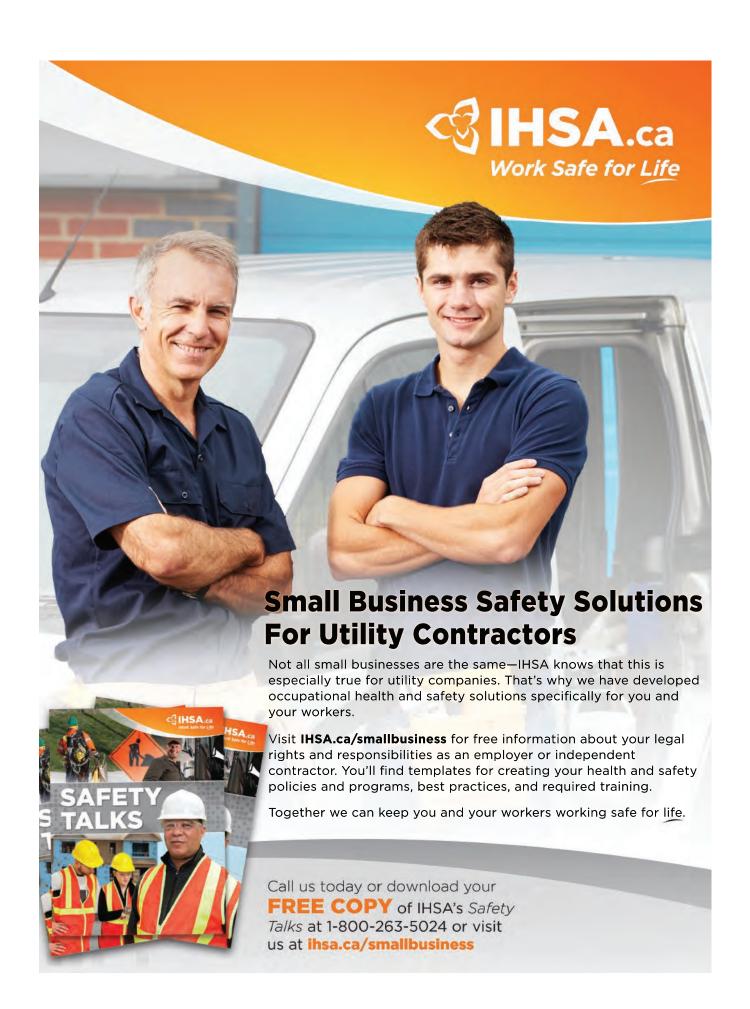
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The Voice of Ontario's ELECTRICAL CONTRACTING INDUSTRY





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At this time of year association life typically slows down a bit as summer approaches. Many local area Electrical Contractors Associations hold their annual meetings now and some have invited ECAO to attend. What these opportunities have reminded us of is the tremendous amount of personal time that so many donate to both their local associations and to ECAO, serving either on our Board of Directors, the Electrical Trade Bargaining Agency, or any of the many regular industry or association committees that happen year-round.

These individuals take time away from their businesses and families to try to make the industry better for everyone, and they deserve our gratitude. We spend so much time with them that we sometimes forget that they are volunteers. But that is what they are and we are fortunate to have them as we benefit from their experience, knowledge, and wisdom.

One such volunteer is the president of Birnie Electric, which just celebrated its

# FROM THE PRESIDENT, DAN LANCIA

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50th anniversary as a business. There aren't very many family-owned electrical contracting businesses that have survived intact with their original name for that period of time in this world of mergers and acquisitions and buyouts and takeovers. Company employees, past and present, came together for a celebration at the Credit Valley Golf and Country Club on April 1 for a celebration that included Mississauga Mayor Bonnie Crombie. The evening included a silent auction which raised \$20,400 for the burn unit at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto.

Congratulations to Tim Birnie for continuing to build on the legacy started by his father Peter in 1967, and for continuing to grow and keep the business competitive in an increasingly challenging business environment. Here's to the next 50 years.

\* \* \*

ECAO has been working with a web design company for the past few months to overhaul and redesign our website, and we will be ready to share the results of that effort very soon. It will have a completely new look, be easier to navigate, be more mobile friendly and we will be able to update and make changes to it ourselves, which will make it more responsive and allow us to keep it up to date. We should also be able to properly utilize the Members' Only and Directors' Only sections the way they are intended to be used, and have direct links to the Certi-fire website and the Working at Heights health and safety training database.

We are currently updating our bylaws so that they make sense and reflect current practice, and we will try to conduct ourselves according to those bylaws once that process is complete.

At the time of writing, the final touches are being put on our annual conference in Munich, Germany in May. We fell short of our partnership goals in securing sponsorships from suppliers, distributors and manufacturers, but we still expect the conference to be a great experience for all who are able to join us. What we have learned from our efforts is that we will have to build better relationships with our suppliers to provide more information about who we are and the members we represent, and start planning well in advance of the next conference. Our ambitions for this year's conference were a good first step that we can build upon for future events.

\* \* \*

As we continue to refine and refocus our priorities on providing value to our members, we are also trying to make the magazine and E-newsletters more professional by providing timely and relevant stories that people want to read. In this issue, you'll find an article on Toronto's pre-apprenticeship program and how that can be advantageous both for electrical contractors and for those considering entering the trade and becoming an electrician.

