

tmta talk

A publication of the
Tooling, Manufacturing &
Technologies Association

**FROM Rob's
Roost**
By Rob Dumont
PRESIDENT & CEO

Career/Technical Education

Washington D.C. where the nation's business is expected to be attended to and isn't—in large part due to partisanship that is palpable, is where I just spent three full days in meetings on the Hill.

The good news is that the meetings raised some new and very important discussions relative to creating an atmosphere where manufacturing has available to it financing and the availability of a skilled workforce.

The policy and lawmakers are now becoming increasingly aware of the real paucity of available skilled workers for industry. The cause is open to debate



but clearly the lack of “shop” or “technical skills” classes at the high school level is a contributing factor. Gone are the days when apprenticeship training was readily available and

young people saw manufacturing as an attractive alternative to college. Let's face it, not every young person should go to college—some are not interested and others are not motivated and there is another group who simply lack the intellectual weights and balances required in a college setting. Many of these in times gone by would seek out careers in industry.

For example, the State of California has, since 1980, seen a loss in excess of 80% of its industrial arts and technology classes and its high school drop-

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tmta Calendar of Events February 2012

20	Presidents' Day Federal Holiday TMTA Offices Open
22	TMTA Board of Directors meets at TMTA Offices

Visit www.thetmta.com for detailed, up-to-date information on all events.



CPAP Proof of Compliance Requirement

Patients who obtained a continuous positive airway pressure device (CPAP) on or after October 1, 2011, must provide proof of compliance with the prescribed treatment 90 days after receiving the device.

As more than 90 days have passed since the start of these new requirements, please contact your durable medical equipment provider to make sure they comply with the BCBSM requirement so that you will continue receiving CPAP benefit coverage.

Some BCBSM February Bills Missing State Claims Assessment Amounts

Some February group BCBSM bills with a January 6, 2012 billing date were generated without the state claims assessment included in their February bill. The missed assessment amount will appear on the next billing cycle for affected groups combining the February and March assessments.

Beware of Counterfeit Drugs On the Market

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued a warning to health care professionals and patients about a counterfeit version of Avastin which may have been purchased and used by some medical practices in the U.S.

BCN New Group Billing on Per Diem Basis

BCN will now bill new groups on a per diem basis. The change, which will take place February 17, 2012, will improve administrative processes for group customers and ensure consistent billing methods for BCBSM and BCN.

Existing groups with first of the month effective dates will continue to be billed according to the wash method. Under the wash method, changes are based on a 31 day billing cycle using midpoint dates to determine if a charge/credit occurs for the current month or the following month.

Avastin belongs to a class of cancer therapies that interferes with the development of new blood vessels that tumors need to grow. It is often used with chemotherapy for certain patients with colon, lung and other like cancers. It is used intravenously, typically in a hospital or doctor's office, every two or three weeks for as long as a year.

Save by Flashing Your BCBSM Card

Your BCBSM card can save you money on a number of services under their Healthy Blue Xtras program. You could save 25% off an introductory dance program at Arthur Murray Dance Studios. Join Fitness 19 with no enrollment fee and a lower monthly rate. Visit the Detroit Zoo and save on admission and attractions with the Zoo + Two package. Refinance at Quicken Loans and receive a \$500 check after closing. Join Costco and receive coupons for free products and savings valued in excess of \$50. Shop English Gardens and receive a free membership to the Garden Club with added member benefits.

The counterfeit version does not contain the medicine's active ingredient, bevacizumab, which may have resulted in patients not receiving needed therapy. It is not yet known how much counterfeit Avastin is out on the market or how much may have been used on patients.

The only FDA-approved version of Avastin for use in the U.S. is marketed by Genentech (a member company of Roche). The FDA-approved version does not include Roche on the label while the counterfeit version does. The counterfeit version also has French writing on the label while the FDA-approved version is in English. Lot numbers for genuine Avastin include six digits with no letters while the counterfeit lot numbers begin with a letter (B6010, B6011 or B86017).

For more information and more BCBSM values, sign in as a member on the BCBSM website (www.bcbsm.com) and click on healthy*bluextr*s in the upper right corner.

The counterfeit drugs came from an overseas supplier called Quality Specialty Products which does business in the U.S. as Montana Healthcare Solutions. Most of the doctor's offices the FDA contacted that may have the drug are located in southern California, with one practice in Chicago and one in Corpus Christi, Texas.

