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August/September 2016

The Official Magazine of the Restaurant Facility Management Association

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Cover photo of the Downey, Calif., location by Michael Ulm, Vice President of Construction, Facilities and Design at Noodles & Company



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Outside My Comfort Zone

Why I decided to embrace networking opportunities

For me, **networking never came easy.** Truth be told, I am actually an introvert. I typically prefer to stay within my protected circle of family and friends instead of stepping outside into new or unknown situations to meet new people.

In social environments, I would only go to places or events if good friends or colleagues were going to be there as well. In fact, I would either wait to go with them (versus going alone), or I would purposefully go late to ensure folks I knew would be present when I arrived. Sound familiar? I know this sounds foreign to many people (i.e., the social butterflies), but I am sure it resonates with far more people than just me (i.e., my fellow introverts).

Over the last few years, I have realized my introversion was something I had to work on. How did I overcome my introversion? Well, I haven't yet done that. However, I continue to make it a focus of mine. I do so by forcing myself to get outside my comfort zone. Otherwise, I'd never leave it. I am proud to say that I have made great strides over the last few years and continue to make this effort a focus of mine on a daily basis.

Why is it important that I (and others in our industry) focus on networking? Networking is critical to what we do. It is absolutely necessary if we want to improve professionally or want to get to the next level of employment.

Do you know everything within your current profession? Are you prepared for all the new technology that your job may expose you to? How about things that could go wrong? Do you have a plan for every possible scenario you could face? Acknowledging that the answer to one (or all) of these examples is "no" is the first step toward making networking a priority. The second step is to force yourself outside of your comfort zone. Go find great networking opportunities, where you also can find answers to questions like the ones I just asked. You see, professionals within your network will likely have experience and tools that they can share with you to help you through new scenarios on the horizon.

Here are a few simple tips that have helped me during networking events:

- **Avoid sitting with friends or known associates at meetings.** This happens to us sometimes without even trying. Have you ever met someone new or learned something in these situations? Doesn't that warrant doing it more? I have found this to be temporarily awkward at times, but the gain always outweighs the initial awkwardness.
- **Introduce yourself to someone you frequently see at work or during other events.** Do you frequently walk by someone at work or at places like RFMA events, but never introduce yourself? Have you ever then gotten to know them later via

a project or meeting and realized they were actually nice or could help you? I've gotten so tired of this happening to me at work that I now start introducing myself to people in the hallway before this ever happens. The value I get out of it is great, but more importantly, it is the right thing to do (whether you work directly with them or not).

- **Check your ego at the door.** Ever worry about not seeming like an expert? Ever felt uncomfortable that you are not a vice president, director or at the same stature as a peer? Titles mean nothing. Also, no one knows everything, so don't be afraid to show that. Humility is a great quality; don't fall into the trap of thinking it is not.
- **Volunteer your time and services.** Not only is this a great way to help others, but it is a great way to meet new people. Also, people who like to volunteer and put others before themselves are some of the best ones to network with. This is why volunteering is such an ideal way to meet some great people.

I hope these tips inspire you to get involved with more networking opportunities. Can RFMA help you as well? Yes! In fact, where do you think I have found the biggest area outside my comfort zone? RFMA! I could share with you numerous examples of how RFMA has helped facilitate the different examples for me that I listed above. All I had to do was get out of my comfort zone; RFMA helped facilitate the rest.

If networking is something you can get better at, I highly encourage you to do so. The last four years for me at RFMA have been so helpful toward my personal and professional development of resources.

Here are some upcoming RFMA networking opportunities:

- RFMA Benchmarking event at Red Lobster headquarters, September 23 in Orlando
- RFMA Gives Volunteer event, September 24 in Orlando
- RFMA Benchmarking Roundtable at Zaxby's headquarters in Athens, Ga. on October 25
- RFMA 2017, March 5-7, 2017

Thanks for letting me share my thoughts with you, and thanks so much for all you do to make RFMA such a great community!

Tim Corcoran, PMP, CRFP
2016 RFMA Board Chair

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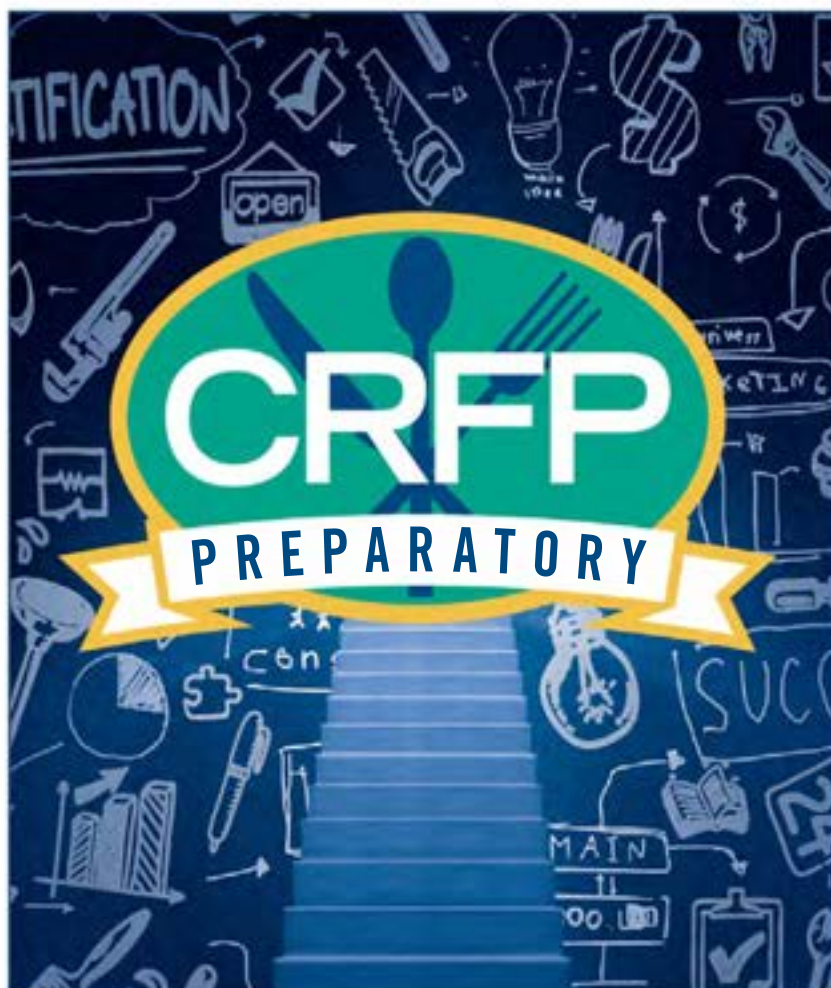
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Tracy Tomson, RFMA

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Always Planning Ahead Registration for RFMA 2017 opens soon

I hope you all have had a wonderful summer and have taken time to enjoy some much-deserved time off from the hectic world of facility management. As the fall draws near and your mind turns back to your priority projects, RFMA wants to remind you that we are here to help you be successful in all that you are doing to maintain your facilities in the most efficient manner possible.

We also want to thank those of you who completed the recent member satisfaction survey that was sent out to all members. Your feedback is important to us so we can effectively serve you and meet your needs. Be assured that we carefully reviewed every survey and will be following up with many of you by phone to delve further into some of your requests and suggestions.

I also want to mention that registration for our Annual Conference opens September 1. Go to RFMAannualconference.com and register for RFMA 2017, March 5-7 in Orlando. Don't let that early registration deadline for restaurateurs pass you by, and don't miss the chance to get a room at the beautiful Gaylord Palms. As a bonus, if you are bringing a restaurant team of 10 or more, registration and hotel rebates are available. So be sure to review those options on the conference website to help reduce your costs.

But if you can't wait until next March to connect with fellow members, RFMA has planned several benchmarking events, best practices panels and Member Meet-Ups for the upcoming months. I encourage you to check the event calendar on RFMAonline.com to see if we are coming to a city near you. If so, make plans to join us! These intimate events allow members to really network and learn from other RFMA members who work in their region. The post-event feedback we receive is overwhelmingly positive, and we hope you consider joining us at one of our upcoming events this year!

Thank you, as always, for letting us serve you.

Tracy Tomson

Tracy Tomson
Executive Director, RFMA



"Registration for our Annual Conference opens September 1. Go to RFMAannualconference.com and register for RFMA 2017, March 5-7 in Orlando. Don't let that early registration deadline for restaurateurs pass you by, and don't miss the chance to get a room at the beautiful Gaylord Palms. As a bonus, if you are bringing a restaurant team of 10 or more, registration and hotel rebates are available."



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RFMA Fall Events

September

Member Meet-Up in Newport, Calif: *Date TBD, check our Event Calendar*

Sept. 23: Restaurant Facilities Benchmarking Roundtable: Orlando

Sept. 24: RFMA Gives 2017 Volunteer Day at Daily Bread in Orlando

Sept. 24: RFMA Gives Volunteer Appreciation Event in Orlando

Orlando Benchmarking Event at Red Lobster Headquarters*

Sept. 23: Friday, from 2– 5 p.m.

RFMA restaurant members, join the RFMA Board of Directors

and our hosts: Steve Garver, CRFP, Denny's

Jack McNertney, CRFP, Red Lobster

Eric Rainville, Tavistock Restaurant Collection for a
Restaurant Facilities Benchmarking Roundtable.

Topics include: CMMS, energy management systems and HVAC/R
preventive maintenance programs.

Register for this event in our Event Calendar on rfmaonline.com.

**This event is for RFMA restaurant members only.*

October

Restaurant Facilities Benchmarking Roundtable: Washington, D.C., area

Oct. 25: Restaurant Facilities Benchmarking Roundtable: Athens, GA

Member Meet-Up (Best Practices Session with Restaurant Panel):

Boston; specific dates not listed as they are still being confirmed.

Register and learn more about these upcoming fall events on our
Event Calendar on rfmaonline.com.

If you are a restaurateur and are interested in hosting a
benchmarking event in your region, please contact
Heather Webb at heather@rfmaonline.com.

Join us for our RFMA Gives 2017 Volunteer Day

Come join us for a special volunteer
day at the Daily Bread located in
downtown Orlando on **Saturday,
Sept. 24**. Volunteers will work on a variety of projects, including
painting and landscaping. Please visit the RFMA website for further
details and to register for the event.



Want to follow all the progress and get the latest updates on RFMA Gives 2017?

Make sure to subscribe to our RFMA Gives blog on our
RFMA website, rfmaonline.com, under RFMA Gives or Blogs.

To become a subscriber log into the RFMA website and
click "Subscribe" at the top of the RFMA Gives blog.

We are still looking for donors for these RFMA Gives 2017 projects!

- Remodel restrooms
- Remodel dry storage room
- Remodel/construct two new offices
- Supply/install new garage-style, pull-down exterior door
- Remodel kitchen to include new soup area
- Donate disposable plates, cups, spoons, paper goods, etc.
- Donate folding tables and chairs for interior dining room
and exterior patio
- Electrician to install new building panel
- Donate sail-type awning for new patio
- Supply/install new mop sink
- Powder coat aluminum fencing
- Replace carpeting in administration building

If you are interested in donating or have any questions
about any of these projects, please contact Jeff Dover, CRFP, at
(972) 805-0905, ext. 3, or email him at jeff@rfmaonline.com.



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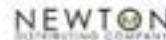
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Thanks to Our RFMA Gives Donors

The RFMA Gives 2017 project is gaining momentum, and numerous vendors and members have generously donated equipment and services for this wonderful event. So far, the committed items include:



Grease trap pumping: Primary by *SLM Facility Solutions Nationwide*, Secondary by *Liquid Environmental Solutions*

Pallet jack by *Classic Installs Inc.*

Equipment repair service by *Whaley Food Service* (labor) and *Parts Town* (parts)

Hood cleaning by *Rainbow International Restoration*

Construction dumpster: Primary by *RiverRoad Waste Solutions Inc.* Secondary by *Westrock* and *Waste Management*

New smallwares by *Franklin Machine Products*

Shelving for kitchen/dry storage and walk-ins by *VMC Facilities LLC*

Electrical panel upgrade by *Stones River Electric/Square D (panel)*

FOH flooring, strip and reseal VCT, replace black vinyl base by *Superclean* (installation), *Red Lobster* (VCT) and BOH flooring by *Silikal America*

Upgrade interior FOH/BOH ceiling lights by *Stones River Electric*

Upgrade hood fire-suppression system by *Academy Fire Life Safety*

Replace FOH/BOH ceiling tiles and grid by *Sapphire Construction*

Replace wooden pass-through with stainless steel by *Florida Stainless*

Provide/install FRP in BOH/cooking areas by *Sheer Enterprises Inc.*

Redesign kitchen and provide building remodel drawings by *Ruby Tuesday Inc.*

Replace storage tank water heater with tankless unit *Water Heater Man Inc.*

Relocate ice machine and remove upright two-door cooler/freezer units by *Caspers Service Co.*

Supply walk-in cooler/freezer combination unit by *Chipotle*

Supply refrigeration for new walk-in cooler/freezer unit by *Heatcraft Worldwide Refrigeration*

Periodic pest control treatments by *Amazing Pest Control*

Install concrete ramp for new garage entrance to building by *Mad Jack's Facilities Resource*

Replace existing t-stats with EMS: Primary by *Entouch Controls*. Secondary by *75F*, *Ektos LLC*. and *Powerhouse Dynamics*

Supply/install new security/CCTV system by *Tyco Integrated Security*

Paint the exterior of the buildings by *U.S. Exterior* and *Paint Folks*

Supply paint for interior and exterior by *Benjamin Moore* and *DMC Facility Services*

Remove/dispose existing steel pipe queue rail at front entry by *Fine Line Facility Services*

Replace exterior wall sconces by *Restaurant Lighting Concepts*

Replace parking pole light heads by *MX Services*

Supply replacement A/C units by *The Trane Co.* and *Johnson Controls*

Install new A/C units by *Performance Air*

Air balance building by *Melink Corp.*

Replace building roof by *Royalty Roofing* (installation) and *Duro-Last Roofing Inc.* (material)

Supply new exterior signage: Primary by *Sign Manager*, Secondary by *MC Sign*

Replace four exterior doors by *Locknet*

Repair/replace parking lot around Daily Bread building: Primary by *Mad Jack's Facilities Resource*, Secondary by *Pavement Exchange*

Paint parking stops by *Fine Line Facility Services*

Professional landscaping by *Dentco*

Patio addition by *Versico Roofing* (pavers)

Install concrete bollards for patio awning system by *Mad Jack's Facilities Resource*

Periodic A/C filter replacement by *Bonded Filters*

Periodic HVAC maintenance by *AFM Inc.*

Equipment cleaning, power washing, janitorial by *Hoodz International* and *Superclean*

RFMA Gives video and photography by *DWM Inc.*

Food safety training by *Lars Johnson*

Volunteer day shirts, gloves, goggles, medical supplies by *Cintas Corp.*

Window shades by *Roll-A-Shade*

Breakfast on volunteer day by *Starbucks*

Water softener: Primary by *Culligan*, Secondary by *Kinetico*

Warehouse in Orlando for material staging by *National Distribution Service Inc.*

Develop logo for Daily Bread by *Flora Creative*

If you have questions or are interested in donating, please contact Jeff Dover, CRFP, at (972) 805-0905, ext. 3, or email him at jeff@rfmaonline.com

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Michael Brown, CRFP • Micah Dyer, CRFP • David Reeb, CRFP • Fletcher (Fletch) Vess, CRFP

Get to know some of our recent **VENDOR CRFP** designees! We are excited that more of our members are joining this distinguished group. We credit their knowledge and experience, as well as their initiative for taking advantage of our online learning modules.



Congratulations **VENDOR CRFPs**

Michael Brown, CRFP — Senior Project Manager for Horizon Construction Co. Inc.
Micah Dyer, CRFP — Director of Business Development for Legacy Air Inc.
David Reeb, CRFP — Business Development for Facility Solutions Inc.
Fletcher (Fletch) Vess, CRFP — Project Manager for Horizon Construction

What do you enjoy most about your job?

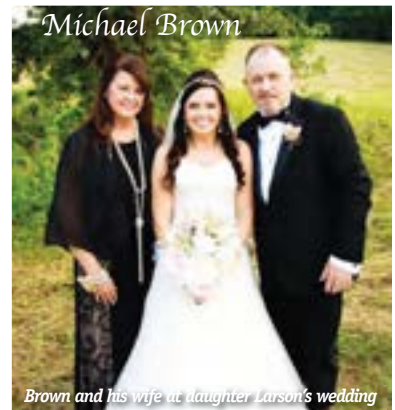
Brown: I get to meet new people on a daily basis, understand their issues and find a cost-effective solution to the problem. **Vess:** The challenge of variety. You might think managing restaurant construction and maintenance projects would become monotonous, but it's just not the case for me. Every project has a life of its own. From diverse operators and managers to unique layouts and site conditions, each job takes on its own personality, and I enjoy the variety of challenges they provide. **Reeb:** In my current and prior roles, the chance to travel and meet new people is a big plus, as well as the opportunity to partner with facility leadership to execute their national rollout and remodeling projects. **Dyer:** I enjoy the variety. Last week I was sitting in a boardroom reviewing the repair and maintenance spending with a customer and developing a strategy on how to use capital funds, and yesterday I was on the roof installing a compressor for a walk-in cooler.

What other companies have you worked for prior to your current position?

Brown: I was CEO of Joppa Construction Co. Inc. for more than 15 years. I have also worked as a Facilities Consultant for Chick-Fil-A. **Reeb:** Prior to joining Facility Solutions Inc. I started in the restaurant industry in my teens with a family-owned Italian restaurant in Northern Michigan. My first management position was Kitchen Manager at a scratch kitchen concept under the Brinker umbrella in the 90s. From there I moved on Boston Market, where I worked my way up to multi-unit store

I would most assuredly recommend the course to anyone who is responsible for facilities maintenance. Regardless of your level of experience, it is virtually impossible to be an expert in all fields. This coursework gives a very good overview of most of the opportunities you will face as a facilities/project manager in the restaurant industry.

— Michael Brown, CRFP,
on the CRFP designation



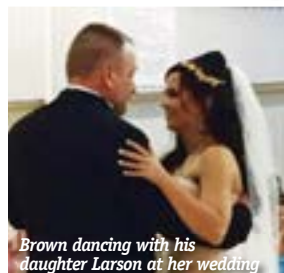
Brown and his wife at daughter Larson's wedding



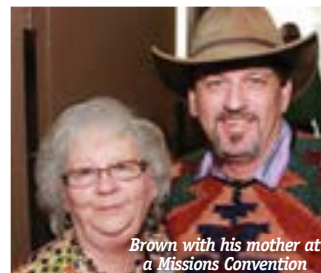
Brown with his family at Christmas



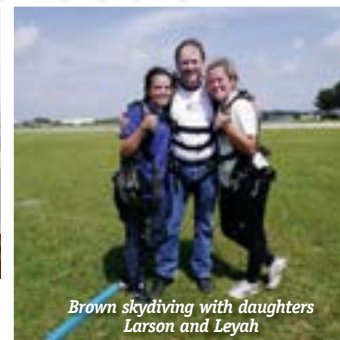
Brown with daughters Larson and Leyah ready to go ziplining



Brown dancing with his daughter Larson at her wedding



Brown with his mother at a Missions Convention



Brown skydiving with daughters Larson and Leyah

Michael Brown, CRFP • Micah Dyer, CRFP • David Reeb, CRFP • Fletcher (Fletch) Vess, CRFP

I think it comes down to real-life experience. Working in restaurants and helping install equipment or replace broken parts really gives an insight into a lot of the questions.