There's also a great article by Nic Bittle, one of the keynote speakers at our conference and the author of three books on developing our current and next generation workforce for the challenges and responsibilities that lie ahead. We are also planning a professional development seminar with Nic in September called *A Foreman's Field Guide to Developing Your Workforce*. Other articles include an overview of ECAO and IBEW's joint sponsorship at this year's Juno awards, and an article on the latest use of drone technology in our industry.

If there are topics of interest that you would like to read about, I encourage you to contact the ECAO office.



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# PRE-APPRENTICE PROGRAM

# Developing a Skilled Workforce at the Grassroots Level By Kevin Vallier

The IBEW prides itself on their commitment to quality work, safety and high standards, as do the contractors they work for. To achieve this culture it must start at the apprentice level. In fact, some would argue it begins earlier than that.

That's one of the reasons the Greater Toronto Electrical Contractors Association (GTECA), in partnership with IBEW Local 353, established the Joint Apprenticeship Council (JAC) more than four decades ago. The JAC is comprised of an equal number of representatives from the GTECA and Local 353 with a mission

to recruit, select, assess, counsel and educate electrical apprentices specifically within the Greater Toronto Area, including Parry Sound, Trenton and Oakville.

More than 1,100 aspiring electricians applied for the program in 2015. Annual intake is based on industry needs and the number of pre-apprentices is determined by a local joint conference board. Last year the JAC decided not to have an intake due to decreased industry demand, but this year applicant numbers exceed 900.

The program provides the pre-apprentices an opportunity to see the industry at the workplace level. Aspiring electricians can better determine if this truly is the skilled trade for them after they have been on site and seen with their own eyes the reality of the job. It's an easier way to enter and exit the industry before the significant investment of real training takes place. In other words, a feeling out process for both the contractor and the pre-apprentice.

The intake process itself takes approximately six weeks and involves a number of aspects





including: completion of an in-person application with presentation of required documents (resume, Ontario High School Diploma and official high school transcript); completion of a computerized Mechanical Aptitude Test; and taking part in a job awareness activity such as climbing an extension ladder, 8' platform ladder installation or using appropriate personal protective equipment. If the candidate successfully fulfills these requirements they are invited to move onto the personal interview at the JAC office. The final step sees the candidates ranked and put into a selection pool where they are called (based on that ranked position as the manpower needs of the industry dictate), to take the Safety and Orientation, Material and Tool Identification, and First Aid courses. Upon passing those three courses they are placed with a contractor by the IBEW Local Union 353, where they will begin their 1,800 hour Pre-Apprenticeship.

After completion of the Pre-Apprenticeship, a Registered Training Agreement (RTA) is signed and their first term of the indentured apprenticeship begins.

It's a thorough process but as Erik Hueglin, Director of Apprenticeship for the JAC, points out, there is a reason for the extensive application procedure. "Our experience in processing thousands of apprentices has told us that applicants that do not have the required education will not be successful at trade school," explained Hueglin. "The educational requirements were developed in consultation with the education community to verify the content of the specific courses, and we've determined the courses have the content that supports the base knowledge required by construction electricians," he added.

GTECA Executive Vice-President Bob O'Donnell says contractors have greatly benefited from the program, allowing new workers in the industry to familiarize themselves with the work environment. "Contractors and foremen have the opportunity to assign pre-apprentices more entry-level tasks, like material handling and clean-up, and assisting more experienced crew members, which in turn allows senior apprentices and journeymen to focus more on the higher skilled work, resulting in contractors being more productive and competitive," said O'Donnell.

It's important to note that acceptance into, or completion of, the pre-apprenticeship program does not mean automatic acceptance into the electrical apprenticeship program. Candidates who successfully complete the pre-apprenticeship program and wish to pursue an electrical apprenticeship are still required to adhere to the existing entry process established by the local area JAC.



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#### PRE-APPRENTICE PROGRAM



Equally as important to note is that pre-apprentices are paid employees, unlike non-union, OYAP and College pre-apprentice programs.

The program is divided into classroom and on-the-job training. Classroom instruction covers electrical construction terminology, safety and orientation, job site roles and responsibilities, electrical material identification and handling, hazard identification, as well as use and care of electrical tools and equipment.

On-the-job training, which makes up 80 per cent of the overall experience, includes: unloading and unpacking electrical materials; on site electrical material inventory control and traffic; supplying crews with electrical materials



and equipment; electrical area job site clean-up and salvage material management; as well as basic electrical work under the direct supervision of three journeymen to one apprentice.

All candidates will have their own counsellor with a personalized training plan who will monitor and record the apprentices' progress while providing life skills counselling. The applicant is evaluated at the conclusion of the one-year probationary period and, if selected, would then begin their apprenticeship.

Those involved with the program are finding that the next generation of potential electricians have a different perspective on a career in the trades.

"We are finding in the last few years that new candidates are less sure of what career they want," said O'Donnell. "It could be a generational thing, but we are finding that more pre-apprentices are voluntarily exiting the program and we also have more pre-apprentices quit that have the skills, but just not the interest in pursuing it as a career."

