

# TRIED & TRUE

////// SINCE 1923

WINTER 2024

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STORY | **PG. 10**

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### Dear Fratco family,

Each issue of *Tried & True* marks the end of a successful season at Fratco and begins a new season of innovation and growth. We are always looking at tomorrow, ensuring the decisions we make today set us up for success not just in the next quarter, but for generations to come.

This issue of *Tried & True* highlights one of our valued employees, Carrie Carver, a proud member of the Fratco family, whose dedication and evolution within the company mirrors Fratco's own trajectory of growth and commitment to its employees and customers. We also feature an exclusive interview with the President and Vice-President of Drainage Solutions, Inc. This distributor and valued customer of Fratco is one of many partners that have helped make Fratco what it is today. Take a few moments to read about how we have helped each other thrive.

We also feature an in-depth article covering the pivotal role of universal standards with a deep dive into ASTM International. We mention ASTM all the time, but now you can explore how this organization shapes industries through its dedication to safety, reliability and innovation; and learn how Fratco aligns with these global standards to ensure top-quality products and practices.

In addition, we hope you enjoy our new *Field Journal* section, which covers practical tips you can apply on the job, and there's a dedicated article for our sales team as well.

We're excited for you to read about the significant changes and developments at Fratco, and how we're making substantial investments to begin building tomorrow, today! If we don't look at tomorrow and how we can improve, we'll get left behind. Every day at Fratco we wake up and take advantage of the opportunity to improve however we can. Whatever the process, whatever the product, there is always a better way—and we will find it.

Sincerely,

**Chris Overmyer**  
President and CEO

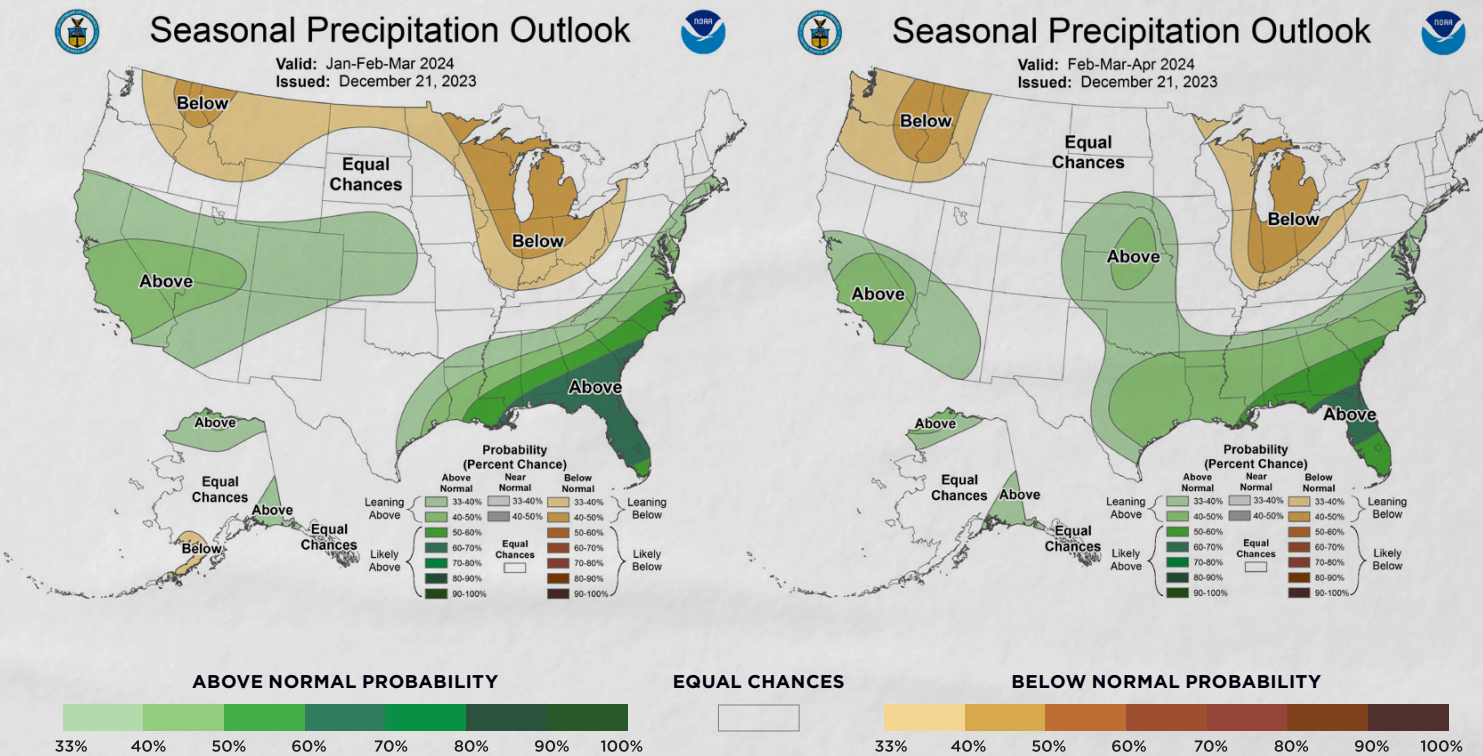


# Precipitation Outlook

FROM THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

JAN-MAR

FEB-APR



The future brings a constantly shifting landscape, and weather predictions are no exception. In an industry where preparation is the cornerstone of success, having a glimpse into what lies ahead can make the difference between a normal day or an unforeseen setback. Staying vigilant with daily and weekly weather updates is essential. Take proactive steps towards a successful future by considering seasonal forecasts for a broader perspective on the coming season.