Counterfeit drugs apply to both brand name and generic products where the identity of the source is often mislabeled in a way that suggests it is the authentic approved products. Counterfeit drugs may:

- be contaminated;
- not help the condition or disease the medicine is intended to treat;
- lead to dangerous, even fatal, side effects;
- contain the wrong active ingredient;
- be made with the wrong amounts of ingredients;
- contain no active ingredients at all or contain too much of an active ingredient; and/or
- be packaged in phony packaging that can look virtually identical to the legitimate packaging.

The FDA has the following advice to avoid counterfeit drugs:

- Purchase ONLY from state-licensed pharmacies that are located in the U.S. where FDA and state authorities can assure the quality of drug manufacturing, packaging, distribution and labeling. This way you know your medication is coming from a reputable source.
- Know your medication. Any time you get a prescription filled or refilled, check the color, texture, taste and shape of the medicine. Watch for any unexpected side effects and contact your pharmacist or physician if you experience any.
- If you buy over the Internet, check to see if the



internet pharmacy is licensed, is in good standing and is located in the U.S. To find out, contact your state board of pharmacy or the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy at 1-847-698-6227. Check to see if the internet pharmacy site has the seal of the Verified Internet Pharmacy Practice Sites Accreditation Program. For a list of legitimate internet pharmacies or for more information, visit www.nabp.net.

If you suspect that you may have a counterfeit drug, contact your pharmacist immediately. The pharmacist will know what the drug should look like and if they have changed from one generic manufacturer to another.

Visit the FDA website at www.fda.gov/counterfeit for more information.

Spinbrush Powered Toothbrush Alert!

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued a warning to users of the Arm & Hammer Spinbrush (until 2009 sold as the Crest Spinbrush) manufactured by Church & Dwight Co., Inc. due to reports of serious injuries and potential hazards associated with use.

The FDA regulates toothbrushes, both manual and electric, as medical devices that are intended to help prevent tooth decay. Electric toothbrushes can be very effective in removing dental plaque and so they can help prevent dental decay and gum disease.

A consumer safety officer at the FDA says “We’ve had reports in which parts of the toothbrush broke off during use and were released into the mouth with great speed, causing broken teeth and presenting a choking hazard.” Reports indicate the brush head can either “pop off” or break in the user’s mouth or near the face exposing metal pieces underneath and causing cuts to the mouth and gums, chipped or broken teeth, swallowing and choking on the broken pieces and injuries to the face and eyes.

Problems with the Spinbrush for Kids have also been reported even though the brush head is not removable. Injuries include cut lips, burns from the batteries and bristles falling off and lodging in a child’s tonsils.

The FDA recommends that consumers using the Spinbrush follow these guidelines:

- Inspect the Spinbrush for any damaged or loose brush bristles prior to using.
- Check to make sure the headpiece is connected properly to the handle and test the brush outside of the mouth prior to using.
- Supervise children and adults who need assistance while using the Spinbrush.
- Do not bite down on the brush head while brushing.
- Follow the instructions and recommended replacement guidelines included with the Spinbrush. Replace the brush head after 3 months of use or if it becomes damaged or loose.

Michigan Manufactures Have an Alternative Choice to High Energy Costs!

Michigan manufacturers do have an alternative choice when it comes to high energy costs and it is so simple to take advantage of!

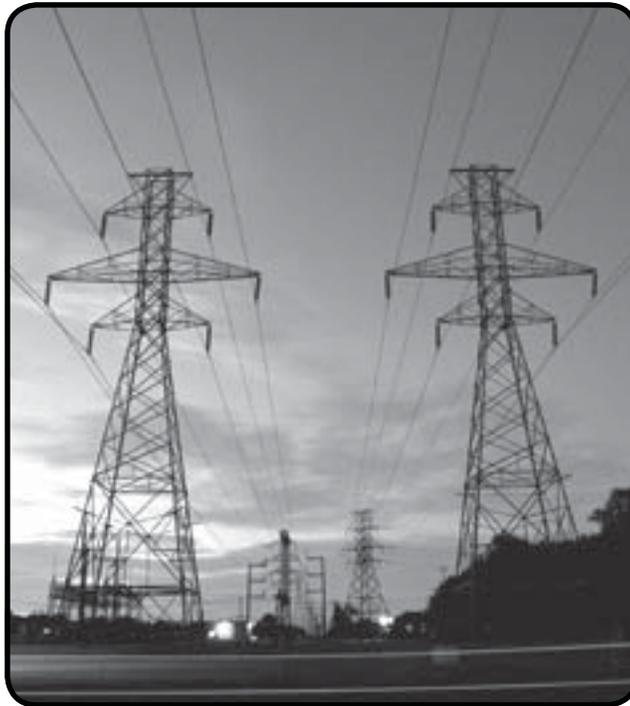
“THESE D___ ENERGY BILLS ARE SO EXPENSIVE!” If you’ve found yourself shouting this every month when your utility bills arrive, you’re not alone. Electricity and natural gas are as important a expense to your business as your employees and your machinery. The costs associated with energy can be reduced quickly and easily. Fortunately, in Michigan deregulation is available. The Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) mandates that Alternative Energy Suppliers (AES) may market natural gas and electricity to Michigan utility users as an alternative to the rates charged by utilities such as DTE and Consumers Energy. It’s easy to take advantage of when you understand the programs available.

