



## Signs of Recovery Are Here, But We Must Keep Our Focus

By Joel Smith, PMI Board of Directors President, Kohler Co.



Joel Smith

I've noticed that the home improvement stores have been doing well since the precautions related to COVID-19 were issued. RetailWire reported sales jumps of 12.3% at Lowe's and 7.5% at Home Depot during their first quarters. Lowe's CEO **Marvin Ellison** said the retailer benefitted from "a customer mindset that was heavily concentrated on the home."

These results are a testament to the DIY mindset of our country. If you're stuck at home, why not update your bathroom or remodel your kitchen? That spirit, along with the essential nature of the plumbing and construction businesses, is helping to buffer our industry from the impact that many others are feeling.

PMI members are fortunate to be served by a staff that has been working virtually for years and hasn't missed a beat since the pandemic began. Legislative and regulatory activities haven't stopped, and PMI has been very active advocating our industry's positions on various issues at both the federal and state level. These issues have included essential workplace guidelines in virtually every state, EPA's move to gain public comment on WaterSense products, a proposed update to a lead testing standard in California, consumer privacy and water-efficiency legislation in various states, and ongoing discussions over U.S.-China tariffs.

While some of us worked virtually before the pandemic, many of us had to adjust to new ways of conducting business. And now, as we carefully begin the process of returning to the office, we return to a familiar, yet different, place with a new set of challenges. One-person-at-a-time limits on elevators, closed-off conference rooms, and physical distancing

between desks is the new reality. Many of these restrictions make work more difficult. I have yet to find anyone who enjoys wearing a mask. But we have to start somewhere.

The road back to normal won't be easy, but if we keep the focus, it will be worth it when we finally arrive. With a vaccine and better treatments for COVID-19 still months away, keeping the focus means following the precautions to keep others safe and healthy, no matter how inconvenient we may find it sometimes. It is possible to both keep the infection rate low and to keep businesses open. That requires mask wearing and physical distancing both at work and when we're in public places. Letting our guard down will cause infection rates to spike, invite renewed restrictions, and stamp out economic recovery.

Our society's ability to keep this focus will be partly measured by our progress at year's end. We are all looking forward to the PMI20 Manufacturing Success Conference in November. Let's resolve to do everything in our power to keep ourselves and others healthy and to thereby expand economic opportunities during this pandemic. This mindfulness will make PMI20 more than a business conference; it will make it a celebration of our ability to persevere in the face of adversity – something PMI members have always done well.

## INSIDE

Fixing Fake Faucets in a Time of COVID-19 . . .	2
James Burwell Relies on PMI . . . . .	3
Reducing COVID Risks . . . . .	4
CEOs Compare Industry Bright Spots . . . . .	7

# Fixing Fake Faucets In A Time of COVID-19

By Kerry Stackpole, FASAE, CAE, PMI CEO/Executive Director



Kerry Stackpole

Resolving the COVID-19 pandemic will demand a myriad of diverse resources from the medical, scientific, research, biotech, government, engineering and plumbing product manufacturing fields.

One of the ways we can stop the spread of COVID-19 is by washing our hands early and often. Which makes the water faucet an amazing source of comfort and safety for millions of people around the world right now.

This noble device and its high value in the current pandemic have also attracted scam artists and a host of online marketers all too happy to deliver knock-off products. They often make brazen claims of being an authorized distributor or dealer. Products that fail to meet energy efficiency laws, certification marks on products that haven't been anywhere near a certification lab, and non-compliant products abound. It is made worse when those non-compliant counterfeit products with your company's name attached make their way into commercial and residential construction. Let's just say your customers and local plumbing and building code inspectors are not amused. All of these are great examples that should be brought to the attention of United States Customs and Border Protection (CBP).

