



THE PIPELINE

News and Information about the Eastern Massachusetts Plumbing Industry • Fall, 2004

www.massplumbers.com

New rooms at the inns —Hotel boomlet spurs new jobs

“Hotels are an important part of our jobs mix.”
—Paul Harrington,
E. M. Duggan



The Westin Seaport hotel begins to take shape next to the Boston Convention and Exposition Center.

Our accommodations may not have the glitz or sheer size of Las Vegas’ mega casino resorts or the whimsical flourishes of Orlando’s theme park properties, but the Boston area is a destination market in its own right and hotel construction is on the upswing here. Hospitality industry reps are

reluctant to call the trend an outright construction boom—maybe “boomlet” is more appropriate—but hotel projects represent a good chunk of work for PHCC of Greater Boston contractors and Local No. 12 plumbers.

Spurred by chronic room shortages, developers green-lighted a number of hotel projects a few years back only to derail them after the events of 9/11 and a soft economy devastated the tourism industry. With the economy sputtering forward and travelers once again hitting the road, some of the projects are back on track.

Another factor driving the mini boom is Boston’s new Convention Center. The entire South Boston Seaport area is undergoing a

transformation, and hotel construction figures prominently in the makeover. Perhaps the project with the highest profile is the 790-room Westin Boston Convention & Exhibition Center Hotel that recently broke ground. Although it has been scaled back from its original 1200-room plans, the \$200 million hotel will be among New England’s largest when it opens in 2006.

Continued on p. 2

We’re able to focus on the mutual goal of bringing in work for contractors and man-hours for Local No. 12 members.

LMCT: A successful model

The old—and never quite accurate—picture of labor/management relationships in the construction trades was of antagonists at each other’s throats. According to this old model, the parties met only when necessary; and, when they did meet, fire-works were expected.

While negotiations still may deadlock, cooperation and collaboration, not confrontation, more accurately describes our relationship today. The Local No. 12 Labor-Management Cooperation Trust (LMCT) advances common objectives including the provision of health and welfare programs, pension plans, and training programs for union journeymen and apprentices. Negotiated in 1993, employer contributions, based on the number of hours worked by

Union members, funds the LMCT.

We created the LMCT to address challenges in the plumbing construction industry that are not typically resolved through the collective bargaining process. These issues include: the hazardous nature of construction work, competitive pressure from employers who do not pay standard area wages or do not provide standard area health and pension benefits, and compliance with governmental regulations. We also seek to ensure that plumbing codes, materials, and installations truly protect public health and safety.

Heading off challenges

Perhaps most importantly, the LMCT facilitates the exchange of information among the officers and members of Local No. 12 and

Continued on p. 3

Being a Union contractor has its benefits

When most folks hear the words “union” and “contractors,” the snap judgment is that the two groups are, by their very nature, adversaries. While the history of the Labor Movement is replete with tales of strife, today’s construction unions and contractors recognize their interdependence and generally enjoy good working relationships. In fact, in the case of Local No. 12 and the PHCC of Greater Boston, the organizations work closely with one another through the joint Labor-

Continued on p. 3

Boston welcomes North America’s LARGEST Plumbing/HVAC trade show

Your FREE admission ticket to the October 14-16 ISH/PHCC Trade Show is enclosed.



Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors of Greater Boston
978-777-8764
www.massplumbers.com
www.phccboston.com



United Association Plumbers and Gasfitters
Boston Local 12
617-288-6200

www.plumbersandgasfitterslocal12.org

Hotel construction brings jobs

Continued from p. 1

PHCC of Greater Boston contractor E. M. Duggan will be handling the Westin's plumbing work. Company President Paul Harrington says that a crew of up to 20 Local No. 12 plumbers will be on the site starting in November. With 2600 plumbing fixtures and features including huge banquet kitchens to accommodate 15,000 square feet of ballroom space, there will be much work to do.

"Because of our pre-fab capabilities, we offer high efficiency for repetitive work like the Westin," Harrington explains. "That's one of the reasons why we seek hotel projects. It's an important part of our jobs mix."

Luxury is in

Not all hotels fit the Westin mold. Whereas a handful of chains once dominated Boston's lodging market, and most of the properties resembled one another, today's hotels come in a wide variety and appeal to an array of niche audiences. Smaller boutique hotels, for example, generally forego function facilities and other full-service amenities but focus on well-appointed accommodations and eclectic design.

