

# The Monroe Igniter



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## MARKET LIKE A BIG BOX STORE

Matthew Schneider

First things first. A special shout out needs to be extended to Matt Plughoff of MAP Consulting for spending a day with the Monroe Equipment Sales Team and two days with a group of Allied Air contractors. If you have not had the opportunity to meet Matt Plughoff in person or participate in one of his schools, you are truly missing the boat. Monroe Equipment is proud to be a partner of his for our sales professionals and to help him bring his insight on retail sales organizations to our dealers. We are going to have additional sessions with Matt in the Fall if any are interested.

During our day of discussion and training with Matt, we were really focused on what defines a sales organization, where the retail customer derives their information from and how a heating contractor needs to think like a retailer to extract the most benefit from their sales initiatives. I could talk for hours on this one topic, but I will share one of the most frightening truths that I learned from our discussions – retail customers don't need us anymore. The contractor sales representative used to be the most important resource that a homeowner needed in order to be educated on products, the installation process, energy savings and comfort. They needed to speak to a contractor sales representative in order to get an install price and compare features and benefits of competing contractors. Remember the old adage: get a minimum of three or four quotes?

As little as five years ago, a homeowner could not buy a new heating and air conditioning system without inviting a contractor sales representative into their home to educate them and ultimately sell them a system. Those days are essentially over.

That realization became clear when Matt asked our team what we could tell him about the Winchester furnace. The Winchester? I watched as my sales professionals shot each other looks of confusion. No one had ever heard of the Winchester. Matt informed us to check Home Depot's website. The Winchester is Home Depot's private label furnaces and condensing units that they are selling online, direct to retail consumers. I checked their site minutes before writing this article and

discovered that a homeowner could purchase a 60,000 btu, two-stage, variable speed furnace and have it delivered direct to their home address for \$1,999.00. Don't be confused. This is not a dealer contracted by Home Depot through their manufacturer's National Accounts Division to sit in a store location, perform sales calls on generated leads and sell systems at predetermined profit margins. This is a retail organization selling direct to a consumer and bypassing the contractor support. I know that this form of Armageddon has been discussed for years, but please know that Armageddon is upon us right now.

A week does not go by that I am not asked by one of our contractor partners about seeing products online, in catalogs or sitting in their customers' garages and basements when they show up under the assumption that they are visiting for a sales call. Did you know that 25% of all Black Friday purchases this past year were made on a mobile device. Amazon.com is building a \$170 million facility in Kenosha, which will be a welcome job provider for that area. I am already hearing from my electrician and plumber friends that Amazon.com is destroying their material and accessory sales due to homeowners researching, choosing, pricing and purchasing these goods from online retailers. If you know a plumber, ask them what has happened to their faucet and toilet sales when the big manufacturers entered the arena of retail.

So what does this mean for us? It means we need to think less like contractors and more like retailers. We no longer control the retail consumer's education and purchase process. Let's not kid ourselves. The consumer is in control and as retailers we need to make the buying process as easy as possible. Studies show that a consumer will tap into 10.4 sources of information when educating themselves on a major buying decision. These sources include websites, social media, consumer protection groups, periodicals, peers, community business associations, big box stores and individual contractors.



## ALLIED EXTENDED WARRANTY PROCEDURES

*Sandy Burns*

Please send any future warranty claims for Service Net (AIG) to the attention of *Damon Dean*. He is familiar with our account and will expedite your claims. An updated claim form is attached to this email. The form now has a space for “date of most recent maintenance”. Service Net is now requiring this date. It has always been a condition of their warranty that annual maintenance be performed, but they weren’t enforcing it in the past. They are now enforcing this condition. **Please inform your customer that “ANNUAL MAINTENANCE IS REQUIRED OR THE WARRANTY WILL BE VOIDED”.**

Most units installed after January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010 have warranties issued by Service Net (Premium Care Plus). You can confirm that a labor contract exists and obtain the

contract number at [hvaccoveageverification.com](http://hvaccoveageverification.com). Type in the serial number with or without the “S”. Depending on when the warranty was issued, it could be listed either way.

