

# SNIFE

SCOTTISH AND NORTHERN IRELAND  
PLUMBING EMPLOYERS' FEDERATION  
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## **News History 2014 - News History 2014 Index:**

[SEC GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE RAISES CONCERNS ABOUT PREFERRED SUPPLIER PAYMENTS](#)

[A BRIGHTER CHRISTMAS FOR DISADVANTAGED KIDS THANKS TO SNIFE AND PLUMBING PENSIONS STAFF](#)

[PROTECTING RETENTIONS IN CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS BY PLACING THEM IN TRUST - E-PETITION](#)

[THE SUPPLIER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME \(SDP\)](#)

[OBITUARY - CHARLES LOVELL OBE](#)

[SNIFE GLASGOW & WEST OF SCOTLAND ASSOCIATION ANNUAL DINNER 2015](#)

[SPECIAL TRAINING RATES FOR SNIFE MEMBERS](#)

[HAVE YOU SIGNED UP TO WATERSAFE?](#)

[LOW CARBON HEAT EVENT - 18-19 NOVEMBER, EDINBURGH](#)

[BEST PRACTICE ADVICE – VAT ON ESTIMATES](#)

[CLOSURE OF PLUMBING AND MECHANICAL SERVICES TRAINING \(NI\) LTD](#)

[SNIFE ANGLING COMPETITION 2014](#)

[GREEN HOMES CASHBACK SCHEME PHASE 3 CLOSURE](#)

[ARE YOU MISSING OUT ON EMPLOYER ALLOWANCE?](#)

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[HMRC CONSULTATION INTO IMPROVEMENTS TO THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY SCHEME \(CIS\)](#)

[UPDATE TO WATER BYELAWS JULY 2014](#)

[SEC GROUP CEO CALLS FOR MORE TRANSPARENCY ABOUT CHAIN FINANCE DEALS](#)

[SNIFE ANNUAL GOLF MATCH 2014](#)

[DEATH OF SNIFE PAST PRESIDENT](#)

[SNIFE APPOINTS COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER](#)

[APPRENTICE FROM MORAY COLLEGE SCOOPS SNIFE SKILLPLUMB COMPETITION](#)

[SNIFE APPOINTS MEMBERSHIP OFFICER](#)

[CONSUMER CONTRACTS \(INFORMATION, CANCELLATION AND ADDITIONAL CHARGES\) REGULATIONS 2013](#)

[SNIFE ELECTS NEW OFFICE BEARERS](#)

[SNIFE APPOINTS TECHNICAL OFFICER](#)

[GREEN HOMES CASHBACK SCHEME EXTENDED IN SCOTLAND](#)

[HERIOT WATT UNIVERSITY INAUGURATES JOHN SWAFFIELD LABORATORY](#)

[SNIFE SKILLPLUMB APPRENTICE COMPETITION 2014](#)

[KANE - SPECIAL TERMS ON FLUE GAS ANALYSERS FOR SNIFE MEMBERS](#)

[CHILDREN DESIGN WORLD PLUMBING DAY BOOKMARKS](#)

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[CELEBRATE THE 5<sup>TH</sup> WORLD PLUMBING DAY!](#)

[INDUSTRY LAUNCHES NEW LEGIONELLA RISK ASSESSMENT & DISINFECTION SCHEME](#)

[PLUMBING INDUSTRY PENSION SCHEME INTRODUCES NEW SCALE OF AUTOMATIC ENROLMENT](#)

[FIRST SEC GROUP \(NI\) NEWSLETTER ISSUED TO MLAS IN NORTHERN IRELAND](#)

[GREEN DEAL NETWORKING EVENT – FEBRUARY 2014](#)

[ENERGY MINISTER PRAISES RENEWABLES TRAINING CENTRE](#)

[SNIFE GLASGOW & WEST OF SCOTLAND BRANCH DONATES TO CHAS](#)

[INVERNESS PLUMBERS RAISE CASH FOR LOCAL HOSPICE](#)

## SEC GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE RAISES CONCERNS ABOUT PREFERRED SUPPLIER PAYMENTS

Recent press coverage about the food industry highlighted the practice of requesting payments to remain on supplier lists. Professor Rudi Klein of the Specialist Engineering Contractors Group has written to the UK Secretary of State, Dr Vince Cable, to alert him to the fact that this practice is also prevalent in the construction and facilities management industries.

Prof Klein writes:

*In recent years many firms in my sector have reported that they have had to make payments to large companies in order to remain a supplier (although this does not guarantee that they will obtain work in the future). These payments have been variously described as rebates, discounts, pre-bates, preferred supplier fees, or as charges for supplier administration or support*

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*In the construction industry these practices have exacerbated a pre-existing culture of payment abuse of SMEs characterised by long payment cycles, unjustified withholding on monies and release of retention monies after two or three years from handover of works.*

Professor Klein went on to ask the Secretary of State to broaden the requested Competition and Markets Authority investigation to include the construction and FM sectors.

