2011 Re-Certification Chapter Meeting Is Set!

Northern California/Hawaii NEBB Chapter ‘s 2011 Associates and Re-certification meeting is set for Monday, May 16, 2011 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Newark/Fremont Hilton Hotel at 39900 Balentine Drive, Newark, CA 94560, 510/490-8390.

We have an exciting day lined up starting at 8:00 a.m. with a vendor showcase. In attendance will be Syserco, Evergreen Telemetry, Belimo Americas, Keithly Barber and Hunt Air.

New this year, in addition to the product display tables for you to visit each vendor will also be presenting a short technical session at the start of our re-certification meeting.

We have a full day of speakers lined up for you. We have Mark Hydeman, P.E. from Taylor Engineering, returning to update us on Title 24 changes, Michael J. Kearns, CLU, ChFC, from Northwestern Mutual Financial Services speaking on Exit Strategies, and Dave Benson from Huntair.
ALNOR IS EXCITED TO ANNOUNCE THE NEXT GENERATION OF Analog Balometer® Capture Hoods!

Since 1919, Alnor has provided rugged and reliable analog instrumentation to HVAC technicians, and the tradition continues with the new Analog Balancing Tool (ABT) Balometer.

The ABT series Balometer utilizes a low current analog meter with a large, easy to read scale. Fast meter response combined with smooth needle movement allows for quick and accurate flow measurements from supply diffusers and return grilles. For more information visit www.alnor.com.

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Hi all. As we enter this New Year I think you may all have noticed some positive economic direction (well, except for gas prices). My personal barometer, traffic, is indicating an increase in people traveling during commute hours. Although it does make the drive longer, it is actually nice to see.

For those of you that didn’t know, I did a brief stent at a real balance company. That was certainly an eye opener as to the influence that our competing organization has on some of the specifications around this valley. I never really bid balance work at my former firm, so was shielded from that aspect of the business. For me it was always about the technical aspects of the job. My heart goes out to you that are fighting that fight. I have since moved to Pacific Coast Trane.

With that said, I think at least I have a clearer picture of the issues that affect you and your firms. I am not sure if that will be able to translate into any more effective inroads, as we are already trying on several fronts to solve that issue, by working with the consulting engineers and getting our name, our qualifications and our standards of excellence out there. Please try to keep that in mind as we work to pursue the highest quality of output from our NEBB firms. That is why we have adopted the report review when recertification is due. It is not to add work for our firms, but to bring the quality of NEBB firms to a more consistent level. So when you get your pictures of your instruments back because we couldn’t read them – we are just doing our job to keep the quality of NEBB as high as we can.

News from the National front is interesting these days. I am sure you all know that we have a new Executive Vice President, Steve Johnson. In addition to that, the National office is relocating. The office will still be in Washington DC, but in a more professional part of town. We are also working with a new vendor to completely remodel our web page. It has been the countless brunt of criticism over the past and we have decided that some of the issues are unacceptable with respect to visibility, and usability. Just as an example, try Googling air balance. The NEBB web site will not come up in any of the first 10 pages at least. That is one of the items that will be addressed in the new web page. I am working with Karen Groppe, Director of Marketing and Communications, on that change right now and would welcome suggestions.

Well, I will sign off for now, and wish you the best of luck in the coming year.
Building System Commissioning (BSC) is becoming an increasingly more important requirement to the MEP construction industry. The demand by building owner ’ s, engineers, California Energy Code and LEED requirements for verifiable documented operation and functionally testing of complete Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing/Piping (MEP) Systems has led to a surge in commissioning for most of the new construction projects.

Our industry is demanding that we provide properly installed, operating and functionally tested MEP Systems on our projects. The Building System Commissioning process executed by the Systems Commissioning Authority (SCA) provides for verification and documentation of the MEP systems insuring they are properly installed, operated and functionally tested systems. This process includes observations, verification and documentation of integrated pre-functional and functional performance verification of all systems. This process requires the assistance of the project MEP subcontractors in order to provide a smooth well planned Startup and Commissioning process.

The NEBB Building System Commissioning (BSC) Guidelines and their associated documents help give a good overview of what it takes to execute this process successfully. As always, these guidelines and documents should be a starting point for more dialogue with your project ’ s design and construction team on how to complete these processes on your project.