For most units installed before January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010 you will need to file claims through Assurant/Federal Warranty. **PRIOR APPROVAL IS REQUIRED.** All Premium Care Plus agreements with Assurant have a 7-digit contract number. They can also be looked up on [hvaccoveageverification.com](http://hvaccoveageverification.com). If a contract exists, it will state on this site that you need to contact Assurant. **They may also require proof of last annual maintenance.**

Feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns. My direct line is 262.432.3245 or email [sburns@monroeequipment.com](mailto:sburns@monroeequipment.com).

# OSHKOSH BRANCH Special Events

## SPRING FLING

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16, 2014 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.**

Appion/Veto Tool Bags/Motors & Caps/ Malco Tools/Super Seal  
FREE LUNCH, DISCOUNTS AND GIVEAWAYS!

## DOG DAYS OF SUMMER KICK-OFF!

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18, 2014 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

Yellow Jacket/Nu-Calgon/Fieldpiece Test Meters  
FREE LUNCH, DISCOUNTS AND GIVEAWAYS!

## DOG DAYS OF SUMMER CONTINUES EVERY WEDNESDAY

**JUNE 18TH - AUGUST 27TH, 2014**

FREE Hot Dogs, Chips, Soda and Water!

# VENTING PRACTICES

Ken Jung

The venting for a furnace installation needs to be carefully reviewed to insure proper operation of the equipment under varying wind and weather conditions. The venting, as a system for most furnaces, consists of both a combustion intake pipe and the exhaust pipe along with elbows or fittings to connect from the furnace and penetrate through an outside wall of the home to the outside. Additionally, a termination is added outdoors to properly direct the exhaust products out and away from the home and intake pipe.

The question usually arises, what about the elbows on the outside of the house?

Even though it is not directly stated in the installation instructions, Allied Air has clarified this and states, "Always count every fitting you use even the termination fittings."

So as an example, if you have 4 – 90° elbows on the intake pipe in the basement area and another three elbows outside for the "Goose neck" design, that would be a total of 7 elbows when you look at the vent table(s) to determine the proper size of PVC venting to use.

The same procedure would apply to the exhaust pipe. It is also listed in the installation instructions that the intake and exhaust pipes must be of the same size pipe. Example, do not use 2" for the intake and 3" for the exhaust.

Minimum vent lengths cannot be less than 15'. Since 90° elbows are equivalent to 5' of pipe, this could also be stated as 5' of pipe plus 2 – 90° elbows, or 10' of pipe and 1 – 90° elbow.

The use of an "Accelerator" is also listed in the installation instructions and is required for certain models of furnaces dependent on the vent pipe size. An accelerator is nothing more than a reducing coupling or reducing bushing installed in the last fitting of the exhaust pipe.

The purpose of the accelerator is to increase the velocity of the gases as they leave the vent pipe therefore pushing the exhaust out and away from the home and even more important, away from the intake pipe so that no cross contamination takes place. The accelerator becomes a requirement on modulating furnace installations due to the low velocity of the exhaust at reduced firing rates.

Lastly, there is an amendment to the installation instructions for all 90%+ furnaces that allows venting to be terminated in different pressure zones (PIB #311). This

can be a tremendous advantage when the venting is located in tight spaces or the outside of the house limits vent accessibility.

A PDF copy of this document is attached to this email. You may also find this document online at [www.monroeequipment.com](http://www.monroeequipment.com) under our FORMS section or contact Monroe Equipment directly for more information.

*Market Like a Big Box Store Continued from page 1*

In order to market to the new consumer, we need to make sure that we participate and display ourselves in as many of these sources as possible. We need to make sure that our message stays relevant in the marketplace and that we are providing our message to our customers in a simple method with as much opportunity for consumer choice as possible.

You may think that becoming a retailer will cost big money, but you can do many things at no expense at all. If you are interested in getting started try just these three things:

- Relinquish control of the sales process. The customer is in control.
- Always provide the customer with multiple options in products with varying degrees of features and benefits, in different budget levels.
- Always perform your sales duties in a single call and leave a written proposal before you leave. Respect the customer's most valuable asset – their time.