19/12/14

## A BRIGHTER CHRISTMAS FOR DISADVANTAGED KIDS THANKS TO SNIFE AND PLUMBING PENSIONS STAFF



As in previous years, Clare Rafferty of Plumbing Pensions has coordinated the donation of toys and games to the [Radio Forth 1 Mission Christmas 2014](#) appeal. Rather than holding an office Secret Santa, the staff in the SNIFE and Plumbing Pension offices chose to buy gifts for children in Edinburgh, the Lothians and Fife, who may not have a present under the tree on Christmas morning. As in previous year this popular suggestion resulted in a generous haul of gifts for a very worthy cause.

18/12/14

## PROTECTING RETENTIONS IN CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS BY PLACING THEM IN TRUST - E-PETITION

We have received notification of an e-petition from the Specialist Engineering Contractors' Group seeking support for a proposal that legislation be introduced requiring all funds identified as retentions within construction industry project contracts to be placed in a trust fund in future.

This will ensure that these funds are protected and guaranteed to be paid to recipients at the appropriate time. By establishing a legal framework whereby all retention monies are held in a ring-fenced trust fund many of the current difficulties experienced by construction industry contractors will be avoided in the future.

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The collection of 100,000 signatures by the end of March will lead to a debate in the House of Commons.

If you wish to sign the petition you may do so [here](#).

9/12/14

## THE SUPPLIER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (SDP)

Ever considered tendering for a public sector contract?

It can be a daunting prospect if you have no experience of tender portals or the tendering process. There is, however, free help, training and advice available across Scotland from The Supplier Development Programme (SDP). SDP is a local authority partnership programme established to offer small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) the opportunity to grow and diversify through procurement. With a public sector spend of over £9 billion, the SDP aims to assist SMEs (small to medium sized enterprises) improve their performance in winning contracts with public sector organisation.

[Sign up](#) to receive their regular newsletter and notification of free training events and webinars in your area and find out if the public sector market place could help you build your business.

8/12/14

## OBITUARY - CHARLES LOVELL OBE

The UK plumbing industry lost one of the founding pillars of its industrial relations arrangements with the death on 13 October 2014 of Charles Lovell at the age of 91.

Starting his career as an apprentice in the building industry, he moved into shipbuilding in 1938. Although keen to join the Royal Navy, this ambition was thwarted as building ships was classified as essential war work. In 1947 he took a job as an industrial plumber and welder with the Newcastle and Gateshead Gas Company. Having joined the Plumbing Trade Union in 1939, he soon became a shop steward and lodge official for the Union. He served as Chairman of his local Trades Union Council and as a borough councillor from 1952 to 1958. He moved onto to become a full-time official of the Union representing the North East of England until his election as General Secretary in 1966. After the merger with the electricians' union in 1968 (to form the EETPU), Charlie Lovell became General Secretary of the combined union, a post which he held until his retirement in 1987. He was honoured by the Queen in 1979 when he was made an OBE.

Charlie Lovell was instrumental in the establishment in the early 1970s of two Joint Industry Boards for the Plumbing Industry (one covering Scotland and Northern Ireland, the other covering England and Wales). He was a key player in the creation and establishment of the Plumbing and Mechanical

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Services (UK) Industry Pension Scheme- a Scheme which today has 37,000 members and has assets in excess of £1.5 billion.

Robert Burgon, Chief Executive of the Scottish & Northern Ireland Joint Industry Board for the Plumbing Industry and Pensions Manager of the Plumbing Industry Pension Scheme has fond memories of working with Charlie Lovell. "He was a real gentleman, even in the cut and thrust of wage negotiations. Always firm, yet polite and courteous, he achieved significant results for his members without ever resorting to impolite or seemingly militant tactics. He took an interest in the Industry Pension Scheme long after his retirement and we looked forward to receiving his annual message just before Christmas congratulating us on the continuing progress of the Scheme. We last saw him in Edinburgh in 2003 when he travelled to attend an 80th birthday lunch in honour of William Todd Soutar who had been the first SNIJIB Director and the first Pensions Manager of the Scheme."

Charles Lovell's daughter, Kate Dunstall, commented in a local newspaper after his death that her father "was a very kind man, always trying to help other people. What most people remember him for was his integrity. He was a very honest man. An old-school socialist."

8/12/14

## SNIFE GLASGOW & WEST OF SCOTLAND ASSOCIATION ANNUAL DINNER 2015

The 2015 Annual Dinner will take place on Friday 9 January 2015 in the Radisson BLU Hotel, Argyle Street, Glasgow at 7.00 pm. The speakers this year are, Robbie Glen, Frank McAvennie and John McKelvie.

As usual the aim of the evening is to raise money for the [Children's Hospice Society Scotland](#) (CHAS) via the Charity Raffle, eat, drink and be merry and catch up with old friends.

Members, Friends and Associates can obtain tickets priced at £50 each (or £48 if more than 11 are purchased) from the Secretary, [Malcolm Drysdale](#), or by calling 0131 556 0600.

