

# CONTACTOR



Electrical Contractors Association of Alberta Newsletter

Issue 3, 2006

*An Invitation  
to Attend*

*Electrical Contractors  
Association of Alberta*

*Christmas Open House*

*Thursday, December 7, 2006  
3:30 - 6:30 pm*

*"The Voice of the Electrical Industry in the Province of Alberta"*

11235 - 120 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T5G 2X9 • Phone: (780) 451-2412 Fax: (780) 455-9815 Website: [www.ecca.ab.ca](http://www.ecca.ab.ca)

# President's Message

Summer has come and gone and I hope that everyone had the chance to take a break and spend some time with their families. With the Alberta economy being in such a high gear, it is important that we all take a moment to enjoy the rewards of our efforts.

Sheri and I had the opportunity to attend an information session on the Alberta British Columbia Trade Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement (TILMA). This agreement is intended to make it easier to do business between our two provinces and will help those of us who are in the dual market.



*Mike Brunner*

I also had the pleasure of attending the Edmonton Chapter meeting and meeting some of the members. The presentation given by NAIT on the training and hiring of foreign workers was very interesting and informative. I was not aware of the services that NAIT provide for anyone considering this route.

We currently have some committee chair vacancies on the Provincial Board. I know that everyone is busy BUT so are those of us who currently serve or have served the ECAA. If you have some time to spare and would like to give something back to your industry, please contact myself or Sheri to discuss a position.

There are lots of new and interesting things happening in our industry, some very good and some major challenges. I encourage everyone to visit our new interactive website [www.ecaa.ab.ca](http://www.ecaa.ab.ca) to get the latest information.

## Chapter Reports

### Edmonton

Terry Milot, President

A meeting was held on September 26, 2006 with approximately 45 people in attendance, along with Provincial President, Mike Brunner. Congratulations to John Carson, Art Lippert and Robert Laframboise who received their PEC rings; as well as new master electricians Philip Carlow, Art Lippert, Orin Hilman and Gary Wilson on receiving their master's certificates.

Winner of the evaluation draw was Kelly Wilde, Kels Electric; door prize winner, Richard Steinke from Stantec; and the 50/50 winner Mr. Terry Emmerson, Provincial Electrical. On behalf of the Labour Relations Committee, Mr. Pat Barnes presented plaques to Mr. Jim McKenzie and Mr. Urgel St. Pierre in appreciation of their volunteer time on the Labour Relations and Negotiation Committees.



Mr. Jim McKenzie also received his Lifetime Membership plaque (nominated at this year's AGM in Kananaskis). Thank you to BJ Electric Supplies Ltd for sponsoring the bar.

Mr. Gary Paterok and Mr. Terry Drabiuk from NAITfind, whose mandate is to match the labour needs of organizations throughout the Province of Alberta with highly skilled individuals from across Canada and around the globe, delivered a very informative presentation. The NAITfind Skills Assessment & Placement Program will soon have a group of skilled workers with AIT certification from China available for work in Alberta.

The Chapter is looking into putting on a grounding seminar for members. It was mentioned that Wirtenan Institute is looking for instructors. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 16th and will be followed by a presentation on self-regulation for master electricians.

# Chapter Reports

## Calgary

Brian Phelps, PEC

Sixty-nine people attended the September 14th meeting in Calgary. Guest speakers were Gary Borodenko from Federated Insurance (*Improving Coverage for Contractors and Risk Management*), and Jean-Guy Beaudrois, Hammond Transformers (*New C802 Building Code for Transformer Installation*). Thank you to Stephen Dunne for arranging the guest speakers, and Gescan for hosting the bar. Congratulations to the new master electricians who received their certificates at the meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 12th at the Blackfoot Inn (*note the location change to accommodate the master's meeting which will follow*).

## North East

Jonny Nielsen, PEC

A brain-storming session was held in September where members talked about increasing membership in their Chapter. Regular meetings will be held the 2nd Monday of each quarter and guest speakers invited. An open house will be hosted in January for master electricians, journeymen and apprentices. Associate members will be asked to set up booths. North East chapter has a concern with electrical permits not being pulled. The inspector for the area has agreed to attend Chapter meetings and answer code questions.

