

# the NEWS

THE HVACR CONTRACTOR'S WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE SINCE 1926

**FOCUS** BEGINS ON PAGE 9  
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 INDUSTRY BRIEFS

## Contractors

- ARS/Rescue Rooter (Memphis, Tenn.) acquired Efficient Attic Systems (Dallas).

## Manufacturers

- ICOR International Inc. (Indianapolis) appointed Dennis Marston as western region business director and David Trone as regional business director.
- UltraViolet Devices Inc. (Valencia, Calif.) named Bruce O'Brien as national sales manager for distribution.
- Johnson Controls Inc. (Milwaukee) and The Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation created a Europe and Mediterranean Energy Efficiency & Climate Change Forum to be hosted in Monaco in April 2010.
- Venture Tape Corp. (Rockland, Mass.) named Brian Hommel as national sales manager of its HVAC product division.

## Distributors

- TSC Distribution Group Inc., the parent company of Torrington Supply Co. (Waterbury, Conn.) purchased the assets of Litco Supply (Torrington, Conn.).

## Organizations

- The Air Movement and Control Association International Inc. (AMCA International) reaffirmed AMCA Publication 502-06 (R2009) "Damper Application Manual for Heating, Ventilating, and Air Conditioning."
- The American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) and the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) signed a memorandum of understanding to share best practices and information on their research and development; codes and standards for climate change initiatives; and net-zero and energy-plus built environment.

— compiled by Angela D. Harris

# Fed Reports Improving Economy

## Construction Recovery Slow to Respond

**T**he Federal Reserve's Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) released new information indicating that the economy is beginning to pick up. The federal government declared the recession over a few months ago, but cautioned that recovery, especially job recovery, may not be as quick as the recession's end.

"Conditions in financial markets have improved further, and activity in the housing sector has increased," reported the FOMC in a statement released late in September. "Household spending seems to be stabilizing but remains constrained by ongoing job losses, sluggish income growth,

lower housing wealth, and tight credit."

Despite the improved outlook, economists agree that recovery will be slow as unemployment rates continue to rise. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, overall nonfarm payroll dropped 263,000 in September raising the national unemployment rate to 9.8 percent.

Although a slowing in the job loss rate is occurring, construction job losses remain high. According to Ken Simonson, chief economist for the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC), construction lost 15 percent of its Sept. 2008 jobs in the last 12 months, compared to 4 percent

for the entire nonfarm economy.

"September losses totaled 51,000 in nonresidential building, specialty trade, and heavy and civil engineering construction combined, nearly the monthly average loss of 54,000 over the past 12 months," reported Simonson. "Residential building and specialty trade contractors shed a combined 13,000 jobs in September, barely a third as many as the monthly average over the 12-month span."

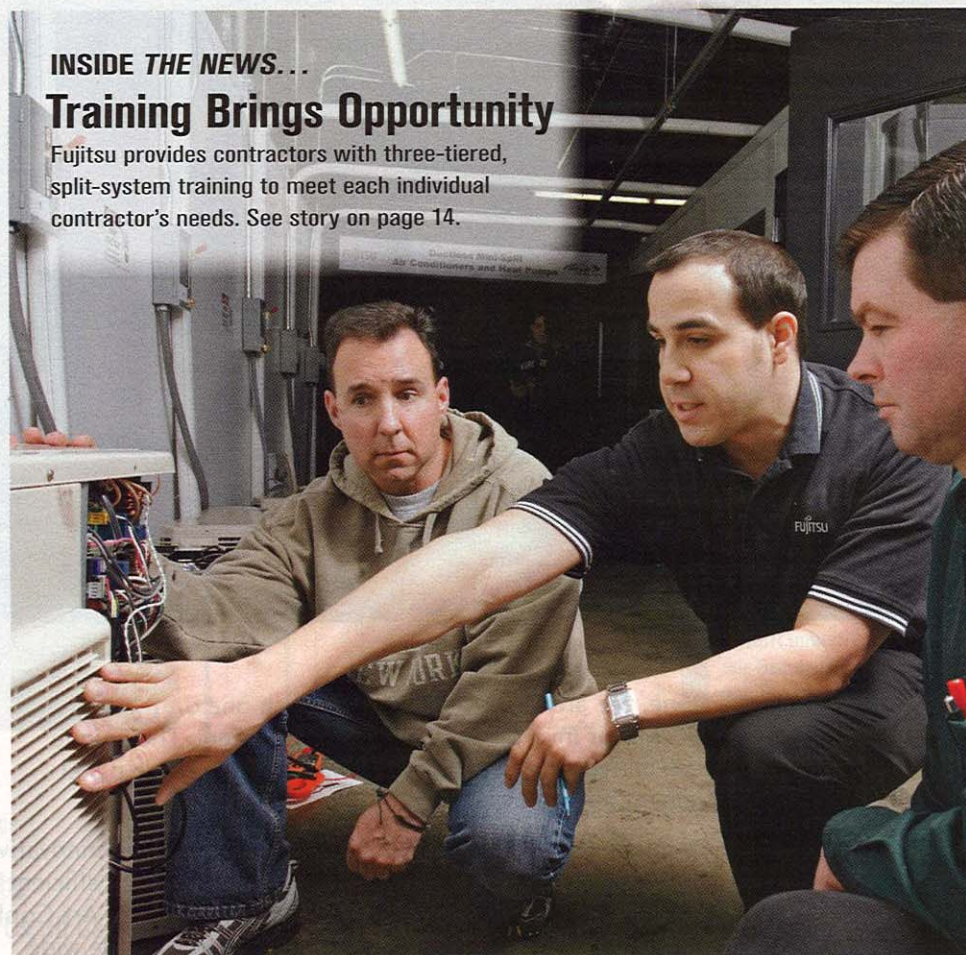
One section that rose slightly was architectural and engineering services employment. Often used as an indicator of future demand for construction, Simonson reported that