The MEP System Commissioning Process

The Commissioning Plan - The key to creating a successful MEP Commissioning Plan starts with identifying the main players, their roles and involvement in the commissioning process. The Cx Plan should also provide a good overview of what is expected of the CM/GC, 3rd party commissioning agents, MEP subcontractors, the owner, design team, etc. It is a good idea to review these roles during your initial Startup and Commissioning Kick-off Meeting to make sure everyone understands what is expected of them and to insure there are no questions and scope gaps.
The Commissioning Process – The Cx Process should begin during design phase of the project. If the project is seeking and enhanced commissioning point for LEED Certification, the process needs to begin prior to construction. However, in many cases in our industry, the Cx process starts at the beginning of construction. The information needed to start the Cx process and create the Commissioning Plan, includes the Construction Documents (Drawings and Specifications), along with the Owner’s Project Requirements (OPR) and the Basis of Design (BOD) and the construction schedule. The Commissioning documents should outline the process from start to finish and provide a good overview of the complete MEP Commissioning process for all of the Commissioning Team members involved.

The Commissioning Schedule – The MEP System Start-Up and Cx Schedule requires a complete sequence of events required to properly operate and commission the systems, identifying all predecessors of various system components required, beyond the installation and startup of the systems and equipment in order for the proper commissioning to begin. Services such as power, gas, water, drainage need to be available and energized, motor rotation direction checked, appropriate valves need to be opened or closed, fire dampers/fire smoke dampers need to be opened, just to name a just a few examples. The whole commissioning process should track to a schedule that has all these tasks completed in logical sequence and interfaced with the overall project’s schedule.

The Issues List - The System Commissioning Authority (SCA) should create, monitor and update the Commissioning Deficiency List to help track all startup and commissioning related deficiencies and issues to resolution.

The Commissioning Completion - The completion of the commissioning process includes verification of the as-built documents, operating and maintenance manuals, final balancing report and training of the owner’s operating personnel. The SCA should also create the MEP Systems Manual that describes all aspects of the MEP Systems and suggested operational and servicing recommendations.

New Web-based Commissioning

The administration of the MEP Commissioning documentation and processes are changing by offering a web-based capability that assists in organizing and streamlining the commissioning process.
The process is utilizing a website to house all the documents for the commissioning process and other necessary documents for the construction and project turnover.

The Cx websites are set-up to enable easy access for the complete Cx team. Commissioning-relevant documents are stored in secure, central, collaborative environment. Project team members have access 24/7, and many software packages allow unlimited users. Project Cx Issue Lists are kept on-line, eliminating the seemingly endless update delays that occur when passing documents back and forth via email.

The updates for the web-based Cx process can be accomplished utilizing a wireless capable laptop computer, notebook or I-pad in the field, offering immediate sharing of the current project MEP Cx status.

*Bill Jeffrey, LEED-AP, DPR Construction*

**NEBB Specifications Can Now Be Downloaded from Website!**

NEBB specifications for Test, Adjusting and Balancing (TAB), Building Systems Commissioning (BSC), Sound & Vibration (S&V) and Cleanroom (CR) are now available on our website for download in Word. Log onto [www.nocalhawaiinebb.org](http://www.nocalhawaiinebb.org) and click on Specifications on the bottom of the home page.

**On-Line Courses Available Now!**

Two new on-line modules on “NEBB Report Preparation” and “NEBB Error Finding” are now available to anyone that needs to know the requirements and formats for preparing a NEBB Certified Testing Adjusting and Balancing (TAB) Report. The module is designed to provide training in step-by-step procedures and includes a self-administered, on-line Final Exam. The course offers training to anyone interested in the subject, as well as successful completion of the Final Exam provides credit toward meeting certain requirements of the NEBB Certified Professional practical exam. Go to [www.nebb.org](http://www.nebb.org) to sign up.
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NEBB Certified Professional
Written/PRACTICAL EXAM
March 19, 2011, 8:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.
San Leandro, CA

NEBB Technician Exam
Written Exam
March 19, 2011, 8:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.
San Leandro, CA

Northern California/Hawaii
NEBB Chapter Re-certification Meeting
May 16, 2011, 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
Hilton Hotel, Newark, CA
Certified Testing, located at 98-1222 Neki Street, Aiea, Hawaii is a testing and balancing firm and has been in business since 1979. In 1986, Certified Testing became NEBB certified in Air and Hydronics when its current owner, Thomas McGowen, became a NEBB certified supervisor. Certified Testing’s main customer is the federal and state government. Certified Testing works in the private sector, but most of their projects are air and Hydronics balancing for federal and state buildings. Doug Buote went to work as a technician in 1988 at Certified Testing working his way into a supervisory position several years later and eventually buying the company in 1998.