— Micah Dyer, CRFP, on his success in achieving his CRFP designation

management. I joined Panera Bread, in 2002, where I worked my way to being a Manager of Operations Services. **Dyer:** I was lucky to get scooped up by Legacy during college. Everything I did prior was small part-time jobs like being a waiter or selling knives. **Vess:** My first job, more than 24 years ago, was as a busser at a family-friendly restaurant. I worked my way through college making sandwiches and cooking chicken in a deli. I've always been around the food-service industry, and I've benefited from the demanding pace and pressures of those early jobs. In my career as a builder, I've had the opportunity to build restaurants and light commercial buildings from the ground up. I think having experience as an end user and a builder gives me perspective as I work with clients to fill their needs.

When you were new to the industry, what was the most surprising thing you learned about the restaurant world?

Vess: It's all about people. School taught me a lot about contracts, business law and successful project planning. However, I was six months into my building career before I realized that building meaningful relationships with the people I worked for and with was the biggest factor in my success. Any job can be enjoyable if you can enjoy the people you collaborate with. **Dyer:** What surprised me most is how many details there are. It seems so simple to order food from a restaurant, but there are so many pieces of equipment and processes in place to cook the food properly and to eat it in a comfortable environment. **Brown:** Regardless of the brand you work for, the people, for the most part, really care about what they are doing and want to do it well. The facilities issues are also very consistent from brand to brand. **Reeb:** How close knit people in the industry are; the friendships last a lifetime.

What is your all-time favorite movie? **Brown:** "Red Dawn."

Dyer: I am a big fan of movies where the good guys are criminals, and they get away with it, such as "Ocean's 11," "The Italian Job" and even the Jason Bourne series. **Reeb:** "Raiders of the Lost Ark." I enjoy movies that are action packed and entertaining. **Vess:** I know what you're thinking: "Fletch" with Chevy Chase. I do like that movie, but I have to say my favorite movie is probably "McLintock!" with John Wayne and Maureen O'Hara. It's a fun Western I compel my whole family to enjoy.

What is the most challenging situation you've ever faced in a facility or on the job? How did you handle it? **Reeb:**

Transitioning from restaurant operations to a sales role has been a challenge. Luckily, having honed my industry experience, I'm able to



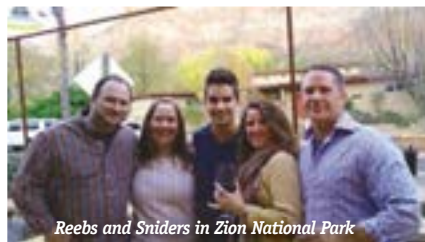
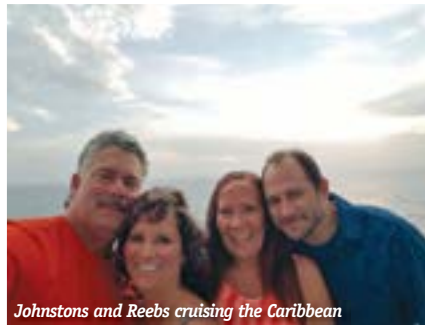
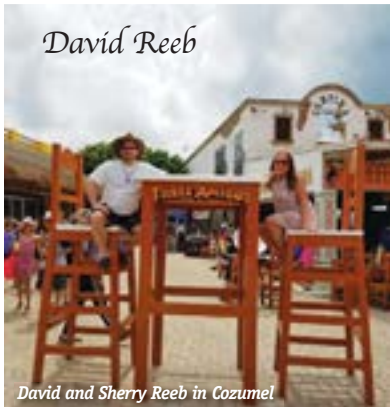
Micah Dyer

provide clients with a high level of service and deliver a quality product for their national roll-out and remodeling projects.

Brown: The most challenging opportunity is when a colleague fails to deliver for a client and the client is unhappy. I have found it best to accept responsibility and be 100 percent honest about the situation and then work very hard to resolve the issue and earn the client's respect again. **Vess:** I was forced to contractually discipline a subcontractor I really liked. His work quality had slipped, and his inconsistencies were threatening the entire project. We met together, and I explained the financial consequences of his performance and the needed corrections to put us back on track. While the meeting wasn't pleasant, I'm happy to say the results were successful, and we remain friends today.



Micah with his daughter



The online prep courses are great at refreshing forgotten knowledge, as well as filling in knowledge gaps. It also affirms that I have achieved a certain level of credibility when I am in front of potential clients.

—David Reeb, CRFP, on the CRFP designation

What is your favorite work-related app? **Vess:** Google Photos. I can take several pictures, put them in an album and upload them to the cloud. I can then share them with anyone via a text or email link. This is very helpful when looking at several projects in one day. **Brown:** Electrician's Bible. **Dyer:** Pandora. It can calm me down or get me pumped up, depending on what the day brings. **Reeb:** FlightView. It's a great way to track the status of flights. I've spent a lot of time in airports, visiting clients and making sales calls, and it provides me with a lot of information you can't get from the airlines.

What is the best advice you ever received? **Brown:** "Tell the truth. Regardless of what it may cost you, always tell the truth." **Dyer:** The best advice I ever received was not to go into debt for a car loan. I didn't end up listening to the advice, but with hindsight being 20/20, it was the best thing anyone ever told me so far. **Vess:** "Don't take down a fence before you know why it was put up." I think some boundaries keep you free. **Reeb:** "Treat people the way you want to be treated."

Who is the most impressive person you have ever met? **Vess:** I was assigned to do some volunteer work with a pediatric surgeon, Dr. Devn Cornish. He was instrumental in the creation of the Children's Healthcare of Atlanta Network of hospitals and developed medical devices to save the lives of premature babies. He is a world-renowned surgeon and a very busy person. However, his greatest quality was his ability to slow down and teach those around him. I became a grateful student every time we worked together. **Brown:** Ron McKay, Jr., who owns a project management company called Ariete International. **Dyer:** I met the founder of Dollar Shave Club. He was actually the guy who encouraged me to set a work record for

my beard! **Reeb:** My high school chemistry/physics teacher. He was a great role model for treating everyone with respect and teaching to multiple levels of ability in the same classroom at the same time.

To what would you attribute your success in achieving your CRFP? **Brown:** I have spent 30+ years in this industry and have used my own hands to physically do this work. That experience gives me the ability to understand issues and know the best course of corrective action to take. **Dyer:** I think it comes down to real-life experience. Working in restaurants and helping install equipment or replace broken parts really gives an insight into a lot of the questions. **Reeb:** The knowledge I gained from managing and supporting restaurant operations, along with the support I received from the team at Facility Solutions Inc. during my preparation for the exam. **Vess:** Like developing film, I've had time and exposure. (I apologize to the Millennials for the ancient reference.) When taking the CRFP preparation course, I found myself recalling past experiences and drawing from them.

Would you recommend attaining a CRFP to other colleagues? Why? **Brown:** Yes, I would most assuredly recommend the course to anyone who is responsible for facilities maintenance. Regardless of your level of experience, it is virtually impossible to be an expert in all fields. This coursework gives a very good overview of most of the opportunities you will face as a facilities/project manager in the restaurant industry. **Dyer:** Having a CRFP helps people know that you are serious about this industry and that you know what you are talking about. I think everyone should get it! **Reeb:** Yes, the online prep courses are great at refreshing forgotten knowledge, as well as filling in knowledge gaps. It also affirms that I have achieved

Michael Brown, CRFP • Micah Dyer, CRFP • David Reeb, CRFP • Fletcher (Fletch) Vess, CRFP

Just like getting my hand stamped at the amusement park, with the CRFP people now have a good idea where I have been. It's a door opener and a confidence builder.

—Fletcher Vess, CRFP, on the CRFP designation



Vess enjoys fishing and camping with his family.



Vess and his family hike to the top of Stone Mountain.



Vess and his wife, Trisha, try out curling.



Vess at the Horizon Construction Co. corporate office.



The Vess family enjoys a cool fall morning raising funds for summer camps.

a certain level of credibility when I am in front of potential clients.

Vess: Just like getting my hand stamped at the amusement park, with the CRFP people now have a good idea where I have been. It's a door opener and a confidence builder.

What do you do for fun in your spare time? **Brown:** I love to spend time with my family. I enjoy hunting, working at the local homeless shelter and singing on the praise team at my church. Next to spending time with my family, I enjoy going on short-term mission trips to multiple countries across this planet, assisting

people with constructing churches, homes and shelters. **Dyer:** I have bipolar hobbies. I either want to be outside hiking or walking downtown, or I want to be curled up inside binge watching movies and shows on Netflix. **Reeb:** During the summer, I spend time at the lake with my family in Northern Michigan. Year round I dabble in home brewing. **Vess:** I have a great wife of 17 years and three children. I enjoy spending my time with them doing any number of activities. Some of our favorites are camping, riding bikes, soccer, dance, tennis and attending church. 🍷

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RFMA's Kensell Wins Star Award from DFWAE

RFMA's Education Director, Debi Kensell, was recognized with a

Star Award for her outstanding work toward making Dallas Fort Worth Association Executives' (DFWAE) Association Day a success. DFWAE is an organization dedicated to professional development for CEOs of associations and their vast staff of professionals.

Arby's Expands its Roster of Company-Owned Restaurants

Arby's will acquire 19 units in the Knoxville, Tenn., market from franchisee T.G.J. & Co., the latest move in the chain's plan to buy up restaurants from small franchisees in markets where it already operates company-

owned stores. The strategy is boosting sales, and the significant investment is instilling confidence in franchisees, Chief Operating Officer John Bowie said.

Barnes & Noble to Create a New Restaurant Concept

Barnes & Noble will open four concept stores next year with larger cafes. Waiters will serve full meals and beer and wine with a goal to keep shoppers lingering longer. The retailer has hired an executive chef to create affordable breakfast, lunch and dinner menus, CEO Ron Boire said.

DWM Facilities Maintenance Earns Fastest-Growing Company Distinction

The *Albany Business Review* ranked DWM Facilities Maintenance on its list of fastest-growing companies for the second consecu-

tive year. DWM moved up from number 23 in 2014 to number 13 in 2015, with a five-year growth of 117 percent. The annual list is ranked by five-year revenue growth as determined by independent research conducted by the *Albany Business Review*.

"Earning the distinction of being a fastest-growing company in the Albany area two years is a testament to the superb daily efforts of our staff," said Founder and CEO David Meeks. "When I began DWM nearly 20 years ago, one of our core values was to control growth to ensure that servicing existing customers was paramount. I am happy to say that our team has been successful, both in maintaining long-term client relationships and growth into new market segments."

One of the ways DWM has maintained their success is through the expansion of resources such as employees and technology, all with a focus on maintaining the culture of problem-solving, partnership and customization.

Frontline International's Waste Oil Management System Receives Innovation Award

Frontline International received a bronze award in the Kitchen Innovation Challenge at the Commercial Kitchen 2016 show, held June 7-8 in Birmingham, England. Frontline International designs, manufactures and distributes equipment to manage fresh and waste oil in restaurants and other foodservice establishments. Specifically, it was the company's hands-free waste oil management system that was recognized by the judges.

At the show, the "Innovation Challenge Gallery" showcased the most innovative product and technology launches in the foodservice industry over the previous 12 months. The companies' products that received the most votes at the end of the first day were invited to pitch to a panel of judges who would then determine the award winners.

Frontline International's waste oil management systems—distributed by Bensons Products in the U.K.—were invited to the challenge and won the bronze based on the increased safety and productivity they afford restaurant employees.

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Frontline International's waste oil management systems are designed to dramatically minimize employee contact with oil. An optional electronic monitoring system measures oil usage, monitors filtration and tracks rebates for a single store or across all stores in a chain.



"We were thrilled to participate in both Commercial Kitchen 2016 and the Kitchen Innovation Challenge," said Giovanni Brienza, Vice President of Frontline International. "We are a product design and engineering company at heart—so being recognized for how our system can improve the well-being of workers as well as the operations of the store means a lot to us."

The Rise of the 'Luxury QSR' Restaurant Model Begins

"Luxury QSR" will be the trendy limited-service model of the future, Euromonitor International's Michael Schaefer said at the last NRA Show in Chicago. Eateries in the space, including the new California-based chain Starbird, will focus on premium, local and responsibly sourced ingredients and use mobile apps and other tech tools to speed service.

McDonald's Moves Headquarters to Downtown Chicago

McDonald's unveiled plans for a \$250 million, 608,000-square-foot headquarters complex on Chicago's West Side, where it plans to move from its suburban offices in 2018. The project's two buildings will be separated by green space, and 20 percent

of the floor space will be occupied by retail shops and other tenants.

Industry Veteran Jim Riekkel Joins EnTouch Controls

EnTouch, the market leader of facility asset and energy intelligence, announced that

industry veteran Jim Riekkel has joined the company as Director of Sales.

Riekkel will be based in Atlanta, and he will support large multi-site enterprise businesses that leverage EnTouch's IoT platform to significantly reduce maintenance and energy costs while regaining control over distributed

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facilities and increasing bottom line revenues.

Riekell has 20 years of diverse experience in sales and multi-unit operations, most recent as the director of enterprise energy strategies at Novar (a Honeywell company).

"EnTouch is extremely fortunate to have Jim join our rapidly-growing team," said Tom Kay, Vice President of Sales and Marketing of EnTouch. "He has a deep understanding of our space and the unique challenges multi-site businesses experience. His past success and his broad understanding of our space will be an enormous asset as he transfers that level of expertise to our industry-leading IoT platform [EnTouch 360]."

Pizza Hut's Biggest Franchisee Buys 39 Wendy's Units

Overland Park, Kan., franchisee NPC International will pay \$36.6 million for 39 Wendy's restaurants in North Carolina. NPC, the world's biggest Pizza Hut franchisee with 1,233 restaurants, has been acquiring Wendy's units since July 2013 and now operates 144 restaurants.

Powerhouse Dynamics Wins IoT Evolution Business Impact Award

Powerhouse Dynamics, creator of the SiteSage enterprise asset and energy management system, announced it has been honored with the IoT Evolution Business Impact Award for 2016. Presented at the IoT Evolution Conference in Las Vegas, the Business Impact Award recognizes companies and business leaders who have successfully implemented Internet of Things (IoT) solutions.

The Business Impact Award recognizes Powerhouse Dynamics' groundbreaking work in connecting equipment in commercial facilities into a single platform that delivers a range of benefits, including improved equipment maintenance, reductions in energy and water usage and, in the case of food service organizations, enhanced food safety. SiteSage delivers a comprehensive solution that fully leverages the IoT.

In particular, the award honors the company's achievements with Arby's Restaurant Group, Inc., where SiteSage technology has been rolled out across all 1,000+ Arby's company-owned restaurants. At Arby's, the SiteSage platform connects HVAC, refrigeration, cooking and irrigation equipment to



cloud-based analytics and controls to ensure operational efficiencies and energy and water savings, along with enhanced food safety, consistent product quality and reduced product shrinkage. Arby's has reported 15 percent energy reduction in company-owned restaurants since 2011 while also achieving significant water savings.

In accepting the award, Powerhouse Dynamics CEO Martin Flusberg said, "This award is particularly special because it recognizes the very real impact of SiteSage implementations. We are turning the promise of the Internet of Things into reality at restaurants and retailers every day, driving practical change with cutting-edge tools."

SiteSage, in use at thousands of restaurants, convenience stores, retail stores and other small commercial facilities across North and Central America, combines enterprise-wide equipment controls with granular monitoring and patented analytics to deliver the type of benefits that have been seen at Arby's. The SiteSage connected equipment platform is being used by a growing number of HVAC, refrigeration, oven, fryer and other manufacturers to deliver equipment that is factory integrated with SiteSage.

Last month, together with Arby's, Ecova and Weathermatic, Powerhouse Dynamics was also awarded the Environmental Leader Top Project of 2016 for a water conservation pilot program that saved more than 7 million gallons at Arby's locations, enough to fill 11 Olympic-sized swimming pools. And in May, Powerhouse Dynamics was named the 2016 Green Business of the Year by the Newton Needham Regional Chamber for achievements in energy savings and reductions in food waste, as well as for the company's focus on sustainable operations.

Ruby Tuesday Parking Lots to Add Tesla Superchargers

Ruby Tuesday has teamed with Tesla to roll out Tesla Supercharger electric car-charging stations at some of the restaurant chain's 729 U.S. locations. The announcement followed a test of one of the stations at a Ruby Tuesday in Missouri.

Shake Shack Makes its Mall Debut in Minnesota

Shake Shack opened its first enclosed mall location at Minnesota's Mall of America. The doors of its 2,800-square-foot restaurant opened to a line of more than 80 people. The New York-based burger chain now has 95 locations in the United States and 10 other countries, and it is opening new eateries at the rate of about 16 per year, said Andrew McCaughan, Development Vice President.

California-Based Pieology Buys Rival Pizza Chain

California-based Pieology Pizzeria has acquired smaller rival Project Pie, the first of what may be several acquisitions for the fast-casual pizza chain as competition grows, said Pieology CEO Carl Chang. The deal adds Project Pie's 30 eateries to Pieology's more than 100 locations in the United States and Guam.

Smashburger Expands to Toronto and University of Notre Dame

Smashburger, the rapidly expanding burger restaurant known for its fresh, smashed-to-order burgers, celebrates its expansion into the Toronto market through a new agreement with franchise operator HMS Host, which opened its first restaurant in Toronto Pearson International Airport on July 9.

The brand also continues its nontraditional expansion in the United States, with the announcement of a new agreement with franchise operator University of Notre Dame DuLac, which will bring a restaurant to Notre Dame University this fall. These openings represent the brand's continuous growth in nontraditional locations to deliver a burger experience that exceeds expectations to burger lovers around the world.

Smashburger currently operates in three casinos, 11 airport locations and one college campus, with several additional locations coming soon. 🍔

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Fall in Line

Strategic alignment is critical to high performance

In business, we measure success by the bottom line or, as I've heard some people put it, "We keep score with dollars." When you get right down to it, profit represents the combination of drive, work and efficiency that we call high productivity. Staying busy isn't enough; we have to stay busy at what matters, in ways that move us toward well-defined goals and objectives.

I've dedicated my 20-year career to helping my corporate clients improve employee performance and execute on strategy. I've stressed the value of time management skills, productivity training, to-do lists, task triage and avoiding distractions. I've pointed out how individual empowerment, effective teamwork and a positive workplace atmosphere all contribute to the kind of employee engagement that yields high levels of both productivity and profit. All of these topics are important.

But sometimes you have to go back to basics to really understand some key principles that lay the foundation for all work that occurs in a company—a basic business reality that, while often forgotten, governs all levels of productivity at work: the need for strategic alignment.

Top to Bottom

Good strategic alignment consists of practices that connect organiza-

tional strategy with employee performance as fully and as directly as possible. When you properly align your organizational structure, all employees act as strategic enablers of business, company policy, mission and vision, working from the same standards toward the same ends. This can only happen when upper management willingly shares its goals with everyone and sets up procedures to make sure everyone stays on track.

