

Meeting Summary from IKECA's Canada Chapter  
Held via Conference Call on June 9, 2011

This turned out to be the most active call to date in the monthly series of telephone conference calls among those interested in furthering the professional of the Canadian Kitchen Exhaust Cleaning Industry proceeded. Several even made a commitment to join the Association; real progress!

As usual, Bill Doherty, Canadian Chapter President, of Pressure Kleen Services welcomed the participants. He summarized what he considered to be the three accomplishments to date:

1. There have been new companies participating in each call over the past three months.
2. Fire Inspector awareness about the KEC industry has increased.
3. Insurance groups have been engaged in private conversations about the role KECs have to play in fire prevention and life safety.

Several participants offered testimonials as to why they are proud to be a member of IKECA:

- Bill Doherty observed that what he had learned during this year's Naples conference had turned into a **savings of \$3,000** for his company—more than paying for his participation. He offered this experience as further proof that one **cannot stand on the sidelines** and expect to reap the full rewards of membership.
- Bala Kumar and his colleagues from Hood Cleaners of America stated that the attendance at meetings often served as a **refresher** for what already knew but, moreover, provided an understanding that their **company is not alone** in the mission for cleaning to a higher standard.
- Another individual reiterated the importance of **understanding that one is not alone** in this industry. He further observed that customers select his business as a result of being an IKECA member—it is a **marketing edge**. He has also found that the **local AHJs are more interested** in what he has to offer because of the IKECA membership.
- A fourth individual with 5+ years of membership valued **the networking** and the commitment to **cleaning to a higher standard**. He believes that **certification** holds one **accountable** on fire prevention and life safety issues.
- Membership was also seen as good **motivation for employees** as the certification amounts to a great investment in the employees.

As an AHJ, Dave O'Neil of Windsor Fire & Rescue Services spoke about the personal experience of doing inspections and how almost losing three firemen from a roof collapse changes one's perspective. In Windsor, several companies have been taken to court for their failure to fulfill proper cleaning within commercial facilities in Windsor, Canada. The goal here is to have each KEC "own" their work including any and all liability. Dave agreed to write a Journal article on their approach within Windsor, Canada and the resulting changes.

At the time of the call, there were nine IKECA members— 7 Active and 2 AHJs—in Canada. All will be listed under the website section for the Canadian Chapter of IEKCA. Since then, another member was reinstated. During the call the following made a commitment to join IKECA:

- Luc Alarie of Nettoyage Dock-Net Inc.
- Jeff Ives of Aqua-Jet. Did join.
- Thayalini of CPM Cleaning.
- Geraldine Holden of Commercial & Industrial Steam Cleaning Services
- Alex Young of Power King Exhaust Cleaning. Did join.

Concerns expressed as impediments to membership in IEKCA included: the expense, the low numbers already members, and the timing of meetings versus the more limited business season for those in colder climates.

Meeting topics of interest for the Annual Conference or the Owner/Operator track of the Technical Seminar & Expo included succession planning and “the view from a restaurant manager” in what they seek in KEC.

Mr. Hutton will distribute the “working with AHJ” sell sheet which the management team has developed. The attachment at the end of his summary should be used during the initial stages of recruiting Canadian AHJs.

Ms. Holden observed that they typically invite Fire Inspectors on the job in order to educate them in what to examine in their own course of inspection. She also reported that the Ontario Fire Marshals are working on a two to three day course about kitchen exhaust cleaning: click on the Ontario Fire College of their website at <http://www.ofm.gov.on.ca/>.



## AHJs and Commercial Kitchen Exhaust Safety

The [International Kitchen Exhaust Cleaning Association, or IKECA](#), is a global trade association representing cleaners and inspectors of commercial kitchen exhaust systems. In cleaning or inspecting, the job is all about providing a safe environment for the involved commercial establishment. As an organization, IKECA is dedicated to fire prevention and the protection of life and property. Therefore, the Association is committed to assisting Fire Marshals and all Authorities Having Jurisdiction (AHJs) in understanding their key role in maintaining a safe environment for any establishment with commercial kitchen exhaust systems. No one wants another tragedy like the one which occurred in [Boston during 2007](#).

As part of their responsibilities AHJ across North America are scrutinizing the kitchen exhaust cleaning industry and increasing their efforts in reviewing and inspecting commercial kitchen exhaust systems. The members of IKECA are committed to partnering in this improved review and inspection process, including educating fire safety professionals about the importance and necessity of a properly cleaned and maintained kitchen exhaust system.

To that end, it is important to understand what cleaning of a commercial kitchen exhaust system means. According to [National Fire Protection Association's](#) standard on this area, NFPA 96 *Standard for Ventilation Control and Fire Protection of Commercial Cooking Operations, 2011 Edition*, section 11.6.1: "Upon inspection, if the exhaust system is found to be contaminated with deposits from grease-laden vapors, the contaminated portions of the exhaust system shall be cleaned by a properly trained, qualified, and certified person(s) acceptable to the authority having jurisdiction" in accordance with Table 11.4, Schedule of Inspection for Grease Buildup. An entire exhaust system includes the hood, filters, fan and all associated horizontal and vertical ductwork.

NFPA 96 is a key tool which Fire Marshals and other AHJs should be using to validate the cleanliness of a commercial kitchen exhaust system. Why? NFPA 96 is not a mechanical code but rather, NFPA 96 is a standard for ventilation control and fire protection of commercial cooking operations, just as the name suggests. As a standard, it dates back to 1946 and is constantly reviewed and updated by an accredited body of diverse expert professionals including regulatory and industry stakeholders.

IKECA member companies serve as important partners for AHJs, since each member company has at least one certified exhaust cleaning specialist—a sign of industry commitment and professionalism. But why is certification so important to the AHJ? For IKECA, certification reflects a knowledge-based recognition of an experienced individual who shows a competency on the guidelines, codes and standards for the industry. By studying the materials and passing an examination, the employee has demonstrated a working knowledge of the required codes and standards applicable to the entire industry. Neither training nor certification will guarantee that any company or individual will do a good job, however. With inspection from interested and qualified AHJs as industry partners, the chances for less than a good job escaping detection are reduced. Moreover, IKECA's certification program is not "for life" nor is it based on open book exams, as some are. The certified employees continue their education annually beyond the exam and uphold themselves to an industry-leading code of conduct and ethics.

AHJs seeking more information should contact Captain Michael Ruley, Atlantic City Fire Department, (609) 347-5595, ext. 237 and/or Captain David Cushing, Boston Fire Department, (617) 343-2197.