Alan Rothenberg of EnerCom Energy (www.enercomenergy.com) explains: “The average price of U.S. natural gas in 2012 should hit its lowest level in 13 years as mild winter weather slashes demand and record production weighs heavily on the market for most of the year,” according to a Reuters poll. Utilities in Michigan have purchased their supplies and cannot react to market conditions like the AES companies can. This results in higher rates to the customers that are not in an Energy Choice program. Customers who understand these programs will save money. Period. Alan understands these programs and how they relate to our members because he was one.

Alan recently retired as VP of **Maro Precision Tool Company**. He saved Maro thousands of dollars each year by utilizing Energy Choice suppliers for Maro’s energy needs. He now consults from his home in Nevada as an energy savings agent for Enercom Energy. Alan has helped hundreds of other Michigan businesses save hundreds of thousands of dollars annually by assisting them

in enrolling with the right AES suppliers to fit their needs and helping them enroll as effortlessly as possible.

Energy deregulation mandated by the MPSC allows Michigan utility customers a way to save a percentage off the utility rate per MCF or CCF, which is described on the bill as a “Gas Recovery Charge.” These programs save the customer money without costly investments in new heating & cooling equipment or in costly alterations to their buildings. Money most Michigan business owners can now spend to keep their doors open. AES companies purchase electricity and natural gas on the market at competitive rates, then pass those savings on to their customers. It’s that simple. However, it is an unfortunate truth that many business owners and controllers in the TMTA are not aware that deregulation exists; or they feel that the program offered by energy suppliers is complex, technical, and confusing; or just not worth talking about.



EnerCom Energy is the leading alternative energy savings agency representing major suppliers of electricity and natural gas to commercial and industrial business owners. Enercom’s diverse network of suppliers allows them to shop the current energy market to secure the lowest possible energy rates for their clients quickly and efficiently. The programs recommended are designed to save you money by lowering your monthly energy payments and can often guarantee your rates from increasing for the next one, two or three years. Also

available are month to month agreements through certain suppliers for those customers who would prefer not to be committed to a contract for any specific length of time.

You will not change your utility company, only the source of the energy. Your place of business will continue to receive distribution, billing, emergency services, and associated fees from its current utility company. By signing a contract with one of Enercom’s recommended alternative energy suppliers, you ensure that your actual electricity and/or natural gas will be provided by an alternative energy supplier at the best competitive rate.

Electricity Energy Choice is not currently open to new enrollment, but companies can request to be placed in the Energy Choice "Queue" so they can take advantage of AES rates immediately, when it open to new accounts. The state of Michigan has also placed a 10% cap limit on alternative electric energy choices. It is anticipated that the cap limit will be increased shortly. Only an alternative energy savings agency, like Enercom Energy, can place you in line in the Queue. There is no utility or supplier cost for your company to enroll and being placed in the Queue does not obligate you to enter the program. You can always cancel without a penalty if you change your mind or if your program or rate is not acceptable to you. But, you must be in the Queue to even be considered for alternative electricity choices. The Queue operates on a first come first serve basis, so time is of the essence if you even **think** your company might want to **save money** on its electricity costs.

The highest charge on your natural gas bill is the "Gas Recovery Charge." With Energy Choice, this charge will be replaced with an alternative gas supplier charge at a much more competitive rate. Natural gas is not bound by the Energy Choice Queue and there is no cap limit in Michigan; therefore, your savings on natural gas can start immediately upon approval.

Alan can explain in a clear and concise fashion the advantages and benefits of energy choice so that you and your business can select the best alternative energy supplier for electricity and natural gas. He can assist you in the implementation of a program specifically designed to meet your current and future energy needs. All at no cost to you or your business.

Don't get left behind paying high energy bills, contact Alan Rothenberg of EnerCom Energy today:

Phone: 248-875-7733
Fax: 702-586-9666
E-mail: a.rothenberg@enercomenergy.com

Does Your Organization Qualify for a Utility Refund?

Energy Analysts serves Michigan industry by reducing their utility costs (electric and gas). They can find out if your company qualifies by reviewing a recent month's electric and gas bill. Fifty percent of the organizations whose energy usage they have reviewed qualified for savings.

