

## Winter Magazine 2019

# *Montana Message* by Brad Longcake

***Greetings from Montana!*** As we welcome the crisp fall air and changing colors, we hope that the fall finds you all in good spirits and ready to welcome the Holiday Season. The end of summer and early fall has kept MPMCSA busy.

PMAA in Georgia was a huge success. Montana was represented by me and Kary Tonjum, PMAA Director. Getting together with peers and other marketers from across the country is a great opportunity to network and keep your finger on the pulse on what is happening around the country. We had two full days of meetings and had the opportunity to discuss a number of topics. These included RFS, electric vehicles, and tobacco issues, along with reports from both the motor fuels committee and the convenience store committee. I had the opportunity to stay and participate in some of the NACS lectures and spend time on the trade show floor. I know I say it every year but if you have never been to NACS, I would highly recommend it. The sheer number of vendors and products to check out is incredible.

In mid-October we hosted an event in conjunction with DEQ in Bozeman to discuss the upcoming changes to the underground storage tank regulations. We had an excellent turnout including members, non-members, consultants, and DEQ representatives for a very informative evening. Topics included the new walk through 30-day inspection form, check release detection equipment, spill prevention tests, over fill prevention and a number of other topics. Given the turnout and the positive reception, we plan to host similar events early in the new year around the state. I also want to thank Leanne Hackney, UST Section Supervisor with the DEQ, for all of her hard work on this program and her willingness to work with me and the MPMCSA over the past few years. She is transitioning out of her current role and will be missed. We wish her all the best in her new adventure.

Recently I was able to participate in an interim committee meeting as we move forward with a Legislative Audit for the Petroleum Tank Release Compensation Board. I was able to provide the committee follow-up information and clarification. The next step will be to submit questions formally in order to help guide the process and ensure the committee has the information needed to proceed.

As you may have heard, Montana's Governor Steve Bullock is in the hunt for the 2020 Democratic Presidential nomination. He recently issued an Executive Order related to what he has deemed an emergency health crisis for our state. The order imposed a 120-day ban on the sale of flavored vaping products. It was scheduled to go into effect on October 22, but vape shop owners have brought forth a lawsuit and the judge has issued a temporary restraining order to block the ban. At the time of print, each side has presented arguments and the judge is in deliberation. We are closely monitoring this issue and the impact it will have on our C-Stores.

In the coming weeks I will travel to Scottsdale for the Western States Executive Director meeting. We will be going over legislative issues and sharing what's working and happening in each state. We have our year end MPMCSA board meeting scheduled for early December and will be going over a number of topics to finish out the year and to begin planning for our annual meeting and trade show the first week of June. This year has been extremely busy with the session and all of the work that has continued, to help ensure that the MPMCSA is always in the front of these issues. I continue to foster these relationships and work with other groups to help include information to help sculpt any new rules or regulations.

On behalf of all of MPMCSA, we wish you all the happiest of holidays and we look forward to all that 2020 will bring.