

*Michigan South Central Power Agency Presents:*

*The*  *Spotlight*

February 2014:

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# Manager's Corner



It is February, and I don't think that anyone is disappointed that January is now behind us. Current weather projections in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania for Sunday the 2nd call for cloudy conditions, so Punxsutawney Phil will not be scared of his shadow and spring will come early this year?

I can't say enough how proud I am of all of our employees for their efforts over the past few weeks. In spite of the bitterly cold temperatures and snowy conditions, everyone did a tremendous job of keeping things running. The energy supplied by our Endicott Generating Station, along with our other resources, not only kept up with our member loads, but also produced excess which was sold into the market. It is times like these that highlight the importance of a strong, diverse power supply.

This month, we will be completing the financing for Project IV, a combined heat and power project which consists of three new gas engines located in Coldwater. This 13 MW project will provide needed local generation for Coldwater as well as supply heat and CO<sub>2</sub> for their greenhouse customer. Also this month, as our FTF project is now in full operation, we will be adding several employees to help us operate this first-of-kind tire fractionating facility. While the development process has been long, this is truly a valuable asset to our organization which will provide benefits to our members for years to come.

So, no matter what Punxsutawney Phil comes up with, enjoy February, and THINK SPRING!

Glen White, General Manager

## Service awards

Steve Flowers 31 years

Roger Rathbun 16 years

Kevin Welton 16 years

Scott Thompson 16 years

Ed Hughes 15 years

Erroll Pressler 15 years

Eric Raymond 15 years

Dave Crothers 13 years

Mikeal Wagner 12 years

Bob Russell 11 years

Craig Figueroa 8 years

Chip Shafer 7 years

Lee Hugenell 1 year

Brian Bennett 1 year

## Member Cities and Villages Events

Marshall's Main Street hosts the 3rd Annual Ice, Wine and Blues Winter Festival February 7-8. Ice carvings will be displayed by John Merucei of Icescapes, Blues bands will play live music while you shop and 15 businesses will have wine tasting available from 5:00-9:00 PM. Wrist bands are \$20 and will be available at all wine tasting locations. The 4th Annual Franke Center Blues Festival takes place on February 8 from 7:00–10:30 PM with What It Is (a funk/blues band) and Larry McCray performing live in concert. Charlie's Barbeque will have a classic BBQ dinner available for purchase before the concert. Beer, wine and soft drinks will be available from 5:00-7:00 PM and at intermissions. Visit <http://www.marshallmi.org/events> for more information on both events.

Hillsdale College Sage Center has a one-of-a-kind musical performance from the Boston Brass band on February 1 at 8:00 PM and the comedic play "Much Ado About Nothing" February 26-March 1 at 8:00 PM and March 2 at 2:00 PM; for free tickets to either event call 507-607-2848.

Coldwater's Tibbits Opera House actors will perform "Oklahoma" February 6-8 and Seussical February 14-16 and 20-22. Coldwater Rotary members will show off their individual and group singing talents in a comedy "Back to the Eighties" during the Coldwater Rotary Show February 27-March 1 at 7:30 PM.

## Test Your Home For Radon

When I was pregnant with my first-born, my husband went on a nesting spree to make our home safe for the new addition to our family, just like I am sure many of you did with your own children. One thing I had never thought about checking was the radon levels in our area, but boy did I get educated quickly on the subject! This odorless, tasteless, invisible gas is found in soil and rocks as a result of the decay of naturally-occurring radium and uranium in the earth. On a yearly basis, an estimated 20,000 lung cancer deaths nationwide are attributed to radon with a percentage of these individuals having never smoked. If you are a smoker, exposure to radon further increases your risk of lung cancer.

The USEPA recommends you take action to remove radon if tests are at or above 4 pCi/L, but 0 is best. My house tested at 24 pCi/L and MSCPAs Administration building had readings of 4.2-13.5 pCi/L. Don't worry... mitigation systems were installed quickly and the levels dropped at both locations.