Once-a-year performance reviews just don't cut it. On the other hand, too much day-to-day control can become micromanagement—the exact opposite of productivity. In any case, performance reviews relate specifically to one person's job, not company strategy as a whole.

So how do you find a happy medium? How do you connect each employee's execution of their work to the organization's overall vision to create a comfortable level of strategic alignment resulting in profit, growth and all-around business success? How do you ensure that each employee, sitting at his/her desk, is working on exactly what they should be doing to drive successful strategy execution?

The Alignment Formula

A successful alignment effort includes three components: communication, education and oversight. Like a three-legged stool, all three legs support and reinforce the others. A weakness or failure in any

way destabilizes the entire effort; however, strength in all three provides a solid structure upon which to build.

Communication

Like so many other things, successful alignment starts with good communication. Suppose your boss gestures vaguely at the horizon and says, "Our goal is to climb that mountain over there." Which mountain does he mean? Does he have a method and schedule in mind? You'd better ask if he doesn't clarify. It surely won't help the bottom line if you end up climbing the workplace equivalent of Pike's Peak in a month when he wanted you to tackle Everest in a week.

That may sound a little silly, but something similar (though much less extreme) happened to an archaeologist as he directed the survey of a gas pipeline corridor. One day, a crew misread a map and surveyed the wrong 3-mile segment. The field director was at fault, because he didn't make his strategy clear enough to the crew leader. Luckily, the team recovered from the error and finished the project on time and under budget. If not for this one mistake, though, they might have finished days earlier—saving the company thousands of dollars.

As a leader, you have a duty to share your organization's strategic goals with your team members as plainly as possible. This includes everything—from long-term targets that may take years to achieve, down to the daily adjustments that keep you on course. While you don't necessarily have to reveal every little detail, the broad outlines of the organization's strategic goals should be transparent to all involved. That way, they can clearly see the general strategy, where they fit into its framework and how their efforts help move everyone closer to the final destination.

Most of us have worked in jobs where we had no idea where we were going or whether what we did even mattered. A business can survive this; it may even make money at it. But you can rest assured employee productivity will just limp along, uninspired at best. If you keep your team members in the dark, you run the risk of creating unhappy drones who either waste their time or sit muttering in their cubicles and guarding their staplers, like poor Milton in the movie *Office Space*. And he ended up burning the building down.

So communicate with your team members clearly and completely, lest you figuratively "burn down" your own business. Give them all the information and other tools they need to get the job done. Let them ask any and all questions they deem necessary, and answer them patiently. Then make sure you ask a few of your own to test their understanding of your goals. Along the way, take advantage of all available methods of communication: team meetings, email and video conferences.



As a leader, you have a duty to share your organization's strategic goals with your team members as plainly as possible. This includes everything—from long-term targets that may take years to achieve, down to the daily adjustments that keep you on course.

On a broader scale, communicating your basic organizational strategy can be as easy as publishing a brief mission/vision statement on the company intranet, holding an all-employee meeting or circulating a memo for everyone to literally sign off on. Most businesses give new employees a handbook outlining company policy, sometimes in exhausting detail. So invest even more time orienting everyone to the company's strategic goals as well—especially when there are changes in direction.

In most respects, strategic alignment is a vertical, top-down process. But a horizontal component should also exist in any organization consisting of two or more teams or departments. Goal sharing between groups keeps everyone on the same page. What you do doesn't happen in a vacuum: It affects others. Without horizontal communication, some people might lose track of what truly matters.

My father is a retired colonel in the U.S. Air Force, and I've heard stories of military leaders withholding much-needed items from soldiers on the front line for bureaucratic, often stupid, reasons. They became so focused on operating their personal fiefdoms they forgot the overarching organizational goal: to win the war.

Goal sharing breaks down "silos" that keep groups from sharing information and integrating successfully with each other. Furthermore, if each group knows the other groups' goals, they can work together to identify areas of overlap and then devise ways to eliminate redundancy and save the company money.

Education

A smart organization provides its employees with basic strategic guidelines right along with their procedural and occupational training. This falls under the heading of giving your people the tools they need to do their jobs right.

Strategic goal education doesn't have to take a ridiculous amount of time. People need to understand where they fit in the grand scheme of things, and why their work matters, so connect the dots for them. This demonstrates their value to the company, which will motivate them and hopefully increase their engagement level. Make it clear that, from the youngest intern to the chair of the board, everyone's work has importance if it moves the organization toward its strategic goals.

Strategic education can encompass a wide range of methodologies, in a number of areas important for alignment. For example, mentoring can achieve





the same ends as orientation-level education, with the mentor passing on strategic goals during the process of showing a new employee the ropes. If your company's goals are in a state of flux, "just in time" training can teach people new skills on the fly and help them adjust to rapidly changing objectives.

In more stable work environments, you'll still need to schedule the occasional event to pass along strategic adjustments and other updates. The town hall meeting offers an excellent venue for doing so. Companies like Apple, AT&T and Microsoft have leveraged this format using modern teleconferencing technology. I presented a keynote at Cisco using their telepresence room, and it was amazing talking with employees around the globe.

Lastly, continued professional development helps your people keep their heads in the game. Cutting training in times of a weak economy is a bad idea for employee motivation, growth and retention. Goal-oriented training becomes more important than ever during a recession, especially when you have no money available for raises. Reminding people about the importance of your investment in them can help you retain workers who might otherwise go elsewhere when things turn around.

Oversight

In the 1980s and 1990s, we used to talk about SMART objectives: They had to be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Timely. Now we've gotten SMARTER, adding Evaluate and Reevaluate to the end of the acronym. Individual workers are, in essence, constantly justifying their return on investment (ROI) by demonstrating their contributions toward achieving individual, team and organizational goals. Therefore, once you've defined the company direction, and provided the tools and training, you must now check in regularly to ensure employees are spending their time executing effectively.



For example, my assistant Becca sits at her desk working hard every day. I don't look over her shoulder or even talk with her daily, as I'm often out of town. So as her manager, how do I know I'm getting the best possible ROI out of her? How do I know that what she'll be working on in six months will achieve my objectives? Training and communicating my goals aren't enough; I also need to make sure Becca's execution stays on target.

I have to give her the space and time she needs to work on her

tasks, if I want her to be a strategic enabler of my business (versus running around putting out brushfires and never having time to do anything important). But we must also check in on a regular basis, so I can ensure she's headed in the right direction.

Mutual trust and feedback help here, as long as they really do flow in both directions. But you've probably heard the old saying: "Trust, but verify." This requires some sort of measurement system that lets both you and your employees track their performance. We use the Tasks feature in Outlook. Regular written reports might work, and informal weekly, monthly or quarterly reviews are much better than yearly. At a more high-tech level, you could implement some sort of software tracking system. For example, shared online workspaces have become common, allowing easy tracking of both an individual's day-to-day productivity and their progress toward specific objectives and projects.

The Bottom Line

The acronym "LASER" is short for Light Amplified by the Stimulated Emission of Radiation. Basically, a laser generates a special kind of light.

Normal light bounces in all directions, but a laser makes the light waves align in one direction only. Scientists call this "coherence." The coherent light beam emerges from the laser so tightly focused that, if powerful enough, it can slice through steel in the blink of an eye.

The right combination of communication, education and oversight encourages workplace coherence—a force multiplier that yields a whole greater than the sum of its parts. Employees slot easily into teams that link together readily to advance company strategy with a minimum of wasted energy—producing brilliant, focused light—rather than useless heat and noise.

When everyone knows exactly where to go and how to get there, making decisions becomes simple and fast. Taken together, the individual "parts" move with one unified purpose—like a school of fish or flock of birds—as a production machine.

Alignment of this nature removes bottlenecks, breaks down information silos, cuts redundancy, limits confusion and maximizes productivity. To work well, it requires a high level of coherence, composed of the proper measures of communication, education and oversight. Needless to say, one size does not fit all. How much of each ingredient you should add to your "alignment recipe" depends on the nature and size of your organization. Determining the right amounts of each requires careful testing, undertaken with a clear-eyed willingness to learn. 🧐

Laura Stack, MBA, CSP, CPAE, aka *The Productivity Pro*, gives speeches and seminars on sales and leadership productivity. For more than 25 years, she's helped Fortune 1000 clients to reduce inefficiencies, execute more quickly, improve output and increase profitability. She is the author of seven books, including *"Doing the Right Things Right: How the Effective Executive Spends Time."* Stack will be a signature speaker at RFMA 2017.



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Jumping Into the FOG

The Internet of Things provides insight into restaurant FOG accumulation

The Internet of Things (IoT) is an inescapable megatrend that will touch almost everything, even the lowly grease interceptor.

Megatrends are large, transformative global forces that impact everyone on the planet. Most intellectuals who put together lists of megatrends have identified the IoT as one of these transformative global forces.

The IoT Revolution

As the name implies, the IoT revolution is all about connecting everyday things to the internet, allowing them to send and receive data. The IoT is revolutionary because of the number of new connected devices and the speed at which the number of connected devices is growing. Companies like Cisco and Intel are estimating that the number of connected devices worldwide will rise from 15 billion today to between 50 and 200 billion by 2020. We are in the process of internet-enabling our bodies, homes, cars, utilities, industries and restaurants.

IoT connected devices are not just for convenience. They are the competitive tool of a generation. Companies that embrace connected

devices to measure and manage their major cost inputs, such as power, water, labor and natural gas, will have distinct competitive advantages. Those companies that do not embrace technology will be the high-cost suppliers and may be left behind.

High-Tech Restaurants

In the restaurant industry, customers are now familiar with the IoT's influence in the dining room, from self-ordering on tablets to paying for food, right at the table. It offers them the speed and convenience they crave, while the restaurant improves operational efficiencies and increases table turnover and sales.

Today's eating establishments are good examples of how the IoT is creating a positive impact on an industry. Connected sensors and networked intelligence are making a difference behind the scenes in mechanical and electrical systems. Restaurant equipment that includes commercial ovens, refrigerators, freezers, HVAC systems, lighting, signage, thermostats and irrigation systems is now being shipped with integrated wireless capabilities. These devices can send real-time data such as status, temperature,

Recently, the restaurant's wastewater system has also become a suitable candidate for centralized cloud facility management.

moisture levels or fault codes back to the manufacturer for technical support and maintenance purposes. They can even be controlled remotely.

Recognizing the potential for efficiency and productivity gains, several innovative software companies have developed cloud-based tools that collect, monitor and analyze information from all of these different restaurant systems and display it on a unified dashboard. From a desktop or smart phone, restaurant facility managers can view and manage critical systems for a single store location or for hundreds of locations across a region. This IoT application is allowing restaurants to maximize the lifespans of assets, reduce energy and operational costs, and improve food safety.

For example, a recent edition of *The Dish* featured an article that explained how Arby's Restaurant Group was able to collect enterprise-level power consumption data and then take steps to reduce power consumption by more than 15 percent and water consumption by more than 8 percent in its company-owned restaurants.

Putting the IoT into FOG

Recently, the restaurant's wastewater system has also become a suitable candidate for centralized cloud facility management. The

cleaning and rinsing of restaurant cooking equipment and flatware produces a mixture of fats, oils and greases (FOG) and solids that are collected in the restaurant's grease interceptor. Grease interceptors require servicing when the FOG and solids levels accumulate to a predetermined maximum limit.

Servicing the interceptor too frequently is a cost inefficiency. Not servicing the interceptor frequently enough causes grease blockages. This leads to several catastrophic results, including overflows and back-ups of raw sewage into the restaurant, causing restaurant closures and brand damage, as well as regulatory fines and plumbing costs.

The key to balancing between wasting money on frequent servicing and allowing FOG catastrophes is to know exactly when the interceptor's FOG and solids levels hit the maximum allowed limit.

Historically, FOG and solids levels were measured manually by restaurant staff, using a dip stick or "sludge judge." This manual measurement is usually inaccurate and is not the best use of cook staff time and energy. Recently, manufacturers have developed ultrasonic sensors that accurately measure the levels of FOG and solids in an interceptor and wireless transmit the level data to a touchscreen controller inside the restaurant so that level data is available at any time.



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Today's eating establishments are good examples of how the IoT is creating a positive impact on an industry.

Rob Abernethy has more than 30 years of experience in the environmental, water and wastewater industries. His past senior management roles include General Manager of American Carbon Services, President of MS Filter and Managing Director of Green Turtle Technologies. Abernethy is currently serving as Managing Director of Ecoinsight Instruments, a start-up company that will provide smart-meter technology to the water and wastewater market. His focus has been commercialization of innovative water and wastewater treatment technology companies.



A smart meter monitoring solution for fats, oils and grease.

Using the touchscreen controller, level data can be sent to the cloud through local Ethernet, Wi-Fi or cellular connections and loaded into a GIS database application. The database application provides facility managers with level data and history from all restaurants in a region and can push alarms and warnings to the mobile devices of facility managers, local restaurant managers and service providers. The FOG sensor data can be managed as a stand-alone platform, or the sensor can be incorporated into a whole-restaurant or enterprise-level data collections and analytics platform.

The Bigger Picture

Connected FOG sensors can be part of a much larger FOG management program, in which all of the stakeholders in the FOG ecosystem—including restaurants, service providers and municipalities—have access to the grease interceptor level data. In an ideal FOG ecosystem:

- Restaurants enjoy reduced service costs and eliminate catastrophic FOG events.
- Service companies become more efficient in collection routing, waste processing and waste disposal.
- Municipalities enjoy reduced sewer blockages, reduced enforcement costs and access to a FOG resource to use as feedstock to anaerobic digesters that produce green energy.

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The BOTTOM LINE

How Red Lobster approaches capital planning and spending

Welcome to FM Project Profile, an interview-style series in which a restaurateur spotlights a major facilities project. By discussing one of their most memorable facilities jobs, our members hope to share insight and inspiration. This month's profile comes from Jack McNertney, CRFP, with Red Lobster.

How many company restaurants and facility managers does Red Lobster have? 704 restaurants in the U.S. and Canada. There are 11 facility managers and 1 project design manager.

For store capital planning, do you budget yearly or by another timeframe? Annually. Our fiscal year runs June through May. Audits are performed between July and February, and these roll up to drive the plan for the following year.

How is the store capital planning completed? Facility managers perform an annual audit. Audits roll up into Oracle, and we determine need versus budget. Once we allocate budgets among the divisions, we pare the requested needs to meet budgeted guidelines.

Guest-facing projects always receive first priority. We have detailed tracking on carpets, roofs, HVACs, parking lots and other major assets. We use financial data, lease terms/expiration/options, guest counts, EBITDA and other variables as part of our decision-making matrix. Operations and the vice president of facilities both weigh in.

How many items are reviewed during the restaurant audit?

There are 105 questions with drop downs. We focus on site, building envelope, roofs, and mechanical and refrigeration systems. We own every asset improvement initiated, plus large equipment (dish machines, ice machines, conveyor ovens, walk-ins, etc.).

Are there any non-facility items in the audit, such as new wall coverings, furniture or storage sheds? Yes, we include the entire building and all assets attached to it.

Approximately how long does it take for a facility manager to complete and input the audit? The audit takes about three to four hours, and input takes about an hour. Once the audit is uploaded, it is shared with operations (the general managers and the directors of operations). Operations is asked to address items within their control, and the facility managers handle the rest.

Many projects are done on the spot and never make it to the audit. We refer to these as non-negotiables. If we find items that meet this criteria, they are acted upon immediately by the facility manager. Non-negotiable items include things that impact team member and guest safety, the brand, as well as health department/AHJ requests, electrical and ensuring all equipment is functional.



Guest-facing projects always receive first priority . . . We use financial data, lease terms/expiration/options, guest counts, EBITDA and other variables as part of our decision-making matrix. Operations and the vice president of facilities both weigh in.



Does operations have any input in the audit or yearly plan?

Yes, they always get the opportunity to weigh in. Sometimes these requests are “nice to dos”; sometimes they are things not visibly evident during the audit. General managers and directors of operations are given the opportunity to join the team during the audits. We use these as teaching moments, too.

How is a final budget calculated? Initially the brand provides a target number. I generally divide this among our eight divisions based on two-year historical spend, CPI indices and other variables. Budgets are broken down into several categories:

1. **Planned projects** that my team executes (from the audits)
2. **Unplanned projects** that pop up throughout the year, such as emergencies or equipment failure
3. **Back office:** a small fund controlled by the general manager that meets capital criteria
4. **Equipment:** anything not planned (fryers, microwaves, hot wells, grills, reach-ins, soup cookers/warmers, etc.)
5. **Corporate initiatives**, such as fire protection system upgrades, alarm system upgrades, etc.
6. **Corporate contingency:** special projects (EMS, HVAC proactive replacements, etc.)

This budget does not include remodel budgets, kitchen remodels and other corporate initiatives that are funded separately, yet executed by my team.

If the final capital budget comes in lower than what is required by the store audits, how do you determine whether to eliminate or put a hold on projects? The process is:

- The vice president of operations weighs in as well as the director of operations. The VP of facilities calibrates the projects and costs with the facility manager’s and budget meetings are held to finalize the annual plan.
- Significant investments, projects above \$50,000, require finance review and E-Team approvals via a Capital Project Review. This is circulated at the beginning of the year as a bulk project review.

Once the final corporate capital budget is approved, are there any other internal approvals necessary to originate the projects and begin the work? Not really. As unplanned projects arise through the year, the spending authority for each level in operations reviews and approves. The entire work flow is done via Oracle Project Manager.

What department “owns” the store capital budget? Facilities owns and is held accountable for the budget.

What is the approval process for emergency capital projects?

It follows the same Oracle process flow and is based on hierarchy approval levels.

As a percentage of sales, what is the normal average capital amount per restaurant? Approximately 2 percent.

How is the store repair and maintenance budget initiated and approved? It’s based on historical spend and adjusted annually for CPI increases. The restaurants are held accountable to manage the budget. We do not utilize any CMMS.

Does facilities have any input and/or control in the restaurants’ repair and maintenance budget or spend? Yes, facilities owns waste removal, yellow grease rendering, grease trap pumping, fire protection, exhaust cleaning and grease trap pumping across the portfolio. The general managers and the directors of operations manage the bulk of repairs until the project becomes complicated. 🌀

Jack McNertney, CRFP, spent 17 years in operations within the QSR industry before moving to facilities. He has spent the last 25 years in facilities with Long John Silver’s/A&W and Yum Brands and eight years in casual dining with Darden and Red Lobster. He is the former Chairman of RFMA and spent five years on the group’s Board of Directors. He co-chaired RFMA Gives for three years, and he currently serves on the RFMA Advisory Council.



Grease is the (Dirty) Word

**Are you managing
your facilities' risk?**

Managing fats, oils and grease (FOG) goes hand in hand with running a restaurant. But as municipal requirements become more stringent, managing, documenting and maintaining grease traps and related equipment has become more demanding.

Environmental regulations are tightening. Documentation and reporting requirements are becoming more rigorous. Would your facilities pass muster if all locations were to be inspected within the next 24 hours? A sobering question, but one worth your attention.

Today, all points along the wastewater stream are under more scrutiny. With municipalities settling violations in the millions of dollars, they are moving responsibility upstream to the source of the effluent discharge. Even restaurants that are currently in compliance face fines if they are late in filing required documentation or are tardy in bringing operations up to code.