■ See **ECONOMY IMPROVING** page 19

### INSIDE THE NEWS...

## Training Brings Opportunity

Fujitsu provides contractors with three-tiered, split-system training to meet each individual contractor's needs. See story on page 14.



# Industry Dealing With Curbs on HCFCs, HFCs

**T**wo independent refrigerant legislative actions are in line to affect supplies of all HCFCs such as R-22 and all HFCs such as R-410A. But the HVACR industry is moving to prevent either action from negatively affecting the ability of contractors to do service work.

That was one aspect of an Executive Roundtable Audio Event hosted by DuPont in early September.

Mack McFarland, DuPont Environmental Fellow, told those listening in on a conference call that the U.S. Clean Air Act is causing a 58 percent reduction in current levels of R-22 production beginning in 2010 and a phase out of the refrigerant by 2020. And he said

■ See **CURBS ON HCFCs, HFCs** page 17



## training & education

# Fujitsu Training Provides Broad Opportunity

## Triple Threat Program Offers Hands-On and Online Experiences

**H**ow to Sell Like There's No Tomorrow" is one of the training topics that Tom Grunstra recently led for 180 contractor attendees at a fully-packed, one-day Fujitsu split systems training course in Grantville, Pa.

Grunstra, a high-energy guy whose 20 years in the industry serve him well as Fujitsu General America's national trainer for HVAC products, explained that long before contractors can close the sale they've got to stop, look, and listen.

"Who are you selling to," he asked, "A man or his wife?"

The next question contractors need to ask themselves is if they are prepared for the sale.

"By this I mean, your own appearance, attitude, eye contact, speech, quality of literature . . . and even the way you smell," noted Grunstra. "These have a huge impact on your ability to win customer confidence and trust."

Grunstra's list of sales tips and industry insights is almost never ending. In fact, he and guest speaker, Dave Yates, president of York, Pa.-based F. W. Behler Inc., tag-teamed the large training group throughout the day.

Yates explained how he has been so successful at selling Fujitsu mini-splits in his largely blue-collar town. "At up to 26 SEER, the systems nearly sell themselves, but we as installers must know how to explain the technology, installations, and energy savings before we can really tip the scales in our favor," he said.

Among many compelling points, Yates explained to attendees that a customer's return on investment in high-efficiency HVAC — especially considering tax incentives now available to do the upgrades — is like getting a substantial amount of money, tax-free. "Could they equal savings like this in the stock market? Not even close."

Grunstra and others have been to about 100 locations in the past year while conducting Fujitsu Authorized Service Training (FAST) sessions.

He pointed out that the all-day, free-of-charge FAST training seminars are North American Technician Excellence (NATE) recognized, with continuing education units (CEUs) awarded. Each

event concludes with tests prior to certificates of completion.

FAST provides detailed information about equipment, operating components, and installation requirements, along with troubleshooting and diagnostics for mini-split air conditioners and heat pumps. "Fujitsu's training and support are the best available anywhere," said Dan Ogden, service manager for Lycoming Heating Co. in Williamsport, Pa. He and three of his technicians traveled to Grantville, Pa., for the FAST event. "We all learned a lot that day."

