



News, Views & Comments from the World of Building Service Contracting

Submit your news for publication to Carol Dean at cdean@wfbsc.org

ARGENTINA-BUENOS AIRES

Crime A Top Concern

With several high profile crimes and at least three police officers killed in Buenos Aires in recent weeks, polls show crime is a top priority for Argentines. All social classes are being affected by the crime wave and several small business owners have been robbed. Many in Argentina believe President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner is not focusing enough on crime. In March, anti-crime advocates organized a protest, which was attended by over 10,000 and used the Internet to mobilize people to ask Congress to declare a national security emergency.

AUSTRALIA-VICTORIA

New Spill Response Technology Available

Enware Australia Pty Ltd has signed an exclusive distribution agreement to distribute FAST-ACT (First Applied Sorbent Treatment – Against Chemical Threats) in Australia and New Zealand, which can be safely applied to chemical spills or vapor releases. Produced in the form of a dry powder, FAST-ACT is essentially magnesium oxide and titanium dioxide. The non-toxic, non-corrosive and non-flammable metal oxides are effective over a wide range of temperatures and conditions and only relatively small quantities of product are required to effectively cover broad areas. The product reduces the need to have multiple spill kits and it reacts with a wide range of acids, halogenated compounds, phosphorus compounds and organic compounds. It

neutralizes both liquids and vapors, including contaminants in air, soil and water. FAST-ACT is supplied in extinguisher-style pressurized cylinders that are easy to operate and do not require any special training for users. Shaker bottles and pails are also available in a variety of sizes to best suit particular application requirements. For more information 02 9525 9511 or safety@enware.com.au.

BELGIUM-BRUSSELS

Proposal To Increase Maternity Leave Opposed

The European Union proposal to increase minimum maternity leave from 14 to 18 weeks, which is awaiting deliberation by the European Parliament has faced opposition from several EU countries, notably Germany. Currently in Germany, women can take up to three years off and return to their jobs but only receive 14 weeks of paid maternity leave. The German Family Minister claims increasing the amount of paid leave would be a hardship for employers and could cost an additional 500 million Euros per year. The proposal has been met with criticism in other EU countries as well, and opposition will create roadblocks to its passage that could last up to two years.

BRAZIL-SAO PAULO

Cebrasse Meets With The FIESP

The leaders of Cebrasse and the Industry Federation of the State of São Paulo (FIESP) met recently to discuss synergies, particularly in light of the impact of the world-wide crisis on the

Brazilian economy. The two organizations explored ways to sustain both industry and jobs.

CANADA-OTTAWA

Consumer Spending Still Strong

Despite reports from Statistics Canada that retail sales fell 5.4% in December, the biggest monthly decline in almost 20 years, and more than 210,000 jobs were lost in the first two months of 2009, a Scotiabank telephone survey of over 1,000 households conducted in February shows that more than 80% of Canadians are either spending more, or the same, as they did about half a year ago. In fact 45% had not changed their spending habits in the previous six months, 36% were spending more, and 19% were spending less.

FRANCE-PARIS

Despite Deficit, France Affirms EU Pact

Even though France is among six countries targeted by the EU executive commission for running up deficits in excess of 3.0 percent, the country reaffirmed its commitment to the European Union's Stability and Growth pact. The pact requires countries to keep public deficits to 3.0 percent of annual output. With French President Nicolas Sarkozy engaging in a massive government spending program, France's public deficit is expected to reach 5.6 percent of gross domestic product in 2009 and remain at 5.2 percent in 2010.

GERMANY-BERLIN

Women Protest Worst Wage Gap In Europe

Germany has the worst wage gap between the sexes in Europe with women on average earning 25 percent less than their male counterparts. Even within Germany itself there are big discrepancies as in West Germany the gap is 25 percent and in East Germany (GDR) it is six percent. In Europe the gap is an average of 17 percent. Several factors such as the German tax system, which encourages part-time jobs for women and a

lack of daycare, make it difficult for women to close the gap. Over one-third of German women work part-time. Only two women serve on the management boards of Germany's top 30 listed companies, and female executives are paid less than the men in the boardroom. In March over 180 separate events were held across the country to draw attention to the issue.

JAPAN-TOKYO

Toll Cuts Lead To More Traffic

New toll discounts for weekend traffic have proven popular and traffic across the Honshu-Shikoku Bridge Expressway and the Tokyo Bay Aqualine bridge-tunnel increased 86 percent and 24 percent respectively from the previous pre-discount weekend. The plan is to reduce weekend and holiday rates on many expressways across the nation, starting at the end of March. On most expressways, the maximum toll will be set at 1,000 Yen, regardless of distance traveled and only vehicles equipped with the electronic toll-collection system will be eligible.

