



THE MONITOR

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Society of Cleaning and Restoration Technicians

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From the President's Pen

It's hard to believe that 2009 is more than half over. I hope that your year has been as fruitful "business wise" as mine has been. In spite of the so-called bad economy, we are just "slammed" with water damages as well as cleaning jobs.

It seems in our area where the economy hasn't yet felt the recession as badly as some areas people are being conservative but still spending on cleaning. I think that they are opting to clean their furnishings rather than replace.



I've also found we do more fire and water damages when people are being conservative. They tend to do less preventative maintenance, so we get more insurance claims. We are also gearing up for the hurricane season so we are going through all of our rental equipment performing repair and maintenance and getting everything ready. Believe me, it pays to plan ahead.

I'm also training a new operations manager since my former one retired after 16 years. Losing him was like my right hand had been cut off. You're never ready for changes in employees, are you? Anyway, fortunately I have a new office manager starting in just a few days, so my business will get back on track.

We are only a few weeks away from the best Connections Event we have ever produced. This event promises to be truly a "hands-on" event that you don't want to miss. This is an opportunity to try out some of those services that could really increase your company's bottom line and that will make your life easier. There are a lot of hands-on areas for rug cleaning, carpet cleaning, upholstery cleaning, water damage, carpet installation, and many others. And don't forget to take advantage of our scholarship program. Check out our website for more information at www.scr.t.org.

I'm sure you have seen the room reduction rates for the Hilton. When was the last time you stayed in a place like the Hilton for \$69.00 a night? Those rates are guaranteed for three days before the event and up to three days after so you could extend your business trip and enjoy a few days of R and R before heading back home. One more time, don't forget to take advantage of our scholarship program.

There will be an SCRT membership "gathering" on Wednesday evening, September 9th, with complimentary adult beverages and snacks. I will be looking forward to seeing you there. And be sure to come by the SCRT Booth in the Tradeshow hall and visit with us. We always enjoy good company; it's good to see old friends. Bring your friends that haven't joined SCRT and get them signed up. You are really going to be disappointed if you miss this event.

By the way, if you haven't gotten

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Connections • Sept. 9-11 • Las Vegas

pH - A Quick Lesson in the Chemistry of Cleaning

By CIRC Staff

The pH scale, numbered from 0 to 14, describes the relative acidity or alkalinity of chemicals, with the middle of the scale, pH 7, being neutral (pure water). Substances from pH 0 to pH 7 are acids; those from pH 7 to pH 14 are alkaline. The scale is logarithmic; for example, a chemical with a pH of 5 is 100 times less acidic than one at pH 3, but it's 10 times more acidic than a substance with a pH of 6. The same goes for the alkaline end of the scale.

Cleaning surfaces with liquids is really a neutralization process — the balancing of acids with alkalies, and vice versa. Oil, grease, and many bodily wastes — most of which are, or contain, fatty acids — are best cleaned up with alkaline solutions such as detergents or commercial all-purpose cleaners. Lye, a common name for sodium hydroxide, at the extreme end of the scale at about pH 13, is used for heavy-duty degreasing tasks such as oven and drain cleaning.

Acids such as white vinegar, lemon juice, and phosphoric acid are best for cleaning alkaline stains or deposits such as those from alcoholic beverages, coffee, tea or mineral scale from hard water. Sulfuric and hydrofluoric acids, at the low end of the scale at pH 1-2, are useful for rust removal or etching surfaces.

Always wear skin, eye and respiratory protection when you must work with harsh cleaning agents at the extreme ends of the scale. Most of these chemicals can burn skin or eyes quickly, and their vapors can cause permanent damage to nasal passages and lungs. Store these products out of the reach of children. Always read and follow label directions carefully for safety and best results. Never mix any chemicals together in an attempt to boost cleaning power. ■

Source: www.housekeepingchannel.com

What Higher Wages Mean for Small Business

By Diana Ransom, *wsj.com*

Many of the nation's small-business owners are about to see their labor costs rise, but that's not entirely a bad thing. Thanks to a three-tiered federal minimum wage-hike that Congress approved two years ago, starting July 24 employers are required to pay hourly workers at least \$7.25 per hour. This third and final rate hike — the last in a three-stage process — represents a 70-cent jump from \$6.55 per hour. (Last year, the minimum rose 70 cents from \$5.85.)