Tightening Legislation

There are many examples of new legislation dictating the disposal of FOG.

In October 2015, the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection reissued a general permit for the discharge of wastewater associated with food service establishments, which limits the amount of FOG, increases the maintenance requirements of equipment and expands the approved options of grease management equipment. The town of Saugus, Mass., passed a new regulation, also in 2015, that requires all establishments preparing or selling fresh food to install an internal grease trap—as well as an external grease trap or secondary interior grease interceptor. Existing establishments have 18 months to comply.

A perfect example of the trickle-down effect of EPA changes



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Would your facilities pass muster if all locations were to be inspected within the next 24 hours? A sobering question, but one worth your attention.

is that of Anderson, S.C. A new FOG ordinance being passed as a result of excessive sewer overflow violations will create more rules for local restaurants, resulting in stricter grease trap installation and maintenance. There will be new fees for food service establishments, as well as requirements for such businesses to show that they are using approved grease waste haulers.

These new ordinances impact both the restaurants and many of the service providers that pump restaurant grease traps. Operating costs rise and get passed along to facilities.

This is why procedural paperwork, documentation and record retention are as important as the physical process of maintaining your hardware. Not all vendors are created equal, so you must be certain that your scope of work with the vendor requires and details the level of rigor you must have to keep your restaurant compliant.

In speaking with Maria Johnson, CRFP, Facilities Director at Cotton Patch Café, she explained that having a single point of contact for 90 percent of the company's 45 locations helps ensure that service manifests are maintained and submitted to municipalities that require receipt of a copy of all maintenance. This helps not only expedite any issues but also gives the company leverage and cost savings.

Cleaning Frequency

Cleaning frequency for a grease trap depends on several factors, which include the grease trap design, seating capacity of the restaurant, cooking techniques and, most importantly, local sewer code. While typical cleaning frequency for a properly sized, well-maintained grease trap is three to four times a year, closer monitoring is required to meet today's demands.

One of the biggest problems is ensuring that the restaurant and the corporate office understand that grease traps and grease interceptors become less effective when they exceed 25 percent solids and FOG total.

When a trap/interceptor has more than 25 percent solids and FOG, the frequency of pumping should be increased to reduce the operational time between cleaning. For example, if you are currently

pumping three times a year, you should try quarterly.

When grease trap/interceptors exceed 25 percent solids and FOG, the risk of backups and buildup of FOG and solids in the lines increases exponentially. As a result, what may have started as an effort to reduce costs ends up costing a location more money due to overflows, extra services and violations.

New grease monitoring systems can be used to help monitor the grease, oil and sediment levels in your tank with the push of a button. While these require additional upfront costs to the mechanical system, they may result in savings if monitoring eliminates unnecessary pumping. Keep in mind that you then have to maintain the proper functioning of the monitoring system or you could inadvertently be relying on a false sense of security versus a time-tested pump-out schedule.

It's not just about the frequency of cleaning, however. How thoroughly your trap is cleaned is just as important. The trap must be fully cleaned—completely drained and scraped with all solids and grease removed, not just a partial pumping that leaves your trap dirtier over time with more buildup.

Johnson of Cotton Patch Café explained that the scope of work she uses with grease management vendors includes very specific details, such as fully pumping the trap down, cleaning the walls and inspecting both the trap and the internal baffles for small cracks. "You want to know your vendor has your back and will catch any issues before something big happens," she said.

The Grease Disposal Process

At a bare minimum, you need to know where and how your vendor disposes of the grease to ensure EPA compliance. This, as with every step of the process, must be documented. You should have a signed manifest upon the departure from your location. Then once the material arrives at a disposal site, you should receive a manifest indicating proper disposal. Partner with vendors that select environmentally friendly disposal sites and maintain the documentation required to minimize your risk.

With continued efforts to "go green" and honor the triple bottom line, there are more and more uses for recycled waste vegetable oils cleaned from your grease trap. They can be converted into green products such as biodiesel fuel and hydraulic oil. If appropriate for your business, consider vendors that offer a recycling option.



The People Factor

Grease and solids that never make it into your drain don't need to be pumped out. The first line of defense in grease management is reducing the solids that make it into your wastewater stream in the first place. With the high turnover often experienced by large restaurant chains, consistent on-the-job practices can often be a sticking point.

Training restaurant employees on best practices, such as disposing of all solids in the trash versus the drain, can go a long way toward reducing the costs and headaches associated with managing your grease. Stopping debris from going down the drain means less chances of clogs and overflows. At Cotton Patch Café, Johnson says proper training is a priority for just this reason. A successful piece of their training includes assigning lead responsibility for a specific grease management task to only one person per shift. This helps employees take ownership of the task, which means they step up to ensure it is done correctly.

Other small steps you can take include the use of lockable drains that cannot be removed without a tool. This deters employees looking for a short cut or feeling overwhelmed during a mealtime rush of disposing of solids into the drains.

While this sounds like common sense, remember that common sense is not always common practice, particularly with a distributed workforce.



New Grease Management Technologies

New innovations, such as bioaugmentation of FOG using enzymes and bacteria, may one day greatly reduce or eliminate the need to pump at all. Other innovations, such as advanced grease interceptor systems, offer alternative hardware solutions to the traditional grease traps. Yet, some practical challenges exist before grease traps will reach extinction, if ever.


The first major challenge is the role that temperature plays in the effectiveness of the bioaugmentation system. Enzyme activity increases as temperature increases, which in turn increases the rate of the reaction. This also means activity decreases at colder temperatures. All enzymes are active within a specific range of temperatures, but there are certain temperatures in which they work optimally. For facilities in climates with seasonal temperature variations, this can make implementation of these technologies impractical or increase variability beyond desired risk tolerance.

Another major challenge is the approval and acceptance of these technologies by municipalities looking to reduce downstream waste issues. The widespread question is often, "Do these new technologies simply move the FOG problem further down the wastewater stream?" Any hint of truth to that statement makes municipalities wary of shouldering even more risk in an increasingly scrutinized world of environmental protection. It will take time and collaboration between innovative vendors and regulatory agencies, combined with proven use in the field, to determine the direction these solutions take in the long-term.

Currently, your best practice is to contact your local municipality to see if they have any regulations when it comes to using enzymes down the drains. Some municipalities can readily provide a list of companies that they have been vetted and approved. Unfortunately

these regulations are done at a local level, which makes consistency of application across multiple locations more challenging. Let's take the state of New Jersey as an example. There are currently 565 municipalities in the state. Of those, four have specific mandates that range from prohibited to allowed to required.

When added to frequency mandates, New Jersey Pollutant Discharge Elimination System requirements, and local plumbing codes, grease disposal quickly becomes a complex maze for facility managers tasked with overseeing multiple locations in multiple cities. Add locations in additional states, and compliance becomes exponentially more challenging. Full-service companies that can perform the risk analysis, maintenance and documentation diligence can help you navigate these challenges more confidently.



Manage Your Risk

If there were a "cheat-sheet" for keeping grease management top of mind, it would be to know the following information each and every day you are in operation:

- 1) The percentage of solids in your grease trap as compared to the volume of the trap
- 2) When and how all preventive maintenance, cleaning and pumping is performed
- 3) Where to find full documentation and an end-to-end manifest of all service performed, any violations received and documentation of rectifying any inspection shortcomings
- 4) The detailed compliance requirements of each municipality in which you have a facility
- 5) Where your vendor disposes of grease removed from your facility and how/where it is documented
- 6) Detailed procedures your vendor follows when servicing the trap (exactly how is it cleaned and what is inspected)
- 7) Who in each facility is responsible for ensuring solids are not disposed of in the drains

The complexities of grease management, combined with changing regulations and new technologies, mean that grease management, by its very nature, can feel more like multiple shades of gray than black-and-white compliance. As a result, it is critical that you work with a vendor that can deliver on a robust scope of work and meet the demands of documentation, all while maintaining an overall risk management perspective for your company. Sometimes all it takes is reallocating your current maintenance budget in an eco-friendlier and profitable way. 🌱

Susan V. Daywitt is the Founder and CEO of SLIM – Facility Solutions Nationwide. She is active in organizations such as the Restaurant Facility Management Association, The Alternative Board, International Facility Management Association and the Women's Business Enterprise National Council.



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Don't Wash Money Down the Drain

**Learn how to properly
dispose of fats, oils
and grease**

I imagine it's 3 a.m., and you're at a restaurant location overseeing the final touches to a new store before the grand opening that morning. The crew is almost finished when you receive the call: A sewer backed up into a kitchen at another location across town.

You quickly shift your attention, sending a plumber to deal with the flood and mess. But the usual tricks don't unclog the drain. A camera sent down the pipe confirms the worst: A huge ball of grease is wedged in the wastewater pipes, and special equipment is needed to clear the clog. In the meantime, local health ordinances require the restaurant be shut down until the sewer backup is cleared. Your stomach sinks as you inform the restaurant's general manager of what needs to be done. You know this incident will cost money to fix, inconvenience customers and employees, and ultimately result in lost revenue for the business.

This situation is a facility manager's worst nightmare, and it's a result of restaurant employees improperly handling fats, oil and grease (FOG). A byproduct of all commercial kitchens, FOG is produced by meat and poultry scraps, butter, margarine, lard, cooking and fryer oil, and dairy products. Over time, traces of FOG coat floors



Cleaning up FOG can be messy, labor intensive and, in the case of fryer oil, dangerous. But proper disposal is not negotiable.

and the wastewater pipes running from the restaurant's location to the sewer system, and it can accumulate in the exhaust hoods and vent hoods in the kitchen.

Some restaurant employees deal with FOG by pouring it down the drain. Others shuttle hot, used cooking oil in buckets to rendering bins outside, which can trigger accidents like burns, slips and falls. Cleaning up FOG can be messy, labor intensive and, in the case of fryer oil, dangerous. But proper disposal is not negotiable.

The Hidden Dangers of FOG

The practice of pouring FOG into the sink might seem harmless; after all, it is still warm, is in liquid form, and slides easily down the drain and out of sight.

However, as the liquid cools, the grease solidifies and accumulates inside the pipes. The cool internal surfaces of sewers provide the ideal environment for thin layers of FOG to build up. These layers thicken over time as other substances glom onto them, until they become a rock-hard substance that obstructs the flow of wastewater. This scenario could cause even more issues:

- Raw sewage and wastewater could **back up into the business**, when the flow can no longer get past the grease buildup.
- **Plumber fees** could be extensive, especially if the clog occurs after hours or over a weekend or holiday.
- **Cleanup inside** the restaurant is likely to be time-consuming and costly.
- **Underground pipes** could overflow into the street, possibly entering a storm drain and contaminating the local water supply.
- **Raw sewage seeping** into parks, yards and streets could lead to the spread of disease-causing organisms.
- **Rancid odors** typically result from raw sewage and wastewater backup.
- **Rodent infestation** could occur.
- **The local wastewater department** could experience damage to their plumbing equipment from FOG, which could result in higher sanitation bills for customers.
- **The city may issue fines** and bills for repairing the damage.

Clogged pipes due to FOG happen more often than you'd think. Pipe-cleaning companies report that 95 percent of the problems they

fix are a result of grease, and 54 percent of sanitary sewer overflows in the United States and Canada are from grease blockages. In fact, FOG in sewer systems is a problem in almost all cities, likely due to an increase in the number of restaurants, an aging sewer infrastructure and improper disposal methods.

Oil and Water Don't Mix

While federal regulations are in place to prevent dumping petroleum oil or products with mineral oil down the drain, few regulations enforce oil and grease discharge from restaurants. Instead, it's up to cities and municipalities to prevent this problem from occurring. The city of Seattle has taken action. It prohibits directly dumping grease down the drain and restricts how much grease can be in wastewater.

As a facility manager, you need to be aware of the rules and regulations in your area and how to prevent this costly problem.

Many local environmental agencies suggest installing grease traps or interceptors to eliminate FOG and related debris from entering municipal sewer systems in the first place. A grease trap can cost \$3,000 to install, depending on the size of the establishment. This amount could be considered money well spent when compared to a clogged sewer that might cost the property owner more than \$1,000 to fix, contingent on the extent of damage. Penalties are also steep. In New York City, establishments are fined up to \$10,000 per violation for discharging grease into the sewer.



Prevent Costly FOG Mistakes

There are many ways to keep FOG from slipping down the drain. These 10 tips can help prevent costly messes and keep your operation in compliance with local regulations:

1. Trap it

Make sure the grease trap is designed to handle the amount of FOG that is expected from the establishment and that it is regularly maintained.

MAJOR BACKUP:

How Clogged Drains Are Costing Restaurants

It's a problem that many restaurant kitchens encounter: used cooking oil being poured down the drain. Clogged pipes cause major backups and can cost thousands of dollars in property damage. In fact, in the United States alone, restaurant kitchens are contributing to a number of unsightly issues as a result of not properly collecting and disposing of used cooking oil.

47%

of the sewer overflows that happen annually are caused by fat and oil buildup.¹

3 BILLION

pounds of restaurant grease is produced each year.²

5,000

fat-based pipe backups occur in New York City every year.³

75%

of sewers are so clogged that they work at half their intended capacity.⁴

2,000

overflows in Los Angeles in the past five years have spurred lawsuits by the Environmental Protection Agency.⁵

SUCH SEWER BLOCKAGES CAUSE

40,000

incidents of illegal overflows into open water annually.⁶

41%

of those overflows were due to fat and oil buildup, according to an EPA audit.⁸

SOURCES: (1) Jennifer Welsh, "Here's the Terrible Thing That Happens When You Pour Grease Down the Drain," Business Insider, <http://www.businessinsider.com/why-cant-you-pour-grease-down-the-drain-2014-8> (accessed February 19, 2016). (2) Gina Ross, "Thieves Fuel Up on Restaurant Grease," Environmental Leader, <http://www.environmentalleader.com/2010/10/04/thieves-fuel-up-on-restaurant-grease/> (accessed February 19, 2016). (3) Barry Newman, "Municipal Heart Attack: Illegal Dumping of Fryer Grease, Fat Leads to Infections," Wall Street Journal, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB991600980767316234> (accessed February 19, 2016). (4-7) Ibid.



Employees should be instructed to never pour grease down sink drains or into toilets. They should instead put liquids into covered containers to solidify and then dispose of them.

2. Divert it

Employees should be instructed to never pour grease down sink drains or into toilets. They should instead put liquids into covered containers to solidify and then dispose of them, or collect grease in a rendering bin for recycling. One proactive measure involves installing a closed-loop oil management system to automatically remove and dispose of the used cooking oil while adhering to sustainability initiatives.

3. Cool it

Allow grease to cool to a safe temperature after cooking and before disposing of it.

4. Wipe it

Have dishwasher personnel use dry paper towels to wipe all pots, pans and plates prior to washing. Do not promote the use of cloth towels, which could accumulate oil that eventually ends up in drains when the towels are washed.

5. Pitch it

Discontinue the use of garbage grinders/food disposals as food is scraped from dishes. Employees should use strainers in the sink drain to catch food scraps and other solids and then empty the strainer contents into the trash. Strainers decrease solids in the grease interceptor and leave less debris inside sewer pipes.

6. Clean it

Maintain a clean exhaust hood/vent, flue and fans. Keeping the hood and ductwork clear of grease buildup can significantly reduce the risk of a grease fire spreading.

Consider an automatic system that uses a spray mixture of detergent and water to clean the hood, flue and fans daily.

7. Sop it

Create and use spill kits that include absorbent pads, paper towels or non-clumping kitty litter to remove grease from floors prior to mopping.

8. Protect it

Keep drains clean by pouring 0.5 cup of baking soda down the drain, followed by 0.5 cup of vinegar. Wait 10 to 15 minutes and then rinse with hot water.

9. Preach it

Ensure that new employees are trained on proper procedures.

10. Easy does it

Do not use corrosive cleaning products on kitchen equipment. Such products may strip metal surfaces and build up metals in the grease trap or violate water pretreatment standards.

The only thing that should be going down the drain is wastewater. Keep the pipes flowing and the business growing by properly eliminating FOG. 🌱

Tina Swanson is Vice President of Customer Experience and Account Management at Restaurant Technologies. She has worked for nearly 20 years in human resources, sales, marketing and Six Sigma. Swanson spent many years at General Electric Co. and Ceridian Corp. prior to joining Restaurant Technologies in 2012.



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Soft Water Saves Hard Dollars

Water treatment solutions that are best for your brand and the planet

Water-softening technology has come a long way, and new solutions have been proven to save restaurants up to \$2,000 per year per location. Facing tighter budgets and the desire to increase the environmental sustainability of your brand, you should consider several important aspects when reviewing your restaurants' water treatment programs.

Earth's Ancient Resource

Have you ever considered that the same water we use today was here when the dinosaurs roamed the earth? Our planet's water has seen a lot of things over millions of years.

Water is part of everything we do. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, 97 percent of the world's water is in the oceans, and 2 percent is frozen in ice caps and glaciers. That leaves less than 1 percent of fresh water for our use. This means we need to take a sustainable approach to water.

The fresh water that is available for our use has gone through the hydrologic cycles millions of times, picking up dissolved minerals, metals and chemicals as it runs over all the surfaces of our earth.

Hardness in Water

Hardness (calcium and magnesium) can be one of the most difficult and costly challenges to a restaurant's operation. Hardness presents

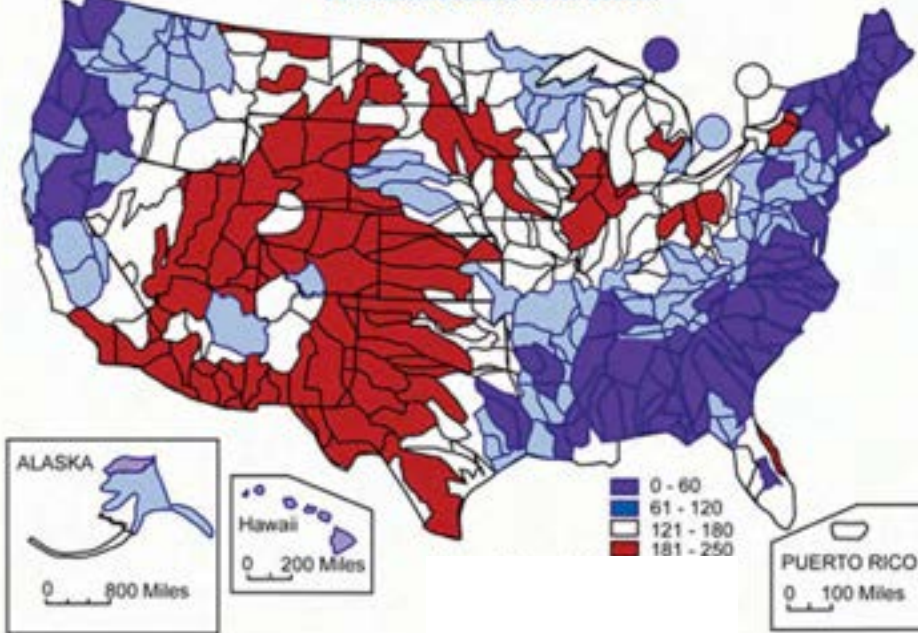
itself as spots on glassware and dishware, as well as scale in dish machines, steamers and water heaters. Hardness decreases the efficiency of equipment and increases overall operating costs.