For the latest weather information, visit the National Weather Service's website.

[www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov)

Blueprint for Success

Patience, persistence and perspiration make an unbeatable combination for success.

- NAPOLEON HILL

We are always looking to move forward, dreaming of the future we're heading to. But true success, the kind that leaves a lasting mark, is not a fleeting mirage but a destination reachable through patience, persistence and perspiration.

**PATIENCE** teaches us to withstand the trials, delays and uncertainties that accompany our endeavors. It reminds us that dreams take time to materialize, and it's our unwavering faith in the process that sets the foundation for triumph.

**PERSISTENCE** is the fire that burns within, urging us to keep moving forward despite obstacles. It empowers us to rise each time we fall and turn setbacks into stepping stones. It's the inner strength that fuels our journey towards our aspirations.

**PERSPIRATION**, the sweat of our labor, is where the magic happens. Hard work, dedication and the consistent application of our skills and knowledge transform dreams into reality.

So, as you embark on your path to success, remember that this unbeatable combination—patience, persistence and perspiration—will be your guiding light. With these tools, you can achieve the success you desire. Trust the journey; embrace the process; and know that your dreams are within reach. ■



# Industry News

## FARM BILL UPDATE

Learn more about the critical lapse of the food and farm bill by Congress and the President's recent extension. The bill has a wide-reaching impact on America's food system, from farm workers to consumers.



Scan here and head to [fsa.usda.gov](https://fsa.usda.gov) for the full update!

## DRAINAGE PAYS

Check out Purdue University's extensive water drainage study in Butlerville, Indiana. It has provided valuable insights into the impact of tile drainage on crop yield and soil health. This research revealed that proper drainage significantly enhances fieldwork timeliness, reducing delays caused by excessive wetness. If you are hesitant to update your drainage system, this shows you can benefit greatly from drain tile investments, improving crop yields and soil quality. Learn more about the study from this article published by Drainage Contractor.



Scan here and head to [drainagecontractor.com](https://drainagecontractor.com) for the full story!

## FREE PPI COURSE

### New EPSD course on PPI eLearn!

PPI Energy Piping Systems Division is pleased to bring you this short course introducing different methods for isolating flow in Polyethylene pipe. The course covers both squeeze-off and other line stoppage methods.



Scan here to check out this course and other courses from PPI!



## MEET

# CARRIE CARVER

## ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT & BENEFITS COORDINATOR

Carrie's history with Fratco began over a decade ago when she became the first woman on the Mount Pleasant production floor. After a brief departure to the medical field, she returned to Fratco when the call came from the Mount Pleasant front office. Since then, she has continued to be an integral part of the Fratco family.

Her journey at Fratco mirrors the company's remarkable growth story. After rejoining the Mount Pleasant, Iowa plant nearly four years ago, she initially served there as an administrative assistant in logistics. In March 2023, she embraced a new role as the benefits coordinator for all four Fratco plants.

As a benefits coordinator, Carrie manages all aspects of healthcare, dental, vision and 401k plans for Fratco employees. With Fratco's team growing faster than ever, she's busier than ever but tackles her responsibilities with enthusiasm.

Carrie deeply appreciates the sense of family and genuine care within Fratco's employee community. Over the years, she's seen Fratco's commitment to employees' welfare evolve and expand.

*"I think all the growth is amazing and we've grown so much. Since I was on the production floor here in Mount Pleasant and as a company—as a whole—I mean, we've been here a hundred years, so growth is exciting."*



Fratco's dedication to growth resonates with Carrie. She acknowledges the company's investments in expansion, improved processes and employee well-being. As a benefits coordinator, her role aligns with Fratco's holistic growth vision, ensuring employees receive comprehensive support in all facets of their lives.

Carrie expresses her gratitude to Fratco's loyal customers, recognizing their trust in the company's quality products. She understands that Fratco's commitment to product excellence and exceptional customer service sets them apart. She noted that knowing customers trust not just Fratco products but Fratco staff as well, makes her proud to be part of the Fratco Family.

Carrie Carver's journey at Fratco exemplifies dedication, adaptability and commitment to the company's growth. Her passion for employee benefits, customer service and genuine care for colleagues align with Fratco's core values. As the company continues to expand and invest in its future, Carrie remains an essential part of Fratco's journey. ■



# PLANT THE SEED

## Forging Stronger Connections with Customers

In the world of construction and contracting, salesmanship isn't just about moving products or winning projects; it's about building trust, offering real value and forging lasting relationships.

