

AIWD

3rd Quarter 2025

insider NEWS



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Miami, FL

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SuperFlash promotes Brittany Fichter to Sales Representative and Marketing Coordinator

Selected for Prestigious AWS Leadership Symposium

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: bfittchner@superflashcg.com

Cleveland, OH — July 25, 2025 — SuperFlash is proud to announce the promotion of Brittany Fichter to the role of Sales Representative and Marketing Coordinator, recognizing her outstanding performance, leadership, and dedication to our mission of delivering quality compressed gas safety and storage solutions.

In her new dual role, Brittany will take on increased responsibilities in client relations, regional sales development and strategic marketing initiatives. Since joining SuperFlash, Brittany has brought passion, insight and innovation to the team. This promotion reflects the trust and confidence the organization places in her to lead and grow in both sales and marketing capacities.

In addition to this exciting internal promotion, SuperFlash is thrilled to share that Brittany has also been selected to attend the AWS (American Welding Society) 2025 Leadership Symposium, representing District 10 at the AWS World Headquarters in Miami, Florida this November.

Out of thousands of AWS members across the country, Brittany was chosen as part of a small, elite cohort of rising leaders in the welding and gas industry. The AWS Leadership Symposium is a signature program that empowers select members to strengthen their leadership capacity and drive greater impact within their local Sections and across the Society. This immersive, 3½-day experience includes advanced leadership training, collaborative workshops, and unique networking opportunities with peers and AWS senior leaders.

As part of the November 6–9 cohort, Brittany will join a long-standing tradition of leadership excellence, becoming part of a national network of over 700 past participants since the program's inception in 1999.

"We are incredibly proud of Brittany's accomplishments and honored to have her represent both SuperFlash and District 10 at the national level," said Kurt Tarkany, National Sales Manager. "Her leadership, enthusiasm, and commitment to excellence make her a perfect fit for both her expanded role and this prestigious opportunity."



Please join us in congratulating Brittany on both her promotion and her selection for the 2025 AWS Leadership Symposium. Her continued success is an inspiration to our entire team and a reflection of the high standards and values SuperFlash stands for.

About SuperFlash

SuperFlash is a trusted supplier of compressed gas safety equipment and custom-engineered solutions, serving industries ranging from medical and specialty gases to industrial and laboratory applications. With a steadfast focus on safety, innovation, and reliability, SuperFlash delivers products such as flashback arrestors, manifolds, gas mixers, and more to customers across North America and beyond. Learn more at

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GROWING THE AIWD:

When you think **BIG**, everyone wins

Lumberton, TX - As the welding industry continues to evolve, we're seeing a steady increase in acquisitions by national suppliers. While adding new members to the AIWD remains a vital part of our strategy to offset these losses, the single most powerful lever we have to strengthen our group is growing our sales—together.



The path to growth is not limited to recruiting new distributors. The most immediate and impactful way to expand our buying power is through deeper engagement with the vendors we already have. That means commitment. That means intentionality. That means all of us — owners, purchasers, and sales teams — working with purpose to support the vendors who support us.

Over the past year, I've had numerous conversations with member companies who are making thoughtful, strategic decisions to buy more from AIWD vendors. These are companies who understand that growing our group's sales doesn't just benefit one member—it benefits every member.

I've walked in your shoes. I know firsthand the challenges distributors face. We operate in a market where end users often influence the brands we carry. That's real. But what's also real is that we often overlook an opportunity: the person doing the purchasing doesn't always fully understand the strength and value of our vendor relationships. The importance of supporting those relationships can get lost in the daily grind.

Salespeople play a crucial role here. Yes, it may take extra effort to educate a customer on a comparable—or even superior—product from one of our group's vendors. Yes, it's often easier to win business by matching what the end user is already using and focusing on price. But growing the AIWD is not just about what's easy. It's about what's intentional.

We must think bigger. We must act deliberately. Every purchase decision that supports our group's vendors is a step toward stronger programs, better pricing, and greater leverage.

Let's not keep doing business the same way and expect different results. If we want to grow—as individual businesses and as a group—we must choose to grow. This is a partnership. And partnerships thrive on communication. If there are ways AIWD can better support you, I want to hear them. We're in this together, and we all want to win.



New members will always be part of our future. But growth through sales—by fully utilizing the vendors we already have—is how we build something stronger and more sustainable for all of us.

