



Marine Chemist Association, Inc.

76 Farmholme Road ■ Stonington, CT. 06378

■ dvraff@comcast.net

March 2024



Marine Chemist Association Newsletter

The Marine Chemist Association held a Board of Directors (BOD) meeting March 17, 2024 in Houston, TX. This was preceded by a sectional seminar. The topic of the sectional was the use of standard safety designation (SSD) as it applies to Pipelines and Hollow Structures. Information on the seminar, board meeting and general information follow.



Chairman Phil Giles Welcoming Everyone to the Seminar

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The presentation on Pipelines and Hollow Structures was the first sectional seminar on this topic. The Board is returning to its prior schedule of two sectional seminars per year on one topic. Our next sectional seminar will be in Phoenix, AZ on October 12, 2024. The seminar will be held at the Hilton Phoenix Airport Hotel. Registration and room booking is available on the website.

(www.marinechemistassociation.com)

Thirty-two individuals attended the Houston seminar. This included 3 trainees and Larry Russell from NFPA. The turnout was better than expected and attendance is increasing after the virtual seminars. The Board is hoping that as we move away from the virtual seminars attendance at the sectional will return to average which is about 25 individuals.

The hotel was located in the Houston Airport and was very convenient, permitting members to easily access the hotel and get to flights quickly once the seminar was over. The BOD is trying to find airport hotels which are inside an airport making it easier on attendees and the board to get to and leave the seminar sites.

The seminar in Houston went very well with multiple questions to the presenters. The final open session remains a popular venue to ask questions on any topic. There was a very good discussion on the new benzene TLV and sampling methods. The Board reaffirmed its stance of continuing to hold in-person meetings versus virtual meetings. The Board believes that in-person interactions provide a better experience for all involved.



Geoff Jenny During his Houston Presentation

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The seminar agenda was as follows.

Breakfast 0700-0800

Seminar starts 0800.

Welcome, P. Giles

Business Outline Including Benzene Discussion 0800-0900 Raffo

How to Prepare Pipelines and Hollow Structures for Hot Work. Clean or Inert.

0915-1030. Axelrad

How to Inspect the Pipelines/Hollow Structure and Confined Spaces they May be In.

1045-1145 Genny

12:00 Lunch

How to Write a Certificate for Pipelines/Hollow Structures and Confined Spaces and what must be on the Certificate as Outlined in 306. 1300-1400 Raffo

Certificate Critique Exercise 1400-1430 L. Russell

Open discussion 1430-end. Raffo

The topics at the fall sectional seminar will be the same although the presentations by Brian Axelrad and Geoffey Jenny may be combined into one. Once the fall seminar is complete the presentations will be put on the website.



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Houston Airport Marriott Hotel

Your Board of Directors (BOD) The following is your BOD. Note that the alternates term on the BOD starts when noted below. Each year the sections nominate a new alternate sectional representative.

As of August 2024,		
Person	Position	Term Starts/ Ends
Phil Giles 670	Past Chair	July 2024/July 2026
Geoffery Jenny 685	Chair	July 2024/July 2026
Josh Marshall 721	Chair Elect	July 2024/July 2026
Kayla Aird	Pacific	July 2024/July 2026
Jeff Hanson	Pacific	July 2023/July 2025
Eric Moore	Gulf	July 2024/July 2026
Gary Snell	Gulf	July 2023/July 2025
Mark Bruff	Atlantic	July 2024/July 2026
Robert Albert	Atlantic	July 2023/July 2025
TBD	Pacific Alt	Term starts July 2025
John Loprino	Atlantic Alt	Term starts July 2025
Rick Thompson	Gulf Alt	Term starts July 2025

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Chairman Elect

Josh Marshall CMC 721 submitted the necessary forms to be considered as Chairman Elect. Since Josh was the only person to submit the required forms to be considered for chair, In accordance with the By-Laws of the MCA, the BOD voted on his request and he was approved to be the next Chairman Elect. (followed by Chair and then Past Chair). Josh just concluded his term on the MCQB and was previously on the BOD. Josh also did an excellent presentation with his group on tank and pipeline cleaning during a virtual seminar (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RkhydN2WiTI>). In addition to this Josh and his group hosted the hospitality suite in Charleston. Congratulations to Josh and we all look forward to his term on the MCA BOD.