The success of the electrical contracting industry rests on a skilled workforce and the effective management of that workforce, while at the same time continually adapting to demands, new technologies and competitive pressures of the market. The pre-apprenticeship program can play a key role in the development of that skilled and competitive workforce.



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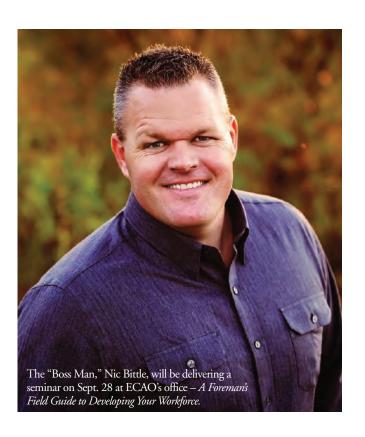
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# Relationship Building Skills in Danger of Becoming Obsolete

How smart contractors develop others to think and act like the boss By Nic Bittle

Many electrical contractors are asking themselves: Who will my next generation of leaders be? Who will replace those in my organization who will retire in the years ahead? What will our workforce look like in the future?

If you have asked yourself these questions, you are in good company.

When we look at the volume of talent that is retiring in the next four to 14 years and then at the level of commitment and experience of those now entering the workforce, our concern is warranted.

I catalogue many of the issues I see in our workforce as The Four Core Competencies:

#### Communication

**The Shift** - How young men and women communicate today is completely different from those who entered the workforce 30 years ago. Face-to-face and voice-to-voice conversations are becoming a thing of



the past. (This is not a good change, by the way.) Their ability to accept constructive criticism or deal with conflict is significantly diminished. Conversations that once took place in person or on the phone are being replaced with text messages and an unmanageable number of emails. The quantity of information, often unnecessary, is trying to replace the good old-fashioned conversation.

**The Problem** – Take away one's ability to have a meaningful face-to-face conversation with another person, and you take away that person's ability to build a relationship. Most of those who prefer text and email claim it's more efficient or just a personal preference. There is a time and place where text and email chains are the perfect way to "deliver information." Building relationships is different. Business follows relationships. Take away your ability to build a relationship with another person, and you may cripple your ability to perform at your best. Today's leaders rely heavily on relationships for success, but for a large part of the next generation entering the industry, this skill is becoming obsolete.

## Self-Leadership

**The Shift** – Self-leadership is about leading oneself, not someone else. It takes one set of skills to lead a group of men on the battlefield or on the job site. It takes a completely different set of skills to show up on time or put away your personal cell phone for the whole day.

**The Problem** – Many of our organizations are trying to figure out how they are going to train this next generation of leaders when they have not developed a level of self-leadership in our workforce. The cell phone issue is not a technology issue. Having a member of your crew on Facebook or texting his girlfriend constantly is not a technology issue. This is an integrity issue. If the cell phone itself were the problem, then everyone with a cell phone would have the same behaviour.

#### Professionalism

**The Shift** – The construction industry already has a tough reputation with regards to professionalism. We have guys who look like they got dressed out of their glove box and smell like they slept under a bridge last night. When I ask about their basic appearance, behaviour, or general odour, I often hear, "This is how I roll, and I do damn good work, so it shouldn't matter."

**The Problem** – It does matter. The individual who doesn't care about their professionalism fails to realize that they are representing more than just themselves. They are representing the trade, the company they work for, and their Local if they are a member. This is damaging our reputation, which damages our ability to be successful.

# Entrepreneurship

**The Shift** – Entrepreneurship includes basic knowledge around how man-hours are created. We are seeing a generation of people entering the workforce who are entitled and do not care whether the contractor is successful. They do not understand how many hours a contractor must generate to replace the \$300 drill they just lost. When I ask a room full of apprentices how much money a contractor makes on a million-dollar job, the number one answer is "one million dollars."

Take away one's ability to have a meaningful face-to-face conversation with another person, and you take away that person's ability to build a relationship.

**The Problem** – The contractors' margins are getting tighter. The work schedules are getting compressed. The little mistakes are adding up, and those mistakes are proving to be catastrophic. Basic business sense and personal financial responsibility are becoming lost arts.

These are the four core competencies we must begin to develop in our workforce if we want to be successful in the future. Most would say the issues above fall under the umbrella of "common sense," but common sense isn't all that common anymore.

Take a look at your organization. Once you remove those who will retire in the next four to 14 years, who will take their place? And then who will take their place? The smart contractors are the ones who are working every day to develop not only their crews, but also tomorrow's leaders.

Nic Bittle will be hosting a seminar, A Foreman's Field Guide to Developing Your Workforce, on Sept. 28 at ECAO. Email ecao@ecao.org to register.

Nic Bittle is the founder of Work Force Pro and works with contractors that want to prepare and develop their workforce to lead with impact, act like a pro, and perform at their best on a daily basis.

