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## The *UPC*'s Value Stretches Far Beyond the North American Market

**I**n North America, I believe those involved in plumbing would agree that "*UPC*<sup>®</sup>" is synonymous with plumbing. Looking back at the early years of the IAPMO, it was started in 1926 by a group of Los Angeles city plumbing inspectors who were taking a coffee break and discussing plumbing issues. Someone proposed forming an association of what later became IAPMO. The inspectors' objectives were as follows: "To advance the latest and most improved methods of sanitation; to promote the welfare of and the harmony between the owner, builder and craftsman; to accomplish a uniformity in the application of the provisions of the ordinances; and to promulgate the mutual benefit of the members, the City Division of Plumbing and the General Plumbing Fraternity."

One can't help but find it quite fascinating how a simple coffee break conversation could really make a difference within the plumbing world that we know today. It was IAPMO's founding father, Stephen Smoot, who had this vision from the start of IAPMO. Smoot once said, "From small acorns, great trees grow." I find his statement to be inspiring.

Now, let's fast forward to present time. I personally have been part of The IAPMO Group for more than a decade now and I have experienced and witnessed unprecedented growth both domestically and internationally during the past decade. It has been an incredible journey and I am very proud to be part of this great organization that has developed the codes that safeguard half of the world's population today. That was quite an achievement.

In the recent years, government officials and plumbing associations from other countries, such as China, Taiwan, Indonesia, Brazil, Vietnam, India, Philippines, and many others, have come to us to learn about our *Uniform Plumbing Code (UPC)*<sup>®</sup>, plumbing standards, and plumbing technologies. It is such an honor to be able to share our knowledge in plumbing with other countries and be able to bring the value of our *UPC* outside the North American market.

During a visit last year to IAPMO R&T's offices, Mr. Miao Bin, the secretary general of the China Building Ceramic & Sanitary Ware Association, said, "Our association has established close contacts with IAPMO R&T since 2003. We appreciate the support IAPMO R&T has provided to our manufacturer members and we are looking forward to working closely with IAPMO R&T when developing new product standards for sanitary and plumbing products in China in the future."

Earlier this year, IAPMO R&T was invited to attend an event in Taiwan to witness the installment of the new chairman of the Plumbing Association of Taiwan. When discussing IAPMO, the newly elected Chairman, Mr. Wu Yih-Dar, commented, "Taiwan's plumbing industry is export-oriented. Many manufacturers of faucets and other plumbing items are exporting to the United States and Canada. IAPMO's *cUPC* certification program has worked as 'entrance tickets' for these manufacturers' products to enter the North America market. In addition, through the understanding of *UPC* requirements, Taiwan plumbing manufacturers are introduced to new plumbing technologies, such as the pressure-balance shower valves, which in turn proved to be beneficial to Taiwan consumers, as well. We are looking forward to further establishing a relationship with IAPMO to develop a certification system like the *UPC* in Taiwan."

This kind of feedback and response that we have received from outside the North America market is what makes all of our efforts and hard work in promoting safe and healthy plumbing worth it. They represent a clear testament that the value of our *UPC* mark of conformity goes beyond the North America market. I am looking forward to bringing the value of our *UPC* to many more countries so that the citizens in these countries can benefit from the safe and healthy plumbing through the application of the code. 📧



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