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The Plant Exchange is produced by members of the Plant Operations Division at the University of Michigan. Its purpose is to inform Plant Operations staff and the university community of activities, accomplishments, and information about our organization and the work we perform.

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new hires
PLANT OPERATIONS
October 2013 - February 2014

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Dennis Gould
Christopher Shukait
Ben Fyke
Work Management
Rebecca Green

in memoriam
October 2013 - February 2014
Robert Adams
Ivan Ceperov
Joel Morrison

retirements
October 2013 - February 2014
Bobby Buchte
John Cockrell
Robert Cullip
Tom Gerardti
Kevin John
Timothy Marzec
Hilroy Poitier
David Pope
Ralph Rose
William Ulrich
Most of the time Plant’s efforts go unnoticed, since we are not always visible to the ever busy campus community. This winter however, the Plant Ops Grounds department displayed an extraordinary example of the type of work and worker we often take for granted. The response of our grounds workers was nothing short of outstanding, keeping our campus open and passable to even our most challenged community members. In this case, Grounds was even recognized by the *Ann Arbor News* with a front page article about the snow removal efforts. I want to add my sincere gratitude and appreciation for all that you do.

Plant’s response didn’t stop there. The extended length of time that outside air temperatures were below zero produced a large number of cold calls and frozen and/or burst piping. Response times by maintenance and custodial staff to these high priority issues were also remarkable. Maintenance staff was also proactive in catching many frozen conditions before they turned into disastrous floods. And through it all, our Utilities Department kept the heating steam, electricity, hot water and compressed air flowing to the campus without interruption.

This is outstanding performance and I want to thank everyone for the excellent job. I further want to acknowledge all those workers who were able to make it into to work on Monday January 6th. This was a very difficult day for U of M and it would have been much worse without your exemplary dedication to the University.

I would like also to call your attention to the Respect and Inclusion Resource Teams (RIRT) section of this issue of the *Plant Exchange*. There are times when actions or careless words can create an uncomfortable work environment. The article calls attention to actual instances that have occurred in Plant where words and/or actions have created conditions that are unacceptable in the diverse and inclusive community. Some of us may recognize ourselves, which may be uncomfortable. But I would encourage everyone to read these articles and learn how “unintentional intolerances” can hurt others. All members of the Plant Operations team should feel that they work in a welcoming and supportive environment.
The Administrative Services Transformation (AST) project represents a major component of the University of Michigan’s overall—and ongoing—efforts to contain costs, maximize resources, increase efficiencies, and reinvest in the institution. The most visible result of the AST project is the formation of the Shared Services Center.

What does AST mean for Plant Operations?

In Plant, we recognized early on in the process that we would need to evaluate how we would get the remaining administrative work done after some of our team members were transferred to the AST. Over the past five years, Plant has devoted a tremendous amount of time and effort into improving the effectiveness of core business groups. The new cleaning system (OS1) at Plant Building Services and the Facilities Maintenance Restructuring (FMR) are two of these efforts. The process of evaluating our “back office” operation is the next logical step in improving the overall effectiveness of Plant Operations.

As such, we have chosen to view the AST project as an opportunity to evaluate and improve our operations, over and above what is required by the changes directly associated with AST. Therefore, over the next 12-14 months, we will examine all of our remaining administrative processes with the intent of consolidating appropriate functions into a single Business Services Unit within Plant.

A team has been assembled to lead this project, composed of representatives from units throughout Plant Operations. With the support of Bridgeport Consulting group, Lukeland Gentles will serve as the Lead Team Sponsor.

Even though there are many unknowns at this point, here’s what we do know:

- No layoffs will result from the creation of the Business Services Unit.
- No major office relocation will occur.
- The process will be transparent. Information will be communicated as soon as it is available, and the team will be sharing regular updates via email, newsletters, staff meetings, and other methods.

If you have any further concerns or questions about this project, please speak with your Associate Director or manager.
Plant Operations Retirement Celebration

By Julie Ashley

Plant Operations honored two long-time employees at the Retirement Celebration in February -- retiree Hilroy Poitier (34 years), Operating Engineer at the Central Power Plant in Utilities & Plant Engineering; and, Bobby Buchte (32 years), Maintenance Mechanic III from the North Campus Region, Facilities Maintenance. Together the retirees have a combined total of 66 years of service to the University.

The celebration was held at the North Campus Research Center (NCRC).