Whether you're a seasoned pro or just starting, here are some things to consider while navigating the nuanced world of sales in our industry. From understanding your customers' needs and highlighting product benefits, to providing excellent customer service and staying updated with industry trends, these eleven tips are designed to assist you in connecting with your customers on a deeper level. Even the most experienced contractors can find new ways to excel in the art of sales. We hope you'll discover valuable insights that will elevate your sales game and further strengthen our Frac Community.

### 1. UNDERSTAND YOUR CUSTOMERS

Before pitching your drainage solutions, take the time to understand your customer's specific needs and requirements. It's one thing to know broadly what your customers are looking for. But it's another to understand their mindset; knowing them on a personal level can help you tailor your pitch to what they need to hear. The "one-size-fits-all" pitch is easy to spot and is a huge turn-off to customers.

### 2. FOCUS ON BENEFITS INSTEAD OF FEATURES

It's great if your widgets and gizmos increase efficiency by 40%, but what your prospect really wants to know is whether or not they'll have more money in their pocket at the end of the year. Remember, features tell, but benefits sell.

### 3. KNOW YOUR PRODUCT/SERVICE

Be well-versed in the technical aspects of your products. Know the different types of products, materials and installation methods available. This knowledge allows you to confidently address customer questions and concerns. The more confident you are, the more confident they will feel with the product.

### 4. OFFER CUSTOM SOLUTIONS

Offer customized solutions based on the specific challenges your customers face. Show that you can tailor your services to meet their unique needs, whether it's for a small residential project or a large-scale agricultural operation. This personal intentionality can go a long way in helping a customer trust their supplier.

### 5. PROVIDE DEMONSTRATIONS

Take your customers to finished or active job sites. Seeing the products in action can be very persuasive for potential customers. It allows them to visualize the benefits and reliability firsthand.

### 6. USE TRANSPARENT PRICING

Be transparent about your pricing structure. Provide clear and competitive pricing for your products and services. Avoid hidden fees or surprises that may irritate customers. You don't like it when companies you interact with lack transparency, so why should your customers?

### 7. BUILD TRUST AND CREDIBILITY

Share customer testimonials, reviews and references that highlight your successful projects. Building trust and credibility is essential in the construction industry. To do this, think of your customers as people first, and customers second. Each will have their own needs and concerns, and giving them the ability to be themselves around you will go a long way.

### 8. FOCUS ON EXCELLENT CUSTOMER SERVICE

Part of building trust is also providing exceptional customer service throughout the sales process. Respond promptly to inquiries, be accessible for questions and be reliable when it comes to project timelines and commitments.

### 9. FOLLOW-UP

Don't forget about your customers after the sale. Follow up to ensure their satisfaction and address any post-installation concerns promptly. A satisfied customer can become a valuable source of referrals.

### 10. NETWORK AND BUILD PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Build relationships within the industry. Attend trade shows, join local construction associations like the Indiana Builders Association (every state has one) and network with other contractors, suppliers and professionals. Word-of-mouth referrals are still a highly effective way to make connections.

### 11. KEEP UP WITH INDUSTRY TRENDS

This is something to keep in mind while you are building your network. Stay updated on the latest trends and innovations in your field. Sign up for industry newsletters or local social events. Being knowledgeable and involved with the newest technologies and practices can set you apart from competitors.

Remember that successful sales often rely on building trust, offering value and demonstrating expertise. By focusing on these aspects and tailoring your approach to your customers' unique needs, you can increase your sales as a contractor. ■





*DISTRIBUTOR SPOTLIGHT*

**BEYOND**

# PIPE & PROFIT



## THE DRAINAGE SOLUTIONS, INC. STORY

**DRAINAGE SOLUTIONS, INC., A LONG-TIME PARTNER OF FRATCO**, is a remarkable drainage systems and solutions distribution company that has not only weathered the storms of time but also emerged stronger with each challenge.

Terry Noriega, the very heart and President of Drainage Solutions Inc., and his wife, Stephanie, began their journey in 1997 as a part-time endeavor. Selling accessories to other dealers might have seemed a humble beginning, but Terry's vision was anything but modest. They originally started the company because they found themselves facing a challenge that no parent ever wishes to confront: mounting medical bills for their young son. In those moments of vulnerability and uncertainty, many would have succumbed to despair, but not the Noriegas. They looked beyond the immediate adversity and saw an opportunity, one that would not only help them aid in their financial challenges, but also lay the foundations for a venture that would stand the test of time.

In the early days of Drainage Solutions Inc., both Terry and Stephanie had their work cut out for them. Terry leveraged his extensive knowledge of pipe and drainage systems, and Stephanie managed the intricacies of the budding business. Terry recalls the slow beginnings, "Starting out

of our home was both a challenge and a lesson. Every square foot was a testament to our dedication to our son and our belief in what Drainage Solutions, Inc. could become." Their garage transformed into a makeshift warehouse and their dining room into a mini office. For five relentless years, the couple juggled their roles as parents, caregivers and entrepreneurs, proving that passion, grit and purpose could indeed turn the tide.