Cambridge's Hotel Marlowe, opened in 2003, is such a property. Duggan handled the HVAC, while J. C. Cannistraro, Inc. did the plumbing. "The rooms include leopard-skin furnishings," notes company President John Cannistraro, Jr. (Thankfully, there are no leopard-skin toilet seat covers—at least not yet.) He adds that hotel work like the Marlowe is becoming somewhat more complicated, with many of the newer properties calling for four-fixture bathrooms, including separate tub and shower stalls, on four separate walls. "Luxury is in these days," Cannistraro says.

J. F. Shine Mechanical, Inc. was the plumbing sub on another luxury boutique hotel, Nine

Zero on Tremont Street in downtown Boston. Company President Nancy Shine says that the high-rise property had a confined construction footprint that posed challenges to her crew of Local No. 12 plumbers. With literally no on-site parking, deliveries had to be made before 7 a.m., and workers had to use public transportation. Also, since the building was constructed during the winter and exposed to the outside until near the end of the project, the plumbers couldn't test their work without risking frozen pipes. Nine Zero uses a Sovent system, with a common vent in the middle of the building for tie-ins. Since the emerging system was new to some of Shine's crew, Nancy said that it was good to gain the experience.

Speaking of luxury, Duggan also handled the recent renovation of Boston's grand dame, the Ritz Carlton. The classic 75-year-old hotel was overdue for a makeover. The crew removed the wet walls and roughing, and essentially gutted all of the bathrooms before installing new high-end fixtures.

A nation of travelers

The new construction is not all luxury accommodations. With Boston's biotech, high-tech, financial, and other companies attracting many travelling workers and consultants to the area, high-value, extended-stay properties are another hot concept taking hold here. Cannistraro recently completed work on two Marriott extended-stay hotels in Charlestown and Brookline.

Another trend is to pair hotels with condominium units, and sometimes retail and office space, for a "mixed-use" property. Sales of the high-end condos help make the hotel sides of the mixed-use deals sweeter for developers and financiers, while the condo residents can take advantage of the hotels' amenities. Cannistraro is the plumbing sub on the mixed-use 500

Atlantic Ave. in Boston. Other mixed-use projects in the pipeline include the Regent Battery Wharf and Mandarin Oriental, both in Boston.

Driven by business and leisure travel, the hospitality industry is a vital economic engine in the Boston area. "We've become a nation of travelers," says Cannistraro. "Ironically, the plumbing industry is one of the very few where traveling generally isn't required. But, we're happy to help build the hotels."

Safety is the draw for PHCC raffle

Hundreds of Local No. 12 plumbers have already qualified to have their names entered into a special Safety Incentive Raffle that will be giving away prizes over the coming months. Sponsored by the PHCC of Greater Boston, prizes include trips to Europe and Bermuda.

"Our goal is to work with the Plumbers Union to establish the finest safety record in the business," said Joe Clancy of American Plumbing & Heating, and the President of the PHCC of Greater Boston.

In early October, a special raffle will be sponsored by the union contractors who make up the PHCC of Greater Boston. The raffle will be held during the PHCC's Industry Appreciation Night. Local No. 12 plumbers who have completed the OSHA 10-hour program, and who have had safe work records, will be eligible.

"We have established a very positive working relationship with Local No. 12," said Clancy. "Our joint safety program is another way we cooperate together to benefit our industry."

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



Newer properties such as the Seaport Hotel reflect Boston's growing hospitality industry.

Inn Demand

Select hotel projects in the Boston area

Broke ground in 2004:

- **Westin Boston Convention & Exhibition Center Hotel**, 790 rooms, expected to open in 2006
- **Mandarin Oriental**, Boston, 149 rooms, expected to open in 2007
- **Regent Battery Wharf**, Boston, 150 rooms, expected to open in 2007

Opened in 2004:

- **The Onyx Hotel**, Boston, 112 rooms
- **The Jurys Boston Hotel**, 220 rooms
- **Courtyard Marriott**, Boston, 91 rooms
- **Bullfinch Clarion**, Boston, 88 rooms

Opened in 2003:

- **Embassy Suites**, East Boston, 272 rooms
- **Hotel Marlowe**, Cambridge, 236 rooms
- **Brookline Courtyard Marriott**, 188 rooms
- **Residence Inn By Marriott**, Boston, 168 rooms
- **Hotel Commonwealth**, Boston, 149 rooms

Opened in 2002:

- **Kendall Hotel**, Cambridge, 65 rooms
- **Nine Zero Hotel**, Boston, 190 rooms
- **Hampton Inn**, Cambridge, 114 rooms

Construction reforms are now Mass law

After months of wrangling, a new package of reforms now changes the ways state and local governments manage public construction projects. The sweeping overhaul, which became effective July 19, marks the first time in nearly 25 years that the Commonwealth has made any significant construction law changes.

