

KHEA NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2020

**KANSAS HEALTHCARE  
ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION**

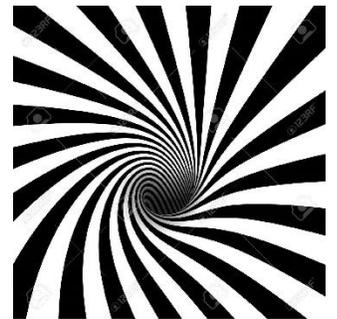
[WWW.KHEAKS.COM](http://WWW.KHEAKS.COM)

Hello fellow KHEA Members,

I hope this note finds everyone happy and healthy. As I sat here at my computer tapping my fingers on the keyboard and trying to think of topics to talk about, I received a phone call from a friend of mine that lives down in the Houston area. He told me about this past week and how he had spent every evening preparing for hurricane Laura. He knew that he had a 50/50 chance of getting hit by this storm. If the storm turned West when it hit landfall, he would more than likely take a direct hit; if it turned East when it hit landfall he would probably receive a bunch of rain, but he would avoid the sustained winds and damage that a storm like this could cause. To be prepared, he had spent the past few evenings placing his tools on blankets and then picking up the four corners and dragging the bundle up to his attic, just in case there was a strong storm surge that caused flooding, like they had a few years ago during hurricane Harvey. Ironically, during the phone call, he said "I sure miss Kansas when all we had to deal with were hail storms and an occasional tornado. Those things just popped up and were gone in minutes...not like these hurricanes that go on for days." I guess he is right, we don't really spend a lot of time here planning for tornadoes because although they are very powerful storms, they're usually here and gone in minutes.

So that leads me to my question for you all to ponder....How do we prepare?

We've all had that inspector that probably felt like a hurricane or a tornado, but how do we plan for our inspections; whether that be the Kansas Fire Marshal, KDHE, Joint Commission or other regulatory agency? Do we spend hours, days or maybe weeks preparing for our inspections, or do we run for cover when we see them enter the building, hide in the cellar, so to speak, and hope that we can weather the storm relatively unscathed? I've been in this Hospital Facility Management business for over 25 years now and I, for one, am tired of riding the regulatory roller coaster. Rather than being survey ready at all times, we spend a few short months frantically preparing for the Joint Commission, spending countless hours performing just-in-time training for staff and it usually proves to not be sustainable. The just-in-time training does not stick, the employees answer the questions wrong when quizzed by the inspector and it ends up being a big disaster.



But how do we change this cycle? How do we change the culture of our hospitals so that we focus on long range, sustainable training and education? How do we make sure that Environment of Care and Life Safety knowledge is part of the hospital's culture and continual education and development is part of our plan so that our people are always survey ready? Culture change is very difficult thing to lead from the Plant Operations or Facility Management office and we need the help and the partnership of our hospital leadership to make that change.

I think back to one of my instructors in college that used Stephen Covey's book "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People". I'm sure most of you have read this book, or at least heard of it. In the book, it talks about "being proactive", "beginning with the end in mind", thinking "win-win", etc., etc., etc., and the last habit is "sharpening the saw". I think that is the step that is most often missed and where most organizations fail. I think organizations do a pretty good job of knowing what they want to accomplish and figuring out a way to meet that goal, but they don't take the time to think through how to keep that goal and that journey sustainable. Organizations need to go back and learn from the experience,



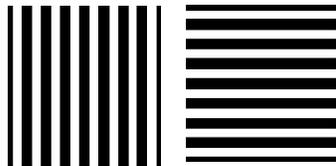
review and celebrate the things they did well and learn from their failures. Hospitals need to go back and perform a “hot wash” and then share that with all players involved, which may be every single person in the organization. Hospitals need to continually “sharpen the saw” so that they can always maintain a level of survey readiness. This, in theory, sounds very simple, but as you know, everyday life gets in the way. We have emergencies, we have unexpected mechanical failures, we have people quit, we get busy. We push education or hard conversations to the back burner or cancel meetings and say, “we’ll catch that next month” and before you know it, the organization has dropped the ball and has totally slipped back into its old habits.

Unfortunately, I don’t have the secret sauce. I don’t have a magical way to get and keep everyone’s attention so that everyone learns the “do’s” and “don’ts” of Environment of Care and Life Safety. I would, however, suggest starting a conversation with your C-suite. Ask how you can partner with your education department or others in the C-suite to come up with ways to make training and education for the entire staff (including nurses, physicians and other clinical staff) a sustainable priority so that the organization can stay survey ready. I would also suggest picking up a copy of Stephen Covey’s book “7 Habits...” if you don’t have that in your collection already. There are some real management gems in those pages.

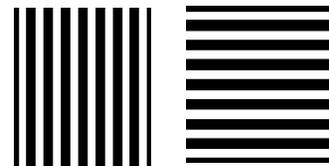


Lastly, I want to encourage you all to use your vacation/Paid Time Off days. Take some time off, get away from work and recharge your batteries. Our jobs are very difficult, very stressful and if given the chance, can slowly wear you down. It can affect your sleep, your home life and your attitude. Mike Connell, Jeff Lane and I all had two fairly rough years in 2019 and 2020. First was a disastrous Joint Commission survey (with the new safer matrix), then came the remediation of the 188 survey findings and two subsequent visits from Joint Commission surveyors and then 2020 came along and COVID-19 set in. I have to tell you...I was spent, both mentally and physically. I needed a break and I knew it. So... I took a motorcycle trip! Two of my high school buddies and I rode from Lubbock Texas, up through Colorado, Wyoming, Idaho and Washington and then back down through Colorado and Utah. It was 12 glorious days and 5,500 miles, away from work, away from my cell phone, away from responsibilities and away from this blasted computer that brings hundreds of emails each day. I took time to enjoy the scenery, I took time to have long conversations (sometimes with myself), I took time to have good meals (and drinks) with good friends and I took time to laugh. It was a much deserved and a much needed break. I challenge you all to do the same. Everyone needs a little time away to refresh and rejuvenate. Take the time. You earned it and you deserve it!

Stay well!  
Brian Leabo  
2020/2021 KHEA President



Date to Remember:  
**Spring Conference & Golf**  
**@ Salina April 20 – 22, 2021**  
**Fall Conference & Golf**  
**@ Manhattan Sept 28-30, 2021**



**SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY!!**  
What is a trait that a great leader possesses and how do they stand out from other leaders? Do they treat employees equal or fair? Explain the difference of equal and fair.

← →  
**CONGRATULATIONS!!**  
OUR ASHE affiliated Chapter has achieved “Platinum” for the hard work the chapter accomplished in 2019!!

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American Boiler & Mechanical	Apex Medical Gas Systems	Assa Abloy
Becker Pumps	Central Mechanical Construction	Commercial Laundry Sales & Service
DCS Services	DH Pace	Edelman-Lyon Automatic Door
Electronic Contracting Company	Energy Solutions Professionals	Glassman Corporation
Hajoca	Johnson Controls	McConnell and Associates
McCownGordon Construction	Mechanical Sales Midwest Inc.	Mid-Continental Restoration Company
Nabholz	P1 Group	RamAir
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Tremco Roofing & Building Management	Underground Vaults & Storage	US Engineering

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