

Blair Business Mirror



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Prestigious recognition

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S.P. McCarl gains national reputation for safety

Despite the fact that Blair County has an incredible number of outstanding businesses, it's still a big deal when one of those businesses gains national recognition for something significant. In mid-November, S.P. McCarl & Company of Altoona became the most recent national award recipient.

At the Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning Contractors National Association (SMACNA) Annual Convention in San Diego, McCarl's received the 2018 Safety Excellence Award. Several hundred contractors from across the country applied for the award, considered the organization's most prestigious.

"To be recognized by SMACNA is special because it's an affirmation to our employees that their efforts make a difference," acknowledged Liz Burke, McCarl's President. "It's even more special because the recognition comes from our peers. In an ever-increasing, fast-paced environment in construction, safety could easily take a back seat to production. We maintain our diligence every day with every team member."

For anyone familiar with S.P. McCarl & Company, winning a safety award would come as no surprise. Visit the company's website and you'll immediately see a list of priorities. The very first one is "Uncompromising Safety Commitment."

"The projects that we do for our clients have become increasingly complex," explained Steve Shank, Vice-President. "We work on everything from heavy industry, chemical plants, laboratories and universities. With these types of projects our safety culture has also needed to continually evolve and improve."

S.P. McCarl's emergence as a trusted, well-established mechanical contractor didn't happen overnight. The company's roots go back 69 years when Foster McCarl, Jr. formed McCarl's Plumbing & Heating Company in Beaver Falls, PA. Foster opened the Altoona office in 1972 and Shawn McCarl became general manager of that office in 1990 and took over independent ownership in 1996.

S.P. McCarl & Company was incorporated by Shawn McCarl, the current CEO, in 1997 and is now the largest full-service mechanical contractor between Pittsburgh and Harrisburg. Those services include



Photo by Steve Shank

Above: S.P. McCarl did the complete plumbing installation at the Fairfield Inn and TownePlace Suites in Altoona. The photo shows the underground plumbing at the new hotels.

On the cover: S.P. McCarl has built a strong reputation for undertaking small and large projects, not only in Blair County but throughout the Tri-State area.

Photo by Joe Terza



Photo by Tim O'Brien

Above: The S.P. McCarl Operations Team represents a wealth of knowledge and experience.

Photo by Dave Thomas

At right: Community involvement has been a high priority of S.P. McCarl since the company's inception. Here, Shawn McCarl poses with Cathy Griffith of the Griffith Family Foundation. The company has been a sponsor of the Foundation's golf outing for several years.



design-build, design-assist, plumbing, HVAC, industrial process piping, sheet metal fabrication and installation, pipe fabrication, ASME code work, HVACR service and plumbing service.

"People don't know a lot about us because we're above the ceiling and behind the walls," McCarl pointed out. "We've averaged \$16 million in sales-per-year. We have 115 employees that represent many highly specialized career fields. We have employed thousands of tradesmen from the region. With 3.2 million man hours, we have paid \$131 million in payroll over the past 23-years."

Although much has changed in the construction industry since 1997, Liz Burke takes great pride in talking about what hasn't changed.

"We remain committed to our core values," she noted. "We put safety and family first. We actively engage in our community and always deliver to our customers, whether it is a residential no-heat call or a contract for a multi-million dollar project for a Fortune 500 company."

Community involvement has been an aspect of S.P. McCarl's approach since it first opened its doors.

"Our philosophy as a company is that we are here for a larger purpose and helping those in need is part of that greater calling," disclosed Kevin Laird, the company's Business Development Manager. Among their involvement are The Griffith Family Foundation, HAYFA, The Zack Hinich Foundation, the Golden Tiger Recreational Field, Young Life of Central Pennsylvania and the Miracle League of Blair County.

With such an illustrious past, what comes next for S.P. McCarl?

"We're excited for the future and are proactively planning," Burke stated. "Our leadership team created a Strategic Plan that provides a platform for growth that is laid-out in 3, 7 and 20 year segments with a concentration on continuous improvement and embracing the future workforce by evolving our workplace. Growth at a steady pace while maintaining our positive company culture is essential to our success."

S.P. McCarl & Company has been a member of the Blair County Chamber since 1974.