



# Minnesota Educational Facility Management Professionals

# The Messenger

APRIL 2015 NEWSLETTER

## The “Tool Box” for Educational Facility Management Professionals

### May 12th, 2015—MASMS State Meeting Two Great Educational Sessions

#### Educational Session #1

Minnesota Solar Schools Project - Opportunities available to school districts for the installation of solar arrays or solar gardens with no cost to districts . Presented by: Jamie Borell, Innovative Power Systems

#### Educational Session #2

What is Your Safety “Game Plan” for Extracurricular Events? - A discussion on school facilities’ needs to balance community activity/accessibility with a reasonable expectation for safety and security. Presented by: Dan Fitch, IEA

**Date:** Tuesday May 12, 2015

**Location:** The Crowne Room, 20500 South Diamond Lake Rd, Rogers, MN

**Schedule:**

9:15 AM	Coffee & Registration
9:45 AM	Welcome and Announcements
10:00 AM	<u>Educational Session #1</u>
11:00 AM	Break & Networking
11:10 AM	<u>Educational Session #2</u>
Noon	Randy Morris, 2015 Legislative Update
12:10 PM	Business Meeting
12:15 PM	Lunch

**On-line registration preferred:** Go to [www.masms.org](http://www.masms.org), and click on **Login**. Your user name is your first initial of your first name followed by your last name (example: jsmith), and your password is masms (unless you have changed it). Then click **Meeting Registration**, select State Meeting, enter your information and press **Submit**.

### MASMS BOOT CAMP— July 2015

Wednesday July 22nd &

Thursday July 23rd, 2015

Location: St. Cloud MN (Holiday Inn)

**Two day course that covers the basics of school facility management.**

**Topics covered:** Best Practices, Training, Equipment Needs, Management Tools, Health & Safety, Inspections/Checklists, Budgets and Staff Management

#### Course Description

This course will provide practical experience and proven techniques to help improve skills in the facilities management field. We will describe today's best maintenance practices and show how other schools have developed high performance facility departments.

**Cost: MASMS will cover the cost of this training.** This includes cost of class, hotel room for Wednesday night (and Tuesday night if your drive is more than 1.5 hours away), and all meals. (Meals include: Wednesday lunch and dinner; Thursday breakfast & lunch; break for both days.) **To Register contact the MASMS office at [ruth@masms.org](mailto:ruth@masms.org)**

## 2015 MASMS Custodial/Maintenance/Grounds Appreciation Days

### Mark Your Calendar

If you did not receive registration forms, please contact the MASMS Office!

**METRO CHAPTER** Wednesday June 17, 2015 OR Thursday June 18, 2015  
Orono High School, Orono MN

**NORTHERN CHAPTER** - Tuesday June 23, 2015  
Pine River-Backus Schools, Pine River MN

**SOUTHERN CHAPTER**—Thursday June 25, 2015  
Mankato East High School, Mankato, Minnesota

**EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS—VENDOR SHOWCASE—NETWORKING—FUN**

**Looking for a great way to say thank you to your staff? This is it!**

**Just \$25 a person! Registration includes snacks & lunch!**

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## New MASMS Educational Members

Norman Vanderlinde, Edina Schools  
 Kory Smith, Edina Schools  
 Corey Montgomery, Edina Schools  
 Gary Syde, Eastern Carver County Schools  
 James Swanson, Eastern Carver County Schools  
 Dennis Hammann, Eastern Carver County Schools  
 Dave Lindquist, Eastern Carver County Schools  
 Donald Wenz, Eastern Carver County Schools  
 Al Bosch, Waconia Schools  
 Andy Nesser, Twin Cities German Immersion School  
 Eric Hill, Hill City Schools  
 Terry Almquist, Waconia Schools  
 Douglas Bonar, Anoka Hennepin Schools

## New MASMS Business Members

Charles Hold, Trane  
 Aaron Given, Twin City Hardware Inc.  
 Eilene Wisniewski, Vanguard Cleaning Systems  
 Michael Hamerlind, Vanguard Cleaning Systems  
 Todd Kuglin, Architect Mechanical Inc.  
 Brice Buckingham, Servpro of Cottage Grove/Woodbury