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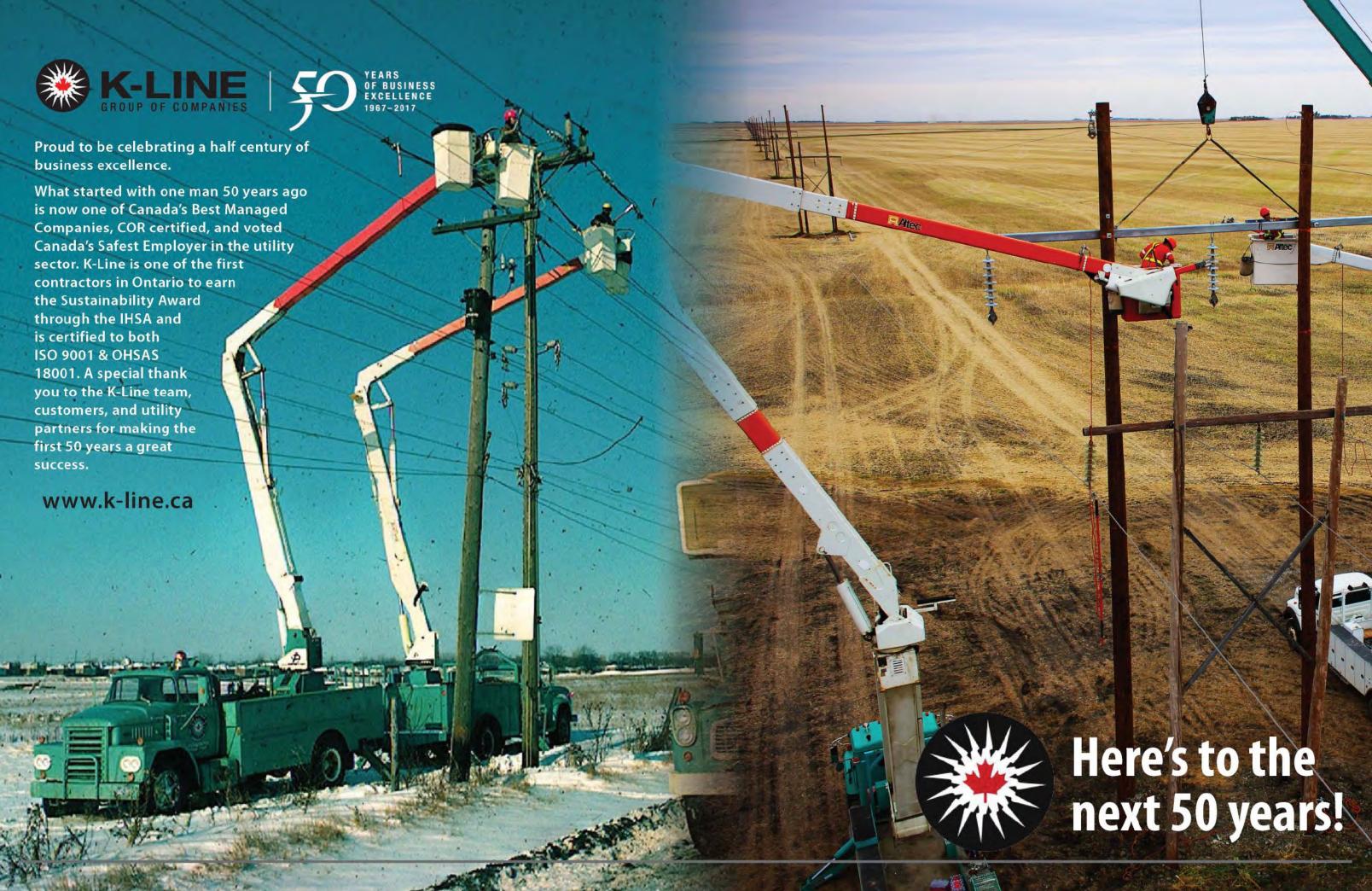






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# ECAO/IBEW Shine Bright at the 2017 JUNO AWARDS



The Electrical Contractors Association of Ontario (ECAO) and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Construction Council Ontario (IBEW CCO) sponsored the *Electronic Album of the Year* at this year's JUNO Awards in Ottawa on April 2. It was a chance to remind the music industry and the public about the value of electricians and the important work they do.

It was a memorable night for one IBEW electrician and an ECAO electrical contractor who walked the red carpet at one of Canada's biggest media events. George Kardaras, a training instructor for Local 586 in Ottawa, and Johannes Ziebarth, an ECAO contractor also from the nation's capital, attended the JUNO Awards ceremony at the Canadian Tire Centre. The event stretched over Saturday and Sunday, April 1 and 2. Kardaras was interviewed by CBC television as part of the event.

"It was extremely rewarding to hear such kind words from so many nominees about how much they value the work of electricians," said Sherri Haigh, Director of Business Development for the Joint Electrical Promotion Plan (JEPP). "It was a great opportunity to raise the profile of IBEW electricians and the ECAO/IBEW brand."

Kardaras and Ziebarth had a chance to speak with JUNO nominees, top Canadian music industry executives, and even actor/singer Kiefer Sutherland.

"There are many linkages between music and electricians – we are both fighting to protect the value of our investments in training and skills which is being eroded by both technology and some corporations trying to increase their profits at our expense," explained Haigh.

Country Album of the Year nominee Aaron Pritchett presented the award for Electronic Album of the Year for ECAO/IBEW. Pritchett, who has family members in the skilled trades, proudly wore an ECAO/IBEW pin during the evening of the live broadcast.

When the time came to present the award, Pritchett was introduced by a voice-over that said, "Electronic Album of the Year is sponsored by the IBEW and the Electrical Contractors Association of Ontario who have a long history of working behind the scenes to keep musicians plugged in and safely wired for sound."

