

Member Spotlight

Pur-Vent, LLC

Becoming a part of the air duct cleaning industry and a joining NADCA was never part of the plan for Henry Baker.

He worked the HVAC side only for most of his professional life. It was only by circumstance did his career path change. "I had been in HVAC for a good 25 years at the time and I was a third-generation HVAC contractor and was on track to take over the family business," said Baker, who co-owns Pur-Vent with his wife Anna. "But around 2011, it started to look like that wasn't going to occur."

The Transition

After it became apparent that he wasn't going to take on the family business, Baker started looking for other avenues in the industry. His more than two decades of experience gave him an idea of where he should go. "I knew ductwork very well and I knew HVAC systems very well, and as an estimator, I saw duct cleaning start to be required in North Carolina more and more," Baker said. "It was then I started investigating and I learned how to do it."

When Pur-Vent opened its doors in 2011, Baker found the ties to the HVAC industry in his area eased his new company into the duct cleaning business. "In Eastern North Carolina, I was already known in the HVAC industry," Baker said. "Because of those contacts, I was able to get projects that others who were just



starting out the industry wouldn't normally be able to get."

His clout in the region sparked growth for his business because he was trusted among his peers, which can be proven by those who contract with Pur-Vent. "When I transitioned over to duct cleaning, my former competitors then became my customers," Baker said. "I was dealing with a lot of the same people in a different capacity."

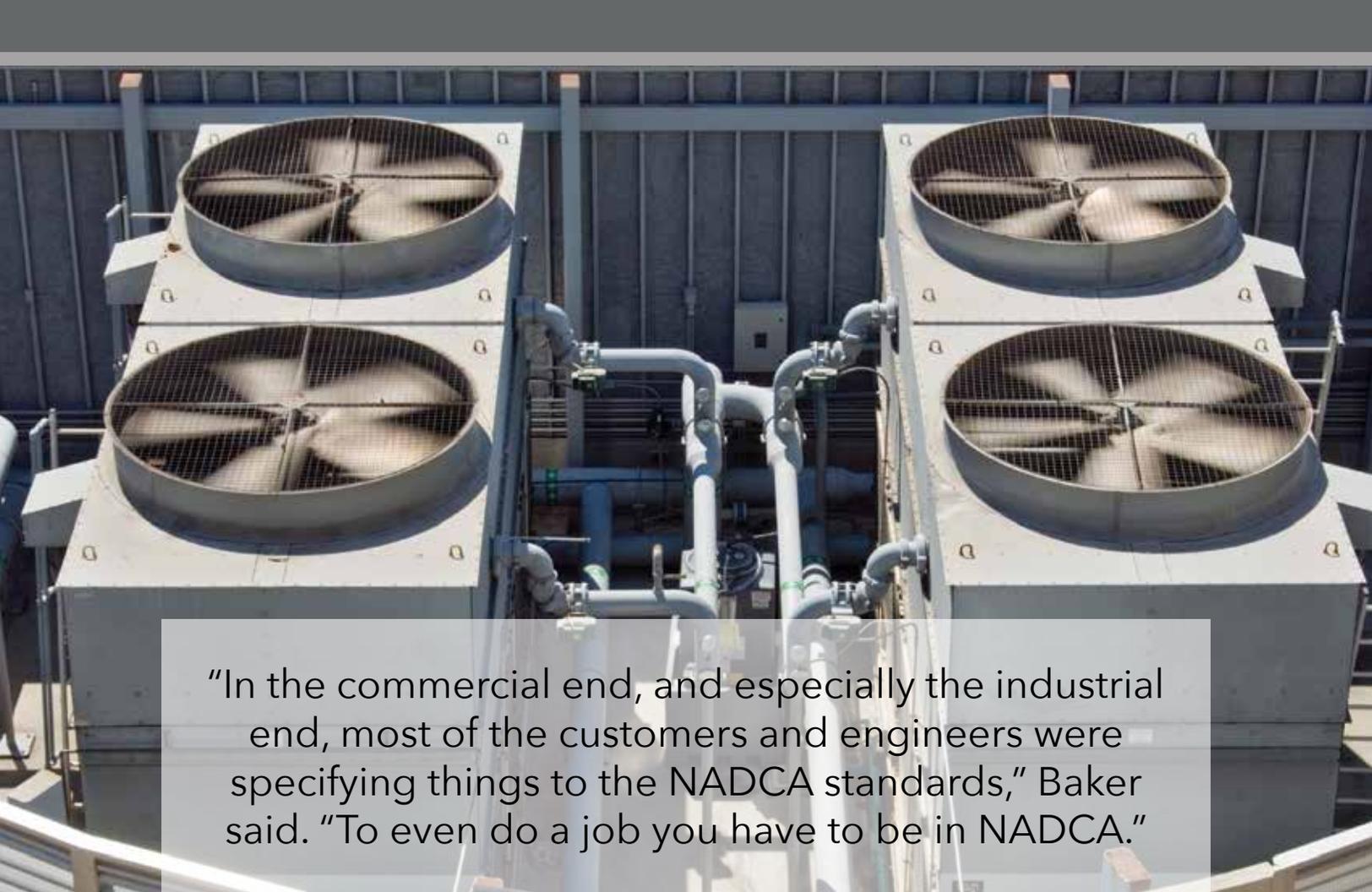
There was a learning curve. In fact, when Baker performed his first air duct cleaning job, it didn't go exactly according to plan. "My first cleaning job took me about 10 times longer than it should have," Baker said. But

like with most things, developing skills takes practice. Since then, he has become increasingly efficient and Pur-Vent is now a go-to company in the area.

Joining NADCA

Part of the growth for Pur-Vent – and how it jumped to higher levels of success – was Baker's recognition of the requirements by regulators in the industry. He realized that if he was going to do well in the field, he had to set himself apart from other companies in the region.

That became especially important when Baker realized that major projects followed NADCA's



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regulations. “In the commercial end, and especially the industrial end, most of the customers and engineers were specifying things to the NADCA standard,” Baker said. “To even do a job you have to be a member of NADCA.”

Baker was interested in the Air Systems Cleaning Specialist (ASCS) certification. With certification comes knowledge, and Baker knew if his company was certified beyond the normal means, it could set his business up for a fortunate future. “The ASCS certification is one reason I joined NADCA,” Baker said. “I saw that as putting my services above others that were offering duct cleaning without it.”

Looking Toward the Future

Since its culmination, Pur-Vent has performed jobs all over North Carolina, including the Raleigh-Durham International Airport and the Durham Bulls Athletic Park – yes, the same minor league baseball team from the movie *Bull Durham*. “As an estimator and project manager for my family’s HVAC firm, I knew what my needs were as far as a duct cleaning subcontractor was concerned,” Baker said. “That by itself has allowed me to know and anticipate the needs of HVAC and general contractors – my customers – from the budgeting phase to project completion. I fulfilled those needs that I had when I was in their position. It boils down to good customer service.”

In February, Pur-Vent celebrated not only its fifth anniversary but also its win of a bid at Duke University’s

historical chapel. The chapel, located in the heart of the main campus, has been closed for the first half of the year for restoration.

Since it was an extensive project – again awarded by a former competitor – Baker’s company was inspected by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) while on site. “One of my feathers in the cap is the OSHA representative told us that we had our act together,” Baker said.

While the job at Duke University shows Pur-Vent is more than capable of performing major projects, the timing of the work is what has Baker feeling comfortable and excited for the future, especially his five- and 10-year plans. “Every year there is a lull around January,” Baker said. “But this year we’re on track already for a banner year.” ●