### FUJITSU TRAINING TRIFECTA

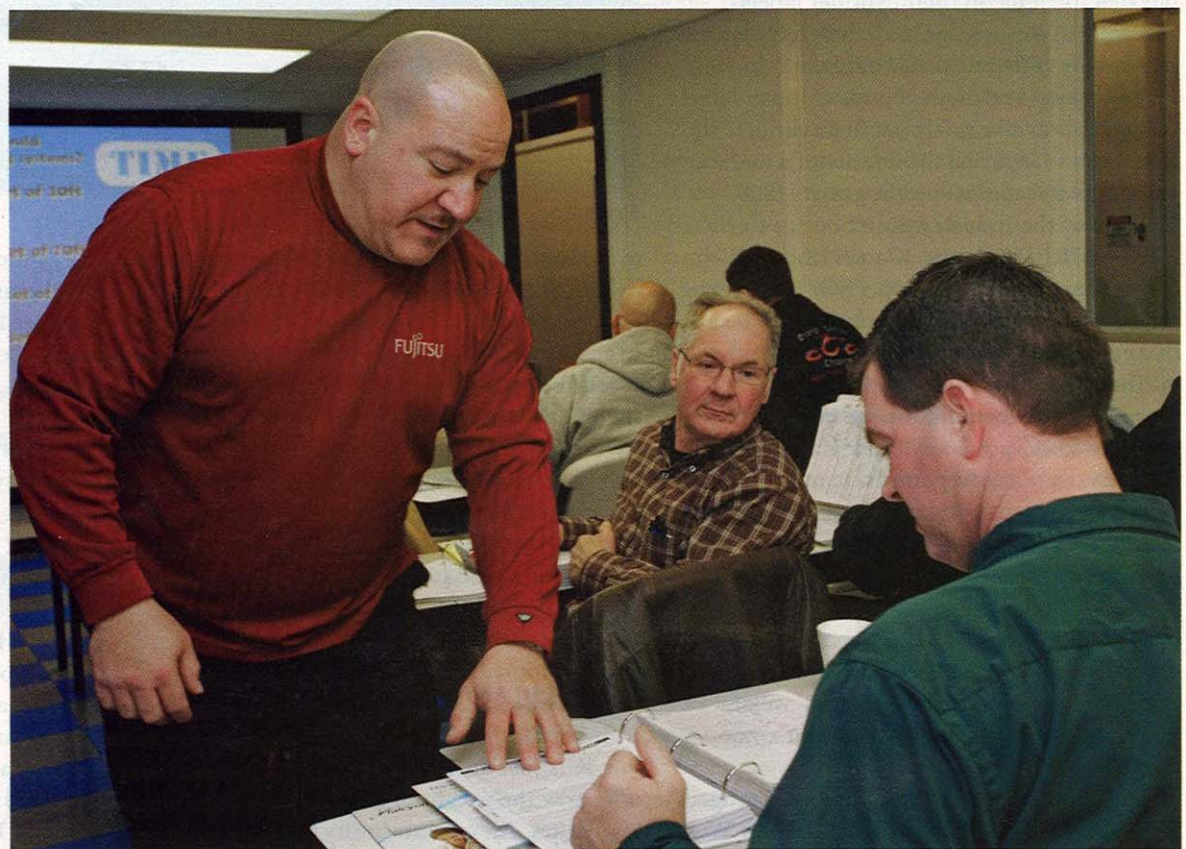
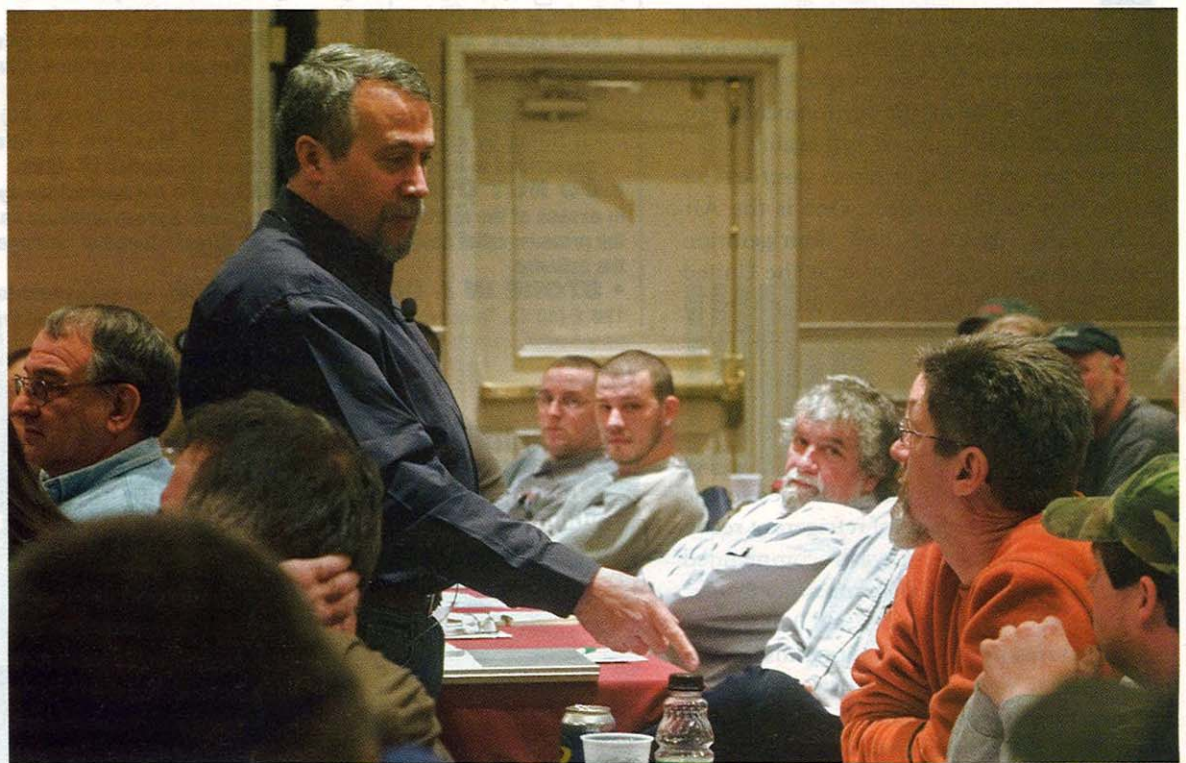
Fairfield, N.J.-based Fujitsu General America takes training seriously and has developed three different approaches to meet contractors' various training needs.