"The IBEW and the Electrical Contractors Association of Ontario are proud supporters of Canadian musicians and it is my honour to present Electronic Album of the Year award on their behalf,"

Pritchett said.

The Juno Awards event was the start of a campaign to help the public understand the value of electrical work in many aspects of our lives.



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8414	1-1/2"	1.360	1.770	1.250	1.590	2/0-4, 3/0-3, 3/0-4, 4/0-3, 4/0-4, 250-3, 250-4
8415	2"	1.700	2.200	1.550	2.050	250-4, 300-4, 350-3, 350-4, 500-3
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# In Power Line Investigations and Maintenance

Kevin Vallier

The popularity of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV), commonly referred to as drones, is sky high. No longer just a function of military intelligence gathering or deployed as military weapons, UAVs have expanded into commercial and recreational use in huge numbers.

During the past couple of years they have also been used in the electrical industry to investigate powerline damages or for regular powerline maintenance assessments.

Windsor was one of the first cities in Ontario to use drones for infrastructure assessment and inspection.

After six months of working with Transport Canada, Enwin Utilities received a standing Special Flight Operations Certificate to fly drones for use in infrastructure inspection and maintenance. The utility company can

Many electrical contractors
who specialize in line work
see great potential in the use
of remote-controlled drones

use the small flying machines to check transformers, powerlines and other infrastructure necessary to maintain the safety and reliability of the local distribution system.

If the power does go out, the utility can
use the drones to locate and assess
the cause, without the time and
expense of sending out a helicopter.
This will also improve response
times, and help avoid potential
emergency situations.

They must work within Transport Canada guidelines, which authorize flight over public property and easement areas, photographing and transmitting images of the equipment and infrastructure owned by the utility.

Safety is always a top priority in working with electrical power, and poststorm scenarios are often fraught with danger. With the help of drones, workers will be able to assess damage safely and quickly, from afar.

The longer drone flights can cut costs of inspections which typically involve the use of helicopters for such operations, and provide better images and data. Helicopter fly-bys go quickly because they cost so much per hour. If you have a hovering operation (with a drone), you can take more detailed pictures.

Concerns over safety also drive interest in drone operations. Hovering in a helicopter next to a transmission line with people in it is one of the riskier things you can do.

Enwin is also able to pass on information about electrical fires, downed wires and other potential hazards to local fire and rescue services.

Sudbury Hydro has also used drones to examine the conditions of their powerlines. The utility thinks the unmanned aerial vehicle, comparable to a fancy remote-controlled helicopter, might be a useful tool in its field work. It could be particularly beneficial in northern Ontario where lines are often found in densely forested areas or other hard-to-access places where there might be some hot spots difficult to see with the naked eye.

Of course, privacy is always a hot button issue when it comes to the use of drones. Sudbury Hydro sent a letter to residents of Copper Cliff to let them know the drone would be flying over the community, assuring residents that their privacy will be protected, as the drone would only focus on hydro lines.

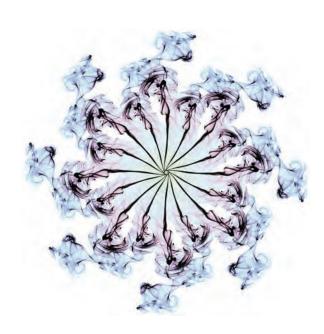
While the use of drones in Canada is still fairly limited by regulatory and licensing parameters, Transport Canada has acknowledged that UAVs operate in diverse environments and in high risk roles, including but not limited to telecommunications relay platforms, survey and inspection of remote power lines and pipelines as well as emergency and disaster monitoring.

Electrical contractors who specialize in line work see great potential in the use of remote-controlled drones to do the often-dangerous work of inspecting power lines and transmission towers, but strict regulations have so far slowed adoption of the technology.

The remote-controlled devices make the work of linemen safer, more efficient and less expensive, according to the American based non-profit research group Electric Power Research Institute.

Utilities spend millions of dollars inspecting power lines, which are often in hard-to-access places. In North America the industry has been interested in the potential use of drones for years, but has been slower than European companies to adopt the technology because of tighter regulatory restrictions in both Canada and the United States.

While hobbyists can fly drones without certification, the Federal Aviation
Administration in the U.S. requires special certification for commercial users. There are numerous conditions and limitations:



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The drone operator needs a pilot's licence, the aircraft must weigh less than 55 pounds, flights can go no more than 200 feet above the ground, and the drone must be operated in the pilot's line of sight.

The FAA treats the operation of drones like any other aircraft for safety reasons, and commercial operators face strict rules for getting permission to use them, according to the agency.

Despite the strict regulations, more than 20 utilities have tested unmanned aerial vehicles for inspecting transmission and distribution lines for damage from storms and normal wear and tear. The new rules allow companies in the electric power and other sectors to fly drones weighing no more than 55 pounds below 400 feet without obtaining a waiver from the FAA.

Here in Canada there are different rules and regulations depending on if you are flying a drone for recreational purposes versus research, academic, or commercial reasons. The Canadian government, through Transport Canada, has primary jurisdiction over the regulation of UAVs in this country. All commercial operators of UAVs must obtain a Special Flight Operations Certificate (SFOC) from Transport Canada prior to use unless an exemption applies. There are a number of SFOC application processes depending on the nature and use of the UAV. The more complex and risky the proposed operation, the more thorough and onerous the SFOC application process is.