A New Mexico State University study found that gas water heaters that use hard water require an extra 29 percent of energy to run, and electric water heaters need an extra 21 percent of energy. Scale acts as a thermal insulator and doesn't allow the heating elements to efficiently heat the water. It is like trying to boil a pot of water with a brick between the stove and the pot.

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) states that water is considered "moderately hard" at 3.5 grains per gallon (gpg) and "hard" at 7.0-10.5 gpg. Anything higher than 10.5 gpg is considered "very hard." The USGS calculated that 89.3 percent of U.S. homes have hard water. Considering most restaurants are concentrated in populated areas, the number of restaurants with hard water would be similar.

Guests perceive spotted dinnerware as dirty, which can negatively impact a restaurant's brand. Alternatively, soft water allows for chemicals in the dish machine to work more effectively. Detergent doesn't know the difference between food soil and hardness. If you remove hardness from the equation, you have freed up the detergent to more effectively address food soils, improving your results. For every restaurant that is in a hard water area, a water softener is vital to its operations.

CONCENTRATION OF HARDNESS AS CALCIUM CARBONATE, IN MILLIGRAMS PER LITER



Hard water locations in the United States — U.S. Geological Survey Map

Soft	0 - 60 mg/L as calcium carbonate or <3.5 grain hardness per gallon (gpg)
Moderate	61 - 120 mg/L as calcium carbonate or 3.5 to 7.0 gpg
Hard	121 - 180 mg/L as calcium carbonate or 7.0 to 10.5 gpg
Very Hard	> 180 mg/L as calcium carbonate or 10.5 gpg and higher

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) states that water is considered “moderately hard” at 3.5 grains per gallon (gpg) and “hard” at 7.0-10.5 gpg. Anything higher than 10.5 gpg is considered “very hard.” The USGS calculated that 89.3 percent of U.S. homes have hard water. Considering most restaurants are concentrated in populated areas, the number of restaurants with hard water would be similar.

“We consider water softeners a critical component to ensuring a wonderful guest experience. It is important for us to have a dependable, low-maintenance option for the restaurants,” said Kevin Carringer, Director of Facilities at Ruby Tuesday.

Choosing the Right Water Softener

When deciding on a water softener for your facilities, there are some choices to be made:

- Electric valve or hydro-mechanical
- Single tank or twin tank
- Timer-initiated regeneration or volumetric regeneration
- Co-current or counter-current regeneration

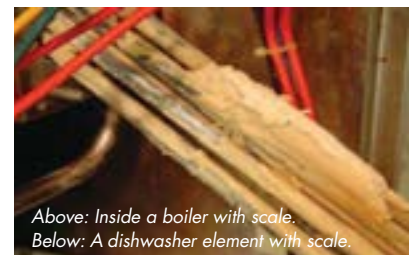
Considering less than 1 percent of the Earth’s water is available for our use, it is important to select a water softener that is considerate of our precious resources.

The most efficient water softeners are those that use twin-alternating tank configurations that are volumetrically regenerated. For many years, single-tank systems had been popular due to relatively lower upfront cost and, in some cases, smaller footprints.

Single-tank, timer-based systems require an estimation of water usage and are set to regenerate based on a fixed number of days. So if you have an abnormally busy day, you may run out of soft water before closing time, forcing you to wash dishes with hard water, resulting in spotty dinnerware.

All single-tank systems (timed and metered) require a reserve factor to be taken into consideration, which can cause a significant decrease in efficiency and an increase in total operating costs. Single

tanks require the units to be regenerated at night; otherwise the softener will deliver hard water for 90 minutes during the regeneration. Twin-tank metered systems allow for constant soft water and only regenerate as needed. Basically, the more soft water you use, the more often the unit will regenerate. Alternatively, the less water you use, the less often it will regenerate. The less you regenerate, the less water and salt you will use, preserving our resources. A metered twin-tank, volumetrically regenerated softener is designed to keep up with your business trends. Additional technologies that further improve the efficiency of the water-softening process include counter-current regeneration versus co-current regeneration, which can optimize water and salt usage during regeneration.



Above: Inside a boiler with scale.
Below: A dishwasher element with scale.

Choosing Cost-Effective Solutions

Inefficient use of water and salt during water softener regeneration can drive up the total operating costs of your water softener.

Salt Savings	Salt (lbs/Day)	Bags of Salt/Day	Bags of Salt/Year	Cost/Bag	Total Salt Cost/Year
Timed Single Tank Softener	50	1	360	\$6.00	\$2,160.00
Metered Twin Tanks Softener	18	0.36	129.6	\$6.00	\$776.60
SAVINGS					\$1,382.00
Water Savings	Gal. /Day	Gal. /Year	Gal. /1,000	Cost/1,000 gal	Total Water Cost/Year
Timed Single Tank Softener	302	108,689.14	109	\$7.00	\$760.82
Metered Twin Tanks Softener	149	53,804.57	54	\$7.00	\$376.63
SAVINGS					\$384.19
COMBINED TOTAL SAVINGS/YEAR					\$1,766.59

A recent study by SW Water in Scottsdale, Ariz., (see table above) showed a return on investment of less than 10 months on the cost of a single-tank timed softener versus a twin-tank metered softener, with an annual savings of \$1,766 for one location.

These salt and water savings will repeat year over year, and after seven years, will result in an overall savings of more than \$12,000 per restaurant. These are hard dollar savings that go right back into the restaurant's operating budget. This particular study did not take into consideration the financial saving associated with the decrease in scale-related breakdown in the water heater, dish machine, steamer and other water-using equipment.

Systems that use an electronic circuitry are subject to electronic valve failure. Electronic circuit boards are frequently subjected to wet environments, which can cause failure. Additionally, there are times when they are unplugged in order to plug in other equipment, or even lose power and memory for a period of time. Hydro-mechanical designs are non-electric valves, meaning they will not fail due to wet environments or power disconnection, and function with mechanical gear sets that track the flow of water.

Going High-Volume

Recently, there has been interest in high-volume, scale-reducing systems. Many systems add a polymeric sequestering agent to the

Although water softening is an important part of a restaurant's operation, be mindful to implement solutions that protect and reduce our environmental impact through decreased water and salt use. Remember, we have less than 1 percent of fresh water to sustain life. It is our responsibility to be good stewards within our industry.

water, or use template assisted crystallization (TAC) to reduce the amount of scale on heating elements and other equipment. These systems do not remove the calcium and magnesium (hardness) from the water but make it less likely to stick.

With these systems, the hardness is the same, which is why they are called water conditioners, not water softeners. Because scale-reducing systems do not completely eliminate scale, they do not improve final dishware results as a traditional ion exchange water softener.

In 2001, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers completed a study of magnetic de-scalers and found that "devices tested did not prevent mineral scale formation under the conditions of this study. The heat exchange capacity of all three shell and tube heat exchangers was considerably reduced by the formation of mineral scale during the course of the study. This study found no significant difference between the devices and the controls in the amount of scale that formed."

Restaurants compete in a world where social media reviews drive customer perception. Good food, great service and clean, spot-free dishware are the driving forces in guest experiences. Meanwhile, we continue to see sustainability and social responsibility as a part of our goal in the industry.

Although water softening is an important part of a restaurant's operation, be mindful to implement solutions that protect and reduce our environmental impact through decreased water and salt use. Remember, we have less than 1 percent of fresh water to sustain life. It is our responsibility to be good stewards within our industry.

Jason Johnson is currently the National Sales Manager for Kinetico's Commercial Water Systems. He has spent the last 20 years in different roles within restaurant operations and the last 13 years working to help restaurants and facilities to improve their operations. Johnson has been with Kinetico for 2.5 years and an active member of RFMA for more than two years.





TZ-1826

Reliable, Superior Protection from Fines and Costly Repairs

Unibody Polyethylene Tank with a Lifetime Guarantee!

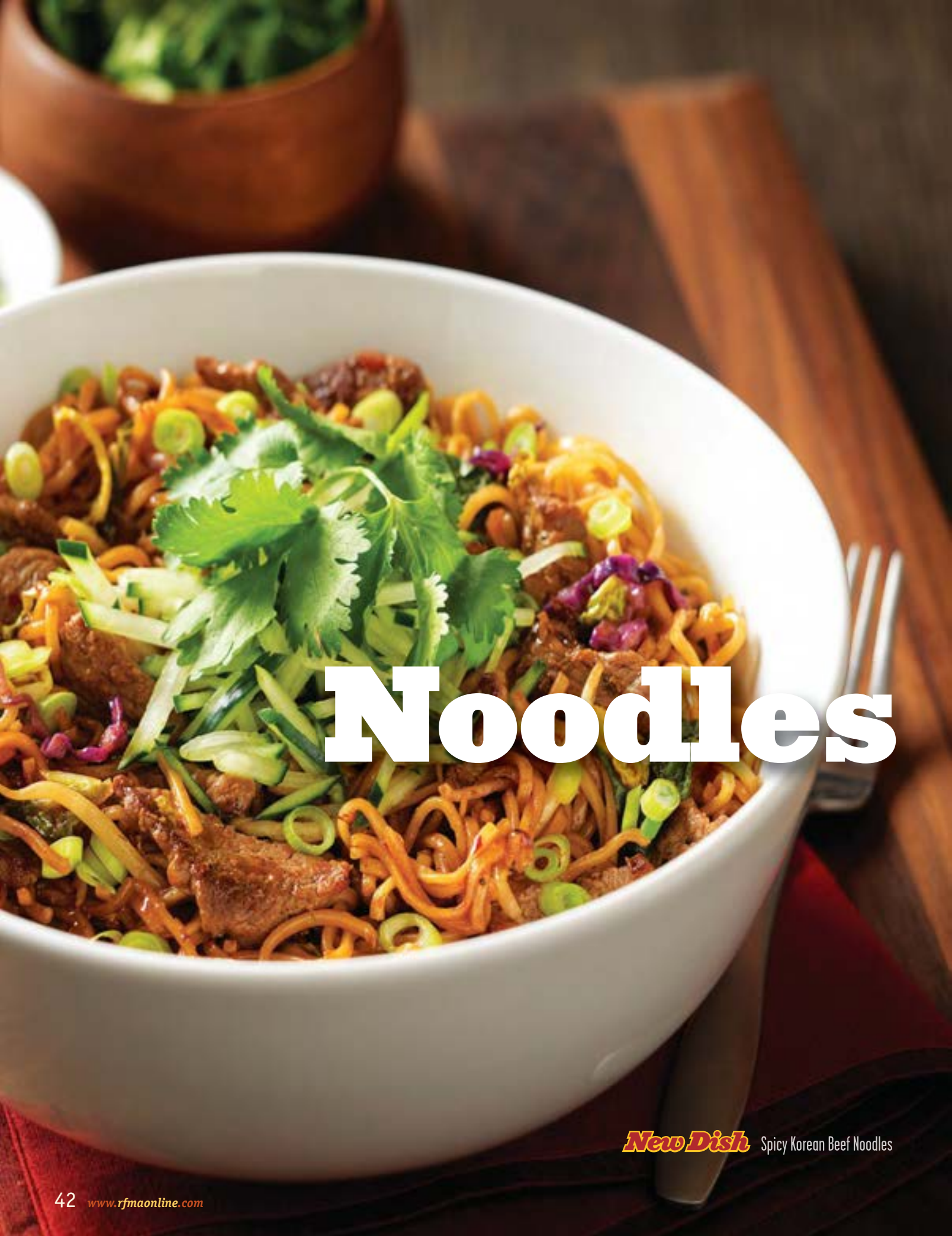


A failing grease interceptor could cost you thousands in fines and repairs.

This steel interceptor at a national chain had holes in its baffles after only 8 years, allowing grease into the collection system, a significant risk for fines and blockages. By upgrading to a Trapzilla, the restaurant now has more capacity in the same footprint and a durable, highly-efficient grease interceptor protecting the restaurant for years to come.

Visit thermaco.com/bigtz for testing results and specifications on the new TZ-1826

The all-new 274 gallon liquid capacity Trapzilla grease interceptor holds more grease than any other similarly sized hydromechanical interceptor per the ASME A112.14.3 certification. Thanks to its highly-efficient design, Trapzilla maximizes grease separation and retention while minimizing the volume required to achieve peak performance. Thousands of restaurant operators rely on its superior protection to comply with local sewer ordinances and prevent operational downtime.



Noodles

New Dish Spicy Korean Beef Noodles



Noodles World Tour Salads

World Tour

**NOODLES & COMPANY IS COMMITTED TO SERVING REAL FOOD
WITH AUTHENTIC FLAVORS**

By Sherleen Mahoney

The simple perfection of noodles has made them a beloved global staple for centuries. Noodles, alone, are unpretentious. But when they dutifully soak up the delectable flavors they are paired with, they shine. This fusion of texture and flavor creates delicious, satisfying and crave-worthy meals.

Noodles & Company has tapped into the undeniable universal appeal of noodles. Under one roof, guests can enjoy the world's favorite noodle dishes, such as Pad Thai, Spaghetti and Meatballs, and its most popular dish, the Wisconsin Mac and Cheese.

The menu features flavors from America, East Asia and the Mediterranean. In total, there are 25 unique dishes, including sandwiches, salads and soups, and eight different types of noodles.

Each customizable dish is made to order, using only the freshest





"We consider ourselves a **world kitchen**, which is not limiting . . . Our culinary team explores the **ends of the globe** to find the next big flavor."

—Erin Murphy, Director of Communications at Noodles & Company

ingredients that are free from artificial preservatives, flavors, colors and sweeteners.

Noodles & Company has made a commitment of serving fresh, real food. This includes organic milk, tofu and tea; cage-free eggs; and naturally raised, hormone-free and antibiotic-free proteins. Fourteen fresh vegetables are prepped throughout the day.

"There's enough variety for everyone," said Erin Murphy, Director of Communications at Noodles & Company. "This really sets us apart in the fast-casual segment. There's such a wide variety of flavors that there is something on the menu that every palate can enjoy."

A FOCUS ON AUTHENTICITY

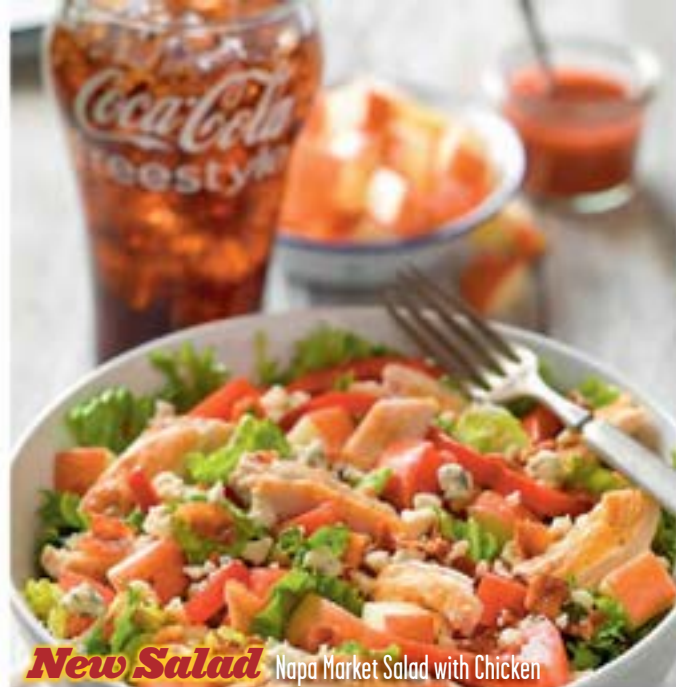
To serve the world's most crave-worthy noodle dishes, authenticity is paramount. The culinary team is constantly refining and perfecting its recipes and looking for the next great flavor to add to its menu.

"We consider ourselves a world kitchen, which is not limiting," Murphy said. "Our culinary team explores the ends of the globe to find the next big flavor."

This year, they reengineered the Pad Thai and introduced gochujang sauce, a popular Korean condiment.

The Pad Thai now features scrambled cage-free eggs and bean sprouts, and the new sauce is more balanced.

Gochujang sauce caught the team's eye. They noticed it on several fine-dining menus, but it was not offered in the fast-casual



New Salad Napa Market Salad with Chicken

market. They loved the flavor and its heat and thought it would perfectly complement the new meatballs shareable plate that was about to be released.

The team worked with a gochujang sauce supplier to perfect it for Noodles & Company. That meant fine-tuning the flavor and removing artificial flavors and preservatives. The company tested the dish in several restaurants for months before it was launched nationwide.

"Noodles & Company is the first national restaurant chain to introduce gochujang sauce, and the feedback was terrific," Murphy said.

Authenticity also means partnering with the best noodle suppliers. That's why the company has been buying its udon noodles from the same family-owned supplier in Brooklyn, N.Y., for the past 20 years.

Twin Marquis Inc. (TMI Trading Corp.) was co-founded in 1989 by two brothers, Joseph and Terry Tang, and named after Joseph's twin sons, Lawrence and Christopher Tang, Vice President of Sales and Product Manager, respectively.

"What differentiates our udon is the extra ingredient of passion in our noodles," Lawrence Tang said in a company video. "We don't make our noodles just for the sake of making noodles. We want to make our noodles fantastic, and what makes things fantastic is passion."

Noodles & Company works with two other suppliers for its other noodles. Dakota Growers and Zerega make the cavatappi, elbow, penne, spaghetti, egg noodles and whole-grain wheat pasta.

Dakota Growers, one of the largest pasta manufacturers in North America, is based in North Dakota, a region known for producing high-quality durum wheat and pasta. And for more than 160 years, the fifth-generation, family-owned Zerega





Penne Rosa

"A year ago, we weren't doing a good job **responding and reacting** to issues . . .

The team wasn't well directed and didn't understand the importance of **building relationships** with operations."

— Michael Ulm, Vice President of Design, Construction and Facilities at Noodles & Company

has been a leading producer of custom pasta. The company produces 250 million pounds of dry pasta each year in more than 300 varieties.

Just as important as authenticity is perfection.

The culinary team spent two years finding the best-tasting gluten-free fusilli noodles.

They sampled more than two dozen different gluten-free noodles, but still, none of them were the right choice. They finally found the perfect noodle in a local Denver grocery store.

The team contacted the Italian company that makes the rice and corn blend gluten-free fusilli to ask them to produce it in bulk for Noodles & Company.

The persnickety nature of the culinary team means noodle-loving guests can rest assured they are enjoying the best noodles.

This summer, Noodles & Company released some new dishes.

One is the new Spicy Korean Beef Noodles, made with naturally raised steak.

"This dish is another great way for guests to enjoy the rich flavor of gochujang," Murphy said. "It can also be made vegan by removing the steak and substituting rice or gluten-free noodles for the ramen, opening up the flavor to even more people."

Ramen will also be offered for the first time.

"We love introducing new noodles to the menu — we consider each dish, its flavors and ingredients, before choosing the noodles for it," Murphy said. The Spicy Korean Beef dish was perfect over a bed of ramen and we are thrilled to have a new noodle on the menu for guests."

There also are two new salads: The Chicken Veracruz Salad and the Napa Market Salad.



All interior/exterior restaurant photos by Michael Ulm, VP of Construction, Facilities and Design

"These salads are so popular with guests that they will stay on the menu indefinitely," Murphy said.