**Calling all Volunteers!!!** ECAA is participating in two upcoming events in Calgary that require volunteers. The Calgary Career Show, October 27th and 28th at the Roundup Centre is an excellent opportunity to receive resumes first-hand from starters wanting to get into the trade and electricians feeling out the job market. Pass out your business cards to prospective customers at the Construct Calgary + the Home Builder & Renovator Expo on November 14th & 15th also at the Roundup Centre. Contact the ECAA office now for more information or if you are able to assist.

All meetings will be held at Vermilion College. Mr. Pierre McDonald, Chief Electrical Inspector for the Province of Alberta, delivered a presentation on self-regulation for master electricians to twenty-five people in attendance at the last meeting. This was well received by all in attendance.

# Committee Reports

## Alberta Construction Safety Association

Dave Hagen

New Building – Calgary Update. ACSA are waiting for development permits to be in place before they can proceed.

Advisor/Building – Fort McMurray. The ACSA started offering classes in July in the new space in Fort McMurray and will have a grand opening in September. Reviewing all courses developed by OSSA and looking at their standards and to see if the Health and Safety Network would accept or want to look at changes to those standards.



Industry Safety Training Database. The Health and Safety Network was being set up to accredit health and safety training courses for the Province of Alberta. The idea is to standardize training in Alberta and have a database for accredited training records.

CSO Gold Seal (CCA), Update. The ACSA is working with the Canadian Construction Association on a Gold Seal for CSOs. The committee has filled out the profile for "Construction Safety Coordinator". The Board of Directors had a lengthy discussion on whether existing CSOs would be grandfathered in. After the discussion the Board's position was to support no grandfathering.

*OH&S Code Review.* A letter was sent out to associations on the Board, asking for people to volunteer to sit on a committee to review the Act. Simon Schmid will represent the Alberta Construction Association, Rod Schmidt will represent the Roadbuilders, DeVere Viola the Home Builders, and Clarke Gould the Electrical Contractors Association. Our next step will be to call a meeting and decide which components of the Act they will take back to their Associations for feedback to the Government. That feedback needs to be in by December 31, 2006.

*Bylaw Review, Length of Term for Chairman.* A Special General meeting has been scheduled for Friday, September 29, 2006 to extend the term of the Chair, Vice Chair, and Past Chair from one year to two years.

*Oil Sands Safety Association Standards.* The ACSA was requested to develop an end-user course on Confined Space and employers could purchase and train to OSSA standards, as well the ACSA would offer this program. They are currently working on that.

*Partnerships Representative on ACSA Board.* Rob Feagan attended the last Board meeting and did a presentation on Partnerships. The Board has decided to invite a Partnership representative, Rob Feagan, as a resource person on the Board of Directors of the Alberta Construction Safety Association.

*Certifying Partner Subcommittee Minutes.* The Certifying Partner is looking at the peer audit process. The ACSA will send a letter to the Partnership group on why we have the peer audit process.

*Education Committee.* The Education Committee is pleased to say that the modules on Legislation Awareness, Emergency Response, Project Safety Plan, and Incident Investigation have been completed. The next topics for development are: Hazard Assessment, Safety Leadership, Alcohol and Drugs, and Fatigue Management. PHSM is ready to go online.

## Apprenticeship

Dean Gjertsen, Chair

The new ECAA website is starting to get Apprenticeship questions on the Forum. It is great to see this interest but I am concerned that in the future as more people become aware of this forum the questions will increase and demand more responses in a timely manner. ECAA will make every attempt to ensure that during these busy times response time does not slow down.

Most questions can usually be referred back to the Alberta Apprenticeship website [www.tradesecrets.org](http://www.tradesecrets.org) or [www.tradesecrets.gov.ab.ca](http://www.tradesecrets.gov.ab.ca) which is very thorough, however lacks information or reference to the Blue Book which the Apprentice is expected to carry during his apprenticeship.

Lionel Neveu has been hired for course quality control review. The mould guidelines and the overheads have been reviewed and the course is ready to go. Construction Environmental Awareness has been reviewed and is ready to print. Auditor Training Program and the audit being redone. Small Employer program needs to be reviewed again. Currently reviewing the Claims Management.

*Loss Control for Senior Managers.* The ACSA is proceeding with developing the content of a program on Loss Control and contemplating the naming of that program along with its development.

*Construction Safety Training System Update.* On June 30, the Steering Committee discussed the comments received through the meetings with the COAA and regional safety committee groups. Worked on that through the summer and will start developing the program for video shooting in October and November for the four-seasons look.