CBP's campaign, Fake Goods. Real Dangers, is working to illuminate the risks of counterfeit goods. Last year, CBP seized more items that pose health and safety risks than ever before. The agency points out that many counterfeit products are low-quality and can cause injuries. You can report suspected illegal activity, trade violations, and tariff and duty evasions to CBP using the E-Allegations portal located here: [eallegations.cbp.gov](https://eallegations.cbp.gov)

You can also write or call: U.S. Customs and Border Protection Office of Regulations and Rulings Intellectual Property Rights & Restricted Merchandise Branch 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW Washington, D.C., 20229 Telephone: (202) 325-0093

PMI has worked cooperatively for years with the Department of Energy, Environmental Protection Agency and various state regulators to identify bad actors and mitigate the impact of counterfeit and non-compliant products, trademark violations, and intellectual property theft.

We've also proactively engaged Amazon, the operator of the world's largest online marketplace, to address member concerns about non-compliant and counterfeit products making their way onto the site. Amazon has created a number of online tools designed to fend off copies of patented products, counterfeits, and non-compliant products. The Amazon Brand Registry is designed to help you protect your intellectual property and trademarks. The brand registry portal is located here: [brandservices.amazon.com](https://brandservices.amazon.com)

Amazon Project Zero is specifically designed to combat brand counterfeits. Powered by Amazon's machine learning, automated protections continuously scan over 5 billion daily listings on Amazon stores and proactively remove suspected counterfeits. Brands provide key data points about themselves, including trademarks and logos. The portal also includes a self-reporting feature allowing your company to remove counterfeit products using Amazon's new self-service tool. Amazon uses these data to strengthen their automated protections to better catch potential counterfeit listings proactively. The portal is located here: [brandservices.amazon.com/projectzero](https://brandservices.amazon.com/projectzero)

Amazon is also ramping up its Transparency project started in 2017. Your com-

pany can be issued unique Transparency codes – a 2-D barcode – to place on each unit you intend to sell on Amazon or any other channel. Since Amazon knows which codes belong to which company and products, any products that arrive at its warehouses without the Transparency code are rejected. You can learn how to protect your products on Amazon here: [brandservices.amazon.com/transparency](https://brandservices.amazon.com/transparency)

Finally, if you'd like some help pursuing trademark, counterfeit and IP violators, there are two other government options immediately available to your company.

You can report your suspicions about intellectual property crime, such as copyright piracy, trademark counterfeiting, or Internet fraud, including the manufacture or sale of counterfeit or pirated goods to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). You can contact your local FBI office to file a complaint by asking to speak with the Duty Complaint Agent or by calling Washington, D.C., headquarters: U.S. Department of Justice Federal Bureau of Investigation Washington, D.C. 20535-0001 202-324-3000.

Under ITC Section 337, the U.S. International Trade Commission (USITC) investigates claims regarding intellectual property rights, including allegations of patent infringement and trademark infringement by imported goods. Other forms of unfair competition involving imported products, such as infringement of registered copyrights, misappropriation of trade secrets or trade dress, passing off, and false advertising, may also be asserted. You can reach out to the USITC Trade Remedy Assistance Office at 800-343-9822.

Our industry's ingenuity remains a beacon for the world. Assuring it stays safe and healthy will require an unforeseen degree of tenacity and vigilance in these uncertain times.

# James Burwell Relies on PMI to Help Connect the Dots

**Current title and employer:** Director of Global Product Management, Haws Corporation.

**Length of time in the plumbing manufacturing industry:** About two years, as I entered the industry when I joined Haws. Previously, I worked for a leading manufacturer of retail fueling and gas pumps. In total, I have about 20 years of experience in sales, marketing and product management. Dealing with hydraulic products is similar, whether you're moving water in plumbing products – or gas in pumps – from one system to another. The only difference is when you're dealing with fuel, it's flammable!

**My proudest plumbing manufacturing career achievement:** I came to Haws to help foster change and develop our commercialization process. My biggest accomplishment has been bringing rigor, portfolio clarity and a set of tools to further develop a strong product management system to create a well-defined strategic portfolio. An example of our innovative team dynamic involved reintroducing our portable gravity-fed eye wash system. Our team took an existing product and improved its quality by retooling the system and adding features, including the HawsCLEAN Portable Eyewash Cleansing Stick, a new type of technology to clean portable eye wash systems and prevent the growth of Legionella and other harmful bacteria.