BUILDING TRUST

For the past year, Noodles & Company's facilities team has been on a mission to rebuild trust.

The previous team experienced challenges with workflow and being responsive with operations and individual restaurants.

"A year ago, we weren't doing a good job responding and reacting to issues," said Michael Ulm, Vice President of Design, Construction and Facilities at Noodles & Company. "The team wasn't well directed and didn't understand the importance of building relationships with operations."

Ulm's biggest focus last year was to regain the lost trust and prove to operations that facilities was there to support them.

"Operations was taking on a lot of the work themselves," he said. "Their job is to support the internal team and make sure guests are being served the best food possible; they should not be fixing refrigerators—that's our job."

Ulm's first step was to find a strong and skilled facility leader to

“No one was held **accountable**—not facilities, service providers or the manufacturers under warranty.”

— Kristin Karmazyn, Director of Facilities at Noodles & Company

With the **challenges** identified, Karmazyn planned a strategy for **success** ...
She had to **rebuild the team**.





New Dish Korean BBQ Meatballs



fill the newly created position of facility director to spearhead this crucial initiative. He hired Kristin Karmazyn, a facilities professional with 20 years of restaurant experience.

"I knew I couldn't make a mistake and had to bring in the right person," he said. "Kristin was the most solid choice I could make."

"I started my career as a waitress at an Applebee's franchise with Steve Grove, the Founder of AppleGrove Restaurants," Karmazyn said. "He saw my potential and put me through school. I learned about new construction, remodels and procurement from Steve and Stuart Wagner, the former CEO of Applebee's International. They are two of toughest guys in the industry and two of the best."

After a careful analysis of the landscape and taking a hard look at the operational gaps, Karmazyn identified some areas for improvement.

"No one was held accountable—not facilities, service providers or the manufacturers under warranty," she said.

"There were no processes in place," added Nadine Rodriguez, Director of Procurement and Services. "Operations felt more comfortable turning to their own leadership to make decisions, so there was a disconnect between the facilities team and them."

"Additionally, the team wasn't responding in a consistent manner," Ulm said. "Operations became unsure of their responsibilities because the facilities team wasn't responding the same way with every request."

With the challenges identified, Karmazyn planned a strategy for success. First, she had to rebuild the team.



Waiting area for pick-up orders



Left to right: Don McGinnis, Owner of Mc2 Enterprise; Jon Pate, Facility Manager in the West Region, Noodles & Company; George Pennica, HVAC/R Supervisor at Mc2 Enterprise; and Kristin Karmazyn, Director of Facilities at Noodles & Company



Jon Pate, Facilities Manager, is in the kitchen learning a thing or two from an employee.



Pesto Cavatappi

“We’re paying attention to what is covered under warranties and holding manufacturers accountable...”

—Nadine Rodriguez, Director of Procurement and Services

She hired five seasoned facility managers, each with a master skillset, to support approximately 475 corporate restaurants.

Don Puduski, a master electrician, manages the East Coast region. His colleagues depend on his expertise on electrical and mechanical issues. He will also be instrumental when the company rolls out an energy management program next year.

Frank Molinaro is an expert in operations and training. His strength is in building relationships with service providers. He manages the central region and takes the lead on presentations to operations and with all facility-related operations training.

Jon Pate’s previous experience includes working as a service technician for many years. He serves the West Coast region and has an aptitude for identifying repeat equipment issues, applying warranties and resolving part delays with manufacturers.

Jim Russell is an expert in automated facility management systems. He manages the West Coast region and continuously develops tools that benefit operations with their facility needs.

Steve Meyer, who manages the east region, has the longest history with Noodles & Company. The team relies on his vast in-house experience.

The team’s first order of business was to ensure all the restaurants were fully operational.

“Some restaurants were dealing with refrigerators that had unresolved problems for years,” Karmazyn said.

Karmazyn also met with each vendor to review their services and scopes of work.

“In the past, some of our vendors may not have been the best qualified,” she said. “Everyone we use now is certified. Our facilities managers are only as good as the people they can depend on.”

The restaurants rely on ServiceChannel to manage work



Jon Pate, Facility Manager in the West Region, Noodles & Company and George Pennica, HVAC/R Supervisor at Mc2 Enterprise

orders. When a ticket is created, an alert is sent to the designated facility manager, who is involved in every step of the process. He ensures there is a response and it is the correct one, action is taken and a resolution is reached.

In addition to fixing and managing issues, the facility managers are forecasting projects. As they visit their restaurants, they are noting the issues that need to be solved today, in six months and next year.

“That allows us to have a good sense of our repair and maintenance dollars,” Ulm said. “With that knowledge, we can reinvest our savings and lower costs in the future.”

With a talented and committed facilities team in place taking care of the restaurants, Karmazyn focused her attention on improving in-house practices and relationships within the Central Support Office.

“I wanted to learn how the facility department interacted with other departments,” she said.

Rodriguez introduced Karmazyn to other company directors so she could meet with them to learn about all the processes currently in place.

Based on the conversations, Karmazyn determined her main focus was on accounting.

She worked closely with Tara Cronin, Director of Accounting Operations, to ensure the team was maximizing the partnership with ServiceChannel. They took numerous training classes to learn everything ServiceChannel had to offer, developed new accruing procedures and began using the work order management system’s analytics to forecast more accurately, identify high maintenance locations and repeat equipment issues.

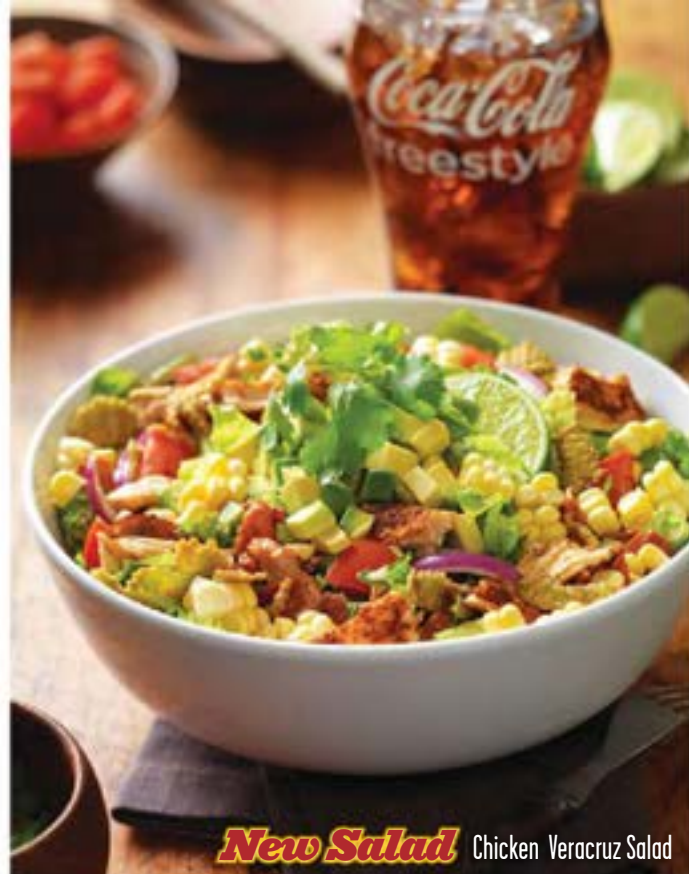
“We mandated all service providers to be active in ServiceChannel in order to perform services in our locations,” Karmazyn said. “When they invoice through ServiceChannel, we can track actual costs and pay all vendors in a timely manner.”

Karmazyn wanted ServiceChannel to be the central repository for contract pricing, preventive maintenance pricing and schedules, warranty terms and parts costs. With the data, the team can provide best practices training to the operations teams to keep the restaurants operating at their full efficiency.

“We’re paying attention to what is covered under warranties and holding manufacturers accountable,” Rodriguez said. “Before, we were double-dipping and spending money unnecessarily.”

Rodriguez and Karmazyn reviewed thousands of invoices and created a more formalized process that is managed by the facility and procurement departments. They categorized the invoices by department and all contracts were assigned an owner.

“We have already seen improvement in services and reductions in cost because our new process allowed us to hold everyone accountable,” Karmazyn said.



New Salad Chicken Veracruz Salad

Lastly, Karmazyn worked with the leasing department to establish procedures to easily identify landlord and tenant responsibilities, which is critical to managing cost and keeping the buildings in pristine condition.

In the first six months, the new facilities team was in reactive mode. Now that a strong team is in place and proven processes have been established, they're moving to a more proactive approach.

A year later, there have been great improvements, but there is still much work that needs to be done.

"We're succeeding now because of our facility's team's strengths and great communication," Karmazyn said.

"The restaurant managers all know who their facility managers are, and they tell me what a great job they're doing," Ulm added.

"We're really turning things around. Our job isn't done yet, but we're making a difference and operations is trusting us again."

KITCHEN MAKEOVER

Noodles & Company is in the early stages of designing a prototype for new restaurants.

The interior design will be more contemporary, applying darker wood stains and brighter, more chromatic colors.

Modern pendant light fixtures will focus the light on the dining tables, where guests are enjoying their meals and engaging with their dining companions. The new lighting package and color palette will create beautiful and inviting spaces.

Accenting the new design are black-and-white framed photographs that capture the brand's promise of delivering real food, real cooking, real flavors. Frosted glass art defines the meaning of a "world kitchen."

Design and facilities are working together to choose products and finishes that will ensure durability and longevity.

"Although we consider the initial upfront costs, we know the biggest factor is the cost to maintain items from a maintenance standpoint," Rodriguez said. "This is now part of our operating model."

The new design incorporates seamless kitchen floors to eliminate tile and grout problems. Additionally, the new stools are virtually indestructible. To demonstrate the durability, the stool supplier

sent one to Ulm, without any packaging and just a shipping label, through FedEx.

"We installed them in our new restaurants, and they look great," Ulm said. "Our old stools lasted one to two years; the seat might last one year. The new stools' seats are made from solid wood. If one wears out, we can take it off, sand it down 1/16th of an inch and put it back on."

The initial test markets for these prototypes are in Colorado, California and Oregon.

Ulm expects to have the final prototype determined in a few months.

The final package will determine the look and feel of new restaurants, and certain elements will be applied to existing restaurants through a remodel program.



THE KITCHEN IS OPEN

The facilities team is diligently working to rebuild the trust with each restaurant one at a time. Every service ticket is an opportunity for the team to prove their skills and commitment. Hiring the best facilities professionals ensures the restaurants are maintained at the highest level and the settings in which guests enjoy their favorite noodle dishes stay comfortable and beautiful for years to come. 🌱



Sherleen Mahoney is a staff writer for Facilitator magazine.



Your Restroom, Your Reputation

Learn how to take control of restroom environments
and improve customers' experiences

It's no secret that unpleasant restaurant restrooms have the unwieldy power to gross out patrons and tarnish the image of the establishment. What may not be as obvious is the increasing occurrences of people experiencing unkempt restrooms, severely impacting the customer-business relationship.

New research shows that almost 70 percent of Americans reported experiencing unpleasant conditions in restrooms in 2015—a 20-percent increase since 2012. When asked the most important improvement they'd like to see in restrooms, survey respondents overwhelmingly said, "Clean them more regularly."

The fact is restrooms represent a powerhouse of customer perception and influence. And customers aren't the only stakeholders affected; employees, suppliers, media and restaurant business associates are also impacted. In the national survey conducted by

Bradley Corp., a designer and manufacturer of commercial plumbing fixtures, 91 percent of respondents said that if they associate a business with a particularly high-quality product or service, they would expect the restrooms to also provide a high-quality experience. Almost as many believe the condition of workplace restrooms is an indicator of how a company values its workforce.

The majority of Americans also say that poor restroom conditions indicate poor management, lower their opinion of the company, show the business doesn't care about customers and make them think twice about patronizing the establishment in the future.

Clearly, a bad restroom damages customer-focused industries like restaurants. Lost customers and sales are poisonous to an industry that is highly dependent on repeat customers, a happy and engaged restaurant staff, and positive word-of-mouth buzz.

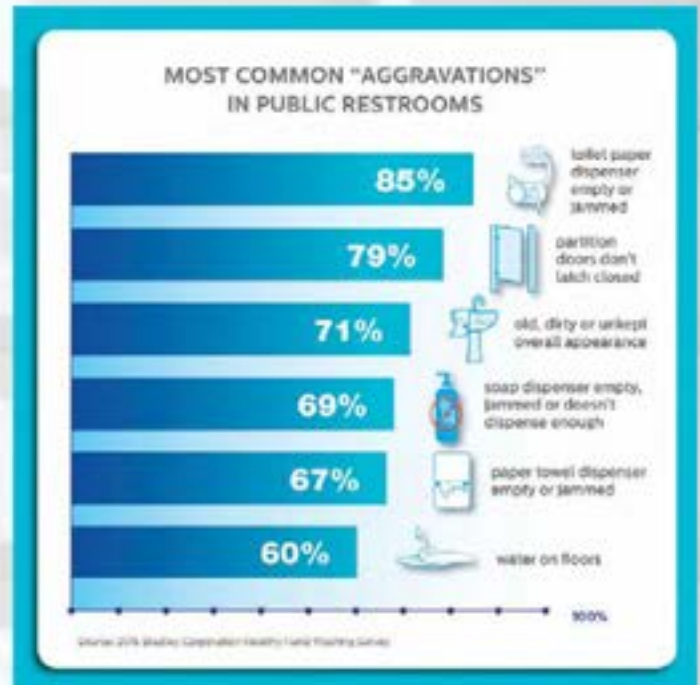
When asked the most important improvement they'd like to see in restrooms, survey respondents overwhelmingly said, "Clean them more regularly."

Germ Concerns in Restaurants

As part of the restroom-business equation, Americans identify restroom germs—and the prospect of touching them—as a major turnoff. This is especially true for restaurant facilities, which are the No. 1 type of facility in which people are most concerned about washing hands, according to the survey. Restaurants cultivate even more anxiety over hand washing and germs than healthcare facilities, which came in second place.

Adding to those concerns is industry research suggesting that germs may be unknowingly spread by sick employees, as reported by *Safety+Health* magazine. A survey of 1,200 workers who grow, process, distribute, cook or serve food showed that 51 percent reported that they always or frequently go to work despite being ill—an eye-opening statistic and a big contrast to most managers who believe that only 18 percent of workers show up when sick.

No matter the type of public facility, people have a strong



aversion to dirty surfaces and germs in restrooms, and they create maneuvers to avoid coming into contact with these areas. Bradley's survey shows that the most common way respondents avoid germs in restrooms is by operating the toilet flusher with

their foot; 60 percent admit to this action. They also use a paper towel when touching the restroom door (56 percent), open and close doors with their hip (43 percent) and use their elbows to avoid touching surfaces (39 percent).

It turns out restroom users who avoid direct contact with restroom surfaces have a good reason. Scientists at the University of Colorado in Boulder examined the microbial biogeography of public restroom surfaces in 2011 and found 19 bacterial phyla invading these areas. Some bacteria were found on toilet seats and floors, but much bacterial exposure in public restrooms occurs during the hand-washing process. In fact, the exteriors of soap dispensers accumulated more bacteria than toilet seats.

Despite their sensitivity to germs in restrooms, Americans have no problem handling their cell phones in restroom stalls. Bradley's survey revealed the majority of respondents admit to texting, checking/sending email, checking/posting on social media and surfing the web on their cell phones. Six percent admit they've taken a photo in the stall while 8 percent of men





say they've checked their fantasy sports league. When you consider that London scientists have reported that one out of six cell phones tests positive for fecal matter, germ-adverse restroom users may be inadvertently spreading more restroom germs via their cell phones instead of avoiding them.

A Checklist for Cleaning Up

To start, giving employees proper training and guidance on restroom cleaning and maintenance is crucial. As part of the training, operators can give employees fact sheets with checklists of areas to inspect, clean, sanitize and restock. Special attention should be given to picking up garbage, keeping countertops, toilets and floors clean and dry, and using air fresheners to maintain a pleasant-smelling environment.

It's important to note that bad restroom scents are especially bad for business. Smell is connected with the brain's limbic system, an area closely associated with memory. According to the Sense of Smell Institute, smell has a very powerful link to memory, which in turn links to the emotional regions of the brain more directly than other senses, such as sight and touch. All the more reason to keep restrooms odor-free.

In addition to smell, the following consumer complaints should be noted by facility managers, according to the Bradley Corp. survey:

- Toilet paper dispenser is empty or jammed
- Partition doors don't latch closed
- Overall appearance is old, dirty or unkempt
- Soap dispenser is empty/jammed or doesn't dispense enough
- Towel dispenser is empty/jammed or doesn't dispense enough
- Water collecting on floor

'Cleaner' Building Materials

In addition to regular cleaning and maintenance, there are also new features of building materials and restroom products that can help enhance the condition of restrooms, simplify maintenance and prolong the lifecycle of restroom fixtures.

For example, countertops, basins and lavatory systems now frequently incorporate more sustainable materials, which are made of natural and recycled materials. Many are

GREENGUARD-certified and can contribute to LEED credits. In addition to green benefits, sustainable materials can increase the durability, maintainability and life span of these products.

Newer sustainable materials for lavatory systems include a molded natural quartz material that can be sculpted into a range of design options. Natural quartz is virtually maintenance-free, since it does not require sealing, buffing or reconditioning like granite. Solid surfaces made of recycled materials and rapidly renewable material are also a popular sustainable choice. Solid surfaces resist stains, chemicals, scratches and heat, which reduce the likelihood of repairs and the need for replacements. Both natural quartz and solid surfaces use integrated bowl designs, which eliminate crevices for microbes to hide, are easy to clean and help prevent the spread of germs. These

These newer products are expected to last upwards of 20 years—twice as long as older products. That increased lifespan promotes operational savings over time.



materials also have nonporous properties, helping them to stay cleaner and germ-free longer.

Durable recycled materials are also used in solid plastic toilet partitions made from recycled high-density polyethylene (HDPE) solid plastic. Constructed from 1-inch thick plastic containing at least 30 percent pre-consumer recycled HDPE and up to 100 percent post-consumer recycled plastic, this solid plastic material stands up to heavy usage and graffiti attempts, and is easy to clean and maintain.

In addition, selections for touch-free hand dryers, low-flow toilets with sensed flushers, contemporary stainless-steel accessories—and even appealing lighting and paint color—will optimize cleanliness and maintenance, while elevating the aesthetics of the washroom environment. Over the lifecycle of these high-performance fixtures and materials, these quality products will lower operating costs due to less cleaning and fewer replacements.

Touch-Free Fixtures Enhance Cleanliness

There is a continued preference among consumers and building owners for touchless fixtures in restrooms. These fixtures can help users in their quest to avoid touching restroom surfaces, reduce the





transmission of germs and bacteria from users' hands, and improve overall hygiene as users leave the restroom area and enter other parts of the building.


Touchless fixtures are user friendly and convenient for consumers, and easier for staff to keep in good working condition. The "hands-free" design reduces wear and tear usage and helps discourage vandalism attempts, such as leaving a faucet running to create a mess in the restroom. Sensed faucets and automated soap and towel dispensers prevent waste and overflows with an automatic shut off.


In addition, high-efficiency touchless hand dryers are also a smart choice for eliminating paper towel waste, which often ends up on the floor, and eliminating the added expenses of towel replacements and time for restocking and garbage pick-up.