NFPA 306

The BOD will solicit members of the association to consolidate comments on behalf of the MCA to the next edition of 306. Brian Axelrad will head up the committee assisted by Don Raffo. A site in the forum has been added to permit members to post comments on the suggested changes to 306. As time gets closer the comments will be reviewed and possibly submitted by the MCA. Everyone should remember you can also submit your own comments.

Benzene Information

ACGIH has lowered the benzene TLV to 0.02 ppm or 20 ppb. Chemists are looking for direction on testing and if diesel or similar products should now be tested for benzene. Most chemists felt that if requested by the customer they would test to meet the new TLV. Everyone attending the seminar believed that there was instrumentation available to meet the 20ppb limit. USCG and Navy have been asked to review the new requirement. Any information will be shared with the board and send to chemists. A general plan and some information were provided at the seminar as follows.

- ACGIH has lowered the TLV for Benzene to .02 ppm or 20 ppb.
- There are instruments available that can measure to this level according to manufacturers.



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306 States;

7.1.1.3*

Any toxic chemicals in the atmosphere associated with cargo, fuel, tank coatings, inerting mediums, adjacent spaces, fumigants, or other contents shall be within permissible concentrations at the time of the inspection, except as provided in 7.1.1.4. (See 7.1.1.6.)

A.7.1.1.3

Permissible concentrations can be found in the latest version of Threshold Limit Values for Chemical Substances and Physical Agents, published by the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists, in Subpart Z of 29 CFR 1915.1000, "Permissible Exposure Limit Value," or the value listed in the manufacturer's safety data sheet (SDS).

When determining "permissible concentrations" according to 7.1.1.3, the Marine Chemist should use the lower value of the published ACGIH's Threshold Limit Values (TLVs) or OSHA's Permissible Exposure Limit (PEL) as the primary source for compliance with this requirement. Only in the absence of a published TLV and PEL for a substance should the Marine Chemist refer to the manufacturer's SDSs to determine if any alternate value exists.

OSHA

Where OSHA does have a PEL, it must be used. If there is no PEL for the substance, the employer must use the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists (ACGIH) Threshold Limit Value (TLV) for the chemical if one exists. Employers can always be more protective, but the minimum standard would be the PELs provided in the OSHA standard.

Suggested Strategy (NOT MANDATORY)

- Speak to your customer and ask which toxicity level they wish to use, the TLV or PEL.
- Test the atmosphere of the space using a total VOC or PID sensor. (This assumes that it previously contained a hydrocarbon product which may contain benzene, the decision is yours)
- If the PID (TVOC) is less than the 15ppm diesel TLV, then no additional for benzene should be required as the 15ppm TLV incorporates an acceptable benzene concentration

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- If using ACHIH and the PID reading (TVOC) is greater than the 15ppm TLV and there may be benzene present then you should consider testing for benzene.
- If the customer wishes to use the PEL and you have a greater than 15ppm reading (TVOV) you may want to test for benzene to meet the PEL.

MCQB Report

John Edgar was voted in by members of the Association to start as an alternate on the MCQB in June of 2024. At this time the current alternate, Brian Axelrad will move into the principal voting position. Brian will represent the MCA in this position. John will only be able to vote in the absence of Brian.

Current MCQB members John Ward who represented the MCA and Josh Marshall who was the independent chemist on the board will be moving off the MCQB. The MCA thanks both of these members for their service to the profession.



John Ward (L) and Josh Marshall (R) being Presented with a Miners Lamp by Larry Russell (C) for their Prior Service on the MCQB.

Vince Pempeit was appointed as the independent chemist on the board by NFPA. He will begin serving his term as a voting member in June 2024.

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BOD and Correspondence

As a reminder any emails, letters or other correspondence to the BOD becomes the official business of the MCA and may be included in the correspondence section of the minutes.

2024 Budget Request

During the annual budget meeting the MGHCP approved the MCA's budget request of \$193,000.

NFPA Report

The following charts were compiled by Larry Russell and are for your information.