I also want to take a moment to express how incredibly grateful I am to work for each of you. Being part of AIWD's continued movement and progress is an honor. We've come a long way over the past few years. We've built better systems, brought on new vendors, added strong members, and strengthened the brand and purpose of this group. And yet, we still have a long way to go. That's the exciting part—this is an amazing group, filled with some of the most driven, smart, and committed people I've ever worked with. We don't just have members—we have the *best* members.

If you want more out of this group, talk to your peers. Let them know the value of the AIWD. It doesn't matter if they're already in another group or going it alone—if they're a good fit, introduce me. I'm always happy to connect and have the conversation. Let's continue to grow and build this network the right way.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Executive Director. I look forward to the next five years and beyond. The best is still ahead, and I'm proud to be on this journey with you.



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AIWD 2026 Annual Golf Tournament

Saturday, May 25, 2026

“COUNT ME IN!”

The importance and VALUE of Member attendance at our Annual Conventions



Decatur, AL – Conventions offer unique opportunities. They provide the chance to meet vendors face-to-face, network with new vendors and explore their offerings. Also, there are multiple opportunities to interact with other members to help problem solve issues you may be having.

In 2026 the show takes place in Miami, April 26th-28th, Sunday to Tuesday. It's important to add these dates to your calendar. I know that sometimes working IN your business seems so overwhelming and like there is no chance you can get away for a few days. The shows give you a time to step back and work ON your business. You may find a new product, or about a new system, or a service that may help make your life easier and free up some time when you return home.

Attending conventions can be expensive, especially for smaller companies. However, it's a requirement for membership to attend every other year. Every year there is voting on behalf of the group, making important decisions for the entire group, so your voice is crucial. That is why we want you, we need you there.

I say all this to let you know. Now is a great time to start making plans to attend. Start by booking your flight. Start by making a staffing plan. Start by practicing your golf swing. Start by getting more business cards. Just start. We look forward to seeing you in Miami!





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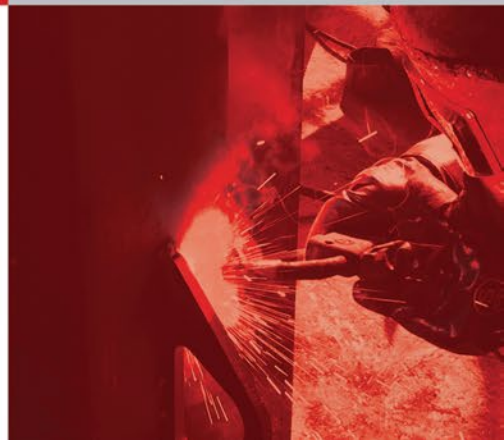


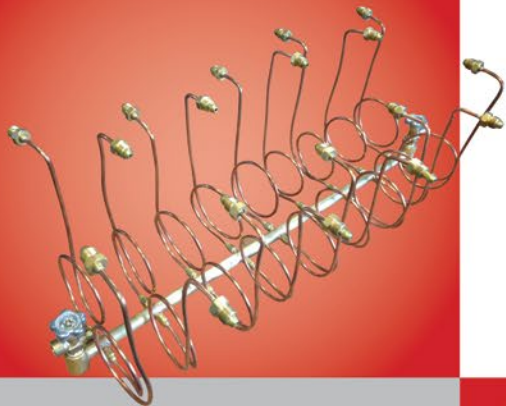
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Connie Hoyt (Treasurer) with Tim Serviss (West Board Member)

Welcome New Members

Please join us in welcoming our newest AIWD Members!

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Member 990

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SAFETY TRAINING SERIES:

Infectious Diseases and Emergency Response



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HORTON

Hepatitis A

Objective: To increase awareness of the health risks and prevention methods associated with Hepatitis A.

Understanding the Dangers

Hepatitis A is a contagious, inflammatory liver disease caused by a virus typically spread through contact with contaminated surfaces or food. The culprits include poor sanitation, contaminated drinking water, poor personal hygiene, and sexual contact.

Hepatitis A isn't a chronic infection. The disease typically incubates 14-28 days. Most infected people recover from the infection without lasting liver damage and develop immunity to future infection. However, on rare occasions, some people develop severe symptoms or liver issues that may become fatal.