The change is unlikely to come as much of a shock. Businesses have been anticipating it for months and have been making changes to better afford paying out higher wages. And not every employer in every state will be affected by the new minimum. (Nineteen states, plus Washington, D.C., already mandate hourly wages of \$7.25 or higher.)

However, retailers and fast food restaurants in 31 states including Florida, Pennsylvania and New Jersey will be required to give millions of workers a raise, amounting to \$1.6 billion a year, according to the Economic Policy Institute, a nonpartisan think tank in Washington, D.C. In addition, many struggling small-business owners worry that such a move may set them over the edge.

"For small firms, labor accounts for 80% of their costs," says Bill Dunkelberg, the chief economist for the National Federation of Independent Businesses, an advocacy group in Washington. "For them, if the minimum wage goes up by a buck, their bottom lines go from \$50,000 to \$30,000."

While there's no doubt some small companies will need to raise prices, lay off workers or even close their doors because of added labor costs, some economists argue that higher wages could spur operational improvements and even boost sales. Here's the good news and the bad news for



small-business owners facing a new higher minimum wage:

The Good News

Studies show that employee morale tends to improve with higher wages, says Mark A. Price, a labor economist at the Keystone Research Center, a think tank in Harrisburg, Pa. “When people feel better about their jobs, they tend to work harder,” he says.

Business owners might also try organizing their businesses to run more efficiently, Price says. In addition to streamlining their operations to get more out of their existing staff, companies might implement time-saving technologies and better supply-chain management techniques, he says.

Finally, paying lower-wage workers more could actually spur small-business sales, says Dean Baker, a co-director at the nonpartisan Center for Economic and Policy Research in Washington, D.C. “Putting more money in workers’ pockets, could lead to an uptick in demand,” he says. “They’re going to spend it, not invest it.”

The Bad News

Businesses will be paying higher labor costs. And if they can’t afford to lose any more profits, they may raise prices to recover those costs, says Dunkelberg from the NFIB. “When prices are higher, people will buy less,” he says. And although big-box discounters like Wal-Mart Stores and Target face the same wage hikes as smaller firms, they’re likely to raise prices only modestly, as they’re able to spread price increases thinly over a wider range of product offerings than small businesses. If small firms, which already tend to charge higher prices than giant retailers, hike prices, they could wind up with even fewer sales, as penny-pinching consumers flock to big discounters, he says.

That’s just the situation Brian Lackey is trying to avoid. Lackey, a Pizzeria Venti franchise owner in Atlanta, opened his store eight months ago, and he doesn’t want to raise prices just yet — even though meeting the new federal minimum wage will drive

his labor costs up \$1,000 to \$1,500 a month. Instead, he’s cutting the store’s overlap. “Do we need three people when two people can do the job?” he says. “While a 5% to 10% price hike isn’t completely out of the question, it’s not something we’re embracing — especially in Atlanta where we’re one of about a thousand [food venues] where people can choose to eat.”

A small company might also try cutting its work force to make up for higher costs. According to studies conducted during the early 1990s, around the time of the last U.S. recession, today’s 11% minimum wage increase will lead to the loss of an additional 300,000 jobs among teens and young adults, says David Neumark, a professor of economics at the University of California, Irvine. With the national unemployment rate hovering near 10%, the timing of the minimum wage hike may compound the problem. ■

Overcoming Procrastination

By Steve Pavlina

Putting tasks off to the last possible minute can be a major problem in both your career and your personal life. Missed opportunities, stress, resentment and guilt are just some of the symptoms. This article will give you practical tools to overcome it.

Replace “have to” with “want to.”

When you tell yourself that you have to do something, you’ll automatically feel a sense of resentment and rebellion. Procrastination kicks in as a defense mechanism.