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Table 1 –2023 Summary of Roster of NFPA Certificated Marine Chemists

Total Marine Chemists at end of 2022		93
Initial Certifications (<i>C. Corbin, CMC 744; A. Hall, CMC 745</i>)	2	
Recertification/Reinstated (<i>previously lapsed or removed</i>)	0	
GAINS		2
Deceased	0	
Certification Suspended, Cancelled or Revoked	0	
Retired or Request for Removal (<i>J. Flynn, CMC 628</i>)	(1)	
Changed to MC Emeritus Status (<i>C. Scott, MCE 621E</i>)	(1)	
REDUCTIONS		(2)
NET CHANGE in 2023		0
Total Marine Chemists at end of 2023		93

Table 3 – 2023 Summary of Roster of Marine Chemist Trainees

Total Marine Chemists Trainees at end of 2022		24
Registrations Approved by MCQB (<i>D. Gould; T. Miles; G. Holt; A. Joyner; S. Siberie</i>)	5	
GAINS		
Removed from roster due to obtaining Initial Certification (<i>C. Corbin, A. Hall</i>)	(2)	
Removed due to Lack of Activity or Six-Year Registration Expired (<i>K. Amis; J. Schultz</i>)	(2)	
Dropped on Request (<i>M. Erisman</i>)	(1)	
REDUCTIONS		(5)
NET CHANGE in 2023		0
Total Marine Chemists Trainees at end of 2023		24

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Table 2 – 2023 CMC Age Demographic Information

Marine Chemist Association Section	Number of CMCs at end of 2023	Net Change From 2022	Average Age of CMCs by MCA Section as of 01/01/24 (change from previous year)
Atlantic	33	nil	59 Years (+1 year)
Gulf-Inland	37	+1	51 Years (-2 years)
Pacific	24	-1	55 Years (nil)
All CMCs	93	nil	54 Years (-1 year)

The following chart shows the number of certificates issued in the past few years. This final value is slightly different than the NFPA number which counts the number of certificates actually issued. This chart counts the funding that has come into the program.

Certificate Counts (Note; Actual Purchased)

	EMCC CERTS	PAPER PKGS	# PAPER CERTS	TOTAL
2023	20,613	409	10,225	30,838
2022	19,191	434	10,850	30,041
2021	18,147	509	12,725	30,872
2020	17,666	519	12,975	30,641
2019	19,701	550	13,750	33,451

At mid-year, it looked like Certs were trending ahead of the past few years, but that trend did not hold. Seems like the 30K range is the new normal. EMCC usage is trending up, and paper is trending down. We currently have 65 chemists using the EMCC.

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You should note that at about 30K certificates per year there is insufficient funding to support the program at the current \$25 surcharge. While the fund does have a cash reserve available the BOD is watching the costs.

2024 Fall Sectional Seminar

The fall sectional seminar will be held at the;

Hilton Phoenix Airport Hotel
2435 South 47th Street
Phoenix, AZ.
480-894-1600

The seminar will be on October 12th with a BOD meeting being held on the 13th. To register for the seminar and book a room please go to our website where you can do both. Please only book a room through this site as the MCA must meet a minimum room number or pay for excess rooms. This applies to the BOD also.

The theme of the seminar will be;

Pipelines and Hollow Structures and Hot Work. The agenda will be the same as in Houston. You can only get credit to attend one sectional seminar per year.

The goal of the sectional seminars is to provide information as to what is required in NFPA 306 so those attending will have the information. None of the presentations are a mandate on what each chemist has to do. Each inspection is different and the goal is to provide information so each person has a good understanding on the minimum requirements of 306 and information to do a complete inspection including how to write a certificate.

2024 Annual Seminar Incentive Information

There will be another incentive to attend the 2024 annual seminar in Denver. However, this year it will be distributed differently. At the request of the MGHCP, a line-item submission for the incentive will be \$25,000. This will be split up to cover seminar and hotel costs between chemists attending the seminar. Last year almost \$24,000 was distributed. However, not all chemists applied for the reimbursement which was \$1000 per chemist. While it is expected this year's disbursement will be

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about the same, it will depend on the number of chemists attending as it may be more or it may be less. The BOD did vote to end incentive payment submissions at 90 days past the seminar closing date. (This means you must submit the required information within 90 days after the seminar concludes to be eligible for reimbursement) The final date for incentive payment submission is **September 11, 2024**. If you submit for the reimbursement later than this date the incentive plan will have expired.