Transmission

Hepatitis A is spread via the fecal-oral route, which involves touching surfaces containing the virus or ingesting something contaminated by an infected person's feces. It's most often spread through close contact with an infected member of the person's household or sex with an infected partner.

The Hepatitis A virus exists in numerous environments and can even survive certain food production processes. Public outbreaks of Hepatitis A often involve fruits, vegetables, shellfish, ice, and water.

Symptoms

Adults are more likely to show symptoms than younger children. However, some adults may be asymptomatic. Common symptoms include:

- Fever
- Nausea and vomiting
- Dark-colored urine
- Jaundice
- Loss of appetite
- Abdominal pain

There are no specific treatments for people who develop Hepatitis A infection other than rest, good hydration and nutrition, and avoiding drugs and alcohol, which can cause additional liver damage.

Prevention

Getting the Hepatitis A vaccination will prevent you from developing the disease. Other precautions include:

- Frequently handwashing with soap and water after using the bathroom or changing diapers.
- Washing hands well prior to preparing food, especially for food handlers.
- Properly sanitizing food-contact surfaces. To do this, first remove debris, clean the surface with an effective detergent, and rinse the object with clean, extremely hot water or place it in a dishwasher.
- Cooking food or boiling water at temperatures high enough to kill the virus (185° F for at least one minute). **Note:** Freezing temperatures won't destroy the virus.
- Washing food, especially fruits, vegetables, and shellfish, prior to eating them.



Using proper handwashing and sanitation practices can help prevent the spread of Hepatitis A.

Training Short 2.0

Safety and preparation are the best ways to avoid emergencies. You should contact 911 or other emergency services for significant emergencies, but everyone plays a role in emergency response. Understanding your role in an emergency is critical for your safety and that of others.

The quantity and type of hazards at your facility and the nature of the operations present different risks and responsibilities. This training includes general information on emergency response to cover the basics.

WHAT IS EMERGENCY RESPONSE?

Simply put, emergency response is how you respond to emergencies. A good Emergency Response Program involves taking action before a possible emergency occurs.

Remember: Call 911 if the situation has escalated and danger is imminent!

GENERAL SAFETY RULES

If you see something suspicious, say something. You can help prevent the domino effect — when an emergency happens and spreads quickly, increasing the danger as it grows.

Do you know the hazards in your facility?

- Flammable and combustible materials
- Explosives
- Hazardous chemicals
- Poor housekeeping
- Faulty electrical equipment
- Ignition sources



FACILITY EVACUATION

Always know where the nearest exits are in your building or worksite. Your workplace has an evacuation notification system in place to let employees know when an emergency is occurring and that everyone must evacuate. This may be an audible or visual alarm, verbal communication, or another unique signal to signify the need to exit.

EVACUATION ROUTES

- Identify 2+ exit paths from your work area prior to an emergency.
- Locate your employee assembly and primary meeting area.
- Know the locations of high-risk areas, like hazardous materials storage, to avoid an evacuation.
- Do not take the elevator in an emergency in a multi-story building. Designate assisted evacuation areas for those who may need assistance to get to a lower level.

EVACUATION TASKS

- If the evacuation notification signal is given, begin the exit process. Notify others.
- Perform evacuation tasks as assigned to you. This may be performing equipment or electricity shutdown, closing doors or windows, or other tasks.
- Go to your meeting point and check in with your supervisor.
- Supervisors shall account for all their employees, assist emergency responders, and ensure that no employees return to the facility until authorities deem it safe to do so.
- Follow the instructions provided by first responders.

FIRE EMERGENCIES

- Ensure that you have a safe means of escaping the area.
- Notify supervisors and fellow employees.
- Call 911. Rely on the fire department for control of large fires.
- **ABC dry chemical fire extinguishers**, which are found in most facilities, help extinguish flammable liquids, combustible materials, and electrical fires.
- Be properly trained on how to operate a fire extinguisher. **Remember the P.A.S.S. method: Pull, Aim, Squeeze, Sweep.**
- On average, fire extinguishers will spray for 10-15 seconds until empty, or approximately 1 second per pound.



SPILL RESPONSE

Before addressing the spill, make sure the situation is safe for trained personnel to clean it up! Never enter an area that may have a potentially explosive atmosphere or one in which you can be overcome with vapors.