As years passed, what started as a part-time venture to cover medical expenses began to flourish. Their commitment to quality, combined with an undeniable business acumen meant that Drainage Solutions, Inc. was ready for its next chapter. In 2002, marking a significant milestone, the company made a bold leap to transition from a home-based setup to its very first brick-and-mortar location. It was more than just a change of address; it symbolized the culmination of dreams, hard work and the tenacity to rise above challenging circumstances.

**CONTINUE READING** ▶▶▶





Terry and Stephanie on vacation with their son.

Reflecting on these early years, the journey of Drainage Solutions, Inc. stands as a tribute to the resilience and determination of the human spirit. It underscores the idea that businesses are not just built on capital and strategy, but also on hope and the power of family. The story of Terry and Stephanie is not just about the inception of a successful company;

## IT'S ABOUT TWO PARENTS WHO, WHEN FACED WITH ADVERSITY, CHOSE PERSEVERANCE OVER DESPAIR AND HARD WORK OVER SURRENDER.

Today as Drainage Solutions, Inc. celebrates a quarter of a century in the industry boasting four branches, 30 dedicated employees and an extensive customer base, its roots remain firmly anchored in those early days of struggle and hope.

Drainage Solutions, Inc.'s expansive approach sets them apart. While many businesses laser-focus on a niche, this company has bravely ventured into diverse markets for all kinds of drainage. From septic systems to golf courses and municipal areas, their footprint is vast. They've grown to offer a wide array of drainage products and



Drainage Solutions, Inc.'s Leesburg facility and fully stocked yard.

brands including pipe, valves and fittings, catch basins, grates, channel drains and trench drains as well as products for erosion, silt and sediment control. Their ambitious venture into online sales and their unwavering commitment to maintaining an abundant inventory underscores their forward-thinking approach.

Their intentionality of keeping many products in stock paid off during the challenges of the recent pandemic. Many businesses faced crippling inventory shortages and plummeting sales. However, Drainage Solutions, Inc. was prepared. Having maintained a robust inventory, their proactive strategy meant they could continue selling products, ensuring their availability for customers in trying times. They prioritized continuing support for their existing customers, choosing not to capitalize on the heightened prices resulting from product shortages. Such preparedness meant they suffered considerably less than many other businesses, a significant achievement amidst a global crisis.

Partnerships have played a significant role in their journey. Terry explains, "It's not just about business; it's about trust." Terry's emphasis on loyalty to vendors and customers illuminates the depth of these relationships. Northern Indiana, with its dense agricultural fabric, has particularly benefited from this unwavering bond.

Jeremiah Jacks, Vice President, and Terry even reminisce on the early days of Drainage Solutions Inc. when their Fratco Sales Representatives, Paul Liggett and Brendan Noggle went the extra mile for them. They would do things like personally deliver products for them as Terry explains, "When there were trucking shortages, Paul would take his truck and a small trailer and pick stuff up and bring it to us if we needed it right away." He explains that while that kind of thing is talked about a lot in the industry, Fratco follows through on their loyalty and adaptability.



Terry recalls meeting former Fratco CEO, Steve Overmyer, 35 years ago at a tradeshow. At the time Terry was representing a Fratco competitor, but he remembers being greeted by Steve as if a friend. "Steve would take me around and introduce me at different trade shows. And I'm thinking, 'Why is this guy introducing me to his customers?'" Terry came to learn that Steve and Fratco as a whole were so confident in their relationship with their customers, that he was actually taunting Terry with Fratco's committed customers knowing they would always stay loyal to Fratco. Terry chuckled as he explained, "[Steve's customers] would tell me stories about Steve driving a truckload to them on Thanksgiving because they wanted to keep working—and he made sure they could keep working. And I'm thinking... that's why. Not because I was gonna steal them. He was letting me know, not to bother. I was young and cocky and he was putting me in my place." Steve demonstrated to Terry the value of a business feeling like a family as he eventually began to adopt that mentality for Drainage Solutions, Inc.

Today at its core, Drainage Solutions, Inc. isn't just a business enterprise—it's a family. The camaraderie between Terry and Jeremiah evokes images of siblings rather than mere colleagues. Their playful interactions encapsulate the essence of the company's culture—nurturing relationships, whether with vendors, customers or within the team. Jeremiah tells us, "...to us it's personal... we're taking care of people, not just selling products. It's about valuing people, investing in them and growing together as a community."

Each branch of the company actively engages and supports local initiatives, reflecting their commitment to the communities they serve. From sponsoring Little League baseball teams to supporting food banks, their involvement is diverse and heartfelt. In a recent creative endeavor in South Bend, they supplied 36-inch pipe to serve as playful barriers for a school's Nerf war event, turning an ordinary weekend into an extraordinary adventure for the kids. Terry explains, "We strive to support each community as best we can. When someone approaches us with a legitimate public project or just needs to borrow pipe, we don't hesitate. It's our way of giving back and staying connected." These acts of generosity and involvement showcase Drainage Solutions, Inc.'s dedication not just to their industry, but to nurturing the communities that have been an integral part of their journey.

Drainage Solutions, Inc. serves as a striking example of perseverance and determination, proving that with vision, dedication and a sense of community, challenges can transform into opportunities. ■



The Drainage Solutions, Inc. team supporting a local multiple sclerosis awareness and fundraising walk.