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About the Survey




The *Healthy Hand Washing Survey* queried 1,062 American adults online Dec. 10-13, 2015, about their handwashing habits in public restrooms and concerns about germs, colds and the flu. Participants were from around the country, were 18 years and older, and were fairly evenly split between men and women (47 and 53 percent). More results are available at www.bradleycorp.com/handwashing.

Impacts of Good Restroom Karma

Frequent and thorough cleaning, as well as using durable and innovative building materials and technologies, help ensure that restrooms look their best and operate more efficiently and effectively—something restaurant patrons, employees and other stakeholders appreciate.

Since today's high-quality restroom fixtures minimize time and costs for installation, maintenance, repairs and replacement parts, building staff can focus on other duties and projects. In addition, these newer products are expected to last upwards of 20 years—twice as long as older products. That increased lifespan promotes operational savings over time.

Perhaps the most important payback is delivering a more inviting and comfortable environment that enhances the consumer experience, encourages hand washing and demonstrates a restaurant's commitment to customers' safety, health and well-being. 

Jon Domisse is Director of Global Marketing and Strategic Development for Bradley Corp. of Menomonee Falls, Wis., a USGBC member and manufacturer of locker room products, plumbing fixtures, washroom accessories, partitions and emergency fixtures.



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Ditch the Tank

Go tankless, and never worry about hot water again

A number of things can go wrong in a restaurant that can upset customers. Most are inconveniences that probably will not pose an existential threat to your establishment. What will shut you down completely, however, is a broken water heater.

In a poll, facility managers were asked, "What is the single biggest item at a restaurant that causes you the most concern and can shut you down?" An overwhelming 95 percent responded with "water heater."

Restaurants need hot water in massive amounts to meet all of their cooking, washing and sanitation needs. According to the National Restaurant Association (NRA), quick-service restaurants consume 500 to 1,500 gallons of water daily, while full-service restaurants consume as much as 5,000—most of which is heated. Arguably, a restaurant needs hot water more than any other modern establishment. Indeed, by local ordinance, it cannot exist otherwise.

The threat of a failing water heater is not an empty one. The average lifespan of a commercial unit is between five and seven years

due to the routine heavy use and high water temperatures, according to National Hot Water, an on-demand, nationwide water heating service. Furthermore, if you are a facility manager who generally avoids or delays preventive maintenance for financial reasons, the risk of failure increases exponentially. According to U.S. Department of Energy statistics, nearly 60 percent of commercial water heater replacements result from emergency breakdown or poor performance, meaning most managers run their units right up to doomsday.

Even if you practice preventive maintenance, you still face the risk of running out of hot water during periods of heavy use if the unit is improperly sized. Some contractors try to overcome this problem by installing more than one water heater. In that case, your peace of mind comes at the cost of housing two or more space-killing tanks that are always inefficiently running at their maximum BTU capacity.

The Tankless Solution

If you have not heard of tankless water heaters, they are exactly

In warmer climates, the tankless unit can be installed outdoors, eliminating the need for venting entirely.



what their name denotes: a water heater that, instead of heating—and sometimes reheating and reheating—stored water in a tank, uses a high-powered burner to quickly heat incoming cold water to meet demand.

When a hot water valve is turned on, the sensor in the tankless unit detects the water flow, and the burner inside automatically fires. Water flows through the tankless unit's secondary heat exchanger, where it is pre-heated by combustion gases as they escape up the flue. The pre-heated water then enters the primary heat exchanger, which completes the process of raising the temperature to the desired level. Once activated, the tankless unit provides a continuous stream of hot water until the outlet is turned off.

Tankless units can vent using installer-friendly PVC piping, rather than category III stainless steel, because the pre-heating process cools combustion gases enough to be handled by PVC. In warmer climates, the tankless unit can be installed outdoors, eliminating the need for venting entirely.

A sufficient supply of hot water at the correct temperature for as long as needed sounds like the perfect solution for a restaurant. So, why has this technology not become more mainstream?

Traditional tank-type water heaters have dominated the market for so long that many consumers—and restaurant operators—are hesitant to switch. Despite this reality, tankless has been gaining ground. Widely available in North America since the early 2000s, tankless controls a growing share of the total water heating market and continues to outpace the annual growth of traditional tanks, as reported by the Air-Conditioning, Heating and Refrigeration Institute (AHRI). Especially important is the fact that tankless meets all plumbing code requirements nationwide.

Even as the tankless market grows, however, it must contend with several misconceptions and inferiority myths. Visually, tank-type water heaters are more reassuring with their size—since they are often accompanied by an additional storage tank—than their far-smaller tankless counterparts. It is difficult for many to believe that a medicine-cabinet-sized unit can produce unlimited hot water. Additionally, many balk at the higher up-front costs associated with

tankless and opt for technology that they are more comfortable with.

With these myths aside, it is time to set the record straight about tankless water heaters, especially in high-demand commercial environments that cannot afford any interruption in service. As a restaurant owner or facility manager, you are doubtless looking for three main features when choosing a water heater: immediate access to sufficient supplies of hot water, equipment reliability and cost-effective operation. Tankless provides all three.

Unlimited and Immediate Hot Water

Your restaurant's water heater doesn't have to fail completely in order to cause serious problems. If it was improperly sized during installation, the tank may not hold enough hot water to meet demand during those crazy evenings when you are hosting two graduation parties and a wedding reception. Even when a water heater is properly sized, the risk always exists that an abnormally high demand will overwhelm it, meaning no hot water and no business.

Once a properly sized tankless unit turns on, it will continue providing sufficient amounts of hot water for as long as needed. Furthermore, there is no need to worry about the infamous "cold water sandwich," because all of the water will be heated as it passes through the unit's heat exchanger.

A hot-water recirculation system used in conjunction with an aquastat and timer can maximize energy savings. The timer will ensure that instant hot water is available in the piping at peak times, and the aquastat will add even greater efficiency by overriding the timer if the pipe water is sufficiently hot. This eliminates the need for the system to run constantly. Hot water when it is needed for as long as it is needed—that's the tankless promise.

Reliability

Tankless water heaters last longer than tank-types, even in taxing commercial environments. They can handle up to 12 years of heavy commercial use. Unlike tank-types, they do not need to run 24 hours per day to have hot water available. Instead, they run only when needed, meaning less wear and tear on a daily basis.



Tankless units can vent using installer-friendly PVC piping, rather than category III stainless steel, because the pre-heating process cools combustion gases enough to be handled by PVC.

When tankless water heaters do give out, it is typically because their heat exchangers have failed. Oftentimes, you can simply replace the heat exchangers instead of having to purchase a brand new unit, extending the lifespan even further.

Facility managers can combine their tankless units to maximize efficiency. An engineered rack system connects one to six units with isolation valves, system and pump controllers, surge protectors, and even recirculation pumps and expansion tanks as needed. This allows for total BTU capacity to be split among multiple water heaters that have modulating burners, enabling the minimum amount of energy to be used to handle a particular demand.

For example, if a single faucet is turned on, only one tankless unit will fire, using the minimum necessary amount of its potential BTUs. In contrast, a conventional water heater without a modulating burner will immediately ramp up its full BTU capacity to deliver hot water to that one hand sink. Tankless units' ability to load-match ensures efficient operation and energy savings.

Combining multiple units also has the obvious benefit of peace of mind through redundancy. If you have only one unit and it fails, you may have to pay an exorbitant overnight repair or replacement fee just to stay in business. With multiple units, if one fails, it is still possible to operate until a replacement arrives.

Cost Effectiveness

At the end of the day, cost is likely among your most important considerations when investing in a water heater. Up front, tankless water heaters cost more than tank-types due to their more powerful

technology, but the savings gained over time will compensate for these costs, especially in a commercial setting:

- In a restaurant, tankless units run frequently during peak business hours and then cease almost completely until the next day. On-demand hot water usually translates into significant monthly energy savings over a tank-type heater, which would operate continuously.
- Tank-type water heaters are often oversized in anticipation of an overwhelming demand for hot water that may never materialize. But designers figure, "Better safe than sorry," specifying a much larger and therefore more costly unit than is actually needed. This jumbo-sized heater wastes far more energy and money than a properly sized tankless unit. This tendency to oversize is why the tank-versus-tankless cost difference is not as big as is often presumed.
- A tankless unit's longer life means more time between replacements. It is possible that you may go through two tank-type water heaters in the time it takes one tankless unit to fail. That in itself may justify the extra up-front cost to install a tankless water heater.

For restaurant owners and facility managers, tankless water heaters can be a business-saver, providing proper amounts of hot water to satisfy daily demand. When hooked together in a rack system, these units efficiently deliver the minimum amount of energy needed to meet the particular load, further saving energy.

Tankless Maintenance

As with any appliance, preventive maintenance is strongly recommended with a tankless water heater, especially in a commercial setting. It is important to flush and descale your tankless water heater(s) on a regular basis, as frequently as every six months, depending on usage and water hardness. The high water temperatures required in



It is difficult for many to believe that a medicine-cabinet-sized unit can produce unlimited hot water.



a restaurant may result in quicker scale buildup. Tankless units are still more resistant to scale buildup than tank-type units would be under similar conditions, as an absence of stored water helps prevent sediments from settling.

It is also advised to filter incoming water in order to maximize quality and reduce the toll on the tankless system. This recommendation is not unique to tankless, however, as a tank-type water heater is prone to even worse damage from poorly treated water.

One additional cost factor to consider is the gas-line requirement for tankless water heaters, which may be larger because of the high water temperatures needed. Ensure that you supply the proper amount of gas by increasing the pipe diameter or water meter size, if necessary. For those concerned with the financial burden this may create, tankless units' efficient operation and long life should yield savings that will more than compensate for the higher up-front purchase and installation costs.

Meanwhile, the peace of mind gained from knowing enough hot water will always be there when needed, even when your facility is running at peak demand, is priceless. 🌱

Jason Fleming serves as Marketing and Customer Care Manager at Noritz America in Fountain Valley, Calif. He can be reached at jfleming@noritz.com



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Consider all the ways you use water. Is water an ally to your bottom line, or is it another problem you deal with on a daily basis? With today's water processing technologies, you should have few problems. A myriad of readily available water filtration and water processing and formulation equipment can give you the water your business needs.

No Small Feat

When was the last time you had to run down to the stream or well to grab a bucket of water to use in your home or business? It's pretty amazing that we have all the water we need right at our fingertips wherever we need it.

It's no small feat that your local municipal water supplier provides a constant supply of clean, drinkable water at a constant pressure and volume to wherever you demand it as long as you keep paying that bill. Because our local municipal water authorities provide this extraordinary service to us day after day, most consumers take the quality of available water for granted.

The water delivered to our businesses and homes meet specific safety standards for consumption. However, only 0.5 percent or so of tap water is consumed; the great majority is used for commercial, industrial, manufacturing, landscaping and other purposes. So addressing the flavor quality of drinking water is simply not a high

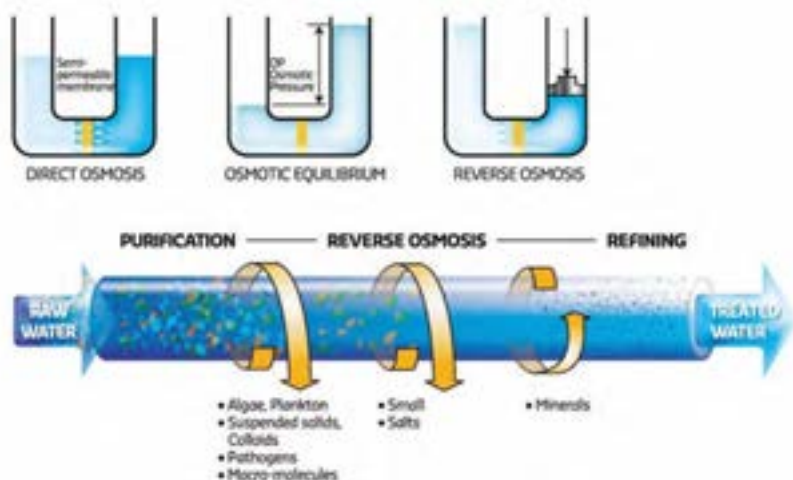
priority for your water purveyor. Instead, we consumers are expected to treat the water we use.

The most common water constituents that are known to make trouble include sediments (particulates in the water stream), total dissolved solids, water hardness and chlorines. Before we can formulate a successful strategy to remove or reduce the problems in our water, we first will need to perform a few simple water tests. Testing for these items is relatively simple, and water testing kits are available on many water treatment supplier websites. Any qualified water treatment tech would be able to quickly test for these parameters in your water.

Sediment

In many cases, holding a clear glass full of water up to the light may be enough of a test to know to what degree you have a sediment problem. Sediment filtration is also referred to as pre-filtration, as we want to first remove these larger particles of dirt, rust, sand, grit and other suspended solids before treating other issues. Neglecting this first stage of filtration would foul subsequent filter mediums.

Sediment is removed by mechanical filtration, since the goal is to remove larger particulates that can be seen by the naked eye. In a retail establishment, this is done using a cartridge-style melt-blown or spun polypropylene filter, which is available in various sizes. Often you will see this filter in a clear polycarbonate filter sump. As sediment filters are not rated by gallons of water usage, visual appearance and pressure loss will tell you when this filter needs to be replaced.



The water delivered to our businesses and homes meet specific safety standards for consumption. However, only 0.5 percent or so of tap water is consumed; the great majority is used for commercial, industrial, manufacturing, landscaping and other purposes. So addressing the flavor quality of drinking water is simply not a high priority for your water purveyor. Instead, we consumers are expected to treat the water we use.

Total Dissolved Solids

In short, total dissolved solids are any minerals, metals or salts dissolved in water. These dissolved solids can come from many different sources: organic sources such as leaves, silt fertilizers or runoff from urban areas; industrial waste; or inorganic materials such as calcium, nitrogen, salts and sulfur which the water encounters while traveling through underground aquifers, lakes, rivers and streams.

Although we express total dissolved solids (TDS) quantities in water in parts per million (ppm), which sounds like a profoundly small quantity, they have a big effect on water-fed equipment. In most cases, we do not want to remove TDS entirely but reduce it. The most economical and reliable method available to us now is reverse osmosis (RO), a water purification process where water is forced through a membrane. RO can treat water for a wide variety of health and aesthetic contaminants that cause unpleasant taste, color and odor problems. The RO process sends purified water to the points of use and discharges contaminants to a drain. When combined with pre-filtration, RO can remove 90 to 99 percent of dissolved impurities that reside in municipal waters.

Water Hardness

Almost all water will contain amounts of dissolved minerals. What we describe as "hardness" is minerals, calcium and magnesium that are less soluble in water and tend to precipitate when water changes by pressure or temperature. These changes allow hard minerals to form tenacious deposits referred to as "scale." In water-heating equipment, scale builds up in layers on heat transfer surfaces, insulating water from efficient heat transfer

and resulting in higher energy costs.

If your water is hard, you will see scale formations on your faucet aerators and on the chrome finish on your faucets. RO will effectively remove water hardness minerals, but too much water hardness will quickly foul RO membranes, greatly reducing their efficiency. Many RO system manufacturers suggest installing a water softener

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before the RO system to protect the membrane and extend its lifespan. Sequestering agents such as polyphosphates, siliphos and hexametaphosphates are commonly employed to control mineral scale deposits. This type of water treatment has been widely used for many years and is effective in cold water applications such as ice machines.

Chlorines

Here, activated carbon in the form of carbon-block cartridges are our go-to guys. Activated carbon is a well-established technology for the reduction of a wide range of contaminants, including residual disinfectants (chlorines, fluorides and chloramines). Activated carbon removes these constituents by a process called adsorption, meaning a cartridge can collect many organic molecules on its surface. Carbon filter cartridges are usually rated in gallons. That rating would refer to how many gallons of water could flow through the filter before its effectiveness will be depleted. Most activated carbons are made from raw materials such as nutshells, coal and wood.

Problem Areas

What are the areas of water use we should be concerned about? Do you sell coffee or tea? Do you use any ice machines, beverage dispensing equipment or steamers/combi-ovens? Any water-fed equipment is quite dependent on water quality.

Coffee and tea. Ninety-eight percent of a cup of American brewed coffee is water, so it is hardly surprising that the quality of water used is critical to the flavor of the coffee. For the best-tasting coffee and tea, you must first know what is in your water. Untreated water from the tap will contain varying amounts of TDS. TDS can be comprised of various components such as minerals, hardness (calcium and magnesium) and salts. Brewing coffee with high TDS water will result in a weak-tasting brew due to under extraction of the flavors from the ground coffee. Too low of TDS will result in over extraction of the grinds, resulting in a very bitter taste. This is especially true of water that has been softened by a water softener before being sent to a coffee brewer, as ion-exchange water softeners remove water hardness. Without the proper amount of water hardness, which is essential for extracting the flavors from the coffee bean, you will be left with a bitter cup of coffee.

Here we should mention that the process for espresso extraction is quite different. Espresso extraction does not depend so much on mineral content. Very hot water is forced under high pressure through a finely ground coffee “puck,” through which water will not pass easily. As the water is not in contact with the coffee for

very long, the minerals in the water do not have much of an effect in the role of extraction.

Tea is especially sensitive to water quality. Make your teas with water that is low in mineral/hardness content, high in oxygen and as free from additives and contamination as possible.

Water purveyors will also use chlorine or chloramines as a method of disinfecting the water supply. The aromas and flavors from these additives will certainly ruin any beverage and must be greatly reduced, if not removed altogether. Chlorine is also a major contributor of corrosion in water-fed food service equipment. Carbon filtration and RO systems are commonly used to remove chlorines from water. RO and ultrafiltration systems have been used to reduce TDS in water for several decades.

Ice machines. The three main water quality issues plaguing ice making equipment are scale accumulation due to high water hardness, chlorine and sediment. Some of the more common issues include water hardness scale deposits, high TDS suspended matter plugging distribution tubes and float valves, ice bin corrosion, evaporator tubes and ice auger pitting. You can increase your equipment’s energy efficiency and lifespan by using water filtration designed for ice machines. By removing the problem constituents in your water with ice machine specific water filtration, you will avoid up to two-thirds of your ice machine service calls.

Steamers and combi-ovens. Once again, poor water quality can be identified as a major contributor of problems associated with this equipment as it promotes the formation of hardness scale deposits on steamer/oven surfaces and liquid level sensing probes. As with ice machines, reducing or removing chlorines in your water will greatly reduce problems with corrosion and will result in longer equipment life.

The Bottom Line

The road to better tasting beverage products and fewer breakdowns and emergency service calls goes right through the water you send to your water-fed equipment. Contact a water treatment dealer experienced with water filtration and formulation systems to find out which water systems they might suggest to achieve your water quality goal. Ask about intervals of system maintenance, availability of replacement filter cartridges or repair parts. Do not assume that more expensive filters or systems are better. Make sure your water treatment dealer knows about your industry and how the equipment will work for you. To the extent that the quality of your water can be improved, the taste and ultimately the quality of your product and business will be improved as well. 🌍

Ted Riggs is the Owner and Tech Service Director of Riggs Water Service, a Colorado service company for many coffee and tea operations in the Colorado Front Range. He has 12 years of experience in service, repair and all things water filtration and formulation, with an emphasis on the coffee and tea markets. He has 25 years of plumbing and facilities maintenance service experience.