## MASMS Is Growing!

Year	# of Members	# of Districts
2014-2015	392 Members	186 Districts
2013-2014	363 Members	179 Districts
2012-2013	302 Members	165 Districts
2011-2012	382 Members	153 Districts
2010-2011	272 Members	142 Districts
2009-2010	270 Members	138 Districts
2008-2009	267 Members	133 Districts

## MASMS CALENDAR

April 14, 2015	Metro Chapter Meeting
April 15, 2015	Southern Chapter Meeting
April 16, 2015	Northern Chapter Meeting
May 12, 2015	State Meeting
May 21, 2015	Northern Chapter Meeting
June 17 <sup>th</sup> , 2015	Metro CGM Days
June 18 <sup>th</sup> , 2015	Metro CGM Days
June 23 <sup>rd</sup> , 2015	North CGM Days
June 25 <sup>th</sup> , 2015	South CGM Days
September 30, 2015	Scholarship Golf Event
October 1, 2015	MASMS 2015 Conference
October 2, 2015	MASMS 2015 Conference
October 28, 2015	Southern Chapter Meeting
November 10, 2015	Metro Chapter Meeting
November 19, 2015	Northern Chapter Meeting
December 8, 2015	Metro Chapter Meeting
December 16, 2015	Southern Chapter Meeting
December 17, 2015	Northern Chapter Meeting



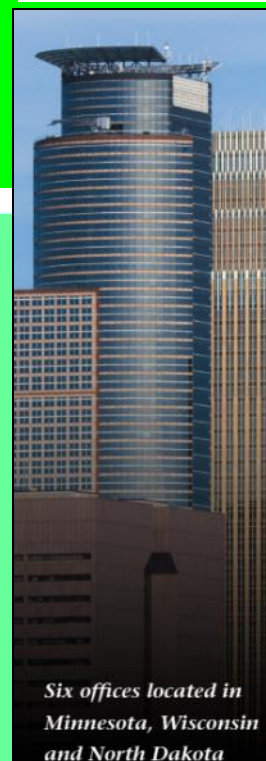
## Vendor Corner

*Mike Remington, Inspec  
 MASMS Vendor Representative*

Placing an advertisement in the MASMS Newsletter  
 "The Messenger" can be very valuable and cost-effective for  
 MASMS vendor members, especially if your schedule doesn't permit your  
 firm to attend the monthly meetings. The costs to advertise in  
 "The Messenger" are: ¼ page ad is \$75 per issue, ½ page ad is \$100 per  
 issue, and a full page ad is \$125 per issue. Contact Ruth if you are  
 interested in advertising in the newsletter.

**MASMS Business Members have three great opportunities to spend  
 time with the custodial, maintenance and grounds staff!**

Consider exhibiting at the MASMS Custodial/Maintenance/Grounds day  
 events—held in the metro, southern and northern chapters in June. If  
 you did not receive registration forms, please contact the MASMS office.



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## A Fresh Look at Natural Gas Contracting

*Submitted by Brenda Jessen, H & H Energy Services*

On its face natural gas is one of the most transparent commodities traded in America. You can usually find the gas price in the business section of your local newspaper alongside the prices of gold, oil and wheat. But as with most commodities most people do not understand the forces which move the prices up and down or why the price on your utility bill is so different from the one in the paper.

### Why do Gas Prices Fluctuate?

As with most products there is a cost to make or produce the product and then there is a cost to move the product to where it is needed. The natural gas production model is similar to that for coal. In that case, coal is extracted from the ground by a mining company and then loaded onto trains or barges to move it around the country. Natural gas by comparison is extracted from underground rock formations by gas production companies and then shipped around the country through large diameter underground pipelines. On an average day over 60 Billion cubic feet of natural gas is moving through these pipelines.

From a commercial standpoint, natural gas is traded around the clock as both a financial and a physical product. Everyone from investment banks to power plants to speculators trade natural gas. Some trade the fundamentals of supply and place bets on whether we are short or long natural gas. Others trade on technical indicators and pricing differentials often without regard to fundamentals. This broad participation with competing objectives in part explains the extreme volatility (price movement) that natural gas can exhibit from time to time.