Tickets will be sold on a first come first served basis and must be ordered by 15 December

12/11/14

## SPECIAL TRAINING RATES FOR SNIFE MEMBERS

SNIFE has established a partnership with NICEIC bringing you the opportunity to access Green Deal and ECO funding and to gain MCS approval at reduced prices. Sign up for [PAS 2030 certification](#), enabling you to access ECO funding and Green Deal for your customers and/or [MCS](#)

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[Certification](#) enabling you to install renewable technologies and allow your customers to be eligible to receive the RHI.

In addition to this you will also receive a 10% discount on your first order from NICEIC Direct, which stocks a wide range of certificates, tools and publications for heating and plumbing engineers.

30/9/14

## HAVE YOU SIGNED UP TO [WATERSAFE](#)?

[WaterSafe](#) is a dedicated online search facility of qualified contractors employed by plumbing businesses. Members are drawn from the scheme operated by SNIFE and the other six approved Water Regulation/Byelaw schemes operating across the UK.

When your business meets the criteria to become a member of the Plumbing Industry Licensing scheme you will also become eligible to become a member of WaterSafe. As a WaterSafe member you can issue certificates to customers that will confirm that your work has been carried out in accordance with the Water Byelaws.

Both [Scottish Water](#) and [BusinessStream](#) recommend the use of WaterSafe members when customers carry out any work to their plumbing systems and only a WaterSafe Plumber will be able to certify that their work meets the requirements of the Water Byelaws.

Make sure you are on the register, call the membership services team on 0131 556 0600 or email us at [contact@snipef.org](mailto:contact@snipef.org).

22/9/14

## LOW CARBON HEAT EVENT - 18-19 NOVEMBER, EDINBURGH

Scottish Enterprise is hosting a free to attend international conference on 'low carbon heat' on 18 November at the Sheraton Hotel in Edinburgh. The conference will bring together the Scottish supply chain, international delegations and facilities managers from major public and private sector estates. There will be seminars, debate, exhibitions and matchmaking on 18 November followed by site visits to the North British Distillery and to see the Greendykes District Heating Scheme for Social Housing on 19 November.

To book your free place visit the [event webpage](#).

17/9/14

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## BEST PRACTICE ADVICE – VAT ON ESTIMATES

SNIFE recently issued best practice advice for members regarding the inclusion on estimates and quotations of total VAT payable. The advice was sent to all members by email and the full version can be accessed on the [members area](#) of the website. In summary it states that best practice is to always include the amount of VAT in full to avoid doubt.

4/9/14

## CLOSURE OF PLUMBING AND MECHANICAL SERVICES TRAINING (NI) LTD

SNIFE regrets to announce that PMST (NI) Ltd (the company established in 2007 to manage plumbing, heating and gas apprenticeship training in Northern Ireland) has closed with effect from Friday 29 August 2014 and the firm of Baker Tilly Mooney Moore has been appointed to manage the closure of the business. Direct contact has been made with all affected by this decision (including employers and apprentices under the PMST programme) and it is expected that appropriate arrangements will be made for existing PMST apprentices to complete their training programme.

2/9/14

## SNIFE ANGLING COMPETITION 2014

Thirty-nine anglers took part in this year's competition at Lake of Menteith in 19 boats. The day was a great success, yielding 71 fish with a total weight of 171lb 7oz. Participants enjoyed a prizegiving followed by High Tea at the Forth Inn, Aberfoyle..

Many congratulations to the prizewinners who were as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> place - Ian Crighton Jnr with five fish at 14.4oz (pictured below with SNIFE President Alwyn Webster)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> place - Joe Bell with five fish at 14.2oz
- 3<sup>rd</sup> place - Crawford Comrie with four fish at 12.2oz
- 4<sup>th</sup> place - Keith Moffitt with five at 11.12oz

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Heaviest fish at 5lb 12oz was landed by Crawford Comrie.



26/8/14

## GREEN HOMES CASHBACK SCHEME PHASE 3 CLOSURE

It was announced yesterday that Phase 3 of the Scottish Government's Green Homes Cashback scheme is now closed because funding has been fully allocated.

The Energy Saving Trust is now operating a waiting list for any customers who are still interested in registering their details to be issued with a voucher should further funding become available. While there is no promise of further funding EST have informed us that funding may become available as unclaimed vouchers expire.

For further information on eligibility and the waiting list please visit the FAQ section on the Energy Saving Trust [website](#).

Please note this closure does not affect the social housing provider stream of the Green Homes Cashback scheme, which is currently open for bids and closes on Thursday 28 August at 5pm.

14/8/14

## ARE YOU MISSING OUT ON EMPLOYER ALLOWANCE?

Around one in 10 small businesses are not claiming the annual £2000 Employment Allowance, according to research by Sage UK.