Lowell Hanson, Associate Director, Facilities Maintenance, welcomed everyone and presented plaques to Hilroy and Bobby. Mike Pepper, Senior Supervisor from the Central Power Plant, and Rocky Kohler, Region Manager for North Campus Region, shared stories about the retirees from their departments and thanked them for their dedication to Plant Operations. Lamberto Gallarin, Maintenance Mechanic III, also paid tribute to Bobby after having worked with him for some years. Both retirees expressed their gratitude to U-M and Plant Operations. Rich Robben, Director of Plant Operations, closed the program and joined the retirees in photos.

Planning to retire? We encourage you to participate in the next Plant Operations Retirement Celebration on August 12 at NCRC. Enjoy the opportunity to celebrate your accomplishment with co-workers, family and friends. For more information, contact the committee member from your department.

Retirement Celebration Committee by department:
Team leader-Julie Ashley, Facilities Maintenance; Plant Building & Grounds Services-Tammy Johnson; Construction Services-Jeanette Craft, Louann Walch; Facilities Maintenance-Gina Flowers, Sue Nylen; Plant Administration-Betty Alberts (continuing to participate on the Planning Committee after retirement); Utilities & Plant Engineering-Ron Crawford; and Work Management-Von Hardesty.
The University has tunnel system underground that deliver steam to the central campus buildings. The majority of the buildings are 60-90 years old. The original central heating plant was built in 1894 near West Hall. Brick tunnels were constructed to protect the piping that provided steam heat to buildings around the Diag. In 1914, the current heating plant was built as a combined heating and electric generation plant. Brick tunnels again were used to connect these two sites.

Soon after World War I, campus growth accelerated. Roughly 60% of the tunnels currently in use today were built in 2 phases: 1925-1929 and 1935-1940. Yet another 20% of the tunnels were built in the 1950s; the remainder of the more than six miles of tunnels in use today were built to support new buildings as they came on line.

Michigan’s harsh winter weather is extremely hard on these tunnels. Most of the tunnels on campus are beneath roads and sidewalks and are subjected to road salt. As it slowly works its way into the natural pores and cracks of the concrete structures below, it corrodes the reinforcing steel in the roof and walls. Preventing deterioration is cost-prohibitive. Therefore, the best way to manage this deterioration is to have an aggressive structural maintenance program.

Every seven to eight years, the Utilities Department conducts a comprehensive structural assessment of the tunnel system. This assessment reviews past reports, tracks previous repairs, and looks at the overall structural condition of the present system. During each cycle, university engineers review the materials and applications used in the last cycle of repairs, evaluate how well they have performed, and research materials that may be new to the market. During this condition assessment, recommendations are made based on priorities which become the basis for that repair cycle. The goal is to preserve and maximize the useful life of the tunnel system. The Utilities Department is currently in the midst of a repair cycle.
Plant Operations is a very diverse community made up of people with many different cultural, ethnic, religious, and political backgrounds. Because of the diversity, sometimes misinterpretations and even conflict can happen due to lack of knowledge and a misunderstanding. In an effort to assist in the education process and to help everyone understand the importance of a respectful and inclusive workplace, the Plant Operations-Respect and Inclusion Resource Team (RIRT) is introducing, “Hot Button Topics.”

RIRT created the “Hot Button Topics” in an effort to spark conversations, sometimes-difficult ones. These topics will be brought to the committee by several different avenues; for example, news or issues arising around campus, issues that have been brought to our attention by managers, Facilities and Operations-Human Resources, the Office of Institutional Equity, and most importantly, you, the Plant Operations’ staff. Names and identifying factors will never be used, only the content.

Our first Hot Button Topic was brought to us by staff members who were concerned about statements made to co-workers in their department, which made them feel uncomfortable. Some of these things were; “Where is your favorite place for ribs and chicken,” “I have invited black people to my house,” and “Some of my friends are black.” These comments were not intentionally made to hurt or insult, but the way they came across were offensive to the receiver. In an effort to raise awareness about “unintentional intolerance,” DiversityInc. magazine addresses this issue and more in their What Not to Say series. One of DiversityInc.’s top examples of what not to say and why not to say it is: “You’re so articulate.”

This phrase is one of the most frequently cited gaffes. “When someone makes this statement, they think they are providing the receiver with a compliment,” explains Adriene Bruce, Vice President of Consulting, DiversityInc. But the comment implies that the person is an exception to a rule, which promotes stereotypes. “It comes from ignorance or lack of exposure and is nonintentional,” says Bruce, but it’s condescending.