There are those in the industry who picture a day in the not-too-distant future when line companies could put some of the smaller drones on every single company truck, so that when they go to sites, they could zip it up and down a pole to do inspections that would normally require someone climbing to the top and back. With thousands of miles of transmission lines and distribution lines in Ontario, there are limits to visual-line-ofsight inspections.

Companies in this line of work still have some way to go before they incorporate drones as a regular part of their operations, but clearly regular use of UAVs is on the horizon.

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# Data Breaches an Increasing Risk for Businesses Large and Small

By Mauro Di Tullio

In the current era of smartphones and "The Internet of Things," cyber breaches are becoming more and more common. Searching "data breach" into Google News will land you roughly 1,870,000 results. Entities both big and small are becoming targets of cyber-attacks. Just ask the Internal Revenue Service south of the border, who were recently hit with a cyber-breach that resulted in the personal data of more than 100,000 people being exposed to cyber criminals.

A recent study from Ponemon Institute – an independent research company focusing on privacy, data protection and information security policy – and IBM revealed that the average cost of a data breach has increased 23 per cent over the past two years, with the average cost per record lost or stolen rising from \$145 last year to \$154 this year. Note that these average costs do not take into account mega-breaches such as those suffered by JPMorgan Chase, Home Depot, and Target.

The healthcare and education industries are the most at risk for costly breaches, with average costs roughly twice as much as the total average.

Derek Browne, Chief Information Security Officer for Northbridge
Insurance, has provided us with key points, both good
and bad, that Canadians should take away from
the Ponemon report.

- The good news: "Canadian businesses are least likely to be breached globally (along with Germany)."
  - The bad news: "If they do experience a breach, it is most likely a malicious attack rather than glitch or human error."

A recent survey from PricewaterhouseCoopers found that 88 per cent of Canadian private companies agreed or strongly agreed that cybersecurity is an important issue, yet 42 per cent of respondents have never conducted formal cybersecurity employee training. On top of that, 52 per cent of respondents feel that employee training related to cybersecurity isn't a top priority for their business. This can be attributed to the fact that businesses view investing in cybersecurity as a discretionary cost, not a business enabler. Canadian business owners need to shift their mentality and acknowledge that cybersecurity should be viewed as an imperative business investment.

Clearly, all Canadian businesses would do well to increase their cybersecurity awareness. We can expect ongoing active communication on the subject including moderated forums, industry conference seminars and trade publication articles. Taking note and conducting some internal company brainstorming can help tackle this issue. The exposures should also be reviewed by your risk management specialist.

Browne refers to a report from global management consulting firm McKinsey & Company which analyzes and discusses the cyber risks that are prevalent in today's digital age.

Browne's key takeaway from this report: "79 per cent of North American companies self-assessed that, on a scale of one to four, they were below a two in terms of cybersecurity maturity." It seems clear that Canadian companies need to become more and more proactive in their cybersecurity defences if they wish to remain unscathed in today's Internet-centred era.

It's not just large corporations that have to worry; smaller companies aren't immune to cyber-attacks either. Just as an example, two Ontario companies were hacked within the last year costing each company thousands of dollars. The hackers lock the company server and essentially demand a ransom be paid to unlock it.

Insurance companies are now offering coverage for this type of incident at a cost of around \$100 per year depending on the company and extent of the coverage.

Mauro Di Tullio is the Senior Account Representative for Associations at Federated Insurance.





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# Lockout Procedures

Know what you're up against

By Workplace Safety & Prevention Services

The key to preventing lockout incidents, says WSPS consultant Michael Wilson, is understanding which hazardous energies you are dealing with. Up to eight potential sources must be controlled tools before a worker can safely carry out maintenance and repair tasks.

"If you take a look at incidents, very often you can trace root causes back to not being ready for the job, not appreciating what you are up against," he says.

So how does an employer ensure workers are ready? Wilson provides tips and advice in an impactful video, *Machine Safeguarding – Control Hazardous Energy with a Lockout Program*.

## 6 steps to lockout

In the video, he lists the six basic steps in a lockout program:

- identification of machinery to be locked out;
- proper shutdown sequence;
- isolation of hazardous energy;
- control of any stored energy;
- lockout; and
- verification of control.

These steps are the heart of a lockout program, but as Wilson explains, there's more to keeping people safe. To watch the video visit www.wsps.ca/Information-Resources/Videos.

# Identify energy courses

A critical first step before implementing a program and training workers, says Wilson, is to inventory all energy sources connected to your machines. These sources may not be obvious.

"Whenever we do lockout training, participants typically identify just three possible energy sources. But there are actually eight, which we discuss in the course: electric, thermal, hydraulic, chemical, radiation, gravity, compressed air, and kinetic."

How do you conduct an inventory? "Start with the manufacturer's information manuals. Your maintenance, engineering and operations staff would certainly be able to tell you what energy sources are in play. And of course, you can always invite WSPS consultants to help you with this task."

### Establish procedures

Once you know what you're dealing with, create step-by-step procedures for controlling hazardous energy in your equipment prior to conducting maintenance, he says.

