

AAHE

UPDATE ONLINE

FACILITIES
CLINICAL
SAFETY
RADIOLOGY

A quarterly update for the members of the Arkansas Association of Healthcare Engineering

**ASHE GOLD 9 CONSECUTIVE
YEARS**

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Terry Martin

Medical Center of South Arkansas

Wow! The year 2000 is almost gone and it seems as though there are thousands of things that need to be completed before the New Year rings in. Pre-JCAHO surveys, SOC and PFI's need up-dating, fire damper testing, starting up new equipment, budget planning, medical gas testing, fire alarm and sprinkler system testing, and fire drills, but Hey Guys and Gals, Health Care Engineering is not like the "Maytag Repairman", who sits patiently by his telephone and waits for a repair request. Our departments work around the clock seven days a week and sometimes we still fall short on completing all work requests. So then we must re-group and start another week.

So much for our hectic schedules and heavy workloads, just thank God that we have jobs and good health.

The Quarterly AAHE meeting September 22 at North Arkansas Regional Medical Center in Harrison, AR was an outstanding meeting. A special thanks to Charlie Beavers and North

Natural Gas Prices Soar

Editorial

If you have no interest in the Natural Gas Market, then you probably are not responsible for the day to day operation of your facility.

One item you may have noticed on your operating budget in the last few months is the significant increase in the cost of Natural Gas. The cost of this all important commodity has reached an all time high. In fact, we are seeing the highest prices since natural gas was deregulated in 1990.

Only a year ago, depending on where you purchased your natural gas, you were paying around \$2.00 per MMBtu. If you purchase a short term contract today, you will pay around \$6.00 per MMBtu. Spot market purchasing of gas today will cost you over \$6.20 MMBtu.

Most managers did not expect this escalated cost of gas when they prepared their budgets for the current year. As a result, there has been a real scramble to keep operating costs under control.

Natural gas costs effect everything from the operation of providing heated domestic water in the facility, to the cost of sterilization. Costs that might not be so evident, are those related to the production of electricity by the commercial generating plants which provide our electricity.

The smart Facility Manager today, will take the time

Arkansas Regional Medical Center for hosting the meeting, Harrison Trane for sponsoring the breaks and lunch and the AAHE Program Committee for setting up the programs. (Facilities, Keith Wright; Clinical, Lyn Hicks; Radiology, Pat White; Safety, Diane Hughes.)

our next quarterly meeting will be at Jefferson Regional Medical Center in Pine Bluff, AR on January 18 and 19, 200 1. So mark you calendar and plan to attend. The program committee has some great programs planned and as I requested in the last news letter, bring a friend or co-worker to the meeting and share with them the benefits of our AAHE Chapter.

A Small Hospital Meeting sponsored by the AAHE was held at Ashley County, Medical Center in Crossett, AR, Friday, November IO. Our own AAHE Safety Chair Person, Diane Hughes gave a presentation on Infant Abduction. A special thanks to Thomas Smith and Don Noble of Ashley County Medical Center for hosting the meeting.

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to understand how these costs effect his operation.

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