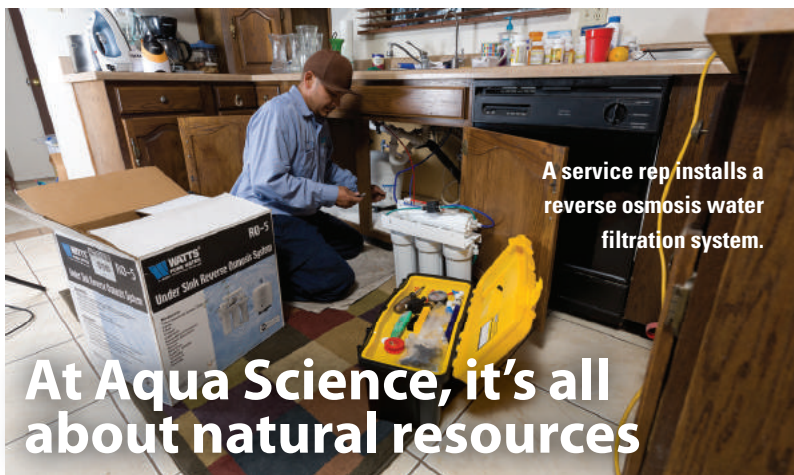


# CONTRACTOR<sup>®</sup>

THE NEWSMAGAZINE OF MECHANICAL CONTRACTING

PLUMBING | PIPING | HYDRONICS | RADIANT | BATH/KITCHEN | TECHNOLOGY | TOOLS | TRUCKS | GREEN | MANAGEMENT



A service rep installs a reverse osmosis water filtration system.

## At Aqua Science, it's all about natural resources

SPECIAL to CONTRACTOR

PHOENIX — Phoenix is known as the Valley of the Sun for good reason. Heat from the sun is so brutal in that desert bowl that it works overtime to pull all the moisture from air, streams and soil, making Phoenix the driest city in the thirstiest state.

Watts softener.



And yet, the desert town once populated only by cacti, hardy reptiles and a band of cow-

boys has grown to more than 1.5 million people. Today, people and plants compete for the most precious commodity on earth — fresh water.

Water in Arizona is recharged at a painfully slow rate, no thanks to so little precipitation, just 7.66 inches a year. Also, groundwater replenishment suffers from rapid surface evaporation and the long distances water must travel through layers of parched soil to recharge deep aquifers.

The groundwater extracted from below Phoenix is gener-

► Turn to Aqua Science, page 8

## Copper crooks target houses, commercial jobsites and county parks too

BY CANDACE ROULO  
OF CONTRACTOR'S STAFF

CHICAGO — Throughout the years, copper theft has always been a problem. Commercial jobsites, houses, and even parks seem to be the typical places crooks steal copper from these days.

Copper theft tends to be cyclical with the price of scrap copper.

► Turn to Copper crooks, page 6

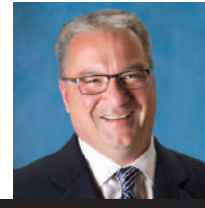


Cages protect units.

## Transition of leadership

# Viega LLC names Dave Garlow CEO

BY JOHN MESENBRINK OF CONTRACTOR'S STAFF



WICHITA, KAS. — Getting through the excitement of his Calculus III course, Dave Garlow's experience at the University of Pittsburgh's engineering school opened doors that even he couldn't have imagined. But the real education came when he started working with Viega LLC and current CEO Dan Schmierer, whom he replaces October 1 as Viega's new president and CEO.

"Dave Garlow's 14 years with Viega LLC in sales and marketing make him an ideal candidate to become president and CEO," Schmierer said. "He brings a very strong customer focus to the role and understands where our customers are coming

from. He's well prepared to step up to this new role."

Growing up in western Pennsylvania, Garlow worked many summer and after-school jobs, the most exciting as a rafting guide on the Cheat River in West Virginia. Garlow coached youth hockey in Pittsburgh for 12 seasons before he moved to Kansas in 2005, and he still plays a little ice hockey in the winter. He also volunteered for the Holy Family Institute in Pittsburgh, a community organization that offers family support services.

Garlow graduated from the University of Pittsburgh with a degree in mechanical

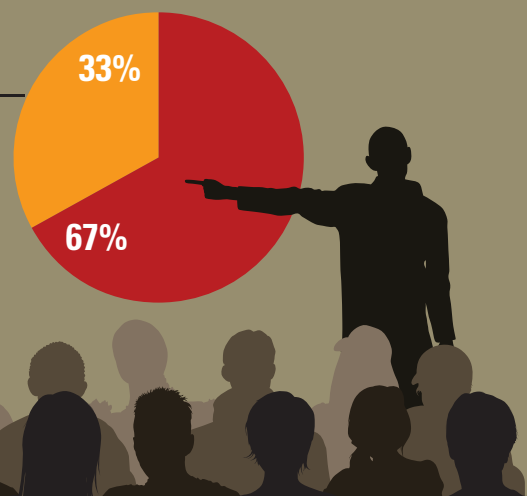
► Turn to Dave Garlow, page 6

## CONTRACTOR INFOCUS

Is your company affiliated with any trade school?