# WORK ANNIVERSARIES

Cheryl Owens	32 years	Reece Eakins	2 years
Chad Eberhart	29 years	Andres Gonzales	2 years
Christopher Overmyer	26 years	Ron Probasco	2 years
Chad Nicholson	22 years	Guadalupe Aguirre	1 year
Bobby Howard	21 years	Maxston Baker-Hoover	1 year
Scott Craig	20 years	Blaine Bowman	1 year
Alan E Kruszka	14 years	Ricardo Cardoza	1 year
Travis Fett	12 years	Danielle Cavazos	1 year
Kiley Robert Miller	5 years	Luis Martinez Cubias	1 year
Carrie Carver	4 years	Celisa Espinoza	1 year
Alondra Aguirre	3 years	Chad French	1 year
Holly Craig	3 years	Jolene Hagedorn	1 year
Nathaniel Depew	3 years	Daniel Hinojosa	1 year
Cameron Dewitt	3 years	Joel Adam Huges	1 year
Cameron Edwards	3 years	Jason Lingenfelter	1 year
Carlos Gonzales	3 years	Edward Pollmeier	1 year
Zachary Wesely	3 years	William Robert Wheeler Posing	1 year
Jade Crum	2 years	Austin Simanson	1 year

## WELCOMING NEW HIRES

Ovidio Reyes Cardona	Rasheed Cooper	Makayla Cam
Palmer Snavelly	Tristian Carter	Stephanie Denning
Stephanie Reagan	Floridalma Perez	Joshua Giovanelli
Rual Gonzalez	Marvin Velasquez Eraso	Rodrigo Pacheco
Daniel Beiswanger	Manuel De La Fuente	Joshua Martin
Myles Drake	Linda Rushing	Ricardo Espinoza

FRATCO IS GROWING:

# Shaping Success Together

Thanks to loyal customers like you, Fratco has experienced remarkable growth. We're extremely thankful for your trust. However, new growth always brings new challenges. Rest assured, we're tackling these head-on.

Even though we're growing and changing, we're still delivering the excellence that our valued customers deserve. We want to explain why we've made these changes and share the positive impact they're having.

Some of our changes include:

- Improved Inventory Availability
- Quicker Load Times
- Enhanced Shipping Efficiency
- Customer Shipment Tracking
- Designated Account Managers
- Dedicated Shipping Department
- Larger Yard Teams
- New Driver Training Program
- Expanded Fleet of Trucks

At Fratco, we believe that improvement is a journey, not a destination. We're excited about the continuous enhancements to our facilities and processes. We understand that change can be intimidating, and we appreciate your patience during this transition. It's a dynamic and continually evolving system that we're constantly evaluating and fine-tuning for success. These changes are all about increasing efficiency and bringing positive benefits to you and your customers, as we truly believe that change is necessary for the future success of Fratco and our customers.

We value your feedback and encourage you to reach out with any thoughts or questions. Together, we'll keep growing and serving you better. Thank you once again for being part of the Fratco family.

**-Your Fratco Team**



# ADMC CORNER



WITH  
**KEEGAN KULT**

We checked in with Keegan and he shared some exciting updates from ADMC.

After successfully launching the Batch & Build program, a story featured in the fall issue of *Tried & True*, a similar program is also taking off in Iowa, Minnesota and Ohio. This program named, "Turn-Key," is the same practice being implemented, "saturated buffers," but with a more streamlined channel for project management and funding. The aforementioned states have incredible funding opportunities that could lead to up to 100% of cost share coverage.



TO READ LAST ISSUE'S  
ADMC ARTICLE SCAN HERE

ADMC is also currently helping the Illinois Sustainable Ag Partnership (ISAP) lead conservation efforts in Illinois by joining forces to accelerate conservation drainage implementation. This program currently offers a 100% cost share. The goal of this project is to help propel growth forward without overwhelming the system.

Anyone interested in implementing these practices in their area can contact Keegan Kult at [kkult@admccoalition.com](mailto:kkult@admccoalition.com).

## SHARE YOUR FRATCO STORY!

Have you had a remarkable experience with Fratco? Whether you're a contractor, customer or employee, we want your story!



SUBMIT YOUR STORY AT  
[TRIED-TRUE@FRATCO.COM](mailto:TRIED-TRUE@FRATCO.COM)

**FRATCO**

**5 MILLION FEET OF  
PROVEN PERFORMANCE.**

**FLEX CORR**





# ASTM INTERNATIONAL: *SETTING THE STANDARD FOR EXCELLENCE*

In the world of manufacturing, construction and innovation, the importance of standards cannot be overstated. Especially here at Fratco, where we hold ourselves and our products to high standards of reliability and endurance. Standards are the invisible threads that bind industries together, ensuring that products are safe, reliable and consistent. Just like many household products you use everyday, Fratco products are no stranger in needing to meet standards. At the forefront of this standardization effort stands ASTM International—an organization dedicated to creating a global language of quality, safety and performance. Many of us have heard or referred to ASTM but we wanted to take the time for a deep dive into what ASTM is and how it functions.