Realize and accept that you don’t have to do anything you don’t want to do. Even though there may be serious consequences, you are always free to choose. All the decisions you’ve made along the way have brought you to where you are today. If you don’t like where you’ve ended up, you’re free to start making different decisions, and new results will follow. Procrastination becomes less likely on tasks that you openly and freely choose to undertake.

Replace “finish it” with “begin it.”

When you focus on finishing a task where



you can't clearly envision all the steps to completion, you create a feeling of overwhelm. Replace, "How am I going to finish this?" with "What small step can I start on right now?" If you simply start a task enough times, you will eventually finish it. If one of the projects you want to complete is to clean out your garage, ask yourself how you can get started on just one small part of the project. For example, go to your garage with a notepad, and simply write down a few ideas for 10-minute tasks to make a dent in the piles of junk. Maybe move one or two obvious pieces to the trash can while you're there. Don't worry about finishing anything significant. Just focus on what you can do right now. If you do this enough times, you'll eventually be starting on the final piece of the task, and that will lead to finishing.

Replace perfectionism with permission to be human. Believing that you must do something perfectly is a recipe for stress. You'll associate that stress with the task and condition yourself to avoid it. You end up putting the task off to the last possible minute, so that you finally have a way out of this trap: now there isn't enough time to do the job perfectly. You can tell yourself you could have been perfect if you only had more time. But if you have no specific deadline for a task, perfectionism can cause you to delay indefinitely. If you've never started that project you always wanted to do really well, could perfectionism be holding you back?

Give yourself permission to be human. Have you ever used a piece of software that you consider to be perfect in every way? I doubt it. Realize that an imperfect job completed today is always superior to the perfect job delayed indefinitely.

Replace deprivation with guaranteed fun. Do you tell yourself that you will have to go into seclusion, work long hours, never see your family and have no time for fun? That's not likely to be very motivating, yet this is what many people do when trying to push themselves into action.

Guarantee the fun parts of your life first, then schedule your work around them. This may sound counterproductive, but this reverse psychology works extremely well. Decide in advance what times you will allo-

cate each week to family time, entertainment, exercise, social activities and personal hobbies. Guarantee an abundance of all your favorite leisure activities. Then limit the amount of working hours each week to whatever is left. By treating your working time as a scarce resource rather than an uncontrollable monster that can gobble up every other area of your life, you'll begin to feel much more balanced. You'll be far more focused and effective in using your working time.

I also strongly recommend that you take at least one full day off each week with no work whatsoever. If you know that the next day is your day off, you'll be less likely to put off tasks. When you think that every day is a work day, however, work seems never-ending, and you always tell yourself, "I should be working." Your brain will use procrastination as a way to guarantee that you get some form of pleasure in your life.

Use time-boxing. For tasks you've been putting off for a while, I recommend using the time-boxing method to get started. Here's how it works: First, select a small piece of the task you can work on for just 30 minutes. Then choose a reward you will give yourself immediately afterwards.

Examples include watching your favorite TV show, seeing a movie, enjoying a meal or snack, going out with friends, going for a walk, or doing anything you find pleasurable. Because the amount of time you'll be working on the task is so short, your focus will shift to the impending pleasure of the reward instead of the difficulty of the task. No matter how unpleasant the task, there's virtually nothing you can't endure for just 30 minutes if you have a big enough reward waiting for you.

When you time-box your tasks, you may discover that something very interesting happens. You will probably find that you continue working much longer than 30 minutes. You will often get so involved in a task, even a difficult one, that you actually want to keep working on it. Before you know it, you've put in an hour or even several hours. The certainty of your reward is still there, so you know you can enjoy it whenever you're ready to stop.

When you do decide to stop working, claim your reward and enjoy it. Then sched-



ule another 30-minute period to work on the task with another reward. This will help you associate more and more pleasure to the task, knowing that you will always be immediately rewarded for your efforts. You'll be eager to return to work on your task again and again, and you'll ultimately finish it.

Realize that procrastination is caused by associating some form of pain or unpleasantness to the task you are contemplating. The way to overcome procrastination is simply to reduce the pain and increase the pleasure you associate with beginning a task, allowing you to overcome inertia and build positive forward momentum. ■

[Steve Pavlina is the founder of StevePavlina.com, a personal development web site focused on time management, motivation, problem solving and personal productivity.]