**I started a career in the plumbing manufacturing industry because:** I was looking to make lasting contributions to a great company with the ability to work autonomously and embrace work-life balance. Haws, a family-owned business, provides all of that and more.

**What is your current role in PMI? What do you hope to accomplish in this role?** I am a newer PMI member and in the position of learning. I've

attended several PMI events, including the last two PMI Manufacturing Success Conferences, so I spent the first year figuring out the lay of the land. With this new information I was able to connect all the pieces.

**I promote PMI within my company by:** Providing reports from the PMI conferences and meetings I attend. I take notes on all the speakers and any near-term trends that could impact our operations or market and share my report to the broader team. We debate the information, decide how it might be relevant to our business, and then strategize.

**Our PMI membership delivers the following benefits to my company:** There are several, including all the incredible help we've gotten from PMI CEO **Kerry Stackpole**. When the COVID-19 situation broke, our first stop was PMI. We wanted to be recognized as an essential business, so Kerry drafted a letter explaining our essential status. We shared the letter with the governor of Nevada (where Haws' headquarters is located) and posted it on our website. Other benefits of membership are the networking, insights on industry trends, PMI Market Outlook reports, and updates on Legionella and other important topics, such as water consumption and purification technologies. The PMI information we've obtained has helped guide us on where we feel we'd like to innovate, or where we may be overextended.

**Best career advice I ever received:** When I applied for a junior-level management position at Whirlpool Corporation, I was pretty green. While I had all my detailed notes, I hadn't left a lot of room for enjoying the conversation. The high-level director interviewing me offered me a bottle of water and I turned it down. Later, he told me to always take the bottle of water! He explained that it shows your ability to read



*James Burwell, director of global product management, Haws Corporation*

your surroundings, adapt to a situation and show confidence. That advice has stuck with me.

**I'm currently reading:** The Wall Street Journal and a lot of industry insight stuff focusing on macroeconomics, world politics, climate, the housing market, and forecasts in our industry.

**My favorite movie:** Shawshank Redemption. Anytime it's on television, I have to watch it. It's such a great story about good vs. evil and in the end, how the good guy prevails!

**When I face a challenge at work (or in life):** People and product challenges are different. In a relationship situation, it's important to address the challenge from a place of understanding the other person. Product is more pragmatic; I default to data and market intelligence information, especially if it's product or portfolio related. If data isn't available, I go to my experiences, make a decision and move forward.

**In my spare time, I enjoy:** Taking a lot of day trips in the northern Nevada area with my wife and five kids. We try to take advantage of family time, maybe enjoy a new restaurant and just have some fun.

# Even-Handed Approach Can Reduce COVID Risks

By Judy Wohlt, PMI Communications Team, Valek and Co.

COVID-19 has begun presenting liability challenges for some businesses – with workers filing claims involving safety breaches and discriminatory practices. Legal experts advise employers to create clear policies and procedures that protect all workers, without treating any particular employee group considered to be at higher risk differently than other employees.

Between March 5 and June 12, COVID-related complaints filed against employers and other organizations across the United States rose from one case to 2,700, according to a COVID-19 complaint tracker ([tinyurl.com/y9squpes](https://tinyurl.com/y9squpes)) set up by the Hunton Andrews Kurth law firm.

To reduce the possibility of claims, companies should provide detailed directions about various protective measures, track and document their coronavirus efforts, review special requests from employees on a case-by-case basis, consider all laws that may be involved, and consult a legal expert to get advice specific to their operations and workforce structure, according to the white paper, “Avoiding Pandemic-Related Employment Litigation and Disputes” by lawyers at the global law firm Jones Day, PMI’s outside legal counsel.