If your company qualifies, typical savings are 5% reductions in the monthly costs. The statute of limitations enables Energy Analysts to petition for up to a 4 year recalculation of prior billings. Refunds are usually applied to your electric or gas account in the form of a credit. The average refund is typically double your monthly costs. (A qualifying company that spends \$5,000 a month is likely receive about a \$10,000 refund.)

When Energy Analysts receives your utility bills, they will review them and report back to you with their findings. You'll need to send a recent month's bill from each of your electric and gas accounts. (Send the bills via fax at 313-537-2829 or e-mail to brian.somerville@att.net)

If your company qualifies for savings/refunds, Energy Analysts will send a service authorization form to you, and after receiving that back, begin their process. Energy Analysts' service fee is contingency based. Thus, only if and when you've benefited by receiving refunds is there a fee, and this fee is based on a portion of your refund.

Energy Analysts founder, Brian Somerville, previously worked for one of Michigan's largest utilities as a tax accountant. Over the last 20 years he has successfully represented thousands of Michigan businesses, lowering their utility costs and coordinating refund recoveries for these organizations.

To find out more, call Brian Somerville at 313-673-5500. Be sure to mention you heard about Energy Analysts in TMTA's TMTA Talk Newsletter.



We would like to take this opportunity to welcome the following new members to the Tooling, Manufacturing & Technologies Association:

- ❖ **Aerospace Consultants International** of Grosse Pointe, MI; they assist aerospace manufacturers and tier suppliers in quality management systems; visit their website at www.aciaerocert.com; and
- ❖ **Kyocera Unimerco** of Saline, MI; they are a full service tool supplier; visit their website at www.kyocera-unimerco.us.



Reminder to TMTA Members — Free Benchmarking Report Opportunity

Under a FREE offer being made to only a select few national industry associations, TMTA members have an opportunity to receive a free benchmarking report from the Performance Benchmarking Service (PBS) group.

PBS is a part of the Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center (MMTC), a leading source of benchmarking data for manufacturing.

Complete and return one of the sector-specific questionnaires by March 23, 2012 and you will receive your confidential, customized, free report in May. The questionnaire does not include sensitive financial disclosure and a link may be found on the TMTA website homepage at www.thetmta.com.

EEOC Issues Final Regulations on GINA

On February 3, 2012, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) issued final regulations extending its existing recordkeeping requirements under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to entities covered by the employment provisions of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA). The final regulations take effect on April 3, 2012.

The final EEOC recordkeeping regulations require employers subject to Title VII, the ADA and GINA to preserve all employment and personnel records made or kept for a period of one year from the date the record is made or the personnel action is taken, whichever is later. In the case of an involuntary termination, the employer must keep the individual's employment records for a period of one year following the termination date.

All employer records relating to a discrimination charge filed with the EEOC or civil action brought by the EEOC or Attorney General under Title VII, the ADA or GINA will

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For more information about the TMTA, our advocacy, events, benefits and up-to-date news and information, visit us at www.thetmta.com

INFLATION TALK

CPI-W Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers

Month	82-84	1967	57-59
Dec	222.166	661.766	769.63*
Nov	222.813	663.692	771.87*
Oct	223.043	664.376	772.66*
Sept	223.688	666.299	774.90*
Aug	223.326	665.221	773.64*
July	222.686	663.314	771.43*
June	222.522	662.826	770.86*
May 2011	222.954	664.113	772.36*

CPI-U All Urban Consumers

Month	82-84	1967	57-59
Dec	225.672	676.014	786.19*
Nov	226.230	677.684	788.14*
Oct	226.421	678.258	788.80*
Sept	226.889	679.658	790.43*
Aug	226.545	678.628	789.23*
July	225.922	676.762	787.06*
June	225.722	676.162	786.37*
May 2011	225.964	676.887	787.21*

Note: December 2011 CPI-W represents a 3.2% increase from one year ago; CPI-U a 3.0% increase.

* Base Year 1957-59 is no longer released. BLS has issued the following conversion factors from the 82-84 year:

CPI-W—.2886674 CPI-U—.2870447

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out rate has been on the rise as well. The dropout rate for 2004-5 among secondary students in California was about 30%. But, for those students taking courses in career/technical education, the rate of graduation was 84%, i.e., just 16% dropped out of school. A study showed that high-risk students are eight to ten times less likely to drop out in the 11th and 12th grades if they are enrolled in a career/technical program rather than in a general program.