We would encourage everyone to consider committing their most valuable time in an investment that will surely pay dividends. Join us for Matt's class in Fall and commit to allowing your Monroe Equipment Territory Manager to invest their time in helping you navigate the changing retail environment.

## RADIANT FLOOR HEATING

*Ben Lane*

Radiant floor heating systems are widely considered to be one of the most comfortable forms of heat on the market. Although the installation of the tubing can be slightly more labor intensive than some of the other heating system types, the initial estimating and layout does not need to be so with a little up front planning. If we can answer a few easy questions, the initial system layout will be a breeze.

1. What sort of performance is required of the system? Are we providing full heating of the space or floor warming only?
2. What kind of tubing is desired or required and how much is needed?
3. How is the system to be zoned?

The performance requirements of the system are directly related to the amount of tubing being installed in the floor and the boiler sizing criteria that are used so a good understanding of the customer's expectations are required. A system being provided to satisfy the full heating requirements of the space may require 8" to 9" spacing on average whereas a system that is used for floor warming purposes only or is otherwise supplemented by another heating system may only require 12" spacing on average. Once these expectations have been established we can apply a generally accepted multiplier to the amount of area being served and determine the estimated tubing requirements for the space. These multipliers include 1.65 for 8" O.C., 1.39 for 9" and 1.1 for 12" O.C. Frame floor, underfloor and sandwich above floor applications will generally use an 8" O.C. spacing where a concrete slab application could be any one of the three depending on application. 12" O.C. spacing may be fine for a concrete slab below grade or a garage but a tighter spacing may be desirable in areas of higher heat loss, bathrooms, kitchens and entryways.

Once the amount and application of tubing have been determined the type of tubing used should also be considered. Radiant PEX tubing is generally the most popular due to the lower first cost but Onix (EPDM) and Radiant PEX-AL (aluminized PEX) are also widely available. PEX and PEX-AL tubing types lend themselves well to slab applications where the spacing is not extremely tight and in larger open areas with room to work. Onix tubing comes in at a higher upfront price but is much easier to handle and work with saving on valuable installation time and labor cost especially in frame floor and underfloor applications where the tubing must be pulled through floor joists and holes therein.

Careful consideration should also be given to how a system is to be zoned. Systems are typically zoned according to flooring type, occupancy, construction/mechanical considerations or some combination of these factors. It is good practice to separate zones according to flooring types because the rate at which the radiant ener-



gy is transferred between flooring types can vary greatly. A room with a tile floor may only require a 100 degree supply water temperature where a room with carpeting may require 140 degrees. Combining these rooms on a common zone can create comfort and control problems. Zones can likewise be separated according to occupancy. It may be desirable to keep areas that are occupied at different times of day on different zones for greater control or setback capabilities. Zones can also be separated according to construction or mechanical considerations. It may be difficult to place a room with a slab floor on the same zone as a room with a frame floor and it may also be difficult to control comfort especially if the heating intensity requirements vary greatly between the various spaces.

Radiant floor heating systems can require additional time from a labor standpoint to install when compared to other heating system types but the estimation and layout of these systems does not need to be terribly more cumbersome with answers to a few easy questions. Once the system performance requirements, tubing type and zoning requirements have been identified, generating an estimated material list for the project is relatively straight forward. We here at Monroe have many years of experience in the design and application of these systems and are here to help you with any radiant in-floor application questions you may have. Let us know how we can help deliver a satisfactory outcome to your radiant in-floor application.

## ARE YOU LEGALLY PREPARED

*Ken Jung*

There is nothing better than sitting in a court room, participating as a witness, watching and listening to all of the legal proceedings between the attorneys for the plaintiff and the defendant and hoping that the jury comes back with a decision in your favor. That is how I spent the past two days.

As I traveled home from the proceedings, I began to think over and over about the examination and cross examination of witnesses, how the judge controlled the court room and the proceedings, the terminology, the entire legal process from selecting jurors' to the final verdict, how something that is written or how something is said to a customer, how words or terminology can be interpreted and shift blame or liability to or away from you. This is an eye opening experience.

