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THE FUTURE IS NOW: HOVERCRAFT TECHNOLOGY HAS ARRIVED

On May 25, 1983, George Lucas introduced the world to speeder bikes in "Star Wars: Episode VI - Return of the Jedi." In one of the movie's most pivotal moments, Luke Skywalker and Princess Leia race dangerously through a forest, hovering on speeder bikes, desperate to apprehend a handful of stormtroopers. Since that moment, the world has wished for the hover technology. Well, California-based tech company Aerofex has granted that wish.

While the exact date hasn't been announced, their Aero-X hovercraft is set to hit the market sometime in 2017. The hovercraft rides similar to a motorcycle. It seats two passengers and moves with two carbon-fiber spinning rotors. After a vertical takeoff, riders can hover up to 10 feet off the ground and cruise up to 45 mph. The engines use standard gasoline and run for a little over an hour per tank.

It's a fairly simple design. A rider sits between the two horizontal rotors and steers the

craft's handlebar. Safety was a priority, and the rotors have been covered to prevent any accidental injury. Computer-regulated faults react to sudden weather conditions and automatically adjust the rotors. The engine and controls have built-in redundancies that allow the vehicle to come to a calm, complete stop if something ever goes wrong in flight. There is also an added option to include air bags throughout the vehicle.

While the Aero-X will not require a pilot's license — you may need a certification similar to a boating license — it will require hefty pocket change. It's expected to cost around \$85,000, and the production process takes over six months. You can,



however, get your name on the list now, as long as you put down a completely refundable \$5,000. Luke, Leia, here I come!

MY ROUTE TO WORKING WITH UNCLE SAM

MY WORK AS A CONSULTANT TO FOH

Twelve years ago, I received a call from a building owner in the Dallas area. He was having some problems with mold in his building and called a friend for a referral. I was the person who was referred. It turned out that the building having the problem was occupied by the Social Security Administration. As usual, I conducted my investigation, determined the source of the moisture causing the mold, and created a scope to clean it up. After we finished the work on the Dallas-area building, we dealt with a similar problem on an SSA building in Bryan, Texas. This was the same owner, and I was the consultant again.

At the time, I did not realize that many SSA offices are owned by a third party and leased to the U.S. government. I also did not understand that my reports, my scope, and all test results (done for the owner) were reviewed by Federal Occupational Health (FOH) on behalf of the lessee (the Government Services Administration).

Several weeks after completing the work on the second building, I received a call from FOH. They called to compliment my work and to ask if I would be willing to do similar investigations on a myriad of buildings across the Southern U.S. (as a contracting consultant). Though I was initially taken aback by the offer, I gladly accepted. Since then, I have worked at 30-plus SSA locations, 10 or more federal courthouses, border-crossing stations, FBI buildings, DEA, ICE, Customs and Border Protection offices, national wildlife refuges, and other government occupied buildings in Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Oklahoma. I have done water intrusion surveys, IAQ investigations, mold consulting, and lots of building forensic surveys.



The work I do in federal buildings is always challenging, but at the same time, the projects are some of the most satisfying work I take on. When I enter a federal building for an inspection, I am always met with the warmest welcome. Most building occupants (commercial or federal) are usually happy I am there because my presence signals that someone is looking out for their health. And the people I meet during my work as a contractor for FOH never fail to show a truly genuine sense of gratitude.

I am happy I can be the person to answer the questions and concerns that these building

occupants have — and that my work can help solve their problems. Knowing that the investigation work I do helps to better people's lives has always been a source of pride for me. I am very glad I have had the opportunity to expand my experience through a variety of work, while at the same time lending a hand to all kinds of building occupants.



The Death of PRODUCTIVITY!

ARE YOU MAKING THIS TIME- MANAGEMENT MISTAKE?

If you think you're a master multitasker, put down your phone and listen up, because you need to hear this:

You're not.

The human brain simply doesn't have the bandwidth to do two or more things at the same time. According to Dr. Susan Weinschenk, when you think you're multitasking, what you're really doing is task-switching, or rapidly going back and forth between tasks — sometimes as fast as one-tenth of a second.

But that constant switching is mentally taxing. In fact, a study from the University of Sussex found that people who routinely multitask have lower gray matter density in the area of the brain that handles empathy, emotional control, and cognitive control.