Another reason for price spikes, especially in winter, is due to the cost of moving the natural gas. Natural gas has become increasingly plentiful as a result of shale gas drilling, however, the ability to move natural gas is dependent upon the previously mentioned underground pipelines. A new gas well can be drilled in days, but building more gas pipelines can take years. Thus in a state like Minnesota, where demand for pipeline capacity can increase dramatically during events such as a Polar Vortex, prices can become exaggerated as demand for natural gas and pipeline capacity peaks.

However, just as natural gas trades as a commodity, so does the cost of moving the natural gas. On any given day, this cost is traded on both financial and physical trading platforms for over one hundred locations across the U.S. Moreover, these prices are published daily in multiple industry sources. This means that you can set this price in advance and not leave yourself open to wild fluctuations.

Thus an educated buyer can choose to set the price of natural gas and the cost of moving that gas to avoid budget busting price spikes.

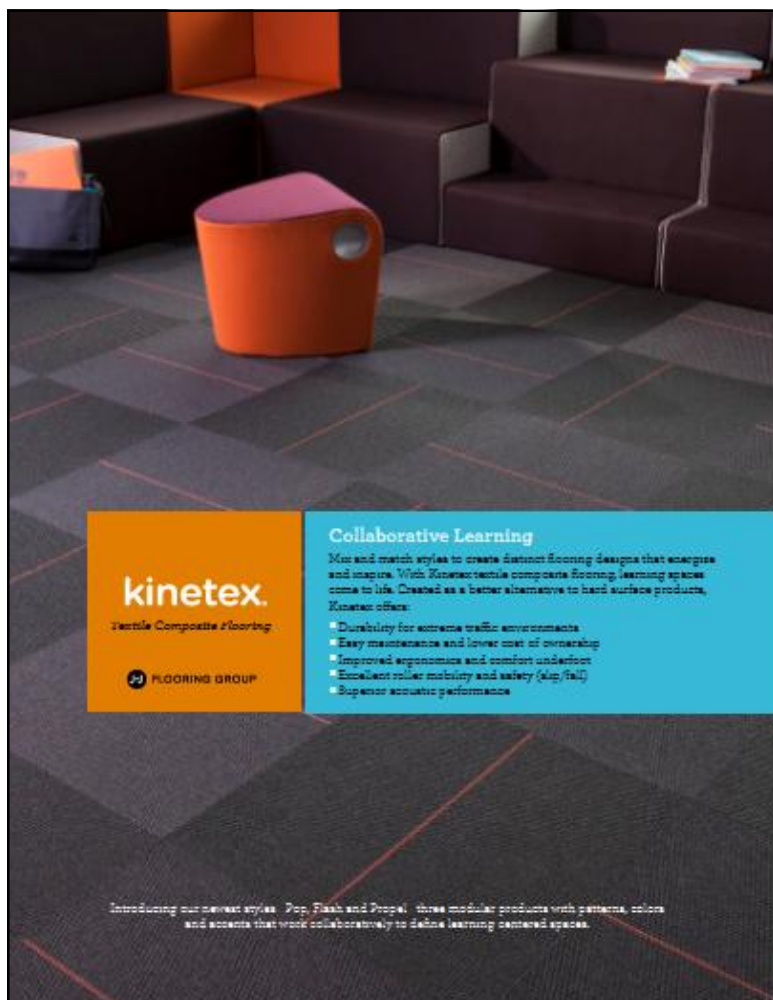
### Natural Gas Contracting Best Practices

Since the natural gas industry is transparent, the truth is that the best practices for buying natural gas are actually the same as with any other product or commodity. Thus anyone purchasing or looking to purchase should follow these Best Practices:

**Rule #1 – Know Your Natural Gas Price.** Every natural gas contract should have a clearly stated price for the gas. This allows the price to be known before the gas is consumed and also allows the price to be verified and audited. Typical pricing methods for Minnesota can range from fixed price to those based on the New York Mercantile Exchange (NYMEX) financial contract to the *Platt's* index for physical deliveries. Since these types of prices are published, using any of them dramatically increases contractual transparency. As with any contract, the mantra should be trust, but verify.