Workers executing lockout should have knowledge, training and experience relating to these steps and to the sources of energy they are dealing with. "Don't forget about supervisors. They also need to be aware of lockout procedures to ensure workers follow the process," he adds.

Developing machine-specific lockout instructions is a wise practice, especially when posted on individual placards for each machine. "It's a nice little review of training," says Wilson. "For example, workers can go up to the placard, and say, 'Okay, here are the energy sources I am dealing with, and I need this many locks, I shut down the electrical over here, and I shut down the air over there.' As a result, they're better prepared to do the job."

#### Verify control

The last step in the lockout process is to check that you are actually in control of the equipment. "I advise employers and workers to take a second and try to start it. Try to operate it, to make sure you are truly in control of that machine before you stick a hand or arm inside."

# How we can help

Watch the Machine Safeguarding – Control Hazardous Energy with a Lockout Program video.

Take a training course: Lockout/Tagout Safety Essentials, a 1/2 day course available in a public classroom or on site, outlines a comprehensive process for creating a program based on CSA standard Z460.

Talk to a WSPS machine safety expert. We can help you conduct hazardous energy inventories and develop your lockout/tagout program and procedures.

# ECAO Receives COCA Chair's Award



ECAO was honoured to receive the 2016 Chair's Award from the Council of Ontario Construction Associations (COCA) at their Annual General Meeting held this past February. The Award is presented at the discretion of the Chair and recognizes a volunteer or an organization whose contributions to the success of COCA go above and beyond what is normally expected.

Pictured in photo from left are: Gary van Bolderen, COCA Board Chair and Jeff Koller. ECAO Executive Director.









www.ecao.org 24

# Know the Requirements for the Installation of Pools,

Spas and Tubs near

Powerline Safety Specialist, Electrical Safety Authority

Section 68 of the Ontario Electrical Safety Code (OESC) has safety requirements for the installation of pools, spas and hot tubs near or under powerlines.

### Overhead Powerlines

Overheard primary (above 750V) powerlines are typically bare conductors, whereas secondary powerlines (below 750V), may be insulated. However, the insulation of these conductors may fray or crack due to harsh environmental conditions such as snow, ice and scorching heat; therefore, it's always the safest assumption to consider all power lines as non-insulated.

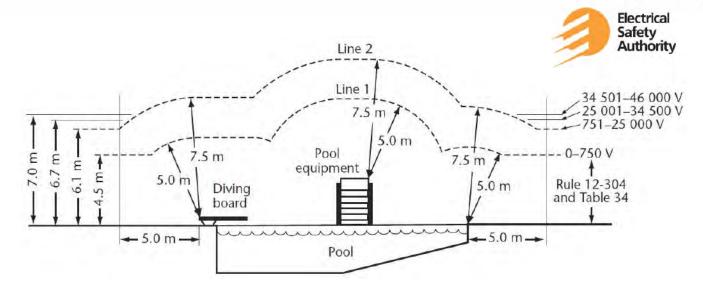
Any conductive object (i.e., pool skimmer or ladder) that makes contact with these lines or jump ("arc") may become energized and can seriously injure or kill people around it.

Rule 68-054(1) does not permit a pool to be placed under or near overhead powerlines or permit overhead powerlines to be placed over or near a pool. Rule 68-054(2) goes further to include elevated surfaces associated with the pool such as diving structure, slide, swings, observation stand, tower or platform.

However, sometimes this is unavoidable due to limited space on the property. There are exemptions in the rule that under certain conditions will permit a pool to be placed under or near overhead powerlines. Diagram 1 (Appendix B note) clearly illustrates the exemptions to the rule.

Diagram 1: Clearance for overhead lines on, over and around pools

Note: No conductors would be permitted under any circumstances in the area under Line 1.



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# **Underground Powerlines**

Rule 68-056 requires horizontal separation between the inside walls of the pool and underground powerlines. The horizontal separation shall not be less than that shown in Table 61. This does not apply to the underground bonding conductors or wiring associated with the pool that is protected by a Class A ground fault circuit interrupter.

Table 61 Minimum buried cable horizontal separations from pools

	Minimum horizontal separation, m			
Type of installation	Direct buried unjacketed cable with bare neutral or cables with a semi-conducting jacket	jacket or conductors in		
Communication conductors	1.5	1.0		
Power conductors				
0-750 V	1.5	1.0		
751-15 000 V	3.0	1.5		
15 001-28 000 V	6.0	2.0		

The following steps provide a safe installation from all electrical hazards and avoid costly and timely relocation of the overhead or underground powerlines.

#### Perform a visual

Determine if there are existing overhead wires located in the vicinity of the proposed pool location. Determining if underground powerlines are present can be difficult. Look for signs such as a meter base located at the rear of the house, or power supplied to an existing shed on the property.

Contact the Local Distribution Company/Utility well in advance to determine if they own any underground powerlines on or around the property. If overhead powerlines are present, they will confirm ownership of the powerlines. If they do own the powerlines, they will need to verify if the location of the proposed pool will meet overhead clearance requirements of

## Call before you dig

Contact Ontario One Call (www.on1call.com) to locate all utility owned underground infrastructure.