DiversityInc. magazine is a national publication that addresses many diversity issues that we as a country, and in Plant Operations, face every day. Ignorance is not stupidity. A person cannot know what they do not know. Everyone has said things that may have been inappropriate or offensive at the time. What is important is that we learn from our mistakes and educate ourselves so mistakes are not repeated. It is not a sign of weakness to admit our mistakes and change our actions and direction. A prime example of changing course and direction is all of the reorganization going on at the university and in Plant Operations. The fact we are restructuring does not mean the last 50+ years have been wrong; it shows we have found better ways of doing business. We can look at diversity education as finding better ways of treating people, which leads to a more respectful, inclusive, and happier society.

The more we talk about things that make us uncomfortable, the more comfortable we feel talking about them. When people feel comfortable, they may start to ask questions and learn from others that do not look like them, sound like them, or have the same interests as they do. In addition, the next time you find yourself faced with this type of situation, use it as a “teachable moment” to spark a conversation of “What not to say.” If you felt the person was not purposely being malicious or hurtful (unintentional intolerance), let them know in a respectful way, why the words were offensive. Spark the conversation and learn from one another.

If you would like to read the article, 5 Things Never to Say to Blacks, learn more about important diversity topics, or to sign up for DiversityInc.’s free email, go to http://www.diversityinc.com/
The Health Science Region (HSR) fields close to 600 work orders per week. Most of them are preventive maintenance or routine corrective work orders, although once in a great while we receive a work order that catches everyone’s attention.

A work order was created on July 19, 2013 stating there was a steam leak on the 20 inch diameter low pressure steam pipe in the 5th floor pipe chase of Medical Science Research Building III (RB3). The region steamfitters were dispatched to assess the problem and immediately escalated the problem to Jerry Heath, the Asset Supervisor responsible for RB3. Jerry came into my office and said “Do you have time to look at a problem? The expansion joint on the 5th floor of RB3 on the low pressure steam line is leaking.”

Since Region Planner, Tom Wynn, was a former steam fitter, we grabbed him and headed off to RB3. We discussed the impact of the steam leak. There was one 20 inch low pressure steam line in the building. It came from the tunnel through the A Level and went to the 10th floor mechanical room where it branched to the various equipment including the air handles for the entire building. From the 10th floor, it split and went to the two absorption chillers in the 11th floor penthouse that supplied the air conditioning to the entire building.

What all this meant was that if this steam line failed, the entire building had to be shut down. There would be no chilled water and no cooling during the middle of the summer. RB3 is a major Medical School Research building with 10 floors of laboratories, research cold storage and research animals. We all knew that the building could not be shut down.

This massive steam line expansion joint was in a corner of the pipe chase and actually welded to the building’s structural steel. The leak, of course, was back in the corner where it could not be seen. Tom had seen expansion joints like this before. He recognized that it had packing ports where joint packing could be injected to seal the joint. We went to the tunnel crew to get packing material and had the region steam fitters try packing the joint to stop the leak. This action did not fix the problem.

Jerry and I decided that we needed to get Robert Morikowa, Plant Engineering, involved. We also contacted Dennis Kretin, Plant Utilities – Tunnel Crew. They investigated the issue and found, with the help of a mirror, a pinhole leak in the pipe of the expansion joint. Packing wouldn’t help. They came up with a two part solution: temporarily repair the leak, then buy a new expansion joint to replace the leaking one when a planned shutdown could be arranged. The replacement joint would take six weeks to six months to arrive at the University.

We hired American Power Seal (APS) to temporarily fix the leak. Jerry and I had assurance that these guys were experts and could do the job. We were wrong. John from APS looked the joint over. He couldn’t figure out exactly how to stop the steam leak. He reached around with his channel locks and rapped the leak. Oops, the pinhole became the size of a quarter with low pressure steam pouring out. The bad news (very bad news) was that John and his helper left without fixing the leak; the good news was he didn’t charge the University for his time to investigate or making the hole larger.

Now we had a major problem. Dennis Kretin was of the opinion that the steam leak was only going to get worse and eventually have a blow-out. Since the pipe chase was an enclosed area, Dennis felt that it constituted a very dangerous entrapment situation. We then called in OSEH, Keith Trombley.

Meetings were arranged. Engineering investigation began. Plant Leadership was informed of the severity. Medical School Facilities was informed before, but now they became more involved. Mark Sedmak, Med School Engineering attended all the meetings. Horace Bomar, Director of the Med School Facilities also became involved.
The tunnel crew just happened to have a 20" expansion joint at the University slated for a tunnel replacement job. It was a single action joint. The joint in RB3 was a double action. Engineering did the calculations and investigation and determined that the tunnel crew joint would work.