GetREAL, an organization of manufacturing and other businesses, assembled data that shows career/technical education courses, teachers and enrollments have declined by more than 20% in the decade since 1997, while "non-graduates" have increased by 25%. The correlation is established that as career/technical education courses disappear, the dropout rate increases. In fact the problem over that period is larger in absolute terms than it appears because during that same decade the total number of students increased.

Draw your own conclusions but to me it suggests that the return of career/technical education opportunities for young people may pay greater dividends than one might expect while assisting in resolving more than one pressing social issue. At the same time there would be generated an interest in and available personnel for industry. Young people definitely need a marketable skill to use upon graduation that will enable them to begin a career that will support a car, a spouse, and perhaps a family. We can and should do more to get this issue front and center with Congress!

You have heard it before but it bears repetition: many organizations in addition to the TMTA continue attempts to convince Rep. John Boehner (R-8th OH) Speaker of the House and Rep. Dave Camp (R-4th MI) Chairman of Ways and Means to bring H.R. 639 (the currency legislation) to a vote in the House. The companion legislation in the Senate has passed. We are in the reverse position of that two years ago when the House had passed the legislation and the Senate had not acted on it.

This legislation would certainly send a clear and convincing message to those who profit from currency manipulation and go a long way in sustaining and increasing manufacturing in this country.

TMTA ENDORSED SERVICE PROVIDERS

Blue Cross Blue Shield/BCN

(Health insurance program)

TMTA contacts:

Bill Percha 586-904-9700 (cell)

Elaine Burger-Laskosky 248-488-0300, ext. 1309

Freedom One Financial Group

(401(k) Retirement program)

Provider contact:

John Young 248-620-8100

GlobalTranz — CarrierRate.com

(Freight discount program)

Provider contact:

Chad Hill 866-275-1407, ext. 130

John M. Packer & Associates

(Unemployment cost control program)

Provider contact:

Nathan Wiest 800-482-2971

Practical Power LLC

(Electrical savings program)

Provider contact:

Mark Bunting 248-726-7598

Ralph C. Wilson Agency, Inc.

(Insurance management)

Provider contact for Benefits coverages:

Robert Farris 248-355-1414, ext. 109

Provider contact for P&C and WC coverages:

Jay Poplawski, 248-355-1414, ext. 158

Reliance Standard/Ameritas

(Life/Dental insurance programs)

TMTA contacts:

Bill Percha 586-904-9700

Stella Krupansky 248-488-0300, ext. 1310

SVS Vision

(Safety & Vision programs)

Provider contact:

Monica Dyja 800-611-3683 or www.svsvision.com

Schena Roofing & Sheet Metal Co., Inc.

(Commercial/industrial roofing contractor)

Provider contact:

586-949-4777

Staffworks Group

(Staffing needs)

Provider contact:

Bill Brann 877-304-9690

TMTA receives a benefit from some of its Endorsed Providers when you, as a member, patronize them. This is one way we are able to maintain the level of dues.

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have to be kept until after the final disposition. The final regulations require employers to maintain the records they create, however, they do not require the creation of additional documents or impose any reporting requirements under GINA.

Employers should review their current recordkeeping policies and practices to ensure that they will be compliant with the final regulations.

**Hand-Held Phones Banned
for Commercial Drivers**

Effective January 2, 2012, regulations implemented by the Department of Transportation's Federal Motor Carrier

technologies such as a wired or wireless earpiece, or the speakerphone function of the mobile telephone. Wireless connection of the mobile telephone to the vehicle for hands-free operation of the telephone, which would allow the use of a single-button control on the steering wheel or dashboard, would also be permitted. If the driver does not reach for, dial or hold the actual mobile telephone in his/her hand while driving and the driver is able to touch a single button needed to operate the push-to-talk feature from the normal seated position with the safety belt fastened, the equipment may be used.

Commercial drivers reaching for an object, such as a cell phone, are 3 times more likely to be involved in a crash or other safety-critical event. Dialing a hand-held cell phone makes it 6 times more likely that commercial drivers will be involved in a crash or other safety-critical event.



Safety Administration and Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration ban the use of hand-held cell phones by drivers of commercial motor vehicles engaged in interstate commerce and other vehicles carrying certain hazardous materials. Text messaging for commercial drivers had already been banned by prior regulations.

Motor carrier employers are prohibited from allowing or requiring their drivers to use hand-held cell phones. Employers violating this regulation face a maximum penalty of \$11,000 and could be held liable for the negligence of their drivers who cause an accident while using a hand-held cell phone. Commercial drivers face federal civil penalties of up to \$2,750 for each offense and disqualification from operating a commercial motor vehicle for multiple offenses. One limited exception is where a commercial driver needs to communicate with law enforcement officials or emergency services.

Drivers may place and receive calls using hands-free

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