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A proactive way to mitigate your restaurants' pest problems

The success of any business depends on the effort you are willing to put into it. Restaurants are no exception, requiring even more focused attention than most businesses due to their constant exposure to the public. Every restaurant strives to provide a welcoming environment, attentive service and quality food. Patrons expect that—and a restaurant's reputation depends on it.

However, anyone who owns or manages a restaurant knows there is more to a good reputation than serving five-star-rated dishes. All of these front-end efforts will be wasted if there is even a chance of a pest sighting in your restaurant.

A Big Concern

Pests, such as insects and rodents, are serious problems in a restaurant. They can contaminate food supplies and damage facilities. They also contribute to foodborne illness and other diseases. A recent report, commissioned by Rentokil in partnership with the Centre for Economics and Business Research, found that loss of reputation is a major concern for more than 75 percent of U.S. public-facing food businesses. Other significant concerns included loss of income (76 percent), compensation claims (66 percent) and damage to electrical equipment (53 percent).

For these reasons and more, every restaurant must have a strong pest control process in place, including guidance and support from an expert pest control vendor. Pesticides control pests, but pesticides alone are not the solution. The key to combating infestations is understanding pest behavior and proactively managing pest control measures. Different pests display specific behaviors and preferences that help them thrive in their environment of choice. Therefore, it is essential to consider these attributes when designing and implementing measures to prevent or eradicate an infestation.

An Integrated Approach

The most effective solution is to have an integrated pest management (IPM) program as part of your food safety program. IPM is a systematic approach to pest management that minimizes exclusive reliance on chemical pesticides and—instead of only trying to eradicate pests—considers all available preventive and curative options.

While pesticides can play a part in an IPM program, the true goal of IPM is to reduce the amount of pesticides used, which is strongly preferred for a food facility. An IPM plan takes a holistic approach to pest control that utilizes a combination of methods, including sanitation, exclusion, monitoring and documentation.



Sanitation

Addressing sanitation means closely examining the facility to get rid of the food, water and harborage that attract pests. Truly effective sanitation is a multi-faceted effort. Place dumpsters as far away as possible from the building and its entrances. Don't let paper and cardboard pile up, as paper products make ideal nesting material for rodents. Clean drains frequently, since moisture can turn any area into a breeding ground for larvae.

In addition, check incoming shipments thoroughly, as many pests come in with product. Once product is on-site, store it in plastic totes and other rodent-resistant containers. Employ an organized first-in, first-out rotation system to use stored product quickly before pests have time to breed, mature and multiply.

Exclusion

Exclusion prevents pests from entering the facility in the first place, primarily by sealing off access points into the building, such as cracks in the foundation, openings around utility lines and gaps around doors and windows. Install air curtains over frequently used doors, seal gaps at the bottom of entrances and make sure all

doors remain closed at all times. Cover pipe openings, place valves on drains and seal fittings that can act as an entryway for rodents and other small pests.

Monitoring

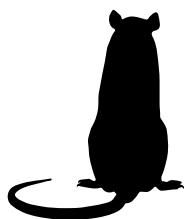
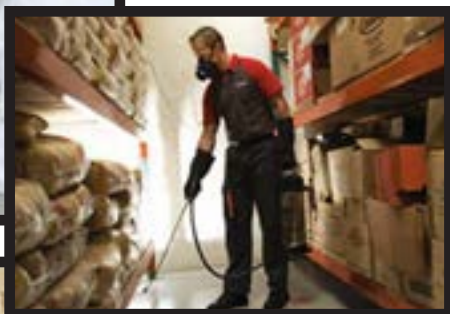
A good monitoring program places traps strategically around the facility to keep track of the numbers and kinds of pests. Using monitors will help to detect when a pest infestation has exceeded a predetermined threshold and determine when corrective action is required. Monitors also serve as an early warning system to help determine what pest issues may be lurking on the horizon, thus allowing you to react before a problem gets serious.

Trap placement needs to be customized for each facility, but some general principles include flanking doors and placing traps along walls, which pests use as a guide to navigate a building. Sanitation also plays a key role in the monitoring process—pests will avoid baited traps if there is real food available to eat.

Know Your Risks

Before implementing such a program, however, it is important to identify which type of pests your restaurant may be at risk of harboring. Some of the most common pests include the following:

- Flies, which are associated with more than 100 disease-causing pathogens, including E. coli, and several kinds of food poisoning. They contaminate food and clean surfaces when they land on them. Common areas to target for fly problems include dumpsters, drains and small cracks where moisture and organic material can build up.
- Rodents, which transmit a variety of parasites, viruses and bacteria, contaminate food and can cause fires or explosions when they gnaw through electrical wires and utility lines. Keys to keeping rodents out include sealing doorways, pipes and other small openings. Rodents are attracted to any source of water and nest in areas where paper and cardboard pile up.
- Cockroaches contaminate surfaces and spread diseases by tracking in germs and filth from unsanitary places. They can even trigger asthma attacks in susceptible individuals. Cockroaches most commonly enter a building through drains and are also a risk you



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Other significant concerns included:

**LOSS OF INCOME (76 PERCENT),
COMPENSATION CLAIMS (66 PERCENT) and
DAMAGE TO ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT (53 PERCENT).**



- you need to monitor when inspecting incoming product.
- Pests such as beetles or moths, which feed on and multiply in stored product such as cereals, seeds, spices and dried fruits. Keys to combating stored-product pests include thorough inspection of incoming product and regular inspection and rotation of product already in the facility.

General places to watch out for pests in every food facility are the kitchen, waste areas, storage rooms, and in or around equipment that generates heat and/or moisture. The outside of the building can also attract pests, particularly if you have an outdoor dining area or trash lingering around the facility for any length of time.


Find a Partner

All of these steps are essential in mitigating the risk of pest infestation, but equally important is involving a trained professional to implement them. That person can be part of your in-house food safety team or a trusted vendor.

When deciding on the right person for the job, it's important to target someone who asks questions about your existing pest control practices. Make sure they have a multi-tiered approach when they inspect your facility and proactively make suggestions to improve your sanitation, exclusion and monitoring systems.

Once your IPM plan is ready and your internal or external pest control expert is in place, consistent implementation is critical, as is evaluation of the program on a regular basis. A successfully integrated pest management program ensures your



facility passes inspection and leads to the end goal of food safety: happy patrons who return time after time. 

Chad Gore, Ph.D., is an Entomologist/Regional Technical Director at Rentokil North America, one of the world's largest pest management companies. J.C. Ehrlich Pest Control, Western Exterminator and Presto-X Pest Control are all part of the Rentokil family of companies in North America.



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The Clean-Up Crew



Don't waste your repair and maintenance dollars on low-quality janitorial services

Janitorial services are a critical part of restaurant operations. A quality cleaning crew can be the difference between achieving a high health score and losing points without even knowing it. A poor cleaning crew can also be costing your restaurants more money than you think.

I began my facilities career on the retail side of the industry, where the need for janitorial services is minimal compared to cleaning requirements in a kitchen. I soon learned that proper management of the janitorial contract is just as essential to the business as the HVAC and refrigeration preventive maintenance contracts.

As we all know, the kitchen is the heart of the restaurant. Proper sanitation and cleanliness keep the restaurant operating and the guests coming back. A poor score from the health department can lead to negative publicity and an overall loss in revenue. In addition, it can also lead to needless repair and maintenance spend.

Quality Control

Quality check your janitorial company to avoid wasting repair and maintenance dollars. Consider these simple tips and tricks to save money:

Rethink mop sink hoses and sprayers.

Attaching a hose to the mop sink faucet is a common practice; the sprayer makes cleaning with mops and scrubbers much easier. It is also common for cleaning crews to use this water hose to spray the quarry tile floor in your kitchen under high pressure to reduce labor hours, instead of filling mop buckets and cleaning the floor the right way. The high water pressure not only removes dirt and debris from the tile; it also removes the grout holding the tile in place. This can cost hundreds if not thousands of extra repair and maintenance dollars per year, which could and should be spent on more imperative needs.

To remedy the situation, require staff to remove the water hose entirely from the mop sink or lock it in storage at night to limit its use. Reduce the length of the water hose attached from a garden-style hose to a 3- to 6-foot hose. This will keep its use contained.

Reduce standing water and excessive water usage.

Excessive water used by the cleaning crew can be just as detrimental to tile floors. Mops should be squeezed or rung out before they ever touch the floor. Dumping water to prep before mopping will slowly deteriorate the grout lines in the kitchen and other sections of the



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restaurant. This practice can also cause mechanical issues on some cooking equipment.

Many facility managers have received a call in the morning from a staff member who reports that their fryers won't light—even though they worked fine the night before. This almost always occurs from water splashing under the fryers while cleaners work with excessive water. The igniter will not spark when wet or damp. The fix is usually as easy as placing a floor fan in front of the fryer to dry out the igniter, but if the restaurant places a service call, it could cost hundreds of dollars. To avoid this issue, perform regular quality assurance checks, and have staff meet with service managers on a continual basis.

Protect your drains.

Floor sink backups and drain clogs can result in very expensive plumbing bills and even restaurant closures. These backups are often the consequence of the cleaning crew not sweeping to remove debris from the kitchen floor before mopping. The water must go somewhere; if gloves, ramekins, towels, silverware and other debris are not removed before mopping, these items will end up down the drain.

To protect your drains, install a drain-locking device on all floor sinks/drains in the kitchen and bar. Standard covers can be removed, allowing debris to be pushed down the drains. This can easily occur during business hours or after closing. Drain locks fit directly into the floor sink drain. Many models are adjustable, so they will fit snug in the line, preventing removal or tampering. A typical kitchen can be outfitted with drain locks for less than the price of a service call after a plumbing backup, and the devices can be installed in minutes. Locking your drains will not solve all of your restaurant plumbing headaches, but it will certainly reduce the frequency of backups.



Contracts Considerations

Whether you have used the same janitorial provider for years or you are bringing on someone new, it is very important to have a clear, defined, written scope of work included in the contract. This not only acts as a check list for restaurant management but also sets the janitorial provider up for success. Both the restaurant and onsite cleaning crew should have this information on hand.

A very specific scope of work will outline the restaurant's expectations so there are no questions if an area is missed. The scope should be customized to fit the needs of the concept, such as carpet versus concrete or hardwood versus tile. It is equally im-

portant to outline avoidances in the contract. An example would be stating not to put broom or mop handles in the door frame in order to prop open a door during cleaning. This can bend hinges and door closers, which can cause the door to scrape the floor or slam shut. If the restaurant staff is not aware of the causes of such problems, they will place a service call and waste more repair and maintenance dollars.

Standard Scope of Work

Breaking up the scope of work into building zones is another way to further increase efficiency and decrease any confusion between management and the provider. Below is an example of a partial scope of work separated by zone. Each area of the building is unique and may require different methods of cleaning. The more information provided, the better off both parties will be.

Restrooms:

- Do not wedge a broom or mop handle between a door and frame to prop open doors.
- Clean and sanitize urinals and toilets inside and out.
- Clean and polish all sinks and counters.
- Polish all chrome, brass, mirrors and fixtures.
- Empty and reline trash containers and feminine disposal receptacles.
- Restock hand towels, toilet paper and hand soap as needed.
- Sweep and mop floor using disinfectant. Remove dirt/debris from edges and corners.
- Once per week, pour water down floor drain.
- Wipe clean all stall walls and ceramic tile walls.
- Pay particular attention to cleaning cove base.
- Dust from the ceiling down as needed, including vents, ledges and stall walls.
- Wipe doors.
- Wipe and restock baby-changing table.
- Wipe stainless partitions using stainless steel polish.

Bar area:

- Do not put chairs on bar top.
- Sweep and mop the floor with disinfectant cleaners.
- Clean under all counters and equipment, removing debris from corners and edges.
- Clean all floor drains and baseboards.
- Wipe mop splashes from the top and along the front of the bar foot ledge platform.
- Wipe the brass trim of the foot ledge using brass polish.

Cement floor (if applicable):

- Sweep, scrub and extract solution using a pH neutral cleaner.
- Remove debris/crumbs from corners and edges.
- Move all chairs and tables.
- Wash and dry all baseboards once per week.

Kitchen floor and expo line:

- Do not use a hose to clean the kitchen floors or expo line.
- Sweep the floor moving all equipment that is movable, removing all debris from under all counters and equipment.
- Block off doors to walk-ins/office with old linen to avoid seepage under the door.



- Do not unplug or damage electrical cords to freezers, refrigerators and coolers.
- Apply cleaning solution to the floor with a mop and scrub with a deck brush; squeegee or shop vacuum up the remaining solution and mop dry.
- Remove all trash from drains and clean drains nightly, including

trough drains by ice machine and dishwasher area. Clean all baseboards once a week.

- On the last day of each month, dust from 7 feet off the floor to the ceiling, including drop-ceiling tiles, light fixtures, HVAC ducts and vents.

Remember, building a strong relationship with your janitorial provider is critical to the brand's success. This partnership can impact the overall customer experience. A clean building is just as important as friendly staff and great food. Being open and honest with expectations and performing regular QA checks will go a long way toward making sure your repair and maintenance dollars are not wasted on needless repairs caused by poor workmanship.

If any of these issues are happening in your restaurants, take a second glance at your contract, perform a surprise inspection or meet with the service manager. Increased interaction will improve the overall quality and level of service for your restaurant.

Shawn McQuade is a Regional Facilities Manager for Red Robin Gourmet Burgers and is responsible for the Southeast Division. He is a CRFP and has been a member of RFMA for two years.



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An Inside Job

Controlling costs with in-house facilities management pros

Why do so many restaurant companies use in-house facilities management professionals? Simply put, it makes financial sense. Facilities management costs within the restaurant industry are extremely high when all activities, including personnel costs, are taken into account.

These charges are under constant review. Some of the justifications for using in-house facilities professionals are:

Cost Control

Overall restaurant facilities costs encompass a large portion of a store's budget. These include repair and maintenance expenses, preventive maintenance, utilities, waste and janitorial, just to name a few. A facilities professional has the knowledge and experience to minimize these costs, which adds money straight to the bottom line. They can control third-party costs by understanding how contractors and vendors can maximize value and reduce costs.

Easier Program Implementation

Facility managers are a perfect fit for the major programs restaurants

continually initiate and roll out. For example, sustainability is hot, and the facility manager provides leadership to oversee and control the actions necessary to save energy and water and reduce waste.

Better Asset Management

Who else knows more about the individual assets of a store, how to maintain them and when to replace them? The facility manager is by far the most knowledgeable when it comes to these issues.

If a CMMS is in place, the facility manager can quickly determine whether to repair or replace a piece of equipment by reviewing its initial cost, age, money left on the books, length of depreciation, replacement cost and repair charge. The overall savings potential in making these types of decisions is enormous. Typically, operations would simply like to buy a new piece of equipment as an expense charge may affect the store's bonus. For facility managers without the use of a CMMS, they still have a variety of sources to readily obtain the information needed to make the correct call on replace versus repair.

Another asset management plus for facility managers is their ability to determine recommended asset replacement programs.

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Streamlined Capital Budgeting

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Who else would the C-suite want to complete an annual audit? Restaurant managers, regional directors or outside service companies? Probably not. A facility manager knows his or her stores, as well as the history of capital and major repair projects. Facility managers are also aware of the current lease terms and agreements and will take these factors into account while preparing a restaurant's budget. Their focus will be on protecting company assets through replacement or major repair programs.

Additional Benefits

Facility managers are also highly skilled at handling disasters and emergencies. They normally are on point for making timely facility decisions on preparing and recovering from any natural disaster. They also are used in real estate or leasing decisions to provide input on the condition of properties. They handle all the preventive maintenance responsibilities for all or some of a location's HVAC/R, grease trap pumping, fire suppression, hood cleaning, security, janitorial, waste and landscaping.

As you can see, facilities duties within the restaurant industry are far and wide. These professionals are tasked with protecting valuable company assets efficiently and economically. Their worth far outweighs their costs. Who else has the knowledge to wear so many hats to manage their restaurants?

RFMA is always here to help, and I'm always looking for feedback. Feel free to contact me at jeff@rfmaonline.com or call me at (972) 805-0905, ext. 3.

Dover and out.

Improved Risk Management

Jeff Dover's facilities career started in 1985. He has been employed by several major chains (Ponderosa, Steak & Ale, Bannigan's, TGI Friday's, Fuddrucker's and recently Five Guys Burgers and Fries). His technical education enabled him to take the lead as energy manager, facilities manager and director of facilities at the various brands.



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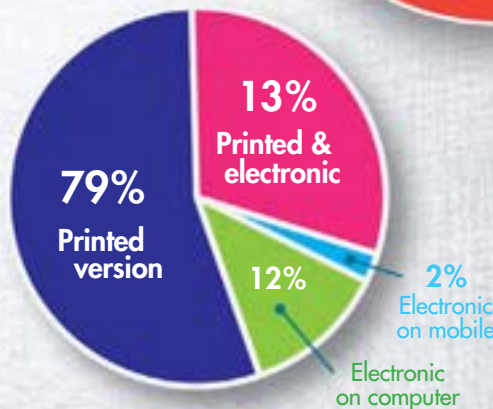
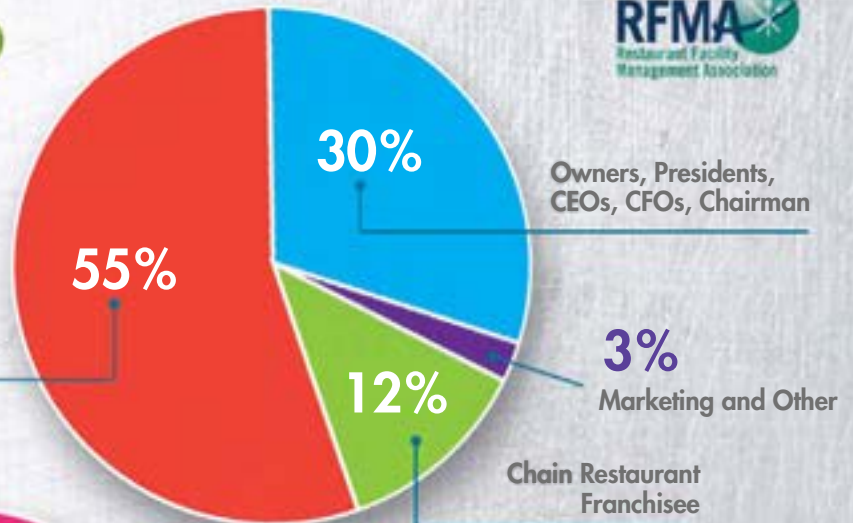
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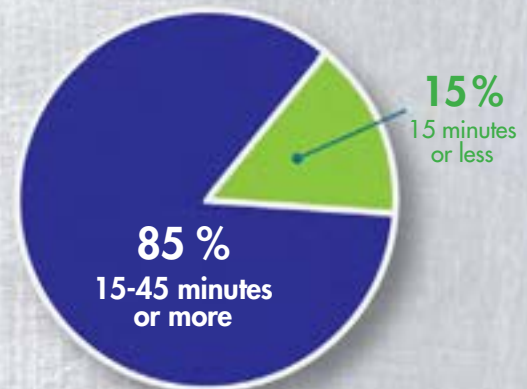
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