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**Solar in the Spotlight at AHR Expo**

January 17, 2011

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LAS VEGAS — Those looking to escape to sunnier destinations this winter might be wise to check out the 2011 Air-Conditioning, Heating, and Refrigerating (AHR) Expo, one of the most prominent events in the HVACR industry. This year's event will take place Jan. 31 to Feb. 2 at the Las Vegas Convention Center and will feature more than 1,800 exhibitors from around the world, who will showcase hundreds of innovative new products to over 45,000 attendees and exhibitor personnel.



Over 45,000 attendees and exhibitor personnel will jam the aisles at this year's AHR Expo, held at the Las Vegas Convention Center.

A primary focus of the 2011 AHR Expo will be solar energy, with numerous new solar products on display, more than a dozen seminars focused on solar topics, as well as demonstrations of solar technology. "Solar is one of the fastest-growing segments of the many sustainable technologies featured at the show," said Clay Stevens, president, International Exposition Co., which produces and manages the AHR Expo. "At least 54 companies we know of will be featuring solar products. ASHRAE and other leading industry organizations have created special solar educational sessions for AHR Expo, and the United Association (UA) Green Trailer will be providing ongoing solar demonstrations."

The UA Green Trailer is fully functional and interactive, so AHR Expo attendees can experience solar energy systems' proper installation and operation. The specific sustainable technologies that are demonstrated within the trailer include: solar energy production and storage; solar water heating; radiant floor heating system; radiant ceiling heating and cooling system; geothermal heat pump system, and much more. Since it was created almost two years ago, the Green Trailer has visited nearly three dozen states and trained over 2,000 professionals.

For more information about the expo or to register online, go to [www.ahrexpo.com](http://www.ahrexpo.com).

**BENEFITS FOR ALL**

Manufacturers and contractors alike look forward to all the new opportunities the AHR Expo brings each year. For contractors, the AHR Expo provides an opportunity to see and touch all the brand-new equipment and technologies that are directly applicable to the HVACR industry. For manufacturers, the AHR Expo provides the ability to meet directly with new and existing customers to discuss products and specific applications.

Gary Weeks, president, Weeks Service Co. (League City, Texas), has attended several AHR Expos over the years in order to see what kind of new products are available. "The AHR Expo is a great way to look for new ideas and new products. I also like meeting the vendors. I talk to them on the phone all the time, but I don't get to meet with them in person very often."

Weeks also enjoys the educational sessions presented at the AHR Expo, and he plans to attend the Las Vegas event as well, in order to keep up on the latest technologies and ideas. He jokingly notes that other contractors "should stay home from the expo and keep doing the same things and expecting different results. I don't want them to get any good ideas — then I'll have to compete against them."

Contractors may also want to attend the AHR Expo in order to give feedback to the manufacturers, including what they like and don't like and what needs they have that may be filled by a new product, said Mary Jo Gentry, marketing communications manager, Ritchie Engineering Co. Inc. — Yellow Jacket Products Division (Booth #C316). "We share this information with our development engineers who use it for product improvements and new product development."

In fact, this is one of the main reasons why Ritchie Engineering Co. has exhibited at the AHR Expo since the 1970s. The company considers the expo to be one of the best ways to interface with domestic and international customers, contractors, and manufacturer representatives. "We view our interactions with the contractor not only as an opportunity to showcase our new products, but to solicit feedback from them," said Gentry.

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As for new products, Ritchie Engineering will be introducing the AccuProbe™ UV, which uses heated sensor or UV technology (or both at the same time) to detect HFC, HCFC, and CFC refrigerants, including SNAP-approved hydrocarbon blends. The company will also feature the new Yellow Jacket heat pump manifold, which features high- and low-side gauges with 1 percent accuracy and the ability to handle heat pump pressures and transitions in heating or cooling mode.

DuctSox (Booth #N3232) has also been a longtime exhibitor at the AHR Expo, having participated for the last 18 years. Cary Pinkalla, president and CEO, noted that the company continues to attend because, she said, "It is our opportunity to show HVAC solutions and inform attendees about our cutting-edge products. It is a great way to increase our company and product awareness."

This year the company will introduce several new fabric duct/diffuser products, including SimpleSox, which is a modular, adjustable, and in-stock air dispersion system, and UFSox, which is an air dispersion product for raised floor applications. In addition, the company will highlight LabSox and KitchenSox, which are air dispersion products for critical airflow applications, including labs, medical, and kitchens.

**EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**

At every AHR Expo, attendees look forward to the numerous free educational sessions that are offered. This year is no different — dozens of free seminars and workshops will be offered daily by leading industry associations and organizations. These include the following:

Heating, Airconditioning & Refrigeration Distributors International (HARDI) will present "Commercial Ground Loop Water Source Heat Pump Systems," which will review the basic design and installation of a commercial ground loop water source heat pump system and discuss the impact of key project-specific variables to the ground loop design.



For contractors, the AHR Expo provides an opportunity to see and touch many of the new equipment and technologies in HVACR industry.

Energy Star will present the "Portfolio Manager Benchmarking Workshop," which will discuss how to benchmark several types of commercial buildings. Also covered will be how Portfolio Manager can help in measuring savings, setting goals, tracking savings, and documenting and recognizing achievements.

BACnet Intl. will present "Energy Standards and Energy Efficiency with BACnet," which will focus on how to achieve more energy efficiency using building automation systems. This session will look at the various strategies presented in standards and guidelines and how they have been successful in the real world.

"Key Technologies for our Connected Future," presented by www.automatedbuildings.com, will provide the details of the key technologies used to connect all types of data and services to the information cloud. In addition, building system analytic software, operations centers, micro video cameras, facial recognition security, and plug load control will be discussed.

In addition, the Building Automation and Control Showcase will return, highlighting everything from energy and building management systems to controls and networking solutions. The Software Center and New Product Technology Theaters will also be featured again at the AHR Expo.

For a full listing of educational opportunities at the AHR Expo, visit [www.ahrexpo.com/forvisitors/2011ed.php](http://www.ahrexpo.com/forvisitors/2011ed.php).

**Sidebar: NATE Classes at the Expo**

Emerson Industrial Automation will offer four free NATE-certified educational seminars just days prior to the opening of the AHR Expo. Each seminar will provide important energy-saving recommendations according to the U.S. Department of Energy, as well as offer simple installation and maintenance techniques designed to maximize bearing and v-belt life and energy efficiency.

The three-hour classes are scheduled for Thursday, Jan. 27, and Friday, Jan. 28, at the Sun Coast Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas. Morning sessions are available from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., and afternoon sessions are available from 1 to 4 p.m., with lunch provided at no cost to attendees. Interested parties are invited to register online at [www.browningenergysavings.com](http://www.browningenergysavings.com) or via phone at 866-477-3277. Registration is on a first-come, first-serve basis and class size is limited.

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