67% NOT AFFILIATED  
33% AFFILIATED

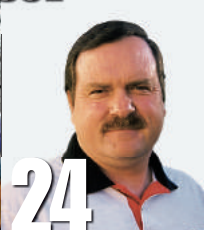
Source: What Contractors are Really Saying about Trade Schools Survey by Coscia Communications Inc.



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wall-hung toilet



American made  
CW standard pipe  
performs better.

See page 11 for details.



Wheatland Tube  
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# At Aqua Science, it's all about resources

► **Continued from page 1**

ally of very poor quality. "Today, it's what we in the water biz refer to as 'extremely mineralized,' with high concentrations of pollutants, minerals and calcium," explained Derek Sajdak, vice president of Phoenix-based Aqua Science. The firm is a specialized plumbing company that knows a thing or two about improving water quality in a land so challenged by the elements.

The area's groundwater conditions have made it necessary to pull 95% of domestic water from surface water sources such as the ever-shrinking Colorado River. The remaining water comes from groundwater. As an indication of the severity of conditions there, the EPA recommends all well owners in the state of Arizona have their water tested annually.

## Focusing on need

Aqua Science specializes in reverse osmosis and other means of water filtration and treatment, solar thermal water heating and high-pressure mist cooling systems. According to



**A service rep unloads an 80-gal. Bradford White solar water heater at the ranch.**

Sajdak, they also do plumbing work when the need calls for it. Needless to say, their variety of work exposes them to all kinds of jobs in the area.

Recently, a horse ranch just five miles out of Phoenix called Aqua Science to install a solar thermal panel for domestic water heating and further water quality work at the ranch's home. The driving force for the home improvement project was the owners' decision that it was high time to take advantage of the blazing Arizona sun. "In a way, it was like we wanted to fight back," they said. "The sun's relentless around here, so this became our way

of harnessing some of it."

"It makes such good sense to install solar for domestic water heating. It's sunny 360 days of the year, so why not use the sun to heat your water instead of paying a power company to do it?" said Steve Voldhart, solar specialist at Aqua Science. "Energy costs, the cost of credit and rebate incentives pretty much dictate the volume of solar business we do each year."

In a bad year, Sajdak and Aqua Science may only install 50 solar thermal systems, while a year with good tax incentives has brought more than 200 installations. "The year 2012 was a wild ride," added Sajdak. "We had two of our best months ever, and several of our worst. We'd definitely prefer the smoother, steadier ride."

## Solar thermal now

For Arizonians, incentives to install solar thermal arrays make the systems hard to resist. The result: calls day and night to price systems.

Sometimes, said Sajdak, the callers don't even ask. "They just want to know when we can put them in," he added.

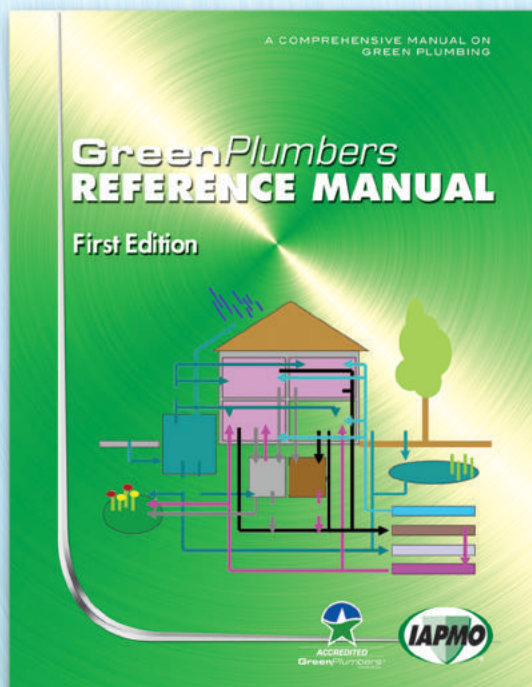
Current savings estimated for a typical residential installation range between \$28-\$45 per month (family of four). "Today, to sweeten the deal, federal incentives pay for 30% of the costs of purchasing the products, and local power companies are paying about 45 cents/kilowatt hour for the equipment. The state offers an even \$1,000. How could you not want to go solar?" said Sajdak.

## Back at the ranch

Aqua Science found that one 4-ft. x10-ft. solar flat plate collector on the roof produced sufficient heat to meet the water heating needs at the ranch house, so service representatives Steve Barber and Noe Sanchez installed the collector where sun exposure was best.

To continue reading about Aqua Science's installation, including a reverse osmosis system, go to [www.Contractormag.com](http://www.Contractormag.com). **C**

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