



December
2003

Volume 2, Issue 3



Newsletter of the
World Plumbing Council

*"Uniting the world plumbing industry to
safeguard and protect the environment
and the health of nations"*

SARS and plumbing

The World Health Organisation, advised by WPC, establishes probable link between deadly virus and poor plumbing

A technical Consultation of the World Health Organisation (WHO), at which the WPC was represented by Board member Russ Chaney, has concluded that the spread of the deadly SARS virus in February 2003 was very probably aided by poor standards of plumbing.

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), believed to have started in residential apartments in Hong Kong, swept through 32 countries early in 2003, infecting some 8,500 people of whom over 800 died. The Hong Kong apartments, said the WHO report, had drainage systems with inadequate safeguards against disease-containing 'faecal droplets' re-entering the buildings. These droplets originate from virus-rich excreta and where there are strong upward air-flows, coupled with non-functioning seals and inadequate traps, can easily re-enter a building via drainage.

WHO also said that inadequate plumbing can help the transmission of other viruses, many of which are responsible for gastro-intestinal and neurological diseases. "In the absence of proper maintenance and without consistent monitoring, reviewing, enforcing and updating of building standards and practices," the WHO report said, "inadequate plumbing and sewage systems could continue to enhance the potential of SARS and some other diseases to spread."

Dr Jamie Bartram, head of WHO's Water, Sanitation and Health

Programme, observed, "In many countries there will be buildings where keeping sewage separate from building occupants is a critical challenge. This could result in harmful viruses, including SARS Coronavirus, being sucked from the sewage system into the home if, for example, there are strong extractor fans working in a family's bathroom. Fortunately, solutions are simple and are already in place in most areas world-wide, but there remain places where shortcuts in design, construction and maintenance continue to compromise safety."

Dr Bartram continued, "While the evidence suggests that, under most circumstances, the spread of SARS among people occurred overwhelmingly across a short range of distance through water droplets, there are specific situations where conditions allowed other transmission routes. One of these is through sewage-associated faecal droplets and the WHO Consultation has, therefore, recommended measures to reduce sewage-borne transmission routes of pathogenic viruses."

The Consultation emphasised that the solution – proper plumbing – is a simple public health measure which is often overlooked but can be addressed at minimal extra cost. It is a significant tool in stopping faecal transmission of SARS. It therefore resolved that governments "establish or strengthen inter-sectoral

continued page 2

International **SARS** Symposium

The World Plumbing Council and the International Association of Plumbing & Mechanical Officials will co-host an international SARS symposium at
The Hilton Los Angeles Airport Hotel, USA
11-12 February 2004

This event will include presentations from internationally known educators, engineers and manufacturers who have studied the SARS outbreak and its connection to plumbing system design

Registration costs just US\$155 for members of sponsoring organisations (US\$135 before 10 January) otherwise US\$195 (US\$175 before 10 January)

For further details, registration and hotel reservations, visit www.iapmo.org

The editor has moved
Editor of the WPC **review** has a new address and contact details - see the back page of this issue

continued from page 1

arrangements and mechanisms to enhance joint efforts of ministries of health, building authorities, local governments and architects/designers to both raise general awareness of the risks from inadequate plumbing and sewage systems, and to take concrete actions to address shortcomings in this area."

The experts meeting at the WHO European Centre for Environment and Health in Rome came from nine countries and represented the fields of epidemiology, virology, environmental health, risk assessment/management, building design and plumbing – the last, of course, represented by Russ Chaney who, speaking after the meeting, said, "The guidelines produced as a result of this Consultation highlight the role the plumbing industry can play in preventing another widespread outbreak of SARS or similar diseases and clearly illustrate a realisation by the health industry of the critical role the plumbing industry plays in protecting the world's people."

UK's Alliance offers ICT help

With computers and the internet playing an increasingly important role in the running and development of plumbing and heating companies, the UK's Plumbing & Heating Industry Alliance (PHIA), an association of 22 industry-related organisations, has launched a pilot helpline and support service which offers assistance on information and communications technology (ICT). For a cost of just 12.5 to 37.5 pence (22 to 64 US Cents) per minute, depending on the time of day, plumbers and heating engineers in the UK can call the helpline for ICT advice.

An extension to the service, at extra cost, offers a personal visit by an ICT expert to business premises.

In a further development, the PHIA has established the All Party Parliamentary Plumbing and Heating Industry Group which comprises members of the UK

Parliament and is designed to represent the UK industry to legislators. See www.phia.co.uk

Executive Board meeting in Edinburgh Observers invited

The next meeting of the WPC's Executive Board will take place in Edinburgh, Scotland on 15 and 16th April 2004. As with all Board meetings, observers from member organisations are welcome to attend. The hosts, the Scottish & Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers Federation (SNIPEF) have organised a number of supporting events, ranging from a visit to a local university, to a whisky tasting!