## What is ASTM International?

ASTM International, the American Society for Testing and Materials, is a globally recognized leader in the development and publication of voluntary consensus technical standards. Founded in 1898, ASTM has grown to become an influential force in shaping industries and technologies across the globe. They are the reason most manufacturing standards are universally implemented and accepted.

Standards are crucial for ensuring consistency, safety and progress across industries. Without them, the construction, automotive, medical, energy and other sectors would be chaotic, compromising safety and hindering innovation. For instance, without standardized sizes everyday appliances like toasters or toilets wouldn't work efficiently. ASTM's role in setting standards is vital for the smooth operation and growth of industries, including specialized fields like Fratco's drainage solutions.

## Key Ways ASTM Makes a Difference

### STANDARDIZING SAFETY AND RELIABILITY

ASTM standards enhance safety by establishing best practices and testing procedures. From building codes to medical devices, adherence to these standards helps protect consumers and users. These standards also promote sustainability and environmentally responsible practices. This is crucial in an era where environmental concerns are paramount. For example, Fratco pipe needs to meet

specific ASTM standards that ensure quality plastic. It's ASTM's stamp of approval that helps provide a universal understanding of what customers can expect from that plastic. Concerns about things like product degradation or pipe buckling under pressure can be removed when the product meets specific ASTM standards.

### CHAMPIONING COLLABORATIVE INNOVATION

Standards drive innovation by providing a framework for consistent quality. Companies use ASTM standards to develop new products and technologies with confidence, knowing they meet established criteria. For Fratco this means following ASTM standards to help certify our top-of-the-line products as well as boost our research and development on potential new products.

### PIONEERING GLOBAL TRADE

ASTM's standards are recognized and adopted internationally. They are often referenced in contracts, regulations and procurement documents, ensuring global consistency and compliance. These universal standards help facilitate international trade by providing a common language for product specifications. This simplifies the procurement process and encourages economic growth for companies big and small. This simplification and standardization is what gives space for small businesses and contractors to help gain some traction. Every business starts somewhere, and with ASTM standards small start-ups can get the same quality assurance that a larger company may already have established.

Source: ASTM.org

## How Does a Standard Get Created?

ASTM's standards development process is a testament to collaboration, expertise and the pursuit of excellence. Here's a glimpse into how it works:

**1. IDENTIFYING NEEDS:** The process begins when a need for a new standard or the revision of an existing one is recognized within an industry or community. One way you can see this play out is in the universal formulas for the composition of recyclable plastics. If a type of plastic is recyclable, then it's meeting that standard.

**2. TECHNICAL COMMITTEES:** When a need is identified a technical committee is called into action. ASTM has over 140 technical committees, each focused on a specific area. For example, if the need is steel-related, it could fall on a committee dedicated to stainless steel alloy or a broader one dedicated to related alloys. These committees consist of experts, stakeholders and professionals from various fields. These committees begin working on solutions and setting standards for identified problems in their respective fields.

**3. BALLOTING AND REVIEW:** Proposed standards are submitted for review, allowing for input and feedback from committee members and external stakeholders. This process is repeated until a standard reaches its final iteration.

**4. PUBLICATION:** Once a standard has been rigorously reviewed, it is published and made available to the general public. ASTM's online platform, ASTM Compass, serves as a repository for these standards where programs like the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) will begin to implement and regulate the use of standards.

ASTM International plays a vital role in shaping industries, ensuring safety and fostering innovation worldwide. We look up to their commitment to collaboration, consensus and excellence and how it has made ASTM an internationally trusted source of standards. ASTM will remain at the forefront as industries continue to evolve and face new challenges, setting the standard for excellence and progress. As we at Fratco continue growing, developing, researching and producing, we will continue to be part of the standardization process that ASTM provides. In an ever-changing world, ASTM International provides the stability and reliability that industries and consumers rely on. ■

## Don't get it twisted!

An Inside Look at ASTM's Role in Creating Standards with Andrew Kireta, Jr.  
- Former Board Chair for ASTM

We had the opportunity to speak with Andrew Kireta, a long-time volunteer with ASTM and former board chair. Kireta emphasized that ASTM as an organization is not involved in the technical or scientific discussions when creating standards. He puts it like this, "The biggest misconception about ASTM is that ASTM as an organization, or as staff, writes the standards or has a say in the actual technical content of the standards. ASTM is a convener and an arbitrator of the standards development process." In other words, ASTM creates a space for scientific experts from different fields and experiences to come together and create standards. Kireta went on to explain, "They [ASTM] do not write nor do they impact the technical content of any of the standards. That is solely the responsibility of each technical committee and their volunteer members." In summary, ASTM as an organization does not write the standards themselves. Rather, they bring together experts from different disciplines to guide them in creating standards based on what those experts know best.



# FIELD JOURNAL

TRIED & TRUE TRICKS OF THE TRADE

## 1. PROTECTING YOUR HANDS FROM WINTER WOES

The toil of the trade in winter climates can often lead to one pesky issue: dry hands. Whether you're handling drainage pipe or shaking hands with a customer, maintaining healthy hands is the best way to keep up with any job.

