NO. 12'S NATIONAL ORGANIZATION, reports that **William Hite**, General President, and **Pat Perno**, General Secretary-Treasurer, have taken over from Martin Maddaloni and Thomas Patchell who resigned from their respective positions.

THE PLUMBING HEATING COOLING CONTRACTORS OF MASSACHUSETTS recently named **Paul Kennedy**, president of Dorchester's P. J. Kennedy & Sons, its "Contractor of the Year" and awarded The Robert J. Sinnott Public Affairs Award to **Anne Collins**, director of the state's Division of Professional Licensure, and **Joe Peluso**, executive director of the Commonwealth's Plumbing Board.



Commonwealth Plumbing's Tom Hannon is the PHCC of Greater Boston's incoming president.

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