**Rule #2 – Know Your Delivery Cost.** Your natural gas contract should also clearly state the price or indices being used to determine the cost to deliver the gas. We have seen cases where the business managers thought they bought gas for \$4.00 /Dth, but were then charged \$27.00 / Dth. The difference occurred because the gas supplier failed to adequately explain and protect the customer from the risk associated with moving the natural gas. This could have been easily prevented by fixing the delivery cost at the same time the gas price was set.

Continued on Page 4



## A Fresh Look at Natural Gas Contracting (Continued from page 3)

Rule #3 – Know the Fee You are Paying. According to contracting theory, the fee that one pays should be reflective of the degree of risk involved in the contract. In other words, if the buyer is taking all the risks by entering into a contract with a floating price and delivery cost, then the buyer should be paying a very low fee to the gas supplier. The answer should be as easy as looking at your bills from last winter. If you paid high prices, then it is fair to ask what exactly did your gas supplier do for you and what risk did they actually take?

The bottom line is that any natural gas contract should clearly specify (1) the price paid for natural gas, (2) the price paid for moving and delivering the gas and (3) the fee you are paying the supplier for this service. Once you embrace these three rules you will be in a better position to manage your natural gas contract, lower your risk exposure, and set more concise budgets.

### Parting Comments

So why is this important to your school district? Clearly unexpected natural gas costs can have an adverse impact on any institution. No one wants to cut back on programs or services because of unanticipated increases in your natural gas bill. It was, after all, the price spikes that occurred post Hurricane Katrina and the commodity bubble of 2008 that prompted a number of buyers to seek relief by pursuing wholesale purchasing and gas transportation.

Unfortunately, while the natural gas industry is extremely transparent, the market dynamics, terminology and rules can be as challenging as trying to purchase a health insurance policy. In fact, in a number of cases that we have reviewed, the school would have been better off to have stayed with their local utility rather than expose themselves to the market place where “caveat emptor” (buyer beware) often applies.

Nevertheless, this does not have to be the situation for your school district. The first step is to apply the Best Practices contracting rules described above and/or seek out a Natural Gas Broker who you can trust to help you through the contracting process. Above all, energy purchasing can and should be understandable and provide consistent benefits to your school district. Remember the utility bill is not a necessary evil that you simply pay; you have choices that allow you to both manage your budget and lower your energy costs.



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## Health & Safety Section

The MASMS Health & Safety Committee supplies information for this section each month. If you have a specific topic you would like to see covered, just let the MASMS office know (ruth@masms.org).

### Formaldehyde in Flooring and Beyond

*By Dan Tranter, MPH, Minnesota Department of Health*

Does your school have laminated wood flooring? Probably not, but if it does, you should know that CBS aired a story on its news program 60 Minutes on March 2, 2015 about laminate wood flooring and formaldehyde. Even if you don't have such flooring, questions about formaldehyde may come up from staff or parents.

The 60 Minutes story reported high emissions of formaldehyde from flooring that they had analyzed following a California emission regulation for products sold in that state. The floors that were found to emit high levels were all manufactured in China by Lumber Liquidators. There has been a flurry of further media stories around the country. Some government agencies are looking into this topic and there are lawsuits in a few states. We at MDH received many calls and emails from the public.

If you'd like to learn more about the story and this topic, check the following websites:

CBS 60 Minutes Story: <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/lumber-liquidators-linked-to-health-and-safety-violations/>

US Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Questions and Answers Regarding Laminate Flooring <http://www2.epa.gov/formaldehyde/questions-and-answers-regarding-laminate-flooring>

California Environmental Protection Agency's Facts About Flooring Made with Composite Wood Products: [http://www.arb.ca.gov/html/fact\\_sheets/composite\\_wood\\_flooring\\_faq.pdf](http://www.arb.ca.gov/html/fact_sheets/composite_wood_flooring_faq.pdf)

**Continued on Page 6**

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## Formaldehyde in Flooring and Beyond (Continued from Page 5)

So how does this issue affect schools? It probably doesn't affect schools directly because this type of flooring is (presumably) uncommon in schools. However, a lot of building materials and products used in schools may have some amount of formaldehyde and other volatile organic compounds. MDH receives inquiries every year from school staff and parents about odors and chemical concerns, usually associated with renovations or products used in schools. Formaldehyde is used as an adhesive and solvent in many products, such as particle board, plywood, paneling, pressed-wood products, insulation, fabrics, personal care products and possibly other items.