## Negligence, discrimination top list of complaints

Workers have filed claims concerning safety violations, alleging their employers failed to institute proper measures to lower exposure to or the spread of COVID-19. For example, Amazon warehouse employees are arguing in a lawsuit that the company didn’t supply suitable disinfectants and other resources to protect them against the virus, according to a CBS News article ([tinyurl.com/y98do98p](https://tinyurl.com/y98do98p)). One worker said she contracted COVID-19 at the warehouse and then infected her cousin, who later died. The lawsuit is asking for an injunction to force Amazon to adhere to Centers for

Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and New York state guidelines and require extra time for employees to sanitize their workstations.

Companies also are facing potential challenges under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) involving employees at heightened risk from COVID-19, said the white paper published by lawyers at Jones Day. The paper explains that the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has stated that an employer may prevent employees from entering the workplace for their own safety if the situation presents a “direct threat” that can’t be reduced or eliminated by reasonable accommodation. However, the EEOC also has said that an employer can’t stop employees from working because they have disabilities that, based on CDC guidance, place them at a “higher risk for severe illness” if they contract COVID-19.

Therefore, the white paper suggests considering various factors in this situation: the severity of the pandemic in an employer’s state or location; the employee’s health and job duties; the likelihood the employee will be exposed to COVID-19 at the worksite; measures the employer is taking to protect all workers; and whether accommodations are available to mitigate risk.

The same holds true under the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA), which requires businesses to make similarly complex judgment calls on whether, when and how to return older or at-risk employees to work, according to the white paper. While the CDC deems individuals aged 65 and older at greater risk of severe illness if infected with COVID-19, the ADEA generally prohibits employers from making certain employment-related decisions based on age. The ADEA also allows employees to challenge both intentional discrimination situations, such as treating some workers differently than others, and

neutral policies that unequally impact a protected category of workers.

## How can businesses protect workers and reduce the risk of claims?

To ensure employers are doing everything they can to reduce COVID-19 risks to employees, companies should comply with all federal, state and local guidelines, including interim guidance from the CDC, while tracking and documenting their efforts, according to legal experts.

“You shouldn’t make assumptions about employees considered in a high-risk group or with disabilities,” said **Efrat Schulman**, partner at Jones Day. Instead, she recommends that companies communicate messages to their workforces outlining their COVID-19 safety preparations, without regard to particular groups, particularly employees aged 65 or older. This approach allows individual employees with underlying health conditions, an at-risk partner at home, or other concerns to engage in needed one-on-one discussions as to what they might need. These cases should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration all laws that may be involved. If in doubt, consider consulting a legal expert with experience specific to your company’s business operations and workforce makeup.

Businesses also can protect employees and themselves by creating a practical process to evaluate workers’ requests to work remotely, modify their schedules and temporarily restructure their jobs, according to a recent article in the National Law Review.

Federal lawmakers are starting to address COVID-19 and corporate liability; however, no legislation has been passed yet, reported a recent Forbes article. States can establish their own liability rules – and some already have. Utah’s legislature

*Continued on page 6*

# Legislative Forum Provides Insights and Tools to Members

By Judy Wohlt and Ray Valek, PMI Communications Team, Valek and Co.

PMI members participating in the PMI Virtual Legislative Forum on June 24 gained valuable information about federal infrastructure legislation and critical housing and trade issues impacting the plumbing manufacturing industry. Members continue to have access to a video recording of the forum, slides from the various presentations, a letter organizations can adapt and use to actively advocate for the industry's agenda, and contact information for members of Congress ([tinyurl.com/y9zklshf](https://tinyurl.com/y9zklshf)).

The two-hour forum was divided into four sessions. The first session, "Eye on Housing," provided an economic analysis and forecast of the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on home and apartment building from **Robert Dietz**, chief economist and senior vice president for economics and housing policy, National Association of Home Builders. He discussed the current construction and housing industry outlook and how housing will be a leading element for the nation's overall recovery.