So, multitasking can literally damage your brain, but at least you'll have a short-term boost in productivity, right? Unfortunately, no. Researchers have found that multitasking slashes productivity by as much as 40 percent.

The quality of your work isn't better, either. You can expect to have more mistakes and less creativity in your work when you're multitasking. There simply isn't room to daydream or think up ideas if your brain is being pushed to the brink.

Multitasking is also disastrous for anyone who's actively trying to learn something. Split attention results in something called "inattentive blindness," where your senses pick up stimuli like sounds or sights, but your brain doesn't register it. This is what happens when you're texting someone on your phone while someone is talking to you in person — you don't really "get" what the person just said.

So how should we manage our time? The key, ironically, is "single-tasking." Approach tasks in sequence and give each one your total focus. While you're doing them, build in short breaks to recharge periodically, such as a 10-minute social media break after 50 minutes of strenuous work, or 5 minutes after 25. Minimize distractions from email, social media, and phone notifications. Connecting with others should be its own task, not an always-on activity.

Single-tasking may not be easy in a world full of distractions, but if you master it, you'll be amazed at how productive you can be!

Client Spotlight

A New Year's Thank-You

How Our Clients Made 2016 a Success



2016 was an awesome year here at Building Air Quality, and we want to say thanks to all of our great clients for making the year particularly memorable. We never take for granted the fact that we have the opportunity to work with such an amazing group of people, and the thoughtful, caring nature of our clients never ceases to amaze us.

While there are many legal and insurance reasons to be proactive about air quality, a lot of our clients do it simply because providing their tenants with the best quality of life matters to them. Having the opportunity to see how passionate the property managers we work with are about safety and air quality always inspires us to do our job at a high level.

We do everything we can to make sure that our clients understand all facets of air quality in their buildings. Since occupants rarely assume liability for air quality issues, it is up to building managers to be proactive and thorough. Our clients are always willing to learn about improving air quality and limiting the risk of contamination. This eagerness, in turn, motivates us to educate them and ensure that avoidable problems do not arise.

Any success we have has a huge amount to do with the attitude of the clients we work with. With 2017 arriving, we just wanted to take the time to thank each and every one of you for an amazing year. Working with you has been a joy, and we look forward to continuing to provide the best possible service in the new year.

An Airborne Problem

TESTING FOR AND PREVENTING RESPIRABLE CRYSTALLINE SILICA

There are all sorts of particles that present health risks to workers when inhaled. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is constantly on the lookout for ways to limit disease through monitoring and regulating the levels of contaminants in the air. One particular particle that poses all sorts of health risks is respirable crystalline silica, and it is important to know how you can keep it from hurting building occupants.

Respirable crystalline silica can build up very rapidly during construction and remodeling projects. It is a common element in prominent building materials like sand, granite, and quartz, and it becomes respirable when it is small enough to travel to the deep lung tissue (alveoli) through the air, which often happens when cutting the aforementioned materials. Without proper education, construction projects may see a spike in unsafe silica concentration levels.

People engaged in stone cutting and similar professions are at an extremely high risk for silicate exposure. If buildings are not tested for silica levels, the risks spread to all occupants to the building, making a space unfit for habitation. Respirable crystalline silica is a classified lung carcinogen and carries the risk of silicosis and tuberculosis. With these diseases, compliance with OSHA regulations is crucial to creating a safe working and living environment.

There are many ways that employers and building managers can protect people from the risks of respirable crystalline silica. The first is to make sure that you undergo consistent and accurate testing. If you don't know you have an issue with particle levels, you cannot take the steps to eliminate them. It is especially important to test particle levels before and after construction projects. Any time the particle level can be altered, testing should be done as a matter of course. You can also limit silica exposure by replacing silica-containing materials with safer alternatives whenever possible.

While it can be easy to regard dust as simply a nuisance, the truth is that it can be much more harmful than that. Especially when sandblasting or



stone cutting, dust accumulation can be a sign of particulate build up. Staying proactive on testing levels and engaging in safe construction practices will go a way long in maintaining safe levels respirable crystalline silica at your property.



SOLUTION

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1	7	4	3	8	2	9	5	6
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7	1	2	8	6	4	5	3	9
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SUDOKU

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