We're concerned about formaldehyde because it may cause health effects, like irritation of the eyes, nose, throat and lungs. People with asthma or other lung conditions may be more susceptible to formaldehyde. There is also some association between formaldehyde exposure and cancer.

What can school staff do to limit formaldehyde? Source control is best, meaning reducing the variety of chemical products and using low-emitting products. Ventilation and administrative controls can also be used.

The EPA is currently finalizing rules for the Formaldehyde Standards for Composite Wood Products Act, or Title VI of the Toxic Substances Control Act. On June 10, 2013, EPA proposed rules to implement national formaldehyde emissions standards for a range of composite wood products. These proposed regulations also contain testing and third-party certification requirements for hardwood plywood, particleboard, and medium-density fiberboard, as well as recordkeeping and labeling requirements. EPA anticipates finalizing these rules late this year. In the meantime, there are currently other standards such as ANSI and CARB standards for composite wood products.

Green Guard, Green Label, EPA Design for the Environment, and Green Seal are other voluntary standards for building materials, furnishings, flooring, and maintenance chemicals. School staff should select products meeting these standards. Remember to check your buildings at least yearly to ensure the correct products are used in the school, for example, as part of your IAQ walk-through inspections and maintenance evaluations.

It's also important to schedule renovation projects over holidays and vacations. Ventilate the space as much as possible to accelerate off-gassing. If renovations will be done during occupied times or end just before occupancy, then it is best to isolate the work area, separate the ventilation, and establish negative pressure with temporary local exhaust ventilation. The EPA has good guidance on maintaining indoor air quality during renovations, such as their I-BEAM (<http://www.epa.gov/iaq/largebldgs/i-beam/>) and Energy Savings Plus Health ([http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/energy\\_savings\\_plus\\_health.html](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools/energy_savings_plus_health.html)) resources.

By taking some of these basic measures, school staff can minimize or eliminate exposure to formaldehyde.

### School Security-Suggested Classroom Door Checklist

Recently, NASFM prepared a guidance document regarding the securing of classroom doors. There are efforts in numerous states where legislation is moving along that circumvents/ignores the adopted Fire Codes involving classroom doors. In these instances barricading devices seem to be acceptable even if they clearly appear to violate the fire code. Various devices being offered may impact the ratings of the fire door, take multiple movements to remove, do not allow access from outside, and may well violate other standards and codes in place such as the ADA. Each day seems to bring a new example of what is being offered as a solution to securing classrooms. We thought a clear and concise document would be helpful for each of you faced with this issue.

In response NASFM developed a "School Security-Suggested Classroom Door Checklist." The document, drafted with subject matter expertise of the Builder's Hardware Manufacturers Association, provides a summary of the issue being addressed, a suggested checklist for securing classrooms based upon most recent codes and standards, as well as references for all the items on the checklist so anyone can confirm if they feel the need.

To view this list go to: [www.masms.org](http://www.masms.org), and select "Resources" on the left hand side of the window, then select "Health & Safety Articles and Presentations"

### Injury Reporting Changes

Recent injury reporting changes made by federal OSHA to be adopted by Minnesota OSHA Changes to OSHA's injury reporting rule became effective at the federal level Jan. 1, 2015. Minnesota OSHA intends to adopt the new injury reporting requirements by March 18, 2015, with an effective date of Oct. 1, 2015.

Changes to OSHA's recordkeeping requirements (for low-hazard industries) will not be adopted by Minnesota OSHA, which is consistent with what is currently in effect in Minnesota. (So schools will still need to keep records.)