*Strategic Planning Report Card.* Last year the decision was made to hold the Strategic Planning Session every two years but provide a report card in the year not having the Strategic Planning Session.

*Partnerships Strategic Planning Working Group Minutes.* The ACSA sit on the Strategic Planning group for the Partnership Group for Workplace Health and Safety, Alberta Human Resources and Employment, looking at a five-year plan for strategic planning so they are able to provide input.

*Course Statistics to May 31, 2006.* Gary Wagar advised we are having the most stupendous year ever. Course statistics across the Province are up 14% over all.

*Next Meeting.* Friday, September 29, 2006 at the Executive Royal Inn in Leduc.

There should be an explanation, along with examples of how to complete this book, from an Apprentice's perspective and an Employer's perspective. The benefit for an apprentice and an employer to keep this book current should also be stressed. Examples may be Safety, informing a direct supervisor of the apprentice's work experience, or familiarity of a task. The Apprentice should understand that the book shows most of the tasks to help him/her become well-rounded in their career to become a better Journeyman and a valuable employee.

The lack of information on the Blue Book on this website will be brought up at the Calgary Local Apprenticeship Committee (LAC) meeting in October.

## Convention 2008

DJ Coppens, Chair

A lot of requests have been received by ECAA for the 2008 Convention location. Mr. John Farlinger, of Farlie Travel, joined the Board for an informal discussion



on possible locations for Convention 2008. Choices will be narrowed down to three or four; a more formal package put together by Mr. Farlinger (price, travel time, logistics); then members will be asked to express their interest before a final decision is made early in the New Year.

## Fire Technical Council

Keven Lefebvre, PEC

A committee has been struck to set up recertification requirements for the Fire Alarm Technicians. If this affects you and you want some input, please email your ideas to [millele@telusplanet.net](mailto:millele@telusplanet.net).

I was able to provide input into the new “secondary suite requirements”. This should prove to be very helpful in adding to the safety of occupants by asking to have all common areas of the occupancy covered by interconnected smoke detectors (i.e. laundry area, furnace room, common hall, stairwell). This is in addition to the smoke detectors already required in the suites and will apply to newly constructed secondary suites only.

## Labour Relations

Brian Halina, Chair

The Industrial contractors continue to find relatively light levels of activity in their sector, but they realize this is a temporary situation and are preparing for the next wave of increased activity in the latter part of 2007. Commercial and Institutional contractors are experiencing very busy times. Manpower availability is good in all sectors at this time.



McMurray. The MTC will be on display at the ECAA chapter meetings in Calgary and Edmonton in October.

A full time training coordinator has been hired in Fort McMurray to facilitate training in the Wood Buffalo area. Contractors in that area can contact Abbas Abbas through the Training Centres office at (780)462-5729. Contractors are encouraged to bring forward any training ideas or needs. The focus of training is changing from “Off the Shelf” courses to training that is triggered by special site needs, such as new product or new techniques.

CannAmm did a presentation on August 17th to the Labour Committee to explain and expand on their earlier proposal. This is an effort to find the path forward to a coordinated approach to Drug and Alcohol testing for Industrial Unionized Electrical Contractors.

The Apprenticeship Sub-committee met on October 4th for further planning of special training for individuals who qualify both in age and ability to compete in the 2008 National Skills competition and the 2009 World Skills Competition. The Training Centres will provide mentoring to the qualified candidates.

The Unionized Electrical Contractors, in conjunction with the IBEW, met with Alberta Industry Training and NAIT to explore ways that the Electrical Industry Training Centres in Edmonton, Calgary and Fort McMurray might play a bigger part in training and tracking the progress of Unionized electrical apprentices. Discussions are on-going.

The PACT program has started the Fall intake of pre-apprenticeship students. They will graduate in Mid-December. Unionized contractors who need a starter with “Value Added” should contact the Training Director in Edmonton (462-5729) before that time. Early indications suggest that there will be a high demand for these individuals at this time.

The Electrical Industry Training Centre has received the new Mobile Training Centre (MTC). The MTC is transported like any other 40’ van, but folds down to 1000 sq. ft. state of the art training space, complete with Video Conferencing communication to any one of the three centres in Edmonton, Calgary and Fort

The Labour Committee presented Recognition Awards to Urgel St Pierre and Jim McKenzie at the September Edmonton Chapter meeting. Both Urgel and Jim have retired from the Labour Committee after years of excellent service to that committee.