### CAUSES OF DRY HANDS:

- Frequent hand washing often results in the skin losing its natural oils due to consistent water exposure.
- The use of various cleaning agents and solvents, along with the materials handled on the jobsite, can contain chemicals that are abrasive to the skin.
- Outdoor tasks, particularly during colder months, expose our hands to harsh conditions like cold temperatures and wind.
- To top it off, the regular use of tools or equipment can result in wear and tear, exacerbating skin dryness.

### RISKS OF NOT TREATING DRY HANDS:

- **Pain** - Spare yourself unnecessary pain by treating your hands before they get to a point of no return in the winter.
- **Infection** - Once dry skin splits open, it's very difficult to keep it clean and free of bacteria.

### COMBATING DRY HANDS:

You might think the manliest option is to let your hands get rough and tough, but there's a difference between tough and dry. It's hard to work when your primary tools get too stiff to function. So just hear us out:

- Start by choosing a heavy-duty moisturizer and make it a routine to apply after washing up and again before hitting the sack to lock in moisture.
- When dealing with tough materials or braving the elements, always have a sturdy pair of gloves on hand to shield against rough surfaces and cold.
- Ditch those harsh industrial soaps; instead, go for ones packed with natural ingredients that clean effectively without robbing your skin of its essential oils.
- Hydration isn't just about the exterior; drinking adequate water keeps your skin robust from the inside.

If you're looking to go the extra mile, coat your hands with a rich moisturizer or petroleum jelly, then wear gloves when you sleep. This overnight regimen ensures your hands are prepped and ready for whatever the next day throws at them, and you don't even need to bother trying to work with a slimy moisturizer all over your hands.

## 2. FUEL YOUR DAY RIGHT: WARM MEALS ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

Out in the field, on a construction site or traveling between jobs, there's nothing quite like a warm meal to fuel your day. Sometimes cold sandwiches or paying for fast food just doesn't cut it. Remember the thermos of hot food mom used to send you to school with? A thermos can be a game-changer if you're looking for hot lunches no matter where you are, especially during those long days out in a cold, windy field.

### PREPPING THE PERFECT WARM LUNCH:

- Before packing your meal, preheat your thermos by filling it with boiling water, sealing it and letting it sit for a few minutes.
- After emptying the water, add your hot food and close it up quick for maximum heat retention.
- When choosing what to pack, go for foods with a consistent texture, such as soups, chilis, pasta or curries, which maintain their warmth and flavor effectively.
- For a little extra, accompany your meal with a small pack of condiments, utensils and maybe some bread or crackers to round out your meal.

Next time you're gearing up for a cold day on the job, pack that thermos with your favorite warm dish. A piping hot meal is not just comforting, it's a boost of energy and morale, reminding us of home and warmth even on the coldest of days.

### 7 LUNCH IDEAS FOR YOUR THERMOS

1. Tomato Soup
2. Pulled Pork Mac n' Cheese
3. Mushroom Risotto
4. Chicken Tortilla Soup
5. White Chicken Chili
6. Chili & Mac
7. Coconut Chicken Curry

### Quick Creamy Tomato Soup

Prep time: 5 min  
Cook time: 15 min  
Serves: 3-4

- 2, 15 oz. containers, chicken or vegetable stock/broth
- 1, 28 oz. can concentrated crushed tomatoes
- 1 cup heavy cream
- Salt and black pepper
- 20 leaves fresh basil, chopped, for garnish
- Soup Toppers (optional): Fresh garlic, Extra-virgin olive oil, Shredded cheese

Mix broth and tomatoes in a medium saucepan on medium heat. Once the soup starts bubbling, add heavy cream and salt and pepper, and let it simmer gently for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Use an immersion blender to puree the soup. Serve in bowls, garnished with basil chiffonade and topped with Soup Toppers.