Doug attended college at Honolulu Community College and went through their two (2) year Refrigeration and Air Conditioning program. After graduation he went to work for Certified Testing. Doug is Certified Testing’s only NEBB Certified Professional certified in Air and Hydronics balancing. As well as working in the field, Doug also handles the estimating and bidding on all jobs. He spends approximately forty percent (40%) of his time in the field and sixty percent (60%) in the office. Certified Testing has one technician, Kevin Chong, who recently passed his NEBB Technician exam in October and is now NEBB certified. Doug’s wife, Debbie, works as the administrative assistant, handling the paperwork for the company.

Doug made the decision to become NEBB Certified in 1998 for several reasons. Certified Testing’s original owner was NEBB certified, so when the firm was sold to Doug he needed to be NEBB certified to keep Certified Testing’s NEBB certification. During the late 1990’s he saw a change in the industry. More projects were requiring certification of firms and personnel. So to bid on those projects, NEBB certification was needed.

Doug feels that one benefit of their NEBB certification is that it ensures that Certified Testing and
all their personnel keep up on current standards and has helped maintain and improve the quality of service provided. Being a NEBB Certified Professional means that the job is not completed until it is done right!

Pictured right is one of the many jobs that Certified Testing has worked on, the Azure Restaurant at The Royal Hawaiian Hotel in Waikiki.

Certified Testing takes pride in all of their projects!

Tech Corner  By Steve Smith

Another year. More changes. Continual growth in our industry . . . As our industry moves on, companies, CP’s and Technicians come and go. Through these personal changes we have changes in direction also. Look at our companies, government and favorite teams. NEBB is no different. With that, I would like to say thank you to our newest CP’s and their willingness to step in and help. Our present and recent board members have been adding additional subject matters to our interviews of the CP’s . . . “volunteerism”. Without all our committees, (marketing, technical, … etc ) how would our chapter maintain? It would not!!! This is an issue expressed across all organizations from your kid’s sports and school to our trade programs like ASHRAE, ISPE, NEBB, etc. Our most recent new CP’s (Ron Jenkins, QCS and Amber Ryman, ACCO ) are examples of the new volunteers. I and the Board would like to say thank you. As we move forward and on, we are encouraged to see you guys stepping in to help. There are several other CP’s applicants in the process that are showing similar dedication. That brings encouragement to the Board in maintaining our chapter Board philosophy.

When we discuss volunteering, many only see the Board positions. All of us board members have committee members that are a huge help. These committee members typically are able to work from their home/office a few times a year for only a short time or attend a show once/twice in their own area, networking NEBB and themselves. All that help adds up and is such a big help. I know on the technical committee that annually I have many applications, equipment or reports that need review. Over the last few years I have had several repeated applicants that have had issues each time in their application. These individuals are targets for me in joining our technical committee because they could use the practice. When we tightened our review process, we walked these companies through their issues. There should not be any more issues and the burden is on the CP’s shoulders more now. So, if you are still having issues, please consider working alongside our other technical committee members to learn more. Call Audrey before we call you.
Starting in 2011 the NEBB Certified Technician Exam is now offered on-line only. The NEBB TAB Committee has completed the implementation phase of the on-line testing program for Certified Technicians and the test is ready for use. The old Practical (rig test or field test) for Technicians is no longer a requirement for Technician certification. The Rig Test components are included in the on-line exam.

On-line exams will be completed in a continuous session of 3 hours. The exam may be administered at any time but must be coordinated with the Chapter Coordinator. Candidates will make application through the Chapter and testing locations will be designated by the Chapter. This exam will be administered by approved Proctors and will be given on an approved computer.

Candidates will have 3 years to complete the Certification process. The test results will be collected by the Test Administrators and results will be forwarded to the local Chapter.

For more information on making application, qualification criteria, and fees please contact your local Chapter Coordinator.

In May, 2009, the NEBB Board established a requirement that all NEBB certified projects in the year 2012 and beyond shall be manned on-site, at minimum, by a NEBB Certified Professional or a NEBB Certified Technician to provide project supervision. A Certified Firm may use any combination of manpower, including multiple non-certified technicians; however, it must designate and deploy on-site for each project either a NEBB Certified Professional or a NEBB Certified Technician.

For any questions, please contact either Audrey Kearns, Northern California/Hawaii NEBB Chapter Coordinator at 510/386-1270, akearns@nocalhawaiinebb.org or the NEBB National office at 301/977-3698.