"We're thrilled about the huge success of our outside event and distributor-based training courses led by Fujitsu's training staff," said Roy Kuczera, senior vice president, Fujitsu. "But, we learned long ago that we need to offer more in-depth, hands-on training, which we do here at our headquarters, and more online training courses for those unable to travel to New Jersey."

With these concepts in mind, Kuczera led Fujitsu toward development of three very different approaches to training — FAST training, Halcyon U, and HalTech. Training participants must complete FAST training before being eligible to attend Halcyon U. HalTech, the online courses, reward participating dealers with enhanced consumer ratings the further they engage the program.

This summer, Kuczera watched as trainers Arturo DeMartinis and Grunstra conducted an all-day Halcyon U session at Fujitsu's newly constructed training facility in New Jersey. There, independent contractor technicians and installers received advanced hands-on service and troubleshooting insights while working with operating equipment in small teams. These eight-hour, NATE-certified courses also provided participants with CEUs.

The course begins with technical training addressed to all attendees but then quickly shifts to small team instruction where, as peers, participants learn together



**TOP:** Guest instructor and contractor Dave Yates, a big advocate of mini-split technology, helped to teach a large gathering of his peers at a recent Fujitsu training event in Pennsylvania. **ABOVE:** Arturo DeMartinis, Fujitsu technical trainer and field manager, speaks with attendees at a "Halcyon U" training event at Fujitsu's training facility in Fairfield, N.J.

as they move from station to station, troubleshooting systems and performing diagnostic checks.

The setting invites detailed questions and answers, and attendees conclude the day knowing how to install, diagnose, and troubleshoot Fujitsu split system air conditioners and heat pumps.

HalTech is Fujitsu's 24/7 online training designed to give

dealers, installers, and service techs round-the-clock access to information about new technology and in-depth understanding and reference material on installing and servicing systems.

In addition to all of the training offered by Fujitsu, the manufacturer conducts Webinars and provides online, interactive troubleshooting reference guides designed to give

service techs instant access to technical support by tracking through easy "yes" or "no" responses to prompts, leading toward a solution. The company also has a live technical support line available 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET, year-round. ■

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