



February 2026



**AC & HEAT PUMP FUNDAMENTALS PROGRAM**

**Class 3: Components & Refrigerant Cycle**

February 11, 2026 | Warsaw, IN  
 February 12, 2026 | South Bend, IN

**Class 4: Installation & Piping Connections**

February 24, 2026 | Warsaw, IN  
 February 25, 2026 | South Bend, IN

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<p><b>DIVERSITECH QUIETMINI-M UNDERMOUNT MINI-SPLIT CONDENSATE PUMP</b>                  MCH51632</p>	<p><b>FASCO A21 LENNOX DRAFT INDUCER MOTOR 115VAC 2.35 AMPS 3400</b>                  MCH54916</p>	<p><b>PACKARD 66743 GOODMAN DRAFTINDUCER MOTOR 115VAC 1.5 AMPS</b>                  MCH54916</p>
<p><b>MEGA-MIKE METEOR</b></p> <p><b>JAMBOLT</b></p> <p><b>HARV THE HOTCORE</b></p>		
<p><b>GUARDIAN GG020 THERMOSTATIC MIXING VALVE INLET/OUTLET 1/2" 13 GALLON</b>                  MCH41082</p>	<p><b>MILWAUKEE 48-11-1865 M18 REDLITHIUM HIGH OUTPUT XC6.0 BATTERY</b>                  MCH41324</p>	<p><b>ORIS SB6060 60" X 60" X 4" WHITE SHOWER BASE</b>                  MCH69589</p>

## Take Action to Fix the Install Date Requirement

### Congress considers key fix to DOE regional standards.

Congress will soon vote on legislation to correct the Department of Energy's regional standards for split-system air-conditioning equipment, addressing an install date requirement that has caused stranded inventory, confusion, and financial losses for HVACR distributors and contractors. HARDI is urging lawmakers to support a targeted amendment that would establish a uniform manufacture date standard across all regions, bringing clarity and fairness to the supply chain.

*Source: Alex Ayers via HARDI Advocacy Alert*

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## Signs of a Turnaround: What 2026 Holds for the HVAC Construction Market

### Stabilization emerges as the industry looks toward 2026.

After years of volatility, the HVACR industry is entering 2026 with signs of stabilization, driven by service and replacement demand on the residential side and growing public-sector and data center investment in nonresidential construction. While affordability challenges, tighter lending, and high material costs continue to pressure contractors, easing rates and selective market strength are creating cautious optimism for the year ahead.

*Source: Source: Hannah Belloli via ACHR News website article*

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## The Real AI Talent War Is for Plumbers and Electricians

### Data center growth intensifies demand for skilled trades.

As the AI boom fuels rapid data center construction, a critical labor shortage is emerging among electricians, plumbers, and HVAC technicians needed to build the infrastructure behind the technology. Federal and industry estimates show tens of thousands of skilled trade positions going unfilled each year, highlighting a growing challenge that could slow AI expansion without increased workforce development.

*Source: Caroline Haskins via The Wired website article*

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## Copper Rockets to New Highs, Again

Rising prices signal continued supply and cost pressures.

Copper prices surged to new record highs in late 2025, topping \$12,000 per ton, as supply disruptions, strong electrification demand, domestic hoarding, and U.S. import tariffs continue to strain inventories. The renewed rally is raising concerns for HVAC contractors and wholesalers facing potential price increases and ongoing supply challenges.



Source: Austin Keating via SNIPS News website article

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## Your Smart TV Is Tracking More Than You Realize

What smart devices collect—and how to limit it.

With more connected devices in daily use, personal data is being collected and shared more than many people realize—including through smart TVs. The article highlights how reviewing and adjusting privacy settings across devices can significantly reduce tracking, reminding users that a few simple changes can go a long way toward protecting personal data.

*Editor's Note – "They" are always listening. You know that, right? Here are some ways to reduce it, if it bothers you anyway... - Joe Velleman*

Source: Shimul Sood via www.makeuseof.com website article

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## The Kiplinger Forecast Data

Stronger growth and spending expected in the year ahead.

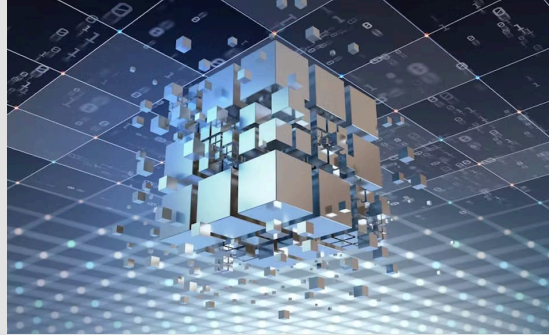
Kiplinger forecasts GDP growth of about 2.5%, slightly higher than last year, driven by stronger consumer spending and improved business confidence. Bigger tax refunds—estimated at \$65–\$100 billion—are expected to boost spending, particularly on major purchases and debt reduction, while higher household net worth and investment gains are helping sustain spending among wealthier consumers despite lingering inflation concerns.

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## The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Mechanical Contracting

How contractors are beginning to put AI to work.

As 2026 approaches, mechanical contractors are moving from AI awareness to practical application, with surveys showing most see AI as relevant but few have fully embedded it into their operations. Adoption is currently strongest in back-office functions like administration, billing, reporting, and compliance, followed by marketing, sales, customer service, and field operations, while design and planning remain more limited use cases—highlighting both the opportunity and caution shaping AI's role in the trades.



Source: Steve Spaulding via Contractor website article

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## America Does Not Have a Recession Problem — It Has a Succession Problem

Why hesitation in hiring may be the real risk.

Economic caution is leading many organizations to delay hiring and promotions, but experts argue the bigger issue isn't a weak economy—it's the lack of strong succession pipelines. Prolonged indecision can cost companies momentum, market share, and morale, often making strategic hiring a safer long-term investment than waiting on economic certainty.

Source: Dr. Mary Kelly, Leadership Economist and Hall of Fame Speaker

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## What It Takes to Sell a Legacy Business

How preparation, trust, and timing shaped a successful sale.

The sale of Oxford Plumbing & Heating, a 70-year-old, family-owned business, highlights how focusing on employees, customers, and long-term planning can position a company for a successful transition. With guidance from trusted advisors, the owner was able to find the right buyer, protect his employees, and step confidently into retirement—showing that people, preparation, and integrity are key to selling a legacy business.

Source: *Kristen R. Bayles via PM Contractor website article*

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## The Penguin That Sparked Gen Z's Existential Reckoning

**How a viral moment turned into a deeper cultural question.**

A short clip from Werner Herzog's 2007 Antarctica documentary—featuring a lone penguin walking away from its colony—has resurfaced as a powerful Gen Z metaphor, shifting from nihilism to existential curiosity. The renewed interest reflects a broader cultural moment, where young audiences are using the image to question purpose, direction, and meaning in an uncertain world, sparked by Herzog's simple but haunting question: "But why?"



**Editor's Note** – *This gets a little deep and nerve-touching. Bring your existential self with you...~ Joe Velleman*

Source: *Dustin Bass via The Epoch Times Viewpoints Editorial*

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