So I ask you to ask yourself the following, "As a contractor how legally prepared are you?" "Do you speak the proper language with customers?" "Do you write down and document the things you do in a proper fashion?" The list of questions could go on and on.

Using words, whether written or spoken, such as "defective," "factory defect" or commenting to a customer, "oh, we see that part break a lot," "I think they should re-design this," or "there should be a factory recall on that part" can insight instant liability to you based on comment for the part or item you are referencing.

Contracts and proposals are yet another item that should be reviewed. Are you aware that to be a truly legal document even a simple furnace or air conditioning proposal must have a "start and completion date" listed somewhere in the scope of work to be performed? The days of a hand shake/gentleman's agreement to seal a deal and exchanging chickens for payment, is long gone.

It is unfortunate that we have to pick and chose our words so carefully, never before did I realize how any of these little things can have such an adverse effect ... especially in a court of law.

Taking measurements and documenting your job site readings is critical. For example: anything from gas pressure, air temperature or combustion readings should be recorded. Many combustion analyzers have the ability to print out the measured information with a date and time stamp including the model and serial number of the instrument performing the test. This can be critically important in cases of potential CO poisoning. If you find "nothing wrong" with something you are called out

to service, document specifics as to why nothing is wrong. Job site pictures can be valuable too, but they can also be used against you! It becomes complicated.



The point of this article is not to scare you, but rather to make you aware and encourage you to review what or how your company handles and addresses certain customer based situations. From contracts and proposals to service invoices and leaving installation instructions or customer manuals on the job site, there are different legal statutes for everything. It may be worth a phone call or a sit down discussion with your company's lawyer or legal advisors to discuss what could be potential liability issues and how to educate your employees to avoid conflict.

I know my view and thought process has certainly been changed.

## GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Barb Ortlieb

Meet Matt Kobleska, aka “Matt K.”, the salesperson that covers the most southeast portion of the state.

Matt’s first job was at Quad Graphics. He then worked at UPS for 5 years and decided he did not want to drive a brown truck for the rest of his working career.

Matt came to Monroe Equipment 14 years ago and started his journey here by working in the Parts Department. He wanted to learn more about the business so he enrolled in HVAC classes at MATC. He “worked the counter” for 5 years before he realized he wanted a sales position and then took courses in Sales and Marketing.



Matt Kobleska and Family

When a sales position opened, he jumped at the chance and then started in his current position. What he likes most about his job is building relationships with his clients and helping them build a better business.

Matt grew up in Milwaukee and moved to Slinger where he went to high school. He played football and basketball.

Matt and his wife Katie have two children.

Kaylee, who is eight, plays soccer, plays the piano, loves to sing and recently had a solo in the winter concert at school. Grayson, who is five, loves to play outside, swim and ride his bike.

Matt is most proud of being a dad. He also enjoys hunting, fishing, traveling and boating in Door County. Growing up, Matt liked spending time with his grandfather building things. His grandpa would always tell him, “Anything worth doing is worth doing right”, which is a rule he tries to live by.

## Up Coming Events

APRIL 15, 2014 - Oshkosh

*BOSCH GREENSTAR TRAINING 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.*

APRIL 16, 2014 - Oshkosh

*SPRING FLING 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.*

APRIL 19, 2014 - Menomonee Falls

*Parts CLOSED Easter Weekend*

MAY 1, 2014 - Menomonee Falls

*LG MINI-SPLIT TRAINING 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.*

MAY 24, 2014 - Menomonee Falls

*Parts CLOSED Memorial Day Weekend*

MAY 26, 2014 - Menomonee Falls and Oshkosh

*Monroe Equipment CLOSED Memorial Day*

JUNE 18, 2014 - Oshkosh

*DOG DAYS OF SUMMER KICK-OFF! 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.*

JUNE 25, 2014 - Oshkosh

*DOG DAYS OF SUMMER 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.*

*The Monroe Igniter is a quarterly publication created exclusively for customers of Monroe Equipment, Inc.*



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