The initial plan was a five day shutdown working two crews around the clock with 12 hour shifts. Facilities Maintenance did not have enough expert manpower to work this long. The decision was made to hire Goyette Mechanical which could draw in manpower from several sources. Pre-work that could be done before the shutdown would be done, but because of the danger in the shaft, most of the work had to start after the shutdown and the steam line cooled. The wall and door between the adjacent laboratory and the shaft had to be removed. A gantry had to be designed, built, and installed. The joint weighed 1800 pounds. A laboratory fume hood exhaust duct that served an entire floor below had to be removed and rerouted. A glass 4 inch diameter acid drain pipe had to be protected. All this work involved the Welding Shop and Regional Sheet metal workers. Construction Services was brought in to remove the wall and door.

The Central Steam Fitter Shop welders Tom Malicki and Dana Sindlinger led the repair crew. They added expertise, advice, and skilled labor to the Goyette crew to ensure the successful outcome.

It was then determined that all prep work could be performed before the steam shutdown. The steam joint was wrapped in a protective blanket. The new plan was no longer up to five days, but reduced to only two days.

The steam was shut off at 6 pm on Thursday night. Due to excellent planning and execution of the plan, the new joint was installed in a little over 7½ hours from shutdown. The steam and the air conditioning were back on by the start of business Friday. The shutdown did not affect the building occupants, which is the best possible outcome.
Strategic planning is the making of decisions today in an effort to mold the future. The nuts and bolts within the strategic plan provide business focus and help navigate the most important choices and actions we must take as a Provider of Choice and Employer of Choice.

The process to build a strategic plan in Plant Operations takes many months and always includes a wide array of people and many sources of information. Here is a short list of methods used to build Vision 2018:

1. **Employee meetings across Plant.** From late summer 2012 through early winter 2013, employee groups offered feedback and ideas. Overarching employee themes influenced Vision 2018. Some examples are improved communication, increased staff/management interface, and ongoing training/development.

2. **Customers had repeated opportunities to influence Vision 2018.** From FUN meetings to surveys to focus groups, customer ideas and priorities for the future were important in building this plan.

3. **Budget requirements** and the changing business pressures within higher education were studied and taken into account for other measures found in Vision 2018.

Reading the plan in this edition of Plant Exchange is one step for every employee. The Plant Operations Lead Team also anticipates and expects ongoing conversation across shops and departments about this plan.

It is the way forward. You are a part of making it happen. Future, face-to-face conversations will provide a clearer understanding of how each of us fits into this plan and how everyone has an important role to reach our Vision 2018 goals.
Construction Services

RENOVATING THE VESTIBULAR TESTING CENTER

By Patrick Doyle

Construction Services recently completed a renovation to the Vestibular Testing Center, part of the UM Health System. The scope of the project was to convert an office into a physical therapy exam room by removing existing walls and adding new walls and converting an existing break room into the new administration office. New electrical/HVAC and finishes were needed to accommodate the new spaces. The work was performed in two phases, and provided much needed clinical space. Both phases took place in an occupied clinical space, which required working in close proximity to the staff and patients. Infection control precautions were extremely important due to the close proximity of workers and staff.

A detailed schedule outlined each phase and was submitted December 13th, 2013. Phase 1 began January 6th, and completed January 20th, and the space was occupied by office staff January 21st. Phase 2 began January 22nd, and completed February 12th, and the new clinic was in use shortly afterward. The project remained on schedule and within budget. Thanks to the hard work and expertise of construction services trades personal, the work progressed smoothly throughout the project, and the staff were pleased to have their new office, and clinic.

“We are a very small clinic to begin with, so having the extra traffic of workers and supplies in and out of the clinic could have been a major disruption. While the project was certainly not without some disruption, the intrusion on our day-to-day work and patient care was minimized thanks to the efforts of all involved in the demolition and subsequent construction work,” stated Margo Beckman, Assistant Director of the Vestibular Testing Center.
conversations and take advantage of these opportunities to provide some cultural perspective…” Plant Operations has been doing this for many years with the supervisor leadership certificate program, and many other learning tracks that include Crucial Confrontations, Crucial Conversations, Realizing Common Ground, It Starts with You, and more.

To learn more about diversity, respect, inclusion, and educational programs in Plant Operations and around campus, or how you can make a difference in your area, contact your Plant Operations—Respect & Inclusion Resource Team at: 734-615-7644 or PO-RIRTeam@umich.edu.

Feel free to join us in one of our bi-monthly meetings for open discussion about difficult conversations.

Remember to nominate a co-worker, supervisor, or team for the Director’s Diversity Leadership Award! Deadline is May 1, 2014.