NEW ZEALAND-AUCKLAND

Complaints Against Landlords Rising

The Auckland branch of the Tenants Protection Association received 45 percent more complaints compared with February 2008. Most complaints centered on disputes over maintenance and pay for unreasonable cleaning costs. One Auckland renter was charged for commercial cleaning, which was not required as part of the lease. Landlords also took more time to refund bonds. Currently landlords can ask for up to one month's rent in bond, which is held in escrow with Tenancy Services for the duration of the tenancy. Both the landlord and tenant must sign off for the bond to be released and landlords are waiting months before signing the releases. However landlords are also facing an increase in tenants who seek to break their leases as a result of the faltering economy. The Government plans to modify a bill introduced before the election last year that gives greater protection to tenants, to add a provision for protecting landlords as well.

SOUTH KOREA-SEOUL

Government Expands Tax Exemptions

In order to attract more foreign investment, the government has decided to expand tax exemptions for large-scale foreign-invested companies in the country's free economic zones. The tax exemption period will now extend to seven years from five. Foreign companies will be exempted from corporate income tax and others for five years and get 50 percent tax discount for the last two years. Currently the incentives are only available to certain sized firms and proponents are encouraging the government to offer tax incentives to every foreign company regardless of their size or the amount of investment. There are six free economic zones in Korea including Incheon FEZ and Busan-Jinhae FEZ.

TAIWAN-TAIPEI

Annual Green Expo Event Open

The 10th annual Ilan County Green Expo opened in Suao's Wulaokeng Mountain Stream in March and will stay open for 51 days. President Ma Ying-jeou addressed the crowds at the opening ceremony. The event runs until May 10th, 2009.

THE NETHERLANDS-AMSTERDAM

Unemployment Up Slightly

Statistics Netherlands reported the seasonally adjusted unemployment figure for the period December 2008 - February 2009 increased by three thousand over the previous three-month period, the third month in a row of rising unemployment numbers. However unemployment is still seven-thousand lower than the same period in the prior year. Male unemployment bore the brunt of the increase with all of those affected under the age of 45. Female employment actually increased by 26,000. As a result traditionally male-dominated segments of the labor market were particularly affected.

UK-LONDON

Study Shows Cell Phones May Play Role In Spread

Researchers from the Ondokuz Mayıs University in Turkey discovered cell phones belonging to hospital staff may be a source of hospital-acquired infections. The study which tested 200 doctors and nurses working in hospital operating rooms and intensive care units found ninety-five percent of the mobile phones were contaminated with at least one type of bacteria, with the potential to cause illness ranging from minor skin irritations to deadly disease. Nearly 35 percent carried two types of bacteria, and more than 11 percent carried three or more. One in eight of the handsets tested positive for Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA). In the US, MRSA causes over 60 percent of all hospital infections. In addition, researchers found only 10 percent of staff regularly cleaned their phones.

UK-LONDON

Firm Markets Office Germs Cleaning Angle

East Anglian based cleaning company, Keep I.T. Clean, touts its specialized office keyboard cleaning services to entice customers. The company points to research that a typical keyboard is infected with 3,295 germs per square inch, which makes keyboards much dirtier than trash cans, or even toilet seats. Furthermore in its marketing message it tells readers that bugs such as listeria and salmonella linger for up to 24 hours on fingertips - and can survive for a similar period on keyboards. The company mentions that illnesses, which can be transmitted via the computer keyboard, include skin diseases, rashes, eczema, fungal infections, diphtheria, thrush, herpes, gastroenteritis, gum disorders, pneumonia, hepatitis, blood poisoning and food poisoning bugs such as e. coli, staphylococcus aureus, coliforms and enterobacteria. It further notes that 41 percent of men and 19 percent of women do not wash their hands after using the lavatory and company cleaners have found samples of urine and saliva on office equipment that are a result of direct finger contact. Keep I.T. Clean markets its expertise and focus on IT equipment cleaning to create a unique selling proposition. The company

has contracts spread across the UK with clients that include Virgin, the NHS and De Vere Hotels.

US-DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Motel Cleaners Need To Be Wary

The American Hotel and Lodging Association warns that motel rooms have increasingly become an alternative lab for Methamphetamine "cooks" seeking to avoid raids on their homes. The motel room labs can easily be set up in less than four hours and ingredients and equipment can fit in a single back-pack. These covert drug labs endanger unsuspecting customers and housekeeping crews with toxic residues left on countertops, carpets and bathtubs that can last for days. The residues if not handled properly can cause eye and skin irritation, vomiting, rashes, asthma problems and other respiratory issues. Cleanup can cost anywhere from \$2,000 to \$20,000 and must be done by meth lab hygienists wearing hazmat suits. U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration records show that states reported finding evidence of drug-making in 1,789 motel and hotel rooms in the past five years.