Construction industry professionals, including those in the plumbing trades, praised the reforms. But the commission of trades reps that helped craft the legislation characterized the revisions as a boon to everyone connected to public construction, including public agencies and taxpayers. Contractors will have more opportunities to bid on public projects, but agencies will have more autonomy in choosing contractors.

Local No. 12 Business Manager Kevin Cotter praised State Senator Dianne Wilkerson and State Representative Marty Walsh for chairing the broad-based commission. "There were

people both for and against the filed sub-bid law," Cotter says. "But through education, people in the industry were able to win over opponents."

Among the highlights, the reform package maintains the state's filed sub-bid system, although it now applies to projects with a higher threshold of \$20,000. The reforms also require owners to appoint a professional project manager for all projects over \$1.5 million, establish annual DCAM certification for subcontractors, and create pre-qualification guidelines for contractors and subcontractors on projects over \$10 million.

Significantly, the laws now allow so-called "alternative methods" of construction for projects over \$5 million. The Construction Manager at-Risk provision places the responsibility of cost overruns on contractors, while Design-Build allows one firm to handle road and bridge projects in the state from planning through completion.

Plumbing code changes on tap

The Massachusetts State Board of Plumbers and Gasfitters recently headed into the final stretch towards completing the most comprehensive update in the state plumbing code in over a decade.

This summer, the Board, chaired by Paul Kennedy, Sr., of P.J. Kennedy & Sons, a PHCC of Greater Boston contractor, opened important hearings on hundreds of anticipated changes in the code. Kennedy reported that the entire code will be reformatted, and that there will be a new, comprehensive index so that items will be easier to find. After hearings in Springfield and Boston, the Board is taking final steps towards making the changes. The new code is expected to be published early next year.

In related news, a new state law authorized the Board to establish continuing education requirements for all plumbers in the State. The law was created with the support of a broad coalition from the plumbing industry. Local No. 12 backed the new bill, as did PHCC chapters from around the state.

The continuing education requirements will apply to both journeymen and master plumbers. In addition, the new law allows the Board to increase the requirements for apprentices. It is expected that the Board will increase the apprentice training period from 6000 to 8000 hours. Education hours are also likely to increase. These changes will bring Massachusetts in line with national apprenticeship standards.

Signatory contractors can reap benefits

Continued from p. 1

Management Cooperation Trust (LMCT)—with an emphasis on "cooperation."

Far from antagonists, the two sides regularly meet to hammer out agreements and develop programs that will help their groups, each other, and the industry. As a result, non-union companies are often surprised to learn about the many benefits available to them as signatory contractors with Local No. 12.

Cutting-edge training

For example, our world-class training center prepares Local No. 12 plumbers for the rigors of today's jobs and keeps them on the cutting edge with the latest skills such as CAD, medical gas, all welding disciplines, and OSHA 10. Our five-year United Association certified training program is considered the best in the nation. And if a contractor needs special certifications, the training center is flexible enough to develop programs upon request.

The LMCT's Market Recovery program, which helps level the playing field, allows signatory contractors to successfully bid on work they might otherwise lose to the non-union sector. And our Industry Analysis program monitors payrolls on all public work to ensure compliance with the law and, again, a level playing field.

Benefits can be the bane of companies. Signatory contractors, however, participate in a comprehensive program that is both easy to manage and offers great benefits to Local No. 12 plumbers. Workers get the peace of mind of Master Medical health insurance, eyeglass, acupuncture and chiropractic coverage, as well as a solid pension package, while contractors get efficiencies, such as streamlined paperwork, and their own

peace of mind by working under the umbrella of Local No. 12's benefits program.

It all adds up to a Union advantage that many contractors find attractive. "Being a signatory contractor is win-win," according to DJ Plumbing company President David Johanson. "I get access to a pool of more highly skilled professional workers than I would on the open market. Plus I get the support of the Local's business agents. And my employees get a better standard of living." Johanson adds that the union is very professional and is in sync with the business needs of today's contractors.

For more information about becoming a signatory contractor, contact Local No. 12 at 617-288-6200.

New LMCT model shatters myths

Continued from p. 1

our employing subcontractors concerning projects, contracts, events, trends, and a host of other important matters. By meeting regularly, we're able to air—and frequently resolve—any potential conflicts. We're also able to do creative things together as a team and focus on the mutual goal of bringing in work for contractors and man-hours for Local No. 12 members.