An estimated 1.25 million employers are eligible for the £2,000 Class 1 National Insurance (NI) rebate, which came into force in April this year and while the NI rebate was being obtained by 89% of firms, the study found that 9% had not checked whether they were eligible and a further 2% had not made any effort to benefit from it.

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The research also found that of those who had successfully benefited from the initiative, nearly three-quarters said the process was very simple, while the others described it as simple.

You can find out more about the scheme [here](#).

7/8/14

## HMRC CONSULTATION INTO IMPROVEMENTS TO THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY SCHEME (CIS)

This consultation, which will run until 22 September 2014, sets out proposals for improvements to the operation of the Construction Industry Scheme (CIS) and proposals for the introduction of mandatory on-line CIS filing for contractors. HMRC would like to hear from subcontractors and contractors, and their agents; software developers and payroll bureaux, and anyone else involved with operating CIS.

In particular the consultation sets out proposals for improvements to CIS online services for contractors as well as a proposals to make it easier for subcontractors to obtain gross payment status. These changes could substantially reduce CIS businesses' administrative costs while still meeting the primary objective of the scheme to protect the Exchequer. They will also give more CIS businesses better control over their cash flow and create a more efficient regulatory environment.

Those affected are asked to respond to 12 questions. The full consultation and details of how to respond can be accessed [here](#).

21/7/14

## UPDATE TO WATER BYELAWS JULY 2014

Water Byelaws have a lifespan of 10 years, after which time they either expire, are extended or are replaced. The Scottish Water Byelaws 2004 expired on Saturday 12 July and were replaced by ***The Water Supply (Water Fittings) (Scotland) Byelaws 2014***.

SNIPEF members received notification of the main changes by email on 14 July. Members can also contact Technical Officer, Shirley Williamson on 0131 556 0600 for assistance or further information.

Full details are available on the [Scottish Water website](#).

15/7/14

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## SEC GROUP CEO CALLS FOR MORE TRANSPARENCY ABOUT CHAIN FINANCE DEALS

Professor Rudi Klein, CEO of SEC Group, has called on banks to be more open about the 'deals and kick backs' offered to large contractors as part of supply chain finance arrangements. Professor Klein highlights that small firms may pay fees to access early payment following the extension of existing payment periods while banks are funding large companies to considerable levels.

The full release can be accessed [here](#).

14/7/14

## SNIFE ANNUAL GOLF MATCH 2014

This year's SNIFE Golf Match took place at Alyth Golf Club in Perthshire on 20 June. The weather was kind to the 72 participating golfers and the winning team were from Pitkerro Plumbing & Heating Ltd in Dundee, runners up were the second team from Brown & Cordner, Cardross and third prize was presented to S & D Plumbing & Heating, Dumfries.

The prize for Endeavour went to Nasser Mohammed of H & C Mechanical Services, Loanhead and the winner of the individual competition was Declan Christie of Pitkerro Plumbing & Heating Ltd.

Many congratulations to all the winners.

FIRST PLACE – Pitkerro Plumbing & Heating Ltd (pictured)

Danny Craig  
Declan Christie  
Neil Campbell  
Alan McLean

SECOND PLACE – Brown & Cordner Plumbing & Heating (Team 2)

Martin King  
David Wright  
Colin Scanell  
Jerry O'Rawe

THIRD PRIZE – S & D Plumbing & Heating

S. Boyd  
J. Power  
K. Turnbull  
C. Ross

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ENDEAVOUR – Nasser Mohammed, H & C Mechanical Services  
NEAREST THE HOLE – Brian Crighton, J. Queen & Son  
LONGEST DRIVE – Gary McDonald, McDonald & Buist Plumbing & Heating  
BEST SCRATCH SCORE – Neil Campbell, Pitkerro Plumbing & Heating  
FIRST PLACE SCOTTISH FEDERATION CUP – Pitkerro Plumbing & Heating



1/7/14

## DEATH OF SNIEPF PAST PRESIDENT

SNIEPF regrets to announce the death of Past President Alistair Mitchell of Dundee. Mr Mitchell served as National President in 1982-83, having previously served as President of the Dundee and District Master Plumbers' Association. He was in his 80<sup>th</sup> year and died in hospital in Dundee on Thursday 19 June 2014 after a short illness.

A celebration of his life will be held in the Invercarse hotel, 371 Perth Road, Dundee on Friday 27 June 2014 at 11.45am. No flowers requested but donations may be made for the British Heart Foundation (Scotland) and Scotland Pancreatic Cancer Research.

24/6/14

## SNIEPF APPOINTS COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

SNIEPF has announced the appointment of Ms Ruth Gibb as Communications Officer. Ruth took up her appointment on Monday 23 June 2014.

Ruth worked in science, technical and medical publishing for many years, and more recently led the communications function within two membership organisations, latterly on behalf of one of the medical Royal Colleges. Ruth is a member of the Chartered Institute of Public Relations and qualified practitioner.

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Ruth lives in Edinburgh and is based in SNIEPF's Edinburgh offices at Bellevue House. Her responsibilities will include working on all aspects of SNIEPF's communications and promotion activity.