Preparation tip: Consult the safety data sheet (SDS) for instructions on how to respond to chemical spills. If evacuation is needed, notify others, and do so as quickly as possible.

- Shut off all potential sources of ignition and any source of leaks (oil piping/valves).
- Notify your supervisor immediately of any spill! Depending on their size, some spills may need to be reported to government agencies.
- Ensure you are wearing all necessary personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Contain and clean up a spill by diking around it using your facility's spill response material. Dispose of absorbent material in designated containers for waste disposal.
- Did your spill enter a storm drain? Alert your supervisor so the proper authorities may be contacted.

CHEMICAL OVEREXPOSURE

Always consult the SDS for specific instructions on the proper response for chemical exposure. If there is any doubt about the seriousness of the exposure, your first action should be to get appropriate medical care for the affected individual. Call 911 if a person seems to be having a life-threatening reaction.

Inhalation: Common symptoms include headaches, dizziness, or nausea. The recommended response is to move the victim to fresh air. If symptoms persist or get worse, seek medical attention immediately.

Dermal (skin): Common symptoms include dryness, cracking of the skin, irritation, or rash. Respond by rinsing with cold water, then seek medical attention if symptoms persist. If the exposure is corrosive, use only water when washing, no soap.

Ingestion: Common symptoms include nausea, vomiting, or cramps. Consult the safety data sheet (SDS) for first aid procedures or contact poison control. If symptoms appear to be serious, call 911 first.

Eye: Common symptoms include burns or vision damage. The most common response is to call for help and flush the eye for at least 15 minutes at an eyewash station or with water. If any trace of the chemical or debris remains in the eye, seek emergency medical attention immediately.

SEVERE WEATHER EVENTS

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the United States experienced 28 separate climate and weather-related disasters in 2023 alone, each causing over \$1 billion in damages.

Be prepared! Preparation is key to minimizing the impact of severe weather events on personnel and property. While some weather events have significant lead-up time, others, like earthquakes, do not.

What types of severe weather events could impact your workplace?

- Flood
- Hurricane
- Earthquake
- Tornado
- Tsunami
- Blizzards
- Extreme Heat/Cold
- Wildfires

The National Weather Service (NWS) uses different terms to signify the likelihood of severe weather events. These words help define the risk posed by the event.

NWS Signal Word	Likelihood	Meaning
Watch	Hazardous weather is possible.	Monitor conditions.
Advisory	Hazardous weather is likely or is already occurring.	Be prepared to act!
Warning	Hazardous weather is likely or is already occurring, and serious damage is likely.	Take action!

Remember these key takeaways for severe weather safety:

- Understand the different responses based on the weather type. For severe weather events like tornadoes, earthquakes, and hurricanes, it may be best to shelter in place. For floods and tsunamis, it may be safer to evacuate to higher ground if time permits.
- If time permits, secure loose or elevated items. Bring equipment down to ground level, secure tanks and drums, and, if possible, bring vehicles inside.
- Have a workplace emergency kit in your building and in company vehicles. Items like flashlights, batteries, radios, bottled water, and non-perishable foods are good starting points.
- Cleaning up after a severe weather event can easily result in injuries. Leave tasks like hazardous material cleanup, downed powered lines, and tree removal to those who are trained in the hazards of performing such work.
- If you lose power following a severe weather event, avoid using combustion-powered generators indoors, as they can cause a buildup of carbon monoxide.

SHELTER-IN-PLACE

There may be occasions when a workplace emergency occurs when evacuating the facility is not possible, such as an outside chemical release, community emergency, or severe weather event. When this happens, you want to ensure your safety by gathering at your workplace's shelter-in-place location.

Location: The best shelter-in-place location is an indoor area with no access to outside walls or windows. If you have multiple buildings or many employees on-site, you may have more than one.

Ventilation: Air intakes should be turned off during a chemical emergency. If you can't turn off the intakes, tape over or cover the vents or areas where contaminated air could enter the space.

Door: Ideally, the door locks from the inside and doesn't allow viewing from the outside. If the door has a window, depending on the type of emergency, you may want to cover it or obscure the view into the room.

Space: There should be enough space for each employee to sit comfortably.

Supplies: Maintain an emergency supply kit and keep it in the shelter-in-place location for easy access. Include flashlights, batteries, bottled water, non-perishable food, and other items to sustain the group until you can be safely released from the area.