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# Your Employee Assistance Program

If you have a bereavement leave policy, consult with your HR advisor regarding suspected abuse. Employees on funeral leave, responsible for managing the affairs of the deceased, may experience additional distress or suffer from grief that affects them later because they postponed self-care while attending to the needs of others. Suggesting the EAP is always a good idea for any problem. Dozens of things could explain the absence, but you can refer your employee to the EAP based on a finding of funeral leave abuse. EAPs have discovered that problems like this often are multifaceted. An employee may be grief-stricken, depressed, abusing leave, relapsing into an addiction problem, looking for

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another job, taking vacation, or all of these things at the same time! This is why EAPs exist – to help sort out the issues and help organizations retain valuable workers.

Your employee may be abstinent from meth use, and his occupational and social functioning may be dramatically improved, but alcohol use following treatment for meth addiction could or could not be a problem for this employee's particular situation, background, and related factors. It may be recommended in this employee's recovery efforts to abstain from all substances, including alcohol, to help avoid relapse to the drug of choice. Your job, of course, is monitoring performance and not focusing on the employee's personal decisions outside work, no matter how ill-advised they may be. Relapse and its effect on performance may be evident in a week, a year, or more. If or when that time comes, engage the EAP.

Employees with creativity and drive tend to have skills often associated with entrepreneurial thinking. Meet with your employees regularly, and talk to them about what makes them excited and what makes them feel engaged. Keep the following in mind: Do you have employees who like dreaming up new ideas? Are any employees naturally prone to spotting new business opportunities? Do any employees consistently demonstrate their ability to spin positivity out of disappointment and see the silver lining of the cloud? Do you have employees who take initiative

on the job to undertake something new without being asked? Evidence of these behaviours can often be spotted even in the most controlled, uninspiring, and limited work settings. Employees who are courageous and unafraid to think outside the box will

find a way to get their needs met, even if it is not in your company, so working with your managers to create opportunities is one key strategy for retaining them and reaping the benefits of their talent.

Your employee's behaviours could be explained by mental illness, such as a type of schizophrenia, but an evaluation would be needed to learn more. Those affected by schizophrenia (about one per cent

of the population) may have their first overt episode of the illness in young adulthood or later. It may therefore be witnessed on the job, and it can be alarming to unwitting coworkers when delusions or auditory hallucinations are shared. Effective medications exist for schizophrenia, and unlike decades ago, they allow employees to function quite adequately. The risk that an employee with mental illness will become violent is overblown, but a fitness-for-duty evaluation afforded by your personnel policies is appropriate if behaviour interferes with or is disruptive to the work situation.

You can start by suggesting the employee visit the EAP, or consult with the EAP about the steps to take.

Diversity and inclusiveness awareness can be suitable for any work group, not necessarily because of existing problems but to

Meet with your employees

regularly, and talk to them

about what makes them

excited and what makes

them feel engaged.

reinforce and strengthen a positive work culture that already exists. Think "preventive maintenance." Remember, if you have 50 employees, turnover is a natural part of the organizational process, and this alone could support a rationale for ongoing education. Many education programs enhance and reinforce existing strengths. A seminar on workplace communication is a good example.

There is always more to know about it. Although you perceive a high-functioning and inclusive workgroup, you can never be sure that covert, unspoken, or unacknowledged biases exist and that they have been felt. Diversity awareness plays an intervening role in averting potential problems.

This article was originally published in the 87th edition of Aspirations: Manager's Toolbox, published in March 2017.



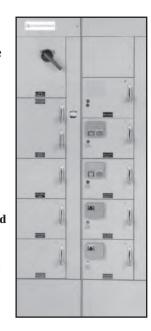
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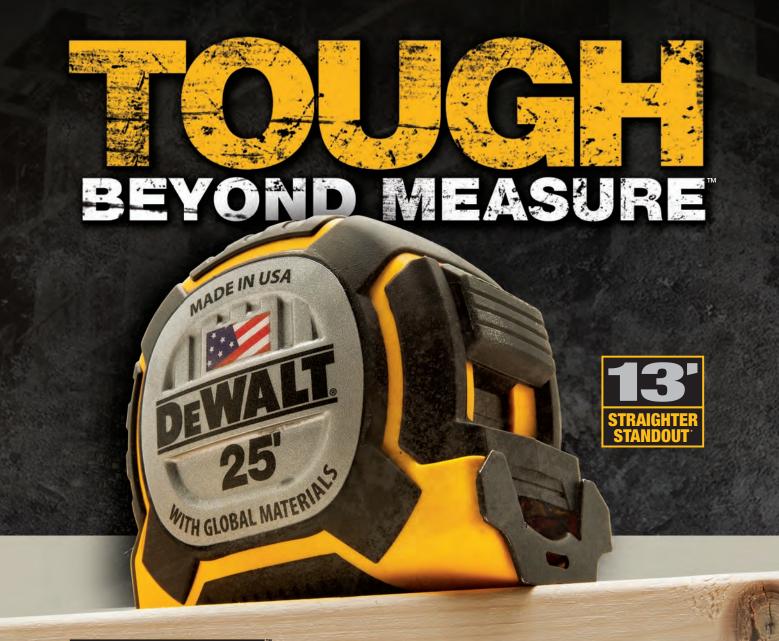


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