24/6/14

## APPRENTICE FROM MORAY COLLEGE SCOOPS SNIEPF SKILLPLUMB COMPETITION



L-R Alwyn Webster SNIEPF President, Henry McNicol Worcester Bosch, Callum Robertson overall winner and Robert Beagley Plumbcenter

Forth Valley College in Falkirk was the venue for the 2014 Annual SNIEPF SkillPlumb Plumbing Apprentice Competition. Organised by SNIEPF (the Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers' Federation) it took place on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2014. This is the 39<sup>th</sup> year of the event. It gives colleges and training centres across Scotland that are teaching the SVQ Level 3 in Domestic Plumbing the opportunity to enter their best students in this prestigious event. Second year apprentice, Callum Robertson from the Isle of Skye who is employed by SNIEPF member Highland Eco heat, and representing Moray College in Elgin scooped the three main awards this year.

The results of the competition are listed below –

Place	Name	College	Employer	Prize
1 <sup>st</sup>	Callum Robertson	Moray	Highland Eco Heat	SNIEPF Shield & £250, Bosch Cordless Drill Kit, Reactive Welding Helmet & £25 voucher for PlumbCenter
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Richard Wilson	North East Scotland	Sugplumb Ltd	£200 & Bosch Cordless Drill Kit & £25 voucher for PlumbCenter

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3 <sup>rd</sup>	David Elder	Dundee & Murray		£150 & Bosch Cordless Drill Kit &
Overall	Angus	Pennycook		£25 voucher for PlumbCenter
Best	Callum	Moray	Highland Eco	Yellow Pages Cup & £200 & £25
Copper	Robertson		Heat	voucher for PlumbCenter
Best	Callum	Moray	Highland Eco	Robert Mair Quaich & £200 & £25
Lead	Robertson		Heat	voucher for PlumbCenter

At the opening ceremony the College Principal Ken Thomson, and SNIFE President Alwyn Webster welcomed everyone to the competition. The competitors started on the Friday with a testing four hour exercise in copper pipe bending, joining and installation and continued on the Saturday morning with a two and a half hour lead bossing exercise and a thirty minute multiple choice question paper on all aspects of plumbing. There are prizes for the best copper pipe work exercise, the best lead bossing exercise and first, second and third overall decided by the total score for all three parts of the competition.

The judges for the Competition were a very experienced panel consisting of Mr Preston Fleming, Mr Gordon Matheson, Mr Alan White and Mr Raymond Leslie. The Judges had a very difficult time marking the competitors work as the standard of work produced was high, in fact the best lead work exercise was won by only one mark over the next best lead competitor.

The finance, materials and prizes for the competition are kindly supplied by our sponsors The Plumbing Joint Industry Board (JIB), BPEC (the British Plumbing Employers' Council), Worcester Bosch, PlumbCenter and Calder Lead / First Supplies. SNIFE are very grateful to these companies for their continuing support of the competition.

The prizegiving ceremony took place on Saturday afternoon. Mr Alwyn Webster, the SNIFE President was joined by Mr Robert Beagley, the Regional Trading Director of PlumbCenter, Mr Henry McNicol, the Regional Sales Director (Scotland & Northern Ireland) for Worcester Bosch and Mr Preston Fleming, employer, SNIFE past President and competition judge to hand out the prizes.

SNIFE are very grateful to the College Principal Ken Thomson and all his staff at Forth Valley College who put in a lot of work prior to the competition to ensure it ran smoothly, in particular Ian Morrison, Danny Houston, Steven Adams, Murray Wilkie and Craig Anderson.

17/06/14

## SNIFE APPOINTS MEMBERSHIP OFFICER

SNIFE has announced the appointment of Andy Furnevel as Membership Officer. Mr Furnevel took up his appointment on Monday 2 June 2014.

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Andy's career to date has been spent in a range of sales roles including a period when he was an Area Sales Manager (East of Scotland) for a plumbing fittings manufacturer.

Andy, who lives in Edinburgh, will be responsible for visiting both existing and prospective members of SNIFE to explain the benefits of membership of the national trade association for plumbing and heating firms in Scotland and Northern Ireland.



9/6/14

## CONSUMER CONTRACTS (INFORMATION, CANCELLATION AND ADDITIONAL CHARGES) REGULATIONS 2013

SNIFE member firms are advised that the above Regulations become effective for all consumer contracts made from 13 June 2014. The Regulations apply across the United Kingdom.

These Regulations replace the Consumer Protection (Distance Selling) Regulations 2000 and the Cancellation of Contracts made in a Consumer's Home or Place of Work etc Regulations 2008. Although in some aspects, the new Regulations are similar to the ones which they are replacing, they require more detailed information to be given to consumers and introduce a 14 day cancellation period.

