



10 YEARS OF SERVICE IN
CENTRAL KANSAS
CELEBRATING



In September 2008, Barry and Daphne Stalcup were just venturing out on their own to start a new business called Comfort Pro. Little did they know that it would see the immense growth they've experienced since that time. "I was nervous at first, because we had two kids under two years old, and I was a stay-at-home mom," Barry's wife Daphne recalls. "We got a small loan and took things one day at a time."

Barry had been plumbing since he was 16 years old. After working for another local company for over a decade, he decided he had bigger dreams. "Daphne was always really supportive. Right after we started, the economy was crashing and things weren't looking good. But against all odds, we made it work."

Comfort Pro's first location was a small rental shop with 800 square feet at the back of the building that now houses Bling on Lakin Avenue. Soon after, Barry hired his first employee, who still works for Comfort Pro today. "That first year, there would be some days where we'd only have 4 calls. And other days we couldn't keep up," Barry says. "It was a roller coaster for sure."

A couple years later, he purchased his second location at 2700 Main Street. For several years, Barry was able to add an employee each year.

"We would pay the bills around the dinner table at night after the kids went to bed," Barry remembers. "Daphne always wrote out the checks and envelopes because my handwriting was so bad, and my aunt Kristy Stalcup, did the books for us for a while. It was a small operation and we worked day and night on it at the beginning."

Comfort Pro really took off when the owners of M&F Plumbing, George and Patty Smith, approached Barry about purchasing their business which had a location in Great Bend as well as a location in Larned. The acquisition was finalized in 2014 along with a new business partner, at which point the Comfort Pro team grew from 5 employees to 15 employees overnight. George and Patty stayed on for about a year, helping the Stalcups with the operation and making the transition as smooth as possible.

For a few months, the Comfort Pro team crammed into M&F's building on Frey Street until they could move into a much larger facility at 503 Williams in the spring of 2015, where they still base out of today. The 24,000 square foot facility gives the rapidly growing company the room it needs to stock ample parts and inventory of furnaces and air conditioners. "As we grow, we continue to get better rates on our equipment because of our volume, which helps us save our customers money and get the project completed much sooner," Stalcup says.

Once the Great Bend location was situated, it was time to upgrade the Larned location. In 2017, Barry purchased a different building that had been an eyesore on Highway 56. "We completely renovated it so that we could add a showroom to sell new appliances and expand into appliance repair over there," he says. "My grandpa grew up in Larned, and M&F had been in Larned since the 1950's so we were definitely committed to staying there and serving the people of Pawnee County."



But that wasn't all that was happening in 2017. At the same time, Barry was in negotiations with Rick and Karen Gates from Russell, Kansas to purchase their business known as R&M Heating and Cooling. The small business only offered HVAC, which left new opportunities for expanding into plumbing and water treatment as well. Before the end of that year, Comfort Pro closed on its third location. Between the two Russell employees that came on at that time as well as a few others that had joined the team in the years prior, the growing business now has 31 employees with 25 trucks doing new construction and service work all over Central Kansas.

In addition to plumbing and HVAC work, the local contractor also specializes in water treatment with water softeners and RO systems. Comfort Pro also offers air purifiers and humidifiers, and is the only certified provider for radon testing and mitigation in the area, adding air quality to their impressive resume.

"I've learned very quickly that when a good opportunity presents itself, you have to jump on it," Barry says. "We've expanded our services and specialties a lot since we first started, just to meet the demand in the area."

These new services include fiberglass repair for tubs and showers, recordable diagnostic imaging on a state-of-the-art self-leveling full color sewer camera, mini-split systems and variable refrigeration flow systems (VRF), and more.

Despite immense growth and a rapidly expanding team of professionals, Barry and Daphne have remained focused on providing quality work at an affordable price. "We want to create a business our kids can be proud of. Our daughter, Kennedy, wants to be the secretary some day and our son, Mason, has shown an interest in taking over the family business down the road," Barry says. "It's important that we treat customers with respect and we always stand behind our work."

Comfort Pro is very active in community projects, donating time and resources to local nonprofits as well as supporting local events such as high school sports and nonprofit fundraisers. They are proud members of four different Chambers of Commerce, and their community reach is expanding all the time.

"In the beginning, Barry said he wanted to stay small - just a couple guys and a couple trucks. Now we laugh about that, but I'm proud of everything he's accomplished," Daphne says. "It's been a wild ride these first ten years, and we couldn't have done it without our family, our amazing employees, and our loyal customers. We hope to continue growing in the next decade."



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