US-VIRGINIA

Extremists Try New Toilet Tactic

Animal-rights and environmental extremists have a new attack method; using sponges to block toilets and urinals to cause expensive flooding and extensive clean-up. They also employ destruction or defacement of property – especially smashing windows, etching windows, and painting (or paint bombing) windows, buildings, vans and billboards. In addition, the extremists have stepped up attacks on food retailers. According to the Arlington, Virginia-based Animal Agriculture Alliance, attacks on the global food chain rose 42 percent, and acts of sabotage, vandalism and arson rose 35 percent over 2007. The overall level of animal-rights extremist attacks in the United States on businesses that use animals – including medical research, consumer product safety, pets, circuses, rodeos, fur shops, hunting stores, farmers, ranchers, food retailers – surged nearly 40 percent. The main culprits were the Animal Liberation Front (ALF); Earth Liberation Front (ELF); and DBF, a branch of ALF found in Sweden and the Netherlands.

ASSOCIATE MEMBER NEWS

Ecolab

Ecolab Inc. announced it has partnered with Veltek Associates, Inc., a provider of solutions used to address the control of particulate and microbial contamination in pharmaceutical and biotechnology operations. Through this strategic partnership, Ecolab's healthcare business will market Veltek's infection control portfolio to hospital pharmaceutical labs. "This collaboration further strengthens Ecolab's healthcare business and infection prevention portfolio by offering hospitals new products and processes that meet USP 797 standards to reduce the risk of transmission of microbes within pharmacy environments," said Susan Nestegard, Executive Vice President, Global Healthcare. "We are excited to be working with Veltek, a market leader in contamination control, to support our customers' infection control efforts across all areas within their facilities." USP 797 is a regulation endorsed by the Joint Commission that governs a range of pharmacy policies and procedures. It is designed both to cut down on infections transmitted to patients through pharmaceutical products and to better protect staff working in pharmacies in the course of their exposure to pharmaceuticals.

UPCOMING EVENTS

18th Congress of the World Federation of Building Service Contractors

Auckland, New Zealand
November 2-8, 2010

Congress updates will be available from March 2009
BSCNZ PO Box 31-067, Lower Hutt 5040

EMAIL: info@bsc.org.nz
WEBSITE: www.bsc.org.nz

19th Congress of the World Federation of Building Service Contractors

Curitiba, Brazil
2012



ALL BUILDING SERVICE CONTRACTING COMPANIES THAT ARE MEMBERS OF ONE OF THE ASSOCIATIONS THAT IS A WFBC MEMBER, ARE AUTOMATICALLY MEMBERS OF THE WFBC.

WFBC ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

ConverPro, Inc.
St-Cesaire, QC
450-469-5588
www.converpro.com

Daniels Associates
Phoenix, AZ
602-992-5192
www.danielsworldwide.com

Ecolab
St. Paul, MN
651-293-2233
www.ecolab.com

JohnsonDiversey
Sturtevant, WI
262-631-4001
www.johnsondiversev.com

TruVox
UK
44 (0) 23 8070 2200
www.truvov.com

Wood Wyant, Inc.
Laval, QC
450-680-9731
www.woodwyant.ca

WFBC MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

Algemene Belgische
Schoomaakunie-Union
Generale Belge du Nettoyage
Brussels, Belgium
Hilde Engels-ABSU.UGBN@skynet.be

Association de Empresas de Limpieza
Buenos Aires, Argentina
Norberto Peluso-correo@limpiolux.com.ar

Building Service Contractors Association of Australia
Crows Nest, NSW, Australia
bscaansw@bscaa.asn.au

Quebec Building Service Contractors Association, Inc.
Montreal, Quebec, Canada
Roger Gauthier-fortier.gauthier@sympatico.ca

Building Service Contractors Association International
Chicago, Illinois, USA
Maurice Desmarais-mdesmarais@bscai.org

Building Service Contractors of New Zealand, Inc.
Auckland, New Zealand
Marja Verkerk-info@bsc.org.nz

Bundesinnungsverband des Gebaeudereiniger-Handwerks
Bonn, Germany
Johannes Bungart RA-biv@gebaeudereiniger.de

Cleaning and Support Services Association
London, United Kingdom
Andrew Large-alarge@cleaningassoc.org

Febrac
Brasilia, Distrito Federal, Brazil
Silvio Gaspar-silviojgaspar@upsbeneficios.com.br

Building Managers Association of the Republic of China
Taipei, Taiwan
Kenneth Kao-pacifico@ms37.hinet.net

Federation des Enterprises de Proprete
Paris, France
Carol Sintes-csintes@federation-proprete.com

Japan Building Maintenance Association
Tokyo, Japan
Keizo Kozen-kozen@j-bma.or.jp

Korean Association of Sanitary Maintenance
Seoul, Korea
Young Hoi Um-kasm@kasm.or.kr

OSB
Hertogenbosch, The Netherlands
info@osb.nl