The Trading Standards Institute has produced three separate guides to the new Regulations:

- A guide for traders selling goods, services and digital content **off premises**
- A guide for traders selling goods, services and digital content **through distance contracts**
- A guide for traders selling goods, services and digital content **from their premises**

These guides can be accessed on the Trading Standards Institute website:

<http://www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/advice/advice-business.cfm>

All plumbing businesses carrying out work for consumers are likely to be affected by the new Regulations and they should ensure that they are aware of the requirements. In particular, if consumers are not provided with all of the information listed in the Regulations (some 24 items), then consumers could claim that the contractor had breached its contract and could seek an appropriate remedy. Failure to provide certain information (largely relating to cancellation rights) would lead to a contractor committing a criminal offence leading to a maximum fine of £5000.

# SNIFE

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The Regulations have introduced a 14 day cancellation period for consumers. This could give rise to practical issues in cases where work commences prior to the end of the cancellation period.

SNIFE is in discussion with representatives of Trading Standards with a view to addressing our practical concerns about these new Regulations and their implications for member firms. In the meantime all members which carry out work for consumers are asked to ensure that they familiarise themselves with the terms of the Regulations and in particular incorporate the required list of information (including cancellation rights) into all consumer contracts.

6/6/14

## SNIFE ELECTS NEW OFFICE BEARERS

At the Annual Conference of SNIFE held in the Menzies Hotel, Dyce on Saturday 24 May 2014, the following Office Bearers were elected for 2014-15:

President:	Alwyn Webster	Aberdeen
Vice-President:	John Leonard	Belfast
Junior Vice-President	Brian Warrender	Inverbervie
Immediate Past President	Raymond Leslie	Lossiemouth

3/6/13

## SNIFE APPOINTS TECHNICAL OFFICER

SNIFE has announced the appointment of Mrs Shirley Williamson as Technical Officer. Mrs Williamson took up her appointment on Monday 26 May 2014.

After graduating in psychology, Shirley had a number of administrative and HR jobs before deciding to undertake a Modern Apprenticeship in plumbing. After completing her apprenticeship and receiving her SVQ Level 3 qualification, she has worked as a plumbing and gas engineer, a gas maintenance team leader, a site supervisor and surveyor and as an instructor and assessor.

Shirley is based in SNIFE's Edinburgh offices at Bellevue House and her responsibilities will include management of various membership schemes such as SNIFE's Approved Certifier of Construction Scheme, its Legionella risk assessment and disinfection scheme and the organisation's WaterSafe scheme. She will also act as Secretary to the SNIFE Technical Committee and provide technical advice to member firms.

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27/5/14

## GREEN HOMES CASHBACK SCHEME EXTENDED IN SCOTLAND

The Scottish Government has announced an extension to funding under the Green Homes Cashback Scheme. For further details follow [this link](#).

22/5/14

## HERIOT WATT UNIVERSITY INAUGURATES JOHN SWAFFIELD LABORATORY

Heriot Watt University in Edinburgh has recognised the enormous contribution made by the late Professor John Swaffield by inaugurating a Building Services Engineering Laboratory in his memory. John, who was one of the world's top experts in drainage research and was well-known throughout the global plumbing industry, led some ground-breaking research in this lab prior to his retirement in 2008. He died in 2011. The event was followed by the Inaugural Lecture by Professor Lynne Jack, who had worked as part of Professor Swaffield's team. The lab was opened by Professor Swaffield's widow, Jean.



*Our photo shows (from left to right); Professor Lynne Jack, Mrs Jean Swaffield, SNIPEF CEO Robert Burgon, Nick Gale, Master of the Worshipful Company of Plumbers and Professor Gareth Pender, Head of the School of the Built Environment at Heriot Watt University.*

9/5/14

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## SNIFE SKILLPLUMB APPRENTICE COMPETITION 2014

The 39<sup>th</sup> round of the Annual Scottish SkillPLUMB Apprentice Competition organised by SNIFE will take place in Forth Valley College, Falkirk on Friday 6 and Saturday 7 June 2014.

Over the two days this competition tests the skills and knowledge of apprentice plumbers attending Colleges/Training Centres in Scotland that teach the SVQ Level 3 in Domestic Plumbing, pitting them against each other in a copper pipework exercise, a lead bossing exercise and a written test.

In organising this event each year, SNIFE is grateful for the support we receive from the trade, merchants, manufacturers, the Colleges and Training Centres and employers who provide materials and prizes and give up their time.

The highest placed competitors from this Scottish round may have the opportunity to go on to the UK Final at the NEC in Birmingham from 12 to 15 November 2014, and the highest placed apprentices from the UK Final may then be invited to compete in the WorldSkills Final to be held in Sao Paulo, Brazil in 2015.