## Master's Update

Kelly Morris, PEC

**Master's Information Package Sent to Regulators.** Alberta Municipal Affairs has circulated an information package to Regulators across the Province, with a request for feedback. The vast majority of the responses are favourable with respect to the proposed enhancements to the Masters Program. It is interesting to note some of the questions raised elude to an idea that the Masters Program may also have a place within accredited corporations. First things first however.

**Upcoming Master's Information Sessions.** Alberta Municipal Affairs has developed a PowerPoint slide presentation in a question and answer format, which will form the basis of the information sessions. The Chief Electrical Inspector will make



the presentation. This should prove useful in establishing Alberta Municipal Affairs commitment to the enhanced program, as well as giving a face to the Safety Services bureaucracy to Master Electricians in attendance.

Upcoming dates for these presentations are October 12th in Calgary; October 16th in Edmonton; October 17th in Red Deer; and November 18th in Grande Prairie. Contact ECAA for more information or to register.

ECAA now needs to get on with establishing the Professional body for Master Electricians, with a discussion on necessary Professional Electrical Contractor Regulation changes.

## Membership

Carmen Nickolson, Chair

**W**ow – another summer has passed and time to focus on ECAA membership initiatives. The master's meeting held September 21st at the Vermilion College for the North East Chapter was well attended and three membership packages were distributed to potential contractor members. Your membership chair will also attend the master sessions in Calgary, Edmonton and Red Deer in October.



As well, the Alberta Electric League is holding their annual Learning Expo in Red Deer on October 17th and ECAA will be there with our portfolio.

We see all of these as opportunities to promote Membership in the ECAA and look forward to bringing more membership applications forward at future Board meetings.

## Open Shop

DJ Coppens, Chair

**E**arlier this year Public Works Canada had a great idea. They would utilize the "Reverse Auction" method for the procurement of Goods and Services. This idea was to assist them in their efforts to cut a half billion dollars from the procurement budget.



to the Federal Government that this was unacceptable. On September 9th, Public Works and Government Services Canada Minister, Michael Fortier, announced that they would no longer pursue the idea of using the "Reverse Auction" as part of the government's current procurement strategies.

Guess what happened? ... They actually listened to the outcry from the construction sector. General Contractor, electrical, Mechanical and many other industry Associations sent notice

# ECAA'S Interactive Web a Success!

In a short two month period, hits on ECAA's interactive website have more than doubled. In the past our website was downloading 200MB, in the last two months we have had over 1GB. This means that since our website is now smaller and uses a more efficient use of bandwidth, more information is being downloaded and viewed than ever before. Over July and August we had approximately 3,500 unique hits on our site.

Currently 209 users have signed up, of which only 62 are ECAA members. Our most active forum is the Employment & Career Opportunities. Many of our web members are people looking to get started in the trade as an apprentice, or apprentices looking for employers.

With ECAA working closely with Municipal Affairs on enhancing the Master's program our website has become one of the main sources for obtaining information. The Master's section on the website will be updated in the new year to include capability

of downloading exam kits, application forms, links to receiving the Standata and permit information, as well as progress reports on self-regulation for master electricians.

The top downloaded files are forms or applications. Membership benefits (177 hits) are one of the top forms being downloaded. This form explains the benefits of belonging to the ECAA and we have received many new membership applications over the web. The Professional Electrical Contractor application form and course registration form received 111 hits and 160 hits over the two months, while 195 people downloaded the fire alarm PIN application form in July and August.

Our website has become the communication tool we were looking for. Everyday more and more people are accessing and using the site. Contact the ECAA office to get your password and start accessing up-to-the minute information.

## Mother and Son Stay Current in NAIT Apprenticeship Program

(Reprinted from) Edmonton Journal, Wednesday, October 4, 2006

Sheila Lefebvre attends the same school as her 17-year-old son Jeff. And she drives him there. "He's asked me not to mention this to his friends," she says. "He's a little embarrassed and thinks he's a bit old to be driven by his mum." But the two are the best of buddies and are believed to be setting a NAIT record. "As far as we know, this is the first time a mother and son have simultaneously taken courses in the same trade at NAIT," says the institute's Raquel Maurier. Sheila is a fourth-year electrician apprentice and Jeff is in his first year. Her husband, Keven Lefebvre, owns his own electrical company, Millennium Electric, and guess what they talk about at supper? "We all work together," Keven says. "Over meals we discuss priorities and who is going to do what the following day." The couple's other children, Jessica, 15, and Jordan, 13, sometimes lend a hand. "Everyone helped when we supplied 10,000 feet of wiring of different colours and lengths to a runway up near the Beaufort Sea," says Keven. "We were delighted when we received a call saying a Boeing 747 had safely used our lights to land on ice."