Delegates are invited to arrive on or before Wednesday 14th April when SNIPEF has arranged a visit to Edinburgh's Heriot-Watt University where the world acclaimed Professor John Swaffield will show research work into siphonage rain-water systems and air in drainage systems. In the evening, members of the Edinburgh branch of SNIPEF will host a drinks reception.

After the first part of the Board's meeting on 15th April, there will be a whisky tasting event and dinner in the premises of the Scottish Malt Whisky Society. SNIPEF suggests that, even if you don't like whisky, this will be an evening well worth experiencing!

The Executive Board meeting will continue on Friday 16th April and that evening, UK trade union Amicus will sponsor a dinner in one of Edinburgh's world-class restaurants.

SNIPEF has arranged favourable bookings for delegates and observers at the 4-star Roxburghe Hotel in Edinburgh, a short walk from SNIPEF offices where the Board meetings will take place. The negotiated room rate is Sterling 105 per night (inc. breakfast) for a single room and Sterling 130 for a double room.

For more details and a reservation form, contact Miss Alix Sinclair at SNIPEF, email alix.sinclair@snipef.org or fax +44(0)131 226 7638

WPC Conference 2005

The World Plumbing Council's next triennial Conference will be held in Auckland, New Zealand from 2 to 6 March 2005. The hosts will be the Master Plumbers, Gasfitters & Drainlayers NZ who represent two thirds of the businesses engaged in the industry. Further details are available on the WPC website at www.worldplumbing.org

Alternatively, contact: Master Plumbers, Gasfitters & Drainlayers NZ Inc, P O Box 6606, Wellington, New Zealand
Telephone: +64 4 384.4184
Fax: +64 4 384.2456
Email: george@masterplumbers.org.nz
shirley@masterplumbers.org.nz
For information about the many delights New Zealand has to offer, visit www.purenz.com

New Zealand scholarship winner assisted by WPC members

Carmen Knowler, pictured, works for Dunedin City Council in New Zealand and is one of only two



females to hold a drainlayer qualification. In 2003 she won a Winston Churchill Fellowship Award which enabled her to travel to the USA, UK and Singapore to further her studies into pipe laying and drainage. Her itinerary was assisted greatly by WPC Board members Robert Burgon (SNIPEF, Scotland), Russ Chaney (IAPMO, USA) and Andy Watts (IoP UK).

Nordic award

WPC member, the Danish Plumbing, Heating & Ventilating Contractors' Association (Dansk VVS) reports:

Sponsored by the five Nordic plumbing organisations, the 2003 Nordic Sheet Award for Architects, worth 100,000 Swedish Kroner, has been won by Brekke Helgeland Brekke AS in Haugesund, Norway.

The jury unanimously chose the design of Udland Church in Haugesund as prize winner because the building is "characterized by its architecture and fascinating use of folded zinc sheets". In particular, The boat shape of the church tower is fascinating and the whole building mirrors nature – the sea and landscape – in an untraditional way.

New this year were two prizes of honour that were given to Danish architects Arkitekterne KOGE, in Koge, for designing Kunstmuseet Koge Skitsemuseum, and to the Norwegian architects LPO-arkitektur & design AS in Moss, for the building Mollebyen Hogskolesenter, Moss.

News from China

Water Exhibition in Beijing

Organised jointly by WPC member, the Plumbing Facilities Committee of China Construction Metal Structure Association (PFC of CCMSA) and relevant units of the Ministry of Construction, the 6th China International Exhibition on Water and Wastewater Treatment Technology and Equipment at the Beijing National Agricultural Exhibition Centre closed on September 19th 2003 after a successful 4-days. The exhibition covered numerous aspects of the plumbing industry, from pipe, valve, water supply and water treatment to water fountains.

Tenth anniversary of PFC of CCMSA

Also in Beijing during September 2003, the PFC of CCMSA held a conference to commemorate its 10th anniversary and to include its 2nd membership meeting.

More than 200 people attended the meeting, among them many

leaders, famous experts, member enterprises, and engineers from around the world.

As a nationwide professional organisation in the plumbing field, the PFC of CCMSA secured considerable support from organisations both in China and from abroad, including the World Plumbing Council, the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials, and the International Copper Association.



The opening of the 6th China International Exhibition on Water and Wastewater Treatment Technology and Equipment in Beijing

World Plumbing Council Lecturers/Trainers Scholarship 2004



Applications are invited for the World Plumbing Council's Lecturers/Trainers Scholarship 2004. The Scholarship, worth US\$5,000, is open to individual plumbing lecturers and trainers from any country, whether that country is represented by a World Plumbing Council member or not.

Applicants will be seeking to undertake a study of plumbing and plumbing practice in a country of their choice and should be able to provide the judges with justification for this choice.

