

# in the Loop

## Maintaining Steam Traps Can Bring Savings

It's easy to tell when a light bulb has burned out, an elevator isn't working or a lavatory sink is leaking. But it isn't that easy to tell when a steam trap has failed – and that can significantly affect your building's bottom line.

Steam traps are often hidden and tend to be “out of sight and out of mind.” Plus, just conducting a visual inspection doesn't tell you all you need to know. The truth is, further investigation is in order, as a failed steam trap can be costing you thousands of dollars a year and you don't even know it.

If we assume a building's steam system has 10 psi of pressure, one failed steam trap with a 7/32-inch orifice means that a system is losing 28 pounds of steam per hour. If that building's system operates 24 hours a day, that's 20,440 pounds of steam lost per month – or 245,280 pounds of steam lost per year, all of which was purchased but not used. That could equate to a loss of more than \$8,700 per year – just from one failed trap, depending on your cost of steam.

Does your building have a failed steam trap? Or, worse yet, several failed traps that haven't operated correctly for more than a year? Repairing those traps could increase your building's energy efficiency and reduce your operating costs.

“Steam traps are often overlooked when it comes to building HVAC maintenance,” says Daryl Schoellkopf, general manager of Webb Kentrol/Sevco, a division of FW Webb. “Every building should have a maintenance program for traps. It makes financial sense. When we go into a

building to evaluate traps that haven't been maintained for five years, we often see multiple traps have failed. Money is going out the window. That just isn't the case when a preventive maintenance program is in place.”

The best time to inspect and work on traps is right after the winter heating season, which is coming up soon (we hope). In fact that's a good time to do a steam trap survey that includes tagging and locating all steam traps, identifying the trap types and manufacturers, and evaluating if traps are still located in the best places on the system. Once a survey is done, a maintenance program can be set up.

“A good maintenance program is probably even more important than the right trap size and fit,” says Schoellkopf. “Maintenance and proper installation will overcome bad trap design any day. You want to be sure the trap is doing what it's supposed to do – holding back live steam, removing condensate, venting air and gases, and reacting to changes in system load. But traps can't keep doing their job day in and day out without proper attention.”

Take time this spring to check out your steam traps. Contact Jeff Lindberg at Hartford Steam, jefflindberg@hartfordsteam.com or (860) 548-7348, to learn more. Fixing failed traps is a winning proposition!

## Introducing... More Information More Often

When Hartford Steam Company surveyed its customers last year, respondents indicated they would like to hear more information more often about the company and its services. We embraced those comments and will soon debut a new e-mailed bulletin to keep customers informed in between our regular newsletters.

The eBulletin will include operating tips, service reminders and other tangible topics that will help customers optimize their steam and chilled water use and interaction with Hartford Steam. By year-end we'll also introduce a customer information portal where customers can access their steam and chilled water consumption information and view graphs that show usage trends.

So stay tuned to your e-mail in-box for more from Hartford Steam. Be sure to let us know what information you find most helpful as we work together to increase energy efficiency. If you're a customer wishing to receive the eBulletin, please send your email address to Diane Wojcik, dianewojcik@hartfordsteam.com.



Steam traps aren't always located in easy-to-reach places, so their maintenance is sometimes overlooked – even though proper trap operation can save an owner thousands of dollars.



## Pride of Ownership

Shawn Paluska may not own 100 Pearl Street, but he represents the people who do. And that's good enough for him.

Paluska, 100 Pearl's property manager and chief engineer, has served the high-rise building, its tenants and its owners for 13 years. "This is my job, and I want to do it to the best of my ability," says Paluska. "I take pride in the building and what it offers our tenants. Giving our tenants what they need is our number one priority."



**Shawn Paluska, 100 Pearl Street**

According to Paluska, one of the best ways to keep tenants satisfied is a preventive maintenance program. It's not a luxurious amenity, but it's the foundation of ongoing satisfaction. It means there are minimal surprises or inconveniences and that the building is comfortable year-round.

Paluska started at the building in 1997, left briefly to work at another property, but returned to 100 Pearl three years ago. He works for SL Management Group, a division of The Silverman Group, the building's owners. He is responsible for the building's day-to-day operations and coordinates building services with the owner's New Jersey office. He also oversees all construction projects. He has received accolades for his building's performance.

"The biggest change I've seen in building operation over the years is the huge improvement in building management systems," he says. "Controls are much more automated and that results in higher efficiencies while still maintaining tenant comfort. Our team is always looking at ways we can improve. I work with a great group of people. We work well together and share tenant satisfaction as our common goal."

## Hartford Steam Salutes... Wesleyan University

The Hartford Steam Company has a kindred spirit in Wesleyan University, just down the road. In 2009, Wesleyan installed a combined heat and power (CHP) system, as did Hartford Steam. (CHP systems recover heat that would otherwise be wasted from the generation of electricity and put it to work to heat or cool buildings or equipment.)

The university's 2.4 MW gas-fired reciprocating engine with heat-recovery steam generator is already resulting in environmental and economic benefits. Campus-wide greenhouse gas emissions decreased from approximately 38,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide in 2005 to 25,000 metric tons in 2009. The system's increased efficiencies – and ability to produce some of its own electricity – are saving the university about \$5,000 per day.

In 2010, Wesleyan University was one of seven individuals and organizations honored with the Connecticut Climate Change Leadership Award for their innovative efforts to address global climate change.

Hartford Steam commends the university for its forward-thinking environmental initiatives and use of combined heat and power.

For more about Hartford Steam's 3.5 MW combined heat and power system, visit [www.hartfordsteam.com/resources.htm](http://www.hartfordsteam.com/resources.htm) and view the first issue 2010 newsletter.



## Did you catch our special issues?

Last fall, Hartford Steam published two special issues of our newsletter: one about sustainability (second issue 2010), the other about meters (third issue 2010). If you missed them, check them out online at [www.hartfordsteam.com/resources.htm](http://www.hartfordsteam.com/resources.htm).



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Emergency? Call (860) 725-7005.  
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