The MCA has reserved about 190 room nights under its room block. The block fills up quickly so please make your reservation as soon as you decide to go.

To be eligible for the incentive you must meet the following conditions and there must be sufficient funds available to cover the costs;

Seminar Incentive Program Requirements

- The seminar fee (\$400) will be reimbursed. However, you must initially register and pay the seminar fee.
- Up to \$600 towards room fees will be reimbursed.
 - **Stipulations are as follows.**
 - You must be a regular member, (Certified Marine Chemist) and attend the entire seminar (100%) and obtain credit for attending. Note: The 90% attendance waiver will not apply to be eligible for the incentive payment. You must attend the entire seminar to qualify for the incentive, however if you only attend 90% you will get credit for attending the seminar
 - You must stay at the seminar hotel under the MCA room block and your room charge expenses must be at least \$600 (Does not include incidentals and you can be reimbursed a lesser amount for the room cost only).
 - You will be required to pay the fees up front and then submit your hotel receipt. At the conclusion of the seminar and when credit for attending is obtained, your receipt for the hotel can be submitted. Please email copies of the document to dvraff@comcast.net and a check will be sent out.
 - If you sign up late and are not able to get into the MCA room block you must stay at the same hotel as the seminar to obtain a refund. Stays at other properties will not be reimbursed for the hotel portion.
 - You must make your own arrangements.

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2024 Annual Seminar



Sheraton Downtown, Denver, CO. Site of the 2024 MCA Annual

Denver, CO. will be the site of the 2024 annual seminar from July 8-10 with the BOD meeting being held on the 7th. The location will be the Denver Sheraton Downtown Hotel, 1550 Court Place, Denver, CO.

You can register for the seminar and book a room on the website. Also, if you have a spouse or friend coming, please book them through the site and include their names. (You can register them for a tour or no tour) Also, if children under 12 (no charge) are coming please include their names and ages. Please make all reservations via the website.

On the social side of the seminar the following is planned.

Registration, Sunday night, Executive hospitality Suite. 5:30 – 8:30

Note; This year due to strict hotel rules there will be an open bar in the suite during registration featuring wine, beer and soft drinks along with snacks.

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Post pandemic, it is becoming almost impossible to bring outside food and drink into the suite and (almost all) hotels no longer allow it. During registration, there will be an open bar and soft drinks in the suite along with food provided by the hotel. After this the suite will be open to all as in the past but with a BYO option. (There is a liquor store directly across the street from the hotel.) The MCA recognizes the importance of chemists and guests gathering in the suite after hours but can no longer assume the liability of providing outside food and beverages. Changing times have forced the MCA to follow the signed contract which prohibits outside food and drink at MCA events. The MCA will retain the suite for the duration of the seminar but it will not be stocked as in the past.

Monday Morning Welcome Breakfast, 8:00 – 10:00am our guest speaker is as follows;

Birds of Prey

Four handlers will bring birds of prey (an Eagle, Hawk, Owl and Falcon) creating a dramatic entrance, interesting conversation, and photo opportunities. In addition to getting up close to these magnificent birds the handlers will educate us on their importance to the eco-system and preservation efforts to protect them.

Monday Morning tour; Busses will leave the hotel between 10:00 and 10:15 to go to the Red Rocks as follows;

The tour will begin at the Georgetown Loop which is an historic narrow-gauge railroad located outside of Denver in the foothills of the Rockies. It was originally constructed in the late 19th century to transport silver ore between the mining towns of Georgetown and Silver Plume. The towns are two miles apart in a steep, narrow mountain canyon. To connect them, the railroad's builders designed a "corkscrew" route that traveled twice the distance, slowly gaining more than 600 feet in elevation. The railroad features a series of impressive loops and trestles that wind through the rugged Rocky Mountains, offering passengers stunning views of the surrounding landscape.