The LMCT has developed a wide range of initiatives to encourage the free flow of ideas throughout our industry. We give special attention to the promotion of quality work, efficient operations, and the economic competitiveness of the unionized sector of the construction industry. Through these efforts, the LMCT Trust has transformed the way that labor and management work with one another.

Log on to the LMCT
www.massplumbers.com



DEVELOPING HOUSING BUSINESS Housing remains a vitally important sector for PHCC of Greater Boston contractors and Local No. 12 plumbers. Projects such as South Boston's West Broadway Redevelopment keep Dowd Plumbing Corp. of Stoughton busy.

Boston hosts huge ISH trade show—and you're invited

Local No. 12 and the PHCC of Greater Boston encourage plumbers and gasfitters to take advantage of one of the best opportunities in years to learn more about our industry.

The ISH/PHCC Trade Show will be in Boston October 14-16. This is the largest plumbing/HVAC trade show held in North America. The event will include 500 exhibitors from 17 countries. If you want to see the very latest in plumbing and heating technology, this is your chance. Your application for a free admission ticket is enclosed, courtesy of our joint Local #12 - PHCC of Greater Boston Labor-Management group. And if you want to sign up for all the activities and seminars that are being offered, go to www.phccweb.org.

What you will see

This unique trade show will be held at the recently opened

Boston Convention and Exposition Center, located in South Boston. The Convention Center itself is a worth the visit. How big is the new expo building? It occupies most of its 60-acre site and contains 1.7 million square feet of meeting space. The main exhibition area alone is large enough to accommodate more than three football fields—with room to spare.

Want to check out the latest products and services from virtually every leading U.S. manufacturer? How about the most recent equipment and styles from Europe or Asia? This is your chance to see it all under one roof.

If you want additional information, visit the PHCC web site: www.phccweb.org. For more free ticket applications, go to Local No. 12, or call the PHCC of Greater Boston office at 978-777-9764.

WELCOME

We are pleased to welcome the following signatory contractors

E.T. Mechanical, Inc.
Kidik Plumbing and Heating, Inc.

Tewksbury
Dorchester

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Safety and Fair Utilities in spotlight

Sometimes people complain that the legislature never accomplishes anything. But 2004 could be the year that proves just the opposite. In the past few months, there have been many changes in laws affecting the construction industry. See the related articles in this issue on construction reform, and on the new law establishing continuing education for plumbers in Massachusetts.

In addition, the state this year passed a law which will require that by 2006 all construction workers on state-funded jobs must have completed the OSHA 10-hour training program. Statistics show that construction continues to be one of the nation's most dangerous occupations. Local No. 12 and the PHCC of Greater Boston supported this latest legislation, and in recent years they have jointly trained hundreds of Local No 12 members in the OSHA 10-hour program.

Why the utilities don't play fair

One piece of important legislation not yet passed concerns "Fair Utility Competition." In Massachusetts and around the country, utility companies have entered into direct competition with both union and open-shop construction companies. This would be fine—except that the utility companies are using the money they take from rate payers to undercut the bids of private companies.

For example, you will often see ads from big utility companies in the Boston area advertising "Free Boilers" to consumers who convert to gas. Sounds good—until you realize that the utility makes sure that this "free equipment" is installed mostly by one of its own "affiliated" companies, one that has the same logo as the gas company itself. A private contractor can indeed become

part of the program, but has to pay thousands of dollars before he receives a single referral. When was the last time a private contractor could offer to give away "free equipment?"

When your gas bill goes through the roof this winter, remember that the check you write will be used to put your job at risk. It doesn't matter if you are a union or non-union plumber. The utility has jacked up its rates so that they can give away "free equipment." But you, the consumer, are paying for those "free" boilers that are being given to your neighbors, and installed by the utility company's "affiliate."

This is the reason why both union and non-union contractors are working to support "Fair Utility" legislation, which would stop the utilities from using ratepayer money to compete against any private business.

This bill hasn't made it through—yet. But in 2004 the bill has moved further than ever before. A group of union and non-union contractors worked with state house committee chairmen to get the bill attached to special utility legislation. In 2005, the bill will be back.

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

Joe Clancy
President, PHCC of Greater Boston

Jack McGinness
Business Agent, U.A. Local 12

Hugh Kelleher
Executive Director,
PHCC of Greater Boston

Roger Gill
Funds Administrator, U.A. Local 12