IICRC Names Full-Time President to Lead Organization

The Institute of Inspection, Cleaning and Restoration Certification (IICRC) has named Patrick Winters its first, full-time paid president effective August 1, 2009. Winters will report to the IICRC board of directors and its chairman.

The newly-created position that Winters will fill represents a significant change in how the Institute is run. Since its founding in 1972, a volunteer president and CEO has managed the organization, while at the same time running her or his own business.

“The Institute has grown impressively and made an important mark on the inspection, cleaning and restoration industries for more than 30 years thanks to the contributions of volunteers at all levels, who will remain the backbone of the organization,” said Paul Pearce, the board chairman and president. “Combining their dedication and expertise with the exceptional management experience of Pat Winters will ensure that we tap the full potential of the Institute and maximize our contributions to the registrants and the industries we serve.”

Pearce and the Executive Committee, working with the board, will continue to actively provide overall leadership, deter-

mine direction, and set policy for the Institute. Winters will be responsible for working with the organization's leadership to develop and implement a long-range strategic plan to generate growth for the Institute in current and new markets, including outside North America, and strengthen relationships with allied industries, federal and state regulatory agencies, and elected officials. He will also work with the Institute's management team as it carries out day-to-day operations.

Winters brings more than 30 years of not-for-profit management experience to his new position with the Institute. For the past eight years, he served as executive director of the Society for Maintenance and Reliability Professionals, a 3,000-member international engineering organization. He has previously been president and chief executive officer of the Denver-area Better Business Bureau, the National Association of Credit Management and Chicago Midwest Service Corporation, and the Building Owners and Managers Association of Denver, Colorado.

Winters was named Association Executive of the Year in 1991 by the Colorado Society of Association Executives and, under his leadership, the Building Owners and Managers Association of Denver was named Association of the Year in 1990 by the Building Owners and Managers Association International. In 2008, he was appointed to the Board of Examiners of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Awards. The Baldrige Awards are given by the President of the United States to recognize U.S. organizations for their achievements in quality and performance in the manufacturing, service, small business, education, health care, and non-profit sectors.

Winters has a Bachelor of Science degree from Illinois State University, holds a Master of Public Administration Studies from the University of Colorado, and is a graduate of the University of Notre Dame Institute of Organization Management – Center for Leadership Development.

Winters was selected after an extensive search by a committee of the IICRC board. The Committee reviewed almost 100 applications for the position. ■

IICRC Begins Drafting S600 Carpet Installation Standard and Reference Guide

The IICRC announced that the organization has filed the proper notification with the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and will begin drafting the S600 Carpet Installation Standard and Reference Guide. The new standard is being sponsored by the World Floor Covering Association (WFCA) and the Carpet and Rug Institute (CRI). The IICRC S600 Consensus Body Standard Committee will be chaired by James Mullins of Shaw Industries, and Barry Costa of Aspire Educational Institute will serve as the vice-chair for the committee.

“Having WFCA and CRI involved in the creation of the standard is an example of how our industry works together to achieve the best result. We know that with their involvement, we will be able to create a standard for carpet installation that will be accepted across the industry,” said IICRC Chairman Paul Pearce. “And, with industry veterans James Mullins and Barry Costa leading the committee, we know that the process will be upheld to the highest standards.”

“The WFCA has enthusiastically agreed to fund half the cost for IICRC to develop ANSI Standards for Carpet Installation (S600) because we firmly believe it is an investment in the future for our customers and the entire flooring industry,” said D. Christopher Davis, President and CEO of the WFCA. “We see the value in and have a history in partnering with other sectors of the flooring industry to accomplish mutual goals.”

“CRI has a long and proud history of providing leadership in the arena of installation standards and felt like it was important to bring all the stake holders to the same table to provide the most credible document possible,” said Werner Braun, president of CRI. “The end result through this ANSI process will once again provide the template for other industries to follow. We are thrilled to have the IICRC leading this process and with the leadership in place to drive it.”