The Experience

Attendees be in awe of the breathtaking views of the Rocky Mountains, and also have the opportunity to explore historic train cars. Traveling over the mountainous terrain, the 3.1 miles of narrow-gauge track include horseshoe curves, steep climbs, and four bridges across Clear Creek, including the massive Devil's Gate High Bridge, providing a wonderful way to see the stunning Clear

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Creek Valley. Whether you are in one of the enclosed cars or choose the open-air ride, you will feel truly connected to the natural surroundings.

Lunch will be at the Trading Post at Red Rocks and you should be back about 3:00 – 4:00.



Red Rocks Outdoor Theater (About a 25-minute Uber ride from the Hotel)

Monday night is a free night.

On Tuesday evening we will have the MGHCP and Chairman's Reception. For this event the Bezel restaurant in the lobby of the hotel has been rented out for dinner and drinks. Additionally, we will have an event at Top Golf which is located in the lobby directly across from the restaurant. We will have a competition with prizes for the winner.

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Bezel Restaurant in the Lobby of the Sheraton. (MGHCP/Chairman's Reception)



TOP GOLF AT THE SHERATON

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On Tuesday and Wednesday mornings there will be a light breakfast for the spouses and friends in the hospitality suite from 8:00 – 9:00 am.

Finally on Wednesday the MCA will have the farewell luncheon at noon.

For the technical sessions breakfast will be provided each day. Lunch on Monday is on your own and on Tuesday there will be an insurance fund lunch.

The following is a DRAFT agenda of the technical sessions.

MCA PRESENTERS DRAFT SCHEDULE	
MONDAY	
1000-1200	ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING
1200-1300	LUNCH ON YOUR OWN
1300-END	MCQB
1300-1330	NFPA
1345-1445	MGHCP
1500 - End	ABS
TUESDAY	
0800-1000	PID SENSORS. LIMITATIONS AND USES
1000-1100	INSTRUMENT REPAIR TECHNICIAN
1100-1200	FLASHPOINT TESTING
1200-1400	INSURANCE LUNCH
1400-1430	DRAEGER, BENZENE METER
1435-1500	RKI BENZENE METER
1505-1530	ION SCIENCE BENZENE METER
1535-1600	HONEYWELL RAE, BENZENE METER
WEDNESDAY	
0800-0900	RESPIRATORY PROTECTION,
0915 - 1000	OSHA
1015 - 1115	SCP TRAINING ROUNDTABLE

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Seminar and Meeting Dress Code and Information

The BOD reminds you that we are a professional organization and all members are expected to dress properly during meetings. Business casual dress is required at all seminars and BOD meetings. Additionally, when coming before any Board you are reminded to dress professionally and use appropriate language. This is especially true when going before the MCQB.

The insurance fund reminds every chemist that if appearing before the MCQB for any type of a review you are permitted and encouraged to bring counsel, documentation, or any information to make your case. The MCQB also encourages this practice.

Marine Chemist Physical Ability to Perform Duties

NPFA sends the following reminder to Chemists who may not be able to perform their work due to a temporary physical limitation.

The NFPA Marine Field Service wishes to remind all Marine Chemists, the *Rules for the Certification and Recertification of Marine Chemists*, as amended 01 September 2023, *Section II. Qualifications – General, Paragraph A*, requires all Marine Chemists to “*be of an maintain good character, and physically able to perform the duties of a Marine Chemist*”. In the event that a Marine Chemist is unable to physically perform his or her duties due to injury or illness; the Marine Chemist should be examined by a licensed physician and obtain a statement attesting to the Chemist's physical ability to perform the duties of a Marine Chemist. The *General Medical Examination Form* (Form No. CMC-MD-01) may be used for this purpose.

Members of the MCQB have questioned the 5-year physical exam requirements and are looking into changing this requirement to have it done more frequently.

Ethics

Past chair Michael Schmidt (Ethics Committee Chair) reported that there are no ethics issues before the board.

Website

The MCA website (www.marinechemistassociation.com) now has become the central location for all MCA information. If you encounter any issues first contact the support email at support@marinechemistassociation.com. If you still have an issue email Don Raffo and I will contact the web person for a resolution.