For more information click on the links below:  
<http://www.dli.mn.gov/OSHA/Recordkeeping.asp>  
<https://www.osha.gov/recordkeeping2014/index.html>



## 1. FAILURE LEADS TO SUCCESS – Learn from mistakes

**fail·ure**/'fālyər/  
noun

1. lack of success.
2. the omission of expected or required action.
3. the action or state of not functioning.

See failures as feedback! We learn from failure and make the changes needed to be more successful in the future.

We may need to change the way we think about failure. Rather than viewing failure in a negative way where we put ourselves down and think WE are a failure, think of failure as a valuable learning experience. When we look at our mistakes with a view to learn from them, rather than sending ourselves negative messages, we are on the path to success.

We may be reluctant to try different things because we're afraid of failing. Fear of failure does nothing but keep us in our comfort zone where we stick with the familiar, the "safe" choices where we don't "risk" another failure. When we step out of our comfort zone—when we're willing to try something new—that is when we take a step toward success.



The only real failure is not learning from our mistakes. The key to success is to look carefully at what went wrong, change what we did the first time, and try again by applying what we learned.

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## Playground Maintenance: Where to Start

Submitted by Sam Sundermeyer, Flagship Recreation

In a typical year, almost 190,000 playground accidents require emergency hospital treatment. And according to the U.S. Center for Disease Control, children ages 5 to 9 have the highest injury rate than any other group. Many of these childhood injuries could be prevented, but it takes effort by everyone involved with the playground – from the designer to the owner to the user of the play equipment.

What are the major causes of playground accidents? According to a recent study, 36% of playground injuries result from poor maintenance. This number can be minimized when everyone takes responsibility for playground safety. Having established the importance of maintenance on the playground, how do we begin to develop a preventative maintenance program?

### PROACTIVE PLAYGROUND MAINTENANCE

Maintenance issues contribute to approximately one-third of playground injuries each year. To ensure safe play and healthy childhood development, keep your playground structures soundly inspected and fully functioning.

#### START

**1 PLAN**

Establish a maintenance program that addresses the details of your playground environment and structures, factoring in materials, weather and type or frequency of use.

**2 SCHEDULE**

These factors will also help you determine how frequently you'll need to perform inspections—daily, weekly, bimonthly or monthly.

**3 INSPECT**

Be prepared with the right tools—bring a ladder to allow access to inspect critical parts during inspections like:

- Wear and tear on moving parts like swing hangers
- Proper levels of safety surfacing especially under swings and slide exits
- Tightness of bolts
- Identify hazards such as broken/missing equipment, entrapment areas or exposed footings
- Security of footings and foundations

**4 DOCUMENT**

Keep accurate records of your inspection so you can maintain an audit trail and know what steps need to be taken to get your playground structures up to specifications.

**5 FOLLOW UP**

Make any repairs identified during the inspection, and share the contact information of your maintenance department so parents and community members can pitch in and help keep the playground safe.

**FINISH**

### Plan

Establish a maintenance program that address the details of your playground environment and structures, factoring in materials, weather, and type or frequency of use.

### Schedule

Factors such as frequency of use, surfacing, and moving components help you determine how frequently you'll need to perform inspections – daily, weekly, bimonthly or monthly.

### Inspect

Be prepared with the right tools – bring a ladder to allow access to inspect critical parts/issues during inspections like: Wear and tear on moving parts; Proper levels of safety surfacing; Tightness of bolts.

### Document

Keep accurate records of your inspection so you can maintain an audit trail and know what steps needs to be taken to get your playground structures up to specifications.

### Follow Up

Make and repairs identified during the inspection, and share the information with other members of your maintenance department and administration so that everyone can pitch in and help keep the playground safe.

Even the best-designed playground can present hazards if equipment if is incorrectly installed, broken, or physically worn. This is why a well-established maintenance program is a necessary part of every playground's safety program.

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### NEXT CPS CLASS

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 July 8th & 9th, 2015 in Mankato Minnesota.

Watch for upcoming details!

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If you don't learn from your mistakes, there's no sense making them!

..... Anonymous