Dietz noted a few trends that offer bright spots in the U.S. economy. Mortgage applications were on the rise with more people buying homes in the first four months of 2020 vs. the first four months of 2019. He also predicted that demand for housing will grow in lower density and rural markets – where COVID-19 cases are lower. These smaller rural markets represent 47% of overall new home building, he stated. Size of homes and demand for building materials will trend upwards as more people work from home and require home offices and gyms, he added.

**Ed Mortimer**, vice president of transportation and infrastructure at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, provided an update during the second session on various transportation and water infrastructure legislation designed to retain or create jobs, repair old systems, and stimulate consumer spending. He cov-



ered some of the key elements necessary to pass this vital legislation, including bipartisan solutions and the need for organizations, such as PMI, to continue their advocacy efforts.

Mortimer discussed how the business community has recognized that infrastructure is the backbone of the U.S. economy. However, he said political challenges and partisan matters could likely stall the infrastructure legislation, which may not be passed by the September 2020 deadline. Mortimer added that the business community needs to encourage private investment in infrastructure to supplement government funding.

During her presentation on the "Future of Trade in the Wake of COVID-19" during the forum's third session, trade lawyer **Nicole Bivens Collinson** reviewed the dynamics of the United States-China tariff negotiations, the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) effective on July 1, and the impact the pandemic is having on supply chains. Collinson is president of the international trade, customs and export law practice at Sandler, Travis & Rosenberg, P.A.

Collinson discussed the short windows that PMI member companies have to ask the United States Trade Representative

(USTR) for extensions to some previously approved China tariff exclusions. Depending on the plumbing product or component, the deadlines to request an extension range from July 7 to July 31, 2020. The extensions would last for one year and are being offered in an apparent bow to concerns about the tariffs' impact on companies struggling with the coronavirus pandemic. The move would apply to some products excluded from the 25% tariffs that the Trump administration imposed on Chinese goods.

The final session, "Outreach to Congress: Take Action and Urge Lawmakers to Support Robust Infrastructure Package," provided tools and information to assist PMI members in their advocacy efforts for the plumbing manufacturing industry. Tools included the customizable letter ([tinyurl.com/y9zklshf](https://tinyurl.com/y9zklshf)) that members can use to urge local lawmakers to pass important infrastructure legislation.

The forum was hosted by PMI CEO/ Executive Director **Kerry Stackpole**, the co-chairs of PMI's Advocacy/ Government Affairs Committee, **Troy Benavidez**, vice president of public affairs for LIXIL, and **Lowell Lampen**, engineering director, K&B NA sanitary products, Kohler Co., and **Stephanie Salmon**, PMI's government affairs consultant.

# PMI's Rules of Origin Guide to Help with USMCA Compliance

By Judy Wohlt, PMI Communications Team, Valek and Co.

PMI published a new guide this month to help members comply with the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) Rules of Origin ([tinyurl.com/y8m9ctgw](https://tinyurl.com/y8m9ctgw)) – and take advantage of the tax-saving benefits under the agreement. The USMCA took effect on July 1, replacing the 26-year-old North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

A new PMI members-only benefit, the PMI “USMCA Rules of Origin: A Primer for Plumbing Manufacturers” booklet was created to help members better understand the basics of the new rules and, through compliance, potentially save money by eliminating certain tariffs and other fees. The guide also will cover several key differences between NAFTA and USMCA that could affect plumbing manufacturers, including product-specific rules, recovered materials, the De Minimis exception, reviews and appeals, and calculating regional value content (RVC).

## New trade pact to benefit U.S. manufacturers during uncertain times

The new trade deal is being implemented at a time when supply chains are facing additional challenges because of the COVID-19 pandemic, making it even more important that plumbing manufacturers and other U.S. businesses understand and comply with the USMCA rules. Logistics, engineering and finance teams will need to keep a close eye on how USMCA impacts new transportation channels and warehouse centers, raw material costs, and changing supplier needs in an unpredictable market, according to a recent Forbes article ([tinyurl.com/yaq8wumx](https://tinyurl.com/yaq8wumx)).