The forum is now the primary way for communication with members. Information for chemists is posted on the website. Failure to sign up for the Forum indicates consent to not receive meeting

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notifications. Any member can post on the Forum and this is the best way of increasing information and interactions.

To access the website, you must log in with your password. Once that is done you will be automatically logged in after that. If you have problems logging in, please contact the webmaster at: support@marinechemistassociation.com.

One of the changes is the ability for more control over your account, information, and membership. You now can change your personal information on the website and no longer need to contact Donald Raffo or the web person. It can be accomplished by going to the My Dashboard section (located in the upper right of the home page) and making the changes. It will then appear on the site.

All information on seminar attendance can be found in the My Dashboard section of our website. Note that you must click on the year tab at the bottom of the spreadsheet to view by year. If you attended a seminar and have a question on attendance, please contact D. Raffo. If you recently attended a seminar, please verify that the information is correct. A screenshot follows;

FIND A CHEMIST

ABOUT ▼

EVENTS

NEWS

MY DASHBOARD



MCA Forums Test

Get the latest updates and collaborate with other Marine Chemists.

[VISIT FORUMS ↻](#)



Seminar Attendance

The official attendance sheet for chemists looking to renew their license.

[SEE ATTENDANCE 📅](#)

Members may view the forum section. It is an area where news and technical discussions may be posted. If you are registered, you will get a text message and/or email whenever there is new information. Information on seminars, newsletters, events or general information also can be

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found on the site. If you have not registered you must enter the site to obtain the latest news and posts. We encourage all chemists to join the forum and obtain notifications.

Additionally, all billing and seminar registration is on the website. You may also book a room via the website to attend a seminar.

Outreach

The MCA continues its efforts at outreach as we believe it is a valuable way to get the message out on using a Chemist as a resource in the maritime environment. If anyone knows of an event where we can spread the word on what we do to a group, please let Don Raffo know so the MCA can see if we can support it.

MCA Committee Appointments

The following individuals represent the MCA on various committees. This is for general information.

Control of Gas Hazards - NFPA 306. (Appointed Positions by BOD)

Greg Grondin, principal, Jim Bruff alternate

John Bell, principal, John Edgar, alternate

Hot Work Operations – NFPA 51B. (Appointed Positions by BOD)

Greg Grondin principal

Robbie Walker, alternate

Tank Leakage and Repair Safeguards - NFPA 326 & NFPA 329. (Appointed Positions by BOD)

Brian Axelrad, principal

Vince Pempeit, alternate

NFPA 350 Guide for Safe Work in Industry Confined Spaces (Appointed Positions by BOD)

Robbie Walker, principal

Vince Pempeit, alternate

MCQB (Voted in by membership)

Brian Axelrad, principal

John Edgar, alternate

Marine Field Service Advisory Committee (Appointed Positions by BOD)

Donald Raffo

Chairman elect

SSRAC (Volunteers)

John Ward, principal

Robbie Walker, alternate

MACOSH (Appointed by BOD)

Donald Raffo

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Code of Conduct for Meetings

During any official MCA meeting there should be no discussion of personal matters, private disputes, or business pricing. Discussion should be limited to technical matters and the business of running the MCA.

We are a professional organization and inappropriate comments or language including

- Disparaging remarks about individuals or organizations
- Sexual comments
- Comments based on religion
- Comments based on race
- Comments based on gender
- Comments based on age
- Comments based on sexual orientation
- Inappropriate language
- Disparaging remarks about individuals or organizations

Will not be tolerated. You will be removed from the meeting.

Facebook Page

For those of you who are on Facebook, visit Friends of Marine Chemist Association. It is a closed group and only chemists, spouses and friends may view and post on the page. If you'd like to access the page, send a friend request to the group. We encourage all to post information, photos, comments or anything else related to our profession, seminars, and events. Please check it out. It proved very popular when posting information about our annual seminar. Please consider sharing some on-the-job photos with the group.

Conclusion

If you have any comments, thoughts or ideas on any aspect of the MCA please submit them to me and I will present them to the BOD for consideration. Remember, you are the MCA and without your participation it will not work. Be safe all.

Respectfully submitted,
Don Raffo
Secretary/Treasurer MCA

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