

Date: Fri, 22 Oct 1999 13:47:02 -0500
 From: GHART <ghart@inlink.com>
 To: info@firespaces.com
 Subject: Re: Manufacturer's Report on Heater Dispute

Walter,

I've been present at the MHA meeting for the last few years when these standards and wording and definitions of what is a masonry heater have been hashed out. Other manufacturers have been there giving input. I'm really curious as to why you have not been in attendance to provide input as well as Tulikivi. These meetings are not secret and are open to builders and manufacturers. I personally contacted Sackett Brick and Tulikivi US.

It seems to me that everything would have been much more productive if feedback were provided at the time of these meetings instead of shaking the tree after everything had been submitted.

Sincerely,

Gary Hart

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Walter Moberg wrote:

> Hello Everyone:

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> On Tuesday you received a "report" from Norbert Senf presenting his
 > description of the building code dispute over masonry heaters. I offer
 > another perspective. Attached is my "report" based on the same meeting held
 > last week in DC to resolve the issues. As a manufacturer of masonry heaters
 > I resent the accusations that we are demanding unreasonable solutions and
 > "spoiling the pot". I invite your reactions and comments and challenge
 > Norbert to post this report on the MHA website as well, so we can have a
 > fair hearing of the issues. Note that we have proposed, and are still
 > negotiating new language solutions that have not yet been placed in front of
 > the group at large. Everyone's input is still welcome.

>

> Walter Moberg, President
 > FireSpaces, Inc.
 > info@firespaces.com
 > www.firespaces.com

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Subject:

Date: Fri, 22 Oct 1999 17:00:01 PDT
 From: "Walter Moberg" <firespaces@hotmail.com>

Reply-To: info@firespaces.com
 To: ghart@inlink.com

Dear Gary,

I work with Walter as well as having been a founder of the MHA, Vice President of the MHA, Chairperson for the ASTM E06.54.07 (which I followed through from its inception to its completion around 8 years later), Chairperson for the HPA Masonry Heater Caucus and President of the MHA a post from which I sadly had to resign. Since resigning from my post I was able to spend less and less time with the association due to the enormous amount of time it takes to try to run an extensive masonry heater manufacturing business (I am partial owner of EnviroTech Radiant Fireplaces and former partner in Dietmeyer, Ward & Stroud, Inc.) I have personally been involved in either the construction or sale of over 800 masonry heaters. I trained for 3 years with a German Stove master. I say this not to brag but to qualify my level of knowledge.

What I saw happening to the MHA was an increasing propensity to close ranks and become very guild-ish. This was the exact problem that was happening in Europe. The guild acted as if they knew everything and that no one else knew anything. Before long (around 1988) the suppliers for handbuilt heater products (Roschmann & Schmid, which had been in business since 1903) went under. The reason that they went under was the fact that they were losing their business to Modular units for their do-it-yourself market. This did not happen because the average person wanted to build their own unit, but because they did not want to deal with the guild and their standards. They limited their ranks so much that they had very few builders and the customer typically had to wait for 6 months to a year to have a heater built.

The MHA started a training program about the time Walter and I left the association. From what we could see it was a very limited training program, largely based on hand construction. Our company and Walter's saw that we were going in different directions than the MHA. We fought numerous verbal battles over many of the same things we are still battling over and in the end decided it was time to devote our energies to our own companies. Many of the battles I fought as Chairperson for the ASTM committee was getting people to think outside their perspective boxes i.e. Finnish contraflow builder, Grundofen builder, TESS manufacturer, Einsatz manufacturer etc.

This the exact issue at hand right now. People who don't know how to build stoves at high altitudes or how to build very large masonry heaters think we should limit flue sizes, people who don't know how to insulate flues running outside a house want to disallow putting flues on the outside of are people who have not successfully built thick wall heaters want to disallow thick wall heaters and at the same time disallow thin walled heaters. What Walter and I are trying to do right now is help people see a bigger picture, because with a little less fighting there is a very big picture out there.

In terms of our participation, knowing that these things were being done, you are right we could have been more involved. I was out of the loop because of internal changes in DWS, Walter was deep into development on some new products. On the other hand, those out there who know both of us and our positions well did not contact us and ask for input. Jim Buckley and I were speaking to each other at least several times a month. Jerry F. had called on several issues over the six months preceding the inception of this code vote. Norbert has long known of our stands and positions and did not once try to get input from us. We did not know that the MHA was going to make their positions into code! I don't know if the fact that they knew so well how we would react to this was a driving factor or not, but I choose to believe not. The only reason we happened to find out that this was even going on was that an engineer whom we knew well, was on one of

these committees. He saw that masonry heaters were on the docket and recognized that they did not represent masonry heaters as we know them. He contacted us and got us going on this path.

If the MHA had continued to act truly as an association like it did when Ric Crooks was President and the ASTM Document and the Colorado Regulations were written, then we'd all be working off the same page. But the MHA has become a guild, representing virtually only the interests of the custom heater builders and that is OK. The larger manufacturers have naturally been drawn to their own caucus and begun to pursue things from a broader perspective. We don't see that we are shaking some sacred tree, rather that we are planting new seeds on fallow ground. Tulikivi is producing and installing more heaters than probably the whole MHA combined. Clearly, they don't want to rely on one vote in an "association" dominated by masons. If MHA can see itself as part of a larger picture and not the center of a smaller universe it would go a long way towards cooperation.

Walter has also been responding to comments today and we have been splitting the load. He asked me to respond to you so that it was done in a timely manner. We would be glad to discuss things further and hope that you can perhaps help bridge our dispute.

Sincerely,

Thomas Stroud