SNIFE welcomes anyone who wishes to come to Forth Valley College on Saturday 7 June in the afternoon to view the Competitors work from 13.00, and attend the prizegiving ceremony at 14.00 (*these timings are provisional and may be subject to change, every effort will be made to adhere to them*)

2/5/14

## KANE - SPECIAL TERMS ON FLUE GAS ANALYSERS FOR SNIFE MEMBERS

Kane, well-known for their flue gas analysers, has made special terms available to SNIFE member firms. The company, which employs 90 people at 3 sites in the United Kingdom, sells products which are designed, manufactured and serviced in the UK. For details of the special terms [click here](#)

17/4/14

## CHILDREN DESIGN WORLD PLUMBING DAY BOOKMARKS

Pupils in Primary 4 at Law Primary School, North Berwick recently had a visit from the SNIFE Chief Executive, Robert Burgon, who talked about the importance of water and plumbing to global health. Part of the presentation, which was prepared by the World Plumbing Council, mentions World Plumbing Day which is celebrated on 11 March each year. The children were invited to design bookmarks promoting the World Plumbing Day message with prizes being given to the best designs. The examples shown [here](#) are all prize winning entries and many show a clear understanding of the

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message that plumbing is vital to global health. Gift vouchers will be presented to the successful pupils in the school on World Plumbing Day 2014.

10/3/14

## CELEBRATE THE 5<sup>TH</sup> WORLD PLUMBING DAY!

[World Plumbing Day](#) is celebrated on **11 March** each year as a means of promoting the important role played by the plumbing industry throughout the world.

Although we in the UK take access to good quality water supply and sanitation systems for granted, many parts of the world still face the tragedy of death and disease as a direct consequence of the lack of access to basic plumbing systems. The safe supply of drinking water is, of course, a concern for many people across the world, but what is not often emphasized is the work the plumbing industry plays in keeping people safe and healthy each and every day.

Scottish Water supports World Plumbing Day and John Rae, Water Operations General Manager from Scottish Water said:

*"The supply of safe and wholesome drinking water is of paramount importance to Scottish Water and we support the aims and ambitions of World Plumbing Day. It is only right to record and support the important role that the plumbing industry, along with Scottish Water, plays in keeping us safe and healthy".*

NI Water is also fully supportive of the upcoming World Plumbing day and Michael McGreevy Water Regulations manager commented:

*"NI Water, like other water suppliers provides high quality wholesome water to our customers, safeguarding the quality of drinking water and public health is of the utmost importance to us. To this end, we fully support the upcoming initiative that is World Plumbing Day in helping underpin water quality and safety."*

Finally, Robert Burgon, SNIFE Chief Executive added:

*"On World Plumbing Day, 11 March 2014, please take a moment to think about the critical role played by SNIFE, its members and others aiming to promote excellence in the plumbing industry and consider what life might be like if we did not enjoy access to the professional plumbing facilities which are widely available to us".*

07/03/14

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## INDUSTRY LAUNCHES NEW LEGIONELLA RISK ASSESSMENT & DISINFECTION SCHEME

The Plumbing & Heating Contractors Alliance, which comprises of the Association of Plumbing & Heating Contractors (APHC) and the Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers' Federation (SNIPEF) has launched a national Legionella Scheme to ensure compliance with the Health and Safety Executive's Approved Code of Practice.

The scheme has been developed to ensure that property owners can meet their legal obligations by using a reputable plumbing company who understands the risks associated with legionella and can implement a risk assessment and carry out remedial action where necessary.

Commenting on the scheme launch Robert Burgon, Chief Executive of SNIPEF said: "The Health and Safety Executive has recently revised its Approved Code of Practice for the control of legionella bacteria, generally referred to as L8. The revision means that L8 now applies to all hot and cold water systems within every property that has a commercial or public use. Previously, the legislation only applied to systems that had a minimum of a 350-litre cold water storage capacity.

"This change in the rules has significantly increased the number of property owners who now must take the necessary precautions to reduce the risks of exposure to legionella. This scheme allows property owners and management companies to meet their obligations by enabling them to quickly and confidently identify qualified plumbing professionals."

To read more and to apply to join the scheme, click [here](#).

10/02/14

## PLUMBING INDUSTRY PENSION SCHEME INTRODUCES NEW SCALE OF AUTOMATIC ENROLMENT

The clock is ticking!

Employers should be aware that the introduction of Automatic Enrolment requires them to enrol staff into a pension arrangement. Employers which have not already reached their specified date (known as the "staging date") will find that it is creeping ever closer.

The Plumbing Industry Pension Scheme can help with the introduction of an additional contribution and benefit scale designed to meet the requirements of Automatic Enrolment.

The new scale, which will be introduced with effect from **6 April 2014**, is on a contracted-in basis. It will still provide members with a defined benefit (at the rate of 1/100ths of their average salary for each year of service) but for a total combined employer/employee contribution rate of only 8%. It will

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also provide a death in service benefit of two times salary at no additional cost. Unlike many other Automatic Enrolment schemes, Plumbing Pensions makes no deductions from contributions and applies no management fees to accrued pension benefits.

Initially the new scale will be available to new member employers only - existing employer participants can already meet their obligations through the use of the existing contribution and benefit scales (which are contracted-out of the Second State Pension).