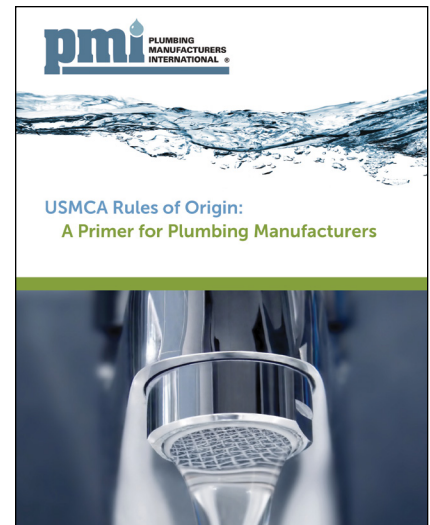
The USMCA provides a modernized framework for trade between the U.S., Canada and Mexico, with a new approach to rules of origin that supports freer and fairer markets, promotes efficient and transparent customs procedures, and strengthens the protection of

intellectual property rights. NAFTA rules will continue to be applied for merchandise that entered the market on or before June 30, 2020, according to U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP). CBP determines country of origin and enforces the tariff, customs and other laws that apply to imported products.

U.S. manufacturers have been declaring support for the USMCA and see it as a chance to help level the playing field for American workers, according to the National Manufacturers Association (NAM). The new trade pact also raises standards and bars anti-U.S. discrimination from foreign governments while removing red tape at the border, especially for smaller American manufacturing companies that want to sell their products in Mexico and Canada.

## Resources to get additional guidance

Plumbing manufacturers should consult the USMCA uniform regulations ([tinyurl.com/y7hgqag4](https://tinyurl.com/y7hgqag4)), published on June 3, 2020, and the USMCA Interim Implementation Instructions ([tinyurl.com/y8ulqnpf](https://tinyurl.com/y8ulqnpf)), updated on June 30, 2020, which discuss how certain rules should be applied, according to CBP's website. They offer early guidance on the new requirements under the USMCA, including how to claim preferential treatment for goods.



For more information on the USMCA, visit the CBP website ([tinyurl.com/yc8qfthl](https://tinyurl.com/yc8qfthl)).

## Even-Handed Approach Can Reduce COVID Risks

*Continued from page 4*

approved SB3007 ([tinyurl.com/y7zugsk9](https://tinyurl.com/y7zugsk9)) covering COVID-19 provisions, a bill protecting businesses from lawsuits associated with coronavirus exposure – assuming there has been no willful misconduct or reckless or intentional harm caused.

Some states have expanded worker protections during the pandemic, according to a recent Time article, going further than federal laws such as the Occupational Health and Safety Act ([tinyurl.com/y9op6xlb](https://tinyurl.com/y9op6xlb)) and the National Labor Relations Act ([tinyurl.com/yamff6q2](https://tinyurl.com/yamff6q2)). For example, Michigan Gov. **Gretchen Whitmer** released an executive order in early April barring businesses from firing workers who choose to remain at home for certain COVID-19-related reasons.

For more information about coronavirus and workplace liability, the EEOC provides a regularly updated guide on “What You Should Know About COVID-19 and the ADA, the Rehabilitation Act, and Other EEO Laws.” ([tinyurl.com/yb7c7qcl](https://tinyurl.com/yb7c7qcl))

*This article is intended to provide general news about legal developments and should not be construed as providing legal advice or legal opinions. You should consult an attorney for any specific legal questions.*

# CEOs Compare Industry Bright Spots, Challenges

By Judy Wohlt, PMI Communications Team, Valek and Co.

With the home renovations market remaining robust and opportunities to innovate continuing to develop, United States plumbing manufacturers are doing better than many other industry sectors during the COVID-19 pandemic.