Communication: Cellular service may be limited in emergencies, so utilize a landline phone if available. Certain mobile phone carriers may have SOS services. Depending on the type of emergency, employees may need to silence communication devices.

Actions: If possible, lock outside doors and close windows. Take an employee roll call and communicate with emergency services to let them know who is accounted for.



MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

Medical emergencies can occur in any workplace. While some workplaces may have trained first aid responders who can assist with medical care, it's important to understand the basic steps any employee can perform in the first critical moments following an emergency.

- Notify your supervisor, emergency response coordinator, or trained first aid personnel.
- Know the location of first aid supplies.
- If contacting emergency medical services, provide information such as the location of the injured employee(s), the type of injury/illness, any additional hazards, and the nearest entrance or other landmarks to enter the building.

DISCUSSION POINTS

Can you answer the following questions?

- Do you know where the two closest emergency exits are from your work area?
- What is the evacuation notification signal for your work area?
- Where is your primary evacuation meeting point located?
- Do you know how to look up safety data sheets (SDSs)?

Remember: Report all accidents/injuries or unsafe conditions to a supervisor immediately.



Foodborne Illness: Buffets and Potlucks

Potlucks and buffets carry a high risk for foodborne illness because bacteria thrive in food that is left out for long periods of time at room temperature. The **danger zone** for bacterial growth is between 40° and 140°F. The maximum amount of time that food can stay in this range before becoming dangerous is two hours, and potlucks and buffets easily last longer.

Sanitary practices, avoidance of cross-contamination, and temperature control guard against bacteria. Take care while preparing, storing, and serving food.



Types of bacteria:

- ***Staphylococcus aureus***: Commonly called “staph”, these bacteria are found on human skin and inside noses, throats, and infected cuts and pimples. They can contaminate food during preparation, and they thrive when food is left out at room temperature. This type of bacteria produces a toxin that cannot be destroyed by heat.
- ***Clostridium perfringens***: Also called “cafeteria germs,” these are often found in large servings of food that are allowed to reach danger zone temperatures.
- ***Listeria monocytogenes***: If food has been contaminated by these bacteria, they can multiply and produce toxins even in temperatures below 40°F. This type of bacteria is commonly found in dairy products, such as un-pasteurized milk and cheese.
- ***Salmonella***: These bacteria are found in poultry, eggs, raw milk, and raw milk products. It can be introduced into food during food preparation or from consuming raw or unpasteurized products.
- ***Escherichia coli (E. coli)***: *E. coli* exposure may be the result of cross contamination from raw meat and produce. There are various strains of *E. coli* that result in a range of health symptoms including diarrhea and other intestinal problems.

Avoiding contamination:

- Always wash hands before handling or preparing food.
- Keep areas, utensils, and platters used for food preparation and serving clean.
- To protect against staph bacteria, do not prepare food if you have an infection of the skin, eyes, or nose.
- Do not reuse serving platters without first cleaning them.
- To guard against *Listeria monocytogenes*, observe sell-by and use-by dates on pre-packaged foods.

Foodborne Illness: Buffets and Potlucks

Temperature control:

- Food preparation:
 - Food must reach the proper internal temperatures while cooking.
 - Cool food quickly and evenly when storing. Put the cooked food into a shallow container and place in the refrigerator or freezer.
 - Reheat foods to 165°F.
- Serving practices:
 - Keep hot foods at 140°F or above by using chafing dishes, slow cookers, or warming plates.
 - Keep cold foods cold by putting the serving bowl or platter in an ice bath, and replace the ice as needed.
 - To limit the time food is at room temperature, put out small serving sizes of the food, and keep the rest in either the oven or refrigerator until it is ready to serve.
 - Track the time that foods have been on the buffet table at room temperature, and discard any food that has sat out longer than two hours.

If foodborne illness is suspected, contact a healthcare professional immediately and describe the symptoms.

Insurance / Risk Advisory / Employee Benefits

HORTON

Employers: Feel free to copy/print this form to use for your safety training course completion.

This form documents that the training specified below was presented to the listed participants. By signing this form, each participant acknowledges receiving this training.

Organization: _____ Date: _____

Training Subject: _____

Trainer: _____ Trainer's Signature: _____

Class Participants:

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Name: _____ Signature: _____

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