The Scheme is now in a position to accept enquiries relating to the new scale and will be happy to assist any new employer which wishes to operate at this level from April.

As many employers are now approaching their automatic enrolment staging date, this new scale provides a perfect opportunity for employers and their employees to participate in the only UK occupational pension scheme specifically aimed at the plumbing and mechanical services industry.

For more information visit [www.plumbingpensions.co.uk](http://www.plumbingpensions.co.uk)

30/1/14

## FIRST SEC GROUP (NI) NEWSLETTER ISSUED TO MLAS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

The Specialist Engineering Contractors' (SEC) Group Northern Ireland was launched at Stormont in October 2013 to represent engineering firms in the construction industry involved in electrical contracting, mechanical services, plumbing, steel construction and lift installation. SNIFE is one of the founding members.

Although the majority of firms in the sector are SMEs the sector represents (by value) the largest sector in Northern Ireland construction. SECG NI has just issued its first Newsletter which has been issued to all MLAs.

A copy of the newsletter can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

29/01/14

## GREEN DEAL NETWORKING EVENT – FEBRUARY 2014

A free networking event for Scottish businesses involved in the delivery of the Green Deal including opportunities to meet the Green Deal providers.

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**The Lighthouse, Glasgow, Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> February, 0930-1200**

## About the event

The Energy Saving Trust, with funding from the Scottish Government, and in conjunction with the Green Skills Alliance has organised this half day event to help support both certified Green Deal businesses in Scotland and those wishing to become certified.

The Green Deal is a government enabled scheme to help install energy improvement measures on properties. Our event will help you understand where you fit in and what business opportunities you could benefit from.

## Why attend?

In addition to networking, this event will also be of benefit to your business as:

- You will gain important householder insights through feedback from Home Energy Scotland\*.
- You will learn more about recent developments around the Green Deal.
- You will get to meet Green Deal providers looking at taking on installers and assessors.
- For those not currently certified, you will learn about what training and certification is required to get involved with the Green Deal and related programmes.

## How to book a place

Although this event is completely free, places are limited and therefore we recommend that you register first in order to secure your place. [Click here](#) to sign up today.

Do you have questions about the Green Deal networking event? Contact [greendealevents@est.org.uk](mailto:greendealevents@est.org.uk).

*\* The Energy Saving Trust's work in Scotland is funded by the Scottish Government. It*

*manages a network of advice centres in Scotland called Home Energy Scotland, specifically designed to help consumers by providing free and impartial advice to take action to save energy. Home Energy Scotland aims to reach 250,000 people every year.*

23/01/14

## ENERGY MINISTER PRAISES RENEWABLES TRAINING CENTRE

Mr Fergus Ewing MSP - the Scottish Minister for Energy, Enterprise and Tourism –officially opened Scotland's first HETAS-accredited renewables training academy. The Falkirk Renewables Centre is a Plumb Center initiative, which will give installers the skills and knowledge they'll need to work with heat pumps, biomass boilers and solar thermal.

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The centre offers fully accredited BPEC and HETAS courses, and boasts working displays and training rigs from leading manufacturers including Worcester Bosch, Kingspan, Windhager, Broseley and Alpha.

Joining Mr Ewing at the opening were a host of Scottish installers, all looking to make 'Renewable More Doable'.



*Mr Fergus Ewing MSP (Centre) opens the event with Plumb Center's Head of Sustainability Tim Pollard (Right), and Plumb Center's Regional Trading Director for Scotland Robert Beagley (Left).*

"Renewable heating systems are a vital part of the Scottish economy helping to both reduce CO2 emissions and provide respite to people hard-pressed by energy costs, particularly those located off the gas grid," Fergus Ewing, the Scottish Minister for Energy, Enterprise and Tourism said.

"The domestic Renewable Heat Incentive, set to be launched this spring, will help transform the market and Plumb Center's training centre in Falkirk can play a vital role supporting this initiative.

23/1/14

## SNIEPF GLASGOW & WEST OF SCOTLAND BRANCH DONATES TO CHAS

The Glasgow & West of Scotland Branch of SNIEPF has made a recent donation of over £4500 following a fundraising drive at their annual Dinner which was held on 10 January. The sum was donated to CHAS (Children's Hospice Association Scotland).

Since the Branch started supporting CHAS in 2006, it has donated nearly £35,000.

20/01/14

## INVERNESS PLUMBERS RAISE CASH FOR LOCAL HOSPICE

The Inverness & Northern District Master Plumbers' Association held their 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner at the Craigmonie Hotel, Inverness on Friday 17th January. The Dinner was attended by Presidents from other Associations, local plumbers, plumbers' merchants; manufacturers and their guests.

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The guests were entertained by three speakers – local and well respected politician The Rt. Hon. Charles Kennedy MP, radio pundit Tam Cowan and well known after dinner speaker Scott Glynn of 'The Scott Glynn Experience'. £600 was raised for the Highland Hospice at the event.

20/01/14