PMI CEO/Executive Director **Kerry Stackpole** shared these and other insights during a recent video interview with **Tom Reynolds**, CEO of the Bathroom Manufacturers Association (BMA) in the United Kingdom (U.K.) ([tinyurl.com/ybcuge76](https://tinyurl.com/ybcuge76)).

The two leaders compared similarities and differences between the U.S. and U.K. plumbing manufacturing markets. While both reported that some of their members are experiencing decreases in sales volume, Stackpole pointed to a bright spot amid the pandemic – that home renovations are up in the U.S. as more people continue to work from home. “Home supply and big box building retailers are open and their parking lots have been jammed,” he said. “Our members rely on remodeling, but also new home building and commercial building, which is the meat and potatoes of our industry.”

Reynolds said that new construction has been the first area to see an uptick in the U.K. “We’re in for an interesting and difficult time,” he added. “What should our members’ budgets look like this year and in 2021? There’s cautious

optimism and sales are higher than they had expected.”

PMI members have found ways to remain productive – such as making much-needed personal protective equipment (PPE) – while keeping their employees safe, Stackpole said. Some are discovering opportunities to innovate, focusing on touchless fixtures that will help boost public confidence in using public restrooms.

Stackpole also discussed federal and state government responses to COVID and how they have impacted PMI members. With no overarching federal directive and strategy in the U.S., some states enacted stricter plans than others involving business shutdowns and physical distancing restrictions. PMI advocated for the identification of plumbing manufacturers as essential workplaces to governors in states and local jurisdictions where PMI members have facilities, enabling production to continue while following physical distancing and other safety guidelines.

As for long-term industry changes caused by the coronavirus, Stackpole focused on two areas: 1) opportunity for growth in touchless fixtures and 2) continuing to keep employees safe. Market opportunities for more touchless fixtures will boil down to which steps the public will require to feel confident using public restrooms. He

asked, “What will we be inventing that people will take comfort from as they re-emerge back into the world?”

Addressing the area of safety, Stackpole said that a sense of stability and predictability will be vital for businesses. That translates to the need for a vaccine, maintaining safety measures to make sure workers feel comfortable – such as temperature checks and physical distancing, and rethinking what our traditional workforce will look like overall.

Reynolds said the U.K. plumbing manufacturing industry is considering some of the same issues and asked: How do we restart our industry and have it come back better than it was before? He highlighted promising areas including zero carbon building, digitalization of the construction industry through building information modeling, and smart marketing. “There’s nothing off the table and that’s what makes it a challenging, but also a quite exciting time,” he said.

Stackpole added that he’s hopeful about the future. “For our industry, whether it’s in the U.K. or U.S., one of the great things is that we’ve continued to innovate on a long-running basis,” he said. “It’s not like we’ve hit a single and double and the game’s over; we just keep swinging. I’m very optimistic that our folks have the ability to adapt and find both new products and new opportunities.”

## Reserve April 20–21, 2021, for PMI’s CEO Thinking Forum

Nine months away is not too early when you’re a busy executive. Reserve time on your calendar today for the inaugural PMI CEO Thinking Forum, April 20–21, 2021, in Washington, D.C.

Join fellow CEOs and other c-suite executives from PMI member companies in open roundtable discussions that will explore strategies to keep your companies and the plumbing manufacturing industry on a continual path to success.

To learn more, contact PMI Association Manager **Jodi Stuhrberg** or CEO/Executive Director **Kerry Stackpole**.



## July 30 National Intern Day Helps Create Bridge to Future

By Ray Valek, PMI Communications Team, Valek and Co.

The COVID-19 pandemic has placed many internship programs on hold or turned them into remote programs. In any case, plumbing manufacturers will ramp up internship programs again as workplace issues related to COVID-19 become resolved.



National Intern Day is on July 30.

[NationalInternDay.com](http://NationalInternDay.com) includes a variety of resources for companies looking to increase content and visibility for their internship programs. The website was created and promoted by WayUp, a company that helps early-career candidates to discover and be discovered by employers.