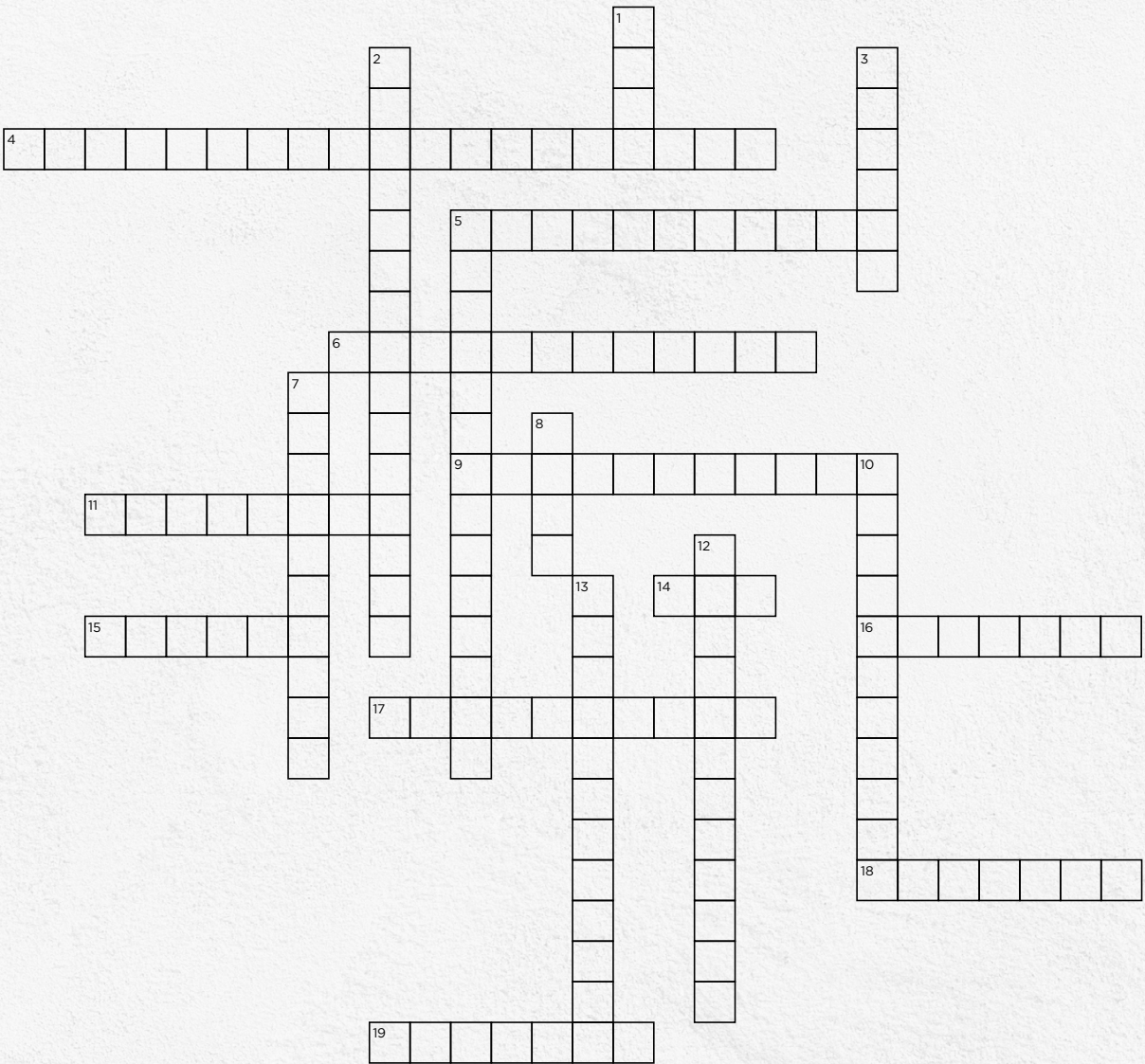
# Howdy, Fratco Family!

WIN THIS LIMITED EDITION *TRIED & TRUE* CAP



Complete the crossword puzzle, snap a picture of it and email it to [tried-true@fracto.com](mailto:tried-true@fracto.com) by March 31st. We will pick FIVE lucky winners to receive a *Tried & True* hat! Fill out the information below and include it in your photo!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_



## CROSSWORD CLUES

### DOWN

- 1. The abbreviation for an organization that implements and regulates ASTM Standards
- 2. Where Carrie started as the first woman when she initially started at Fratco
- 3. Something you can wear over night when you are extra serious about avoiding dry hands
- 5. The first names of the salesmen that went the extra mile for Drainage Solutions, Inc.
- 7. Key focus of Fratco’s changes
- 8. The abbreviation for a globally recognized leader in the development and publication of voluntary consensus technical standards
- 10. The year that Drainage Solutions, Inc. was founded
- 12. The main material in our FlexCorr pipe
- 13. Publication where Fratco’s exclusive stories and news are featured

### ACROSS

- 4. This position at Fratco handles all healthcare, vision, dental and 401k plans
- 5. The second of three qualities for unbeatable success
- 6. Our new section with practical tips for the job
- 9. At Fratco, we believe that improvement is a journey, not a \_\_\_\_\_.
- 11. The bill that Congress has yet to pass
- 14. Who Terry and Stephanie originally started Drainage Solutions, Inc. to raise money for
- 15. This university published an extensive study on water drainage
- 16. A similar version of the Batch & Build Program
- 17. New growth always brings new \_\_\_\_\_.
- 18. The tenth tip for good sales practices
- 19. What Fratco believes improvement is



**INSTRUCTIONS:** Cut along the dotted line for 5x7 frames. Cut out the image for 4x6 frames.



*Hard work beats  
talent when talent  
doesn't work hard.*

- TIM NOTKE

#### LOCATIONS

**CORPORATE OFFICE**  
105 W. BROADWAY ST.  
MONTICELLO, IN

**WESTFIELD, IA  
(STATELINE TILE)**  
23942 IA HWY 12

**FRANCESVILLE, IN**  
4385 S. 1450 W.

**ST. ANNE, IL**  
499 S. OAK ST.

**ALGONA, IA**  
2502 E. POPLAR ST.

**MT. PLEASANT, IA**  
1600 W. WASHINGTON ST.

**FRATCO**

**Fratco**

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