



Joseph Kneidinger Green Contractor of the Year Chuck Fell

CFI MECHANICAL OF HOUSTON



President Dan Daniels, left, and Kenneth Edwards, UA General Executive Board vice president District 3, right, present Chuck Fell with the Joseph Kneidinger Green Contractor of the Year Award.

PHOTO BY BRIAN GADBERY

Most reading this probably remember “MacGyver,” the late 1980s television series about a secret agent who eschewed guns in favor of resourcefulness, calm and whatever knick knacks he could dig out of his pockets? If a problem needed solving, MacGyver would quickly survey the items at his disposal and rig up a solution to save the day.

The recipient of the 2011 Joseph Kneidinger Green Contractor of the Year Award, Chuck Fell, has more than a little of that MacGyver know how in him.

As chairman of the Plumbing Contractors of America and member of the Mechanical Contractors Association of America board of directors, Chuck has fought tirelessly to promote green education and research in the field of plumbing and mechanical design and construction. And his company, CFI

Mechanical of Houston, embraces innovative concepts, such as prefabrication, and technologies that benefit the environment as well as address the practical consideration of a building’s life cycle costs.

That’s where his MacGyver-like instincts are best served. Take for instance the Hines project known as 717 Texas, a 33-story office tower in Houston’s downtown theater district. Originally constructed in 2003, the building’s owners sought a LEED Platinum rating, but came up three points short during the initial inspection.

Grass and shrub landscaping on the property was being watered using the city of Houston’s public water supply. Chuck’s team at CFI was called upon to find a better, more cost effective and sustainable way to go about it.

CFI suggested the building’s owners collect the condensate from the building’s air handling units into a holding tank with a pumping station, then disconnect the irrigation system from the city’s public water supply and instead connect it to the condensate holding tank.

This clever solution earned the project four LEED points this year, enough to achieve the platinum level rating the owners desired. CFI has subsequently recommended this condensate recovery system to customers who want a proven green solution without requiring a large initial investment.

For his spirit of innovation, commitment to environmentally friendly building practices and promotion of products and systems that help our industry contribute positively to the sustainability movement, IAPMO is thrilled to award Chuck Fell with the 2012 Joseph Kneidinger Green Contractor of the Year Award.

“I would like to thank the IAPMO Board of Directors, the C.A.U.S.E. committee and the Green Technical Committee,” Fell said. “I’m so honored, very grateful and pleased to receive this award.

“Education of green, sustainable causes is a priority of CFI Mechanical, IAPMO, MCAA, our schools and universities and my family. It should be for your families, too. Thank you very much for this award, I’m very grateful.”