The website features a Virtual Lunch & Learn Summer Series of world-renowned industry experts in various fields, including technology, engineering, product management, marketing, supply chain and more. The website also features the top 100 internship programs and top 100 interns each year. Companies can both nominate and vote for themselves to appear on these lists.

A recent story in the Washington Post about internships reports that openings were 49% lower in May 2020 than in May 2019. While stating that some live experiences can't be duplicated remotely, the article features innovations in making the virtual internship valuable for both the company and the intern. IBM launched the "IBM Intern Café," which uses artificial intelligence to match employees and other interns who share the same interests.

The PMI@Work blog ([safeplumbing.org/communications/pmiblog](http://safeplumbing.org/communications/pmiblog)) features a variety of articles about opportunities available to those interested in working in plumbing manufacturing. The blog has covered issues such as the human-computer interface, the rise of technology in manufacturing, how young people can gain experience, the multigenerational workforce, how plumbing manufacturing makes health care safer, digital manufacturing, water-saving careers, and how to safely reopen after COVID-19.

PMI's careers page ([safeplumbing.org/advocacy/careers](http://safeplumbing.org/advocacy/careers)) links to the careers and LinkedIn pages of its members. Students and others looking for career opportunities are encouraged to peruse these listings to gain an understanding of the broad array of positions available and to apply for positions of interest to them.

PMI member companies hire individuals to fill production level, maintenance, technician and executive positions. They require machinists, engineers and industrial designers, as well as professionals with expertise in plumbing codes and standards, sustainability, sales, marketing, finance, operations, human resources and training, government affairs, and much more. To compete globally, plumbing manufacturers require high-quality workers, as well as a strong technical workforce.

The company's locations, as well as some common locations of jobs, are listed with each entry. The plumbing manufacturing industry is very widespread and is always in need of highly skilled workers; a Deloitte and Manufacturing Institute study states that an estimated 3.5 million jobs need to be filled by 2025 within the manufacturing industry sector. The plumbing manufacturing industry makes a positive economic impact in all 50 states; plumbing fixture and fittings manufacturers' total economic impact on the American economy is \$85.5 billion.

## 2020 PMI LEADERSHIP

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Joel Smith, Kohler Co.  
President

Todd Teter, House of Rohl  
Vice President

Martin Knieps, Viega LLC  
Secretary-Treasurer

Nate Kogler, Bradley Corporation  
Immediate Past President

Fernando Fernandez, TOTO USA  
Sal Gattone, LIXIL

Daniel Gleiberman, Sloan Valve Company

Bob Neff, Delta Faucet Company

### PMI STAFF

Kerry Stackpole, FASAE, CAE  
CEO/Executive Director  
[kstackpole@safep plumbing.org](mailto:kstackpole@safep plumbing.org)

Matt Sigler  
Technical Director  
[msigler@safep plumbing.org](mailto:msigler@safep plumbing.org)

Jodi Stuhrberg  
Association Manager  
[jstuhrberg@safep plumbing.org](mailto:jstuhrberg@safep plumbing.org)

Ann Geier  
Administrative Assistant  
[ageier@safep plumbing.org](mailto:ageier@safep plumbing.org)

### PMI CONSULTANTS

Ray Valek  
Public Relations  
[ray@valekco.com](mailto:ray@valekco.com)

Frederick Desborough  
Technical Consultant  
[frd@flex-fluss.com](mailto:frd@flex-fluss.com)

Pam Taylor  
Legal Consultant, Jones Day  
[ptaylor@jonesday.com](mailto:ptaylor@jonesday.com)

Maureen Baird  
Graphic Design  
[info@mbairdgraphics.com](mailto:info@mbairdgraphics.com)



1750 Tysons Blvd., Ste. 1500  
McLean, VA 22102  
Phone: 847 481-5500  
Fax: 847 481-5501  
[SafePlumbing.org](http://SafePlumbing.org)