The IICRC is now looking for industry volunteers to participate on the committee. The timeline for completion of the S600 is approximately 36 months, and the committee will meet approximately four times per year. However, sub-committees continually work online and via conference calls. There will be between 15 and 20 members on the voting committee of the S600 Consensus Body Standard Committee and more than 35 volunteers assigned to specific sub-committees and topics.

“We’re looking for professionals who are dedicated to moving this document forward,” said James Mullins, IICRC S600 Consensus Body chair. “With each new standard comes new challenges and we need a group of people that are excited about this standard.”

Membership in the IICRC S600 Consensus Body Standard Committee is open to all persons who are directly and materially affected by the standard activity in question. Participation in the committee is not conditional upon membership in any organizations, nor unreasonably restricted on the basis of technical qualifications or other such requirements. Committee membership applications will be reviewed by the committee chairs and people selected to participate will be notified by August 15, 2009. Not everyone that applies will become a consensus body voting member. ■

If you wish to apply for committee membership, please e-mail committee chairs James Mullins (james.mullins@shawinc.com) or Barry Costa (barry@aspire-centre.com), or contact IICRC headquarters at 360-693-5675.

Programs vs. Operating Systems

Dear Tech Support:

Last year I upgraded from Boyfriend 5.0 to Husband 1.0 and noticed a slowdown in the overall performance, particularly in the flower and jewelry applications that had operated flawlessly under Boyfriend 5.0. In addi-



tion, Husband 1.0 uninstalled many other valuable programs, such as Romance 9.5 and Personal Attention 6.5, but installed undesirable programs such as NFL 5.0 and NBA 3.0. And now Conversation 8.0 no longer runs and House Cleaning 2.6 simply crashes the system. I've tried running Nagging 5.3 to fix these problems, but to no avail.

What can I do?

Signed,

Desperate

Dear Desperate:

First keep in mind; Boyfriend 5.0 is an entertainment package, while Husband 1.0 is an operating system. Try entering the command:

C:// I THOUGHT YOU LOVED ME and download Tears 6.2 to install Guilt 3.0. If all works as designed, Husband 1.0 should then automatically run the applications Jewelry 2.0 and Flowers 3.5.

But remember, overuse can cause Husband 1.0 to default to Grumpy Silence 2.5, Happy Hour 7.0 or Beer 6.1. Beer 6.1 is a very bad program that will create Snoring Loudly.wav files.

Whatever you do, DO NOT install Mother-in-Law 1.0 or reinstall another Boyfriend program. These are not

supported applications and will crash Husband 1.0.

In summary, Husband 1.0 is a great program, but it does have a limited memory and cannot learn new applications quickly. You might consider additional software to improve memory and performance. I personally recommend Hot Food 3.0 and Lingerie 6.9.

Good Luck,

Joyce at Tech Support

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Dream Steam Cleaning & Restoration

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Max Clean Carpet Care

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Sonic Clean Environmental Services

Howard Levy
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President's Message

(Continued from Page 1)

involved with a local chapter, now's the time to do so. We now have 11 chapters around the country. Most are holding chapter meetings on a regular basis and sponsoring classes. The Mo-Kan chapter just hosted both the RCT and CRT classes and there will be another RCT class in Ypsilanti, Michigan on August 24th. SCRT members get a discount when they attend!

Last but not least, be sure to be watching for the new and improved SCRT website coming real soon. This one will have a lot more to offer and be more interactive . . . with lots of bells and whistles for our members. More about the new website next time.

See y'all in Vegas September 9th thru the 11th.

Until next time,
Gary

**Looking for IICRC
CECs? Look no more.
We've got them *on-line!***
(All worth 2 CECs)

- *Principles and Methods
of Carpet Cleaning
- *Microbial Contamination
and Remediation
- *WoolSafe Fabric
Care Specialist
- *The Art of Drying –
Practical Psychrometry

***And don't miss the Rug
Cleaning Technician
Course (RCT) August 24 in
Ypsilanti, MI***

**Contact Clean Care Seminars
at 800-455-4278 or visit
www.cleancareseminars.com**

Join A SCRT Chapter!

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**Interested in starting a SCRT
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region?**

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