In promoting the Scholarship, the World Plumbing Council recognises that education and training are crucial issues which must be addressed if any real, lasting progress is to be made towards sustainable development. Raising standards in plumbing correlates directly to increasing the effectiveness of public sanitation systems, reducing the level of water loss and to increasing capacity for further improvements on consumption management.

World Plumbing Council member organisations are invited to contact accredited training establishments in their own countries to promote the Scholarship to lecturers and trainers. Training organisations from non-member countries are also welcome to participate.

Further details of the Scholarship, together with application forms, are available at www.worldplumbing.org or contact the WPC Secretariat:

c/o The Institute of Plumbing
64 Station Lane
Hornchurch RM12 6NB
England

Telephone: +44(0)1708 472791

Facsimile: +44(0)1708 448987

Email: secretariat@worldplumbing.org

Memorandum of Understanding planned

In order to demonstrate the shared interests of the two organisations, the World Plumbing Council and Worldskills plan to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) at the Worldskills General Assembly in Hong Kong in May 2004. To this end, Rudi van den Hurk, Worldskills Secretary General and Sheila Ruigrok, PR and Marketing Executive of Worldskills visited the WPC Secretariat at the UK's Institute of Plumbing to discuss the wording of the MOU.

Worldskills is the 'not for profit' international vocational training organisation which provides a unique means of exchange and comparison of world-class competency standards in the industrial trades and service sectors of the global economy. Every two years, hundreds of young skilled people, accompanied by their teachers and trainers, gather together from around the world to compete before the public in the skills of their various trades and test themselves against demanding international standards. They represent the best of their peers drawn from regional and national skill competitions held currently in 37 countries. (see www.worldskills.com)



Pictured outside the UK's Institute of Plumbing building are, from left to right, Andy Watts (WPC Secretary), John Smartt (Worldskills Chief Plumbing Expert), Rudi van den Hurk, Kevin Wellman (Institute of Plumbing Operations Director) and Sheila Ruigrok

ASPE's forum

WPC member, the American Society of Plumbing Engineers has launched a members-only discussion forum on to its website, www.aspe.org

Canadian hopes

Guy Brookes, an instructor at the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology and member of WPC member organisation the Mechanical Contractors Association of Alberta, has trained Canadian entrants in the plumbing section of the last three Worldskills competitions.

Guy's students have been placed 6th, 4th and 6th in these competitions and he is hoping that Alberta will again produce Canada's representative for the 2005 Worldskills in Helsinki, Finland.

UK Scholarship

22 year old Danny Davis from Stockport, England has been awarded the first Raymond J Brooks Scholarship initiated by the British Plumbing Employers' Council (Training) Ltd (BPEC) in memory of its founding Chairman, Ray Brooks who died in January 2002.

Danny's prize will be a 3-week trip to the USA to see the plumbing industry at work and in particular to examine the USA approach to education and training. The trip is being planned by BPEC in conjunction with a number of WPC members including IAPMO, PHCC and the United Association.

WPC debuts trade show display at ISH North America

The world-renowned ISH plumbing, heating and air-conditioning exhibition saw the first public use of the WPC's trade show display. Funded and developed by WPC member IAPMO, the display attracted considerable interest from many of the estimated 11,800 people who attended the exhibition, held in Las Vegas, Nevada, USA.

Scott Marshutz, marketing director at IAPMO worked closely with the organisation's graphic designer Jeff Ortiz to produce the design which will be used at exhibitions around the world. Marshutz also manned the display at ISH, with help from Hans Tiedemann, executive

director of the Mechanical Contractors Association of Alberta, and Shannon Corcoran, executive director of the American Society of Sanitary Engineering. Between them they gave away to interested parties around 200 copies of the WPC's 'People in Plumbing' CD, plus countless copies of the *Review*.



Scott Marshutz, facing camera, with the WPC display at ISH North America

WPC Review is published by the World Plumbing Council which is incorporated in Geneva as a non-profit organisation under Article 60 of the Swiss Civil Code Federal Number CH-660-2641000-8

The Council's Secretariat is based at:
The Institute of Plumbing (UK)
64 Station Lane, Hornchurch,
Essex RM12 6NB, England

Tel: +44 (0)1708 472791
Fax: +44 (0)1708 448987
secretariat@worldplumbing.org
<http://www.worldplumbing.org>

The Council's Registered Office is c/o
KPMG Fides, 14 Chemin De-Normandie,
CH-1206 Geneva, Switzerland

The mission of the World Plumbing Council is to unite the world plumbing industry to safeguard and protect the environment and the health of nations, for the benefit of all. Its objective is to provide and share information regarding research projects and technology that may be applicable to the Plumbing Industry and the people they serve

The contents of this newsletter are copyright and may not be reproduced in any form without the written permission of the World Plumbing Council

WPC Review is edited by: Roger Willis
2 Malthouse Yard, Reepham, Norfolk
NR10 4NF, England
Fax: +44 (0)1603 879821
Email: roger.willis1@virgin.net