Keven's late father, an accountant with an electrical company, told his son he couldn't afford to put him through university, but could get him a job as an electrician. "I enjoyed the work, did a job here and there for someone and then found myself with my own company," said Keven.

Sheila, now 39, took Jeff with her when he was a toddler to drop materials at her husband's work sites. "When Jeff went to school and I began helping on jobs, I thought why not log my hours and go back to school as an apprentice electrician," she said. "My father had been an electrician." In high school, Jeff found himself working for minimum wage at various fast-food outlets and decided an electrician's job looked attractive. "I told him he could do anything he wanted and I'd be proud of him," said Keven. But he chose to study to become an electrician. "Now the three of us get more work done than when I had eight men working for me. We are wiring a 64-suite condo unit and are staying ahead of other trades." Electricians earn about \$30 an hour and there is such a demand for the trade that the provincial government asked NAIT to create another 120 places this year for first-year apprentices. "We always hear about Fort McMurray," said Bill Yaremko, NAIT's electrician program head. "But housing and other industries are booming. There's a tremendous amount of work in the Edmonton area." Of NAIT's 2,235 apprentice electricians,

some 432 fourth-year apprentices will graduate as journeymen in the coming year. "We couldn't accommodate all our qualified applicants and we are renovating and hope to have another 200 or 300 places next year," said Yaremko.



**The Lefebvre Family -- Sheila, Jeff and Keven**

There can be problems in a family full of electricians, of course. "Sheila and Jeff often like to hear country music when they are working," said Keven. "I can't stand it and go off to find a job somewhere else." The other bugbear is that there are always plastic connection covers, small bits of wire and screws left in the washing machine or dryer. "A screw is worth five cents," said Keven. "When you are working for yourself, you pick them up."

# Board of Directors

## Electrical Contractors Association of Alberta

### Executive:

President:	Mike Brunner
Vice President:	DJ Coppens
Treasurer:	Todd McKay
Secretary:	Ron MacKenzie
Past President:	Terry Milot

### Chapter Presidents & ECAA Directors:

Edmonton	Terry Milot
Calgary	Brian Phelps, PEC
Central	Darcy Teichroeb, PEC
North East	Jonny Nielsen, PEC
North West	Les Dzwonkiewicz, PEC
Lethbridge	Todd McKay
Medicine Hat	Glenn Pocsik
Fort McMurray	Gord Stuve

### Directors-at-Large:

North	Terry Emmerson
South	Ken Rickbeil, PEC

### Committees:

ACSA	Dave Hagen
ACA (South)	Al Miller
ACA (North)	Peter Rasmussen, PEC
Apprenticeship	Dean Gjertsen
Associate Liaison	Terry Sawatzky
CECA	Willard Kondro
Code	Clem Gratton, PEC/Perry Schmaltz, PEC
Communications	Kelly Wilde
Convention '07	Mike Brunner
Convention '08	DJ Coppens
Labour Relations - Union	Brian Halina
Labour Relations – Non-Union	DJ Coppens
Legislation	Dick Ducholke, PEC
Master's	Kelly Morris, PEC
Membership & Public member	Carmen Nickolson
Nominations	Terry Milot
	Willard Kondro
	Roger Richard
PEC	Lou Hiemer, PEC
Safety Codes Council:	
Fire	Keven Lefebvre, PEC
Electrical	Perry Schmaltz, PEC
Ways & Means	Todd McKay

## UPCOMING CODE SEMINARS

*Edmonton, October 21st, 8:00 - 12:00*

*Calgary, October 28st, morning session full  
Openings Available 1:00 - 5:00*

*Grande Prairie, November 18th, 10:00 - 2:00  
Master's Information Session 2:30 - 4:30*

*Contact ECAA for more information.*

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

### Contractor:

*Power Flow, Edmonton  
Second Opinion Systems Limited, Calgary*

### Associate:

*Anixter, Calgary  
Bow Valley Insurance, Calgary  
Unified Systems Group, Calgary*

## *The Contactor*

The Contactor is the official publication of the Electrical Contractors Association of Alberta.

We welcome articles and paid advertisements.

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