

Service Insights



[Point of View](#)

A Q&A with Zach Zinsky

August 03, 2020

Master Certified Technician, [Gary's East Coast Service](#), Oxford, Conn.

Working as a painter and delivering pizzas may not be the road most traveled to becoming a service technician in the foodservice industry, but that's exactly the path Zach Zinsky took en route to becoming a CFESA-certified master technician for Gary's East Coast Service, a Connecticut-based service agency. "I've always been fascinated with how things work. For example, I always worked on my own cars. But I never knew there was a career path fixing food appliances," Zinsky recalls.



Zinsky did, however, know the daughters of Angela and Gary Petitti, the owners of Gary's East Coast Service. And that relationship presented a career-defining opportunity: "Gary was willing to give me a chance," Zinsky says. "I love my job and am grateful to Gary and everyone else who took the time to train me. So I took this job and have not looked back at all. You get to meet a lot of people, and you get close with some customers."

FE&S: What's it been like working with operators during the pandemic? What extra safety precautions are you taking?

ZZ: I am lucky enough to have kept working throughout the pandemic. Right now, wearing a mask is required when you are out in public in Connecticut. I know it's different in other states. Our company gave us hand sanitizer and bottles of disinfectant to wipe down our vans when done. When servicing high-risk establishments, like convalescent homes, the doors are locked when you get there. So you can't enter the customer's business as you normally would. You have to have your temperature taken and your oxygen levels. They ask you some questions about where you have been and even ask you to wear a protective suit when going to the kitchen. It's definitely been different walking into a place wearing a mask. We work in hot environments, and wearing a mask when working on an oven definitely makes you need to hydrate more.

FE&S: Have you had to go start up or perform maintenance on equipment that's been shuttered for a while? If so, what's that been like?

ZZ: A lot of places chose to stay open, whether it was for takeout or delivery. But I did have one customer that did close. They shut off the main gas line because they were not going to be in the restaurant. When that happens, the gas line gets gummed up a bit. When restarting, you have to relight everything on the line, and that can take a little while. You want someone who is knowledgeable to light the pilots, make sure the gas pressure is correct, etc. When we reopen more fully, we might see more of these calls.

FE&S: What's the most important piece of advice you've received?

ZZ: I don't have to think about that one. It's always bring an extra set of clothes. There are days when things just don't go your way, and if you don't have extra clothes, you are going to have a bad day. There are some days where I've had to toss my clothes straight in the dumpster.