Winter is a great time to conduct radon testing as having windows and doors closed is one of the recommendations for accurate radon testing. I urge you to get a free or inexpensive test kit at your local Health Department or MSU Extension Office. Click on the following links to read more about radon: [http://mi-radon.info/MI\\_counties.html](http://mi-radon.info/MI_counties.html), <http://www.epa.gov/radon/>, [http://www.radon.com/radon/radon\\_facts.html](http://www.radon.com/radon/radon_facts.html)

# Carbon Monoxide - The Silent Killer

This article is written by Phu Nguyen, Onsite Construction Safety Consultant, MIOSHA CET Division.

On Wednesday, January 8th, I woke up to a beep, beep, beep.....beep, beep, beep....this was not my alarm clock. This was not even a smoke detector because ours are hard wired and when one goes off, they all go off to create one big symphony of concern. This was coming from my son's room. I rushed through the house and I found the source of this unwelcome noise on top of his bookshelf – a carbon monoxide detector that I had placed there two years ago hoping to never actually need it.

After getting my son out, turning the fans on, and opening the windows to a brisk -4 degrees, we decided it was best to get him and my pregnant wife out of the house. It appears we had a problem with our fuel oil furnace and if it were not for that little 20-some dollar device, we would have never known it. Carbon monoxide is colorless and odorless and I would have continued to run that furnace in the same condition all winter long.

I was fortunate in that we had a detector with a digital readout of ppm levels. When I first found it the level was 158. As I moved through the house it went up and down but in the basement it climbed to 300+. When I went into the office, I asked Greg Kozak, Senior Industrial Hygienist, MIOSHA On-site Consultation at what levels I should start to get concerned. His answer: 35. That's right 35 ppm, which is the MIOSHA General Industry 8-hour time weighted average limit. (The ceiling or never-to-be-exceeded limit for CO is 200 ppm.) My basement was 10 times the 8-hour time weighted average limit! I say all this because I have another cheaper CO monitor that does not have a digital readout and does not alarm until 400 ppm. Greg also mentioned there are studies that show chronic CO exposure to even low levels can cause long term health problems. Phu expressed his thanks to Greg for taking his time to provide detailed explanations and expressing sincere concern for the health of his family.

Please make sure you have good working carbon monoxide detectors in addition to your smoke alarms.

Signs and symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning may include: dull headache, weakness, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, shortness of breath, confusion, blurred vision, loss of consciousness. If you suspect you've been exposed to carbon monoxide, get into fresh air immediately and seek emergency medical care.

The Spotlight is a monthly newsletter for the Michigan South Central Power Agency. Articles may be printed in whole or part without permission. If you wish to share any news or comments please contact Chrissy Van Kampen at [vankampenc@mscpa.net](mailto:vankampenc@mscpa.net)

## Employee Spotlight: Kelly Atkins



Kelly Atkins began his MSCPAs career in 1993 as a Laborer; he also worked in fuel handling and currently is an Attendant. "I love that every day I learn something new and my job keeps me challenged," he said. Kelly's job responsibilities include: equipment lubrication checks/changes, visually and physically inspects operating and standby equipment, checks bearings, motors, fans, pumps, prime pumps; adjusts pump glands, valve packing, renews packing; adjusts water seal pressures and flows, adjusts cooling water supplies and flows; places air removal equipment into and out of service; removes

ash; removes pulverizer rejects hourly; tests water samples; adds chemicals to feed tanks; takes hourly readings.

Kelly lives in Jonesville with Lori, his wife of 11 years. He is the proud father of three sons (Matthew, 24, Anthony, 22 and Douglas, 17). Outside of work, he enjoys spending time with his family, taking care of his saltwater fish tank and watching hockey in his Red Wing room filled with Detroit Red Wings memorabilia.

Kelly's  
Favorites:

Movie: Dawn of the Dead (1978 version)

Band: Red Hot Chili Peppers

Food: Roasted Chicken with gravy

Snack: Milk and chocolate chip cookies

## February birthdays

Erica Burger  
Chip Shafer  
Kevin Welton  
Gary Graves  
Dave Eichler

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