



COAST TO COAST UPDATE
AU COURANT D'UN OcéAN À L'AUTRE
 INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS
 FRATERNITÉ INTERNATIONALE DES OUVRIERS EN ÉLECTRICITÉ



PHIL FLEMMING

International Vice President / Vice-président international
 First District, CANADA / Premier District, CANADA



January/February 2009

Greetings:

The following are excerpts from a publication, "Ensuring Our Future".

"It is simply no longer possible to believe that union construction is faced with only a temporary set of circumstances which have given rise to a new form of competition within the industry..."

As more and more union firms find themselves running second best in the bidding process over long periods of time, their ability to maintain a strong competitive business entity becomes weakened. On the other hand, non-union construction firms continue to build strength with each successful contract. As they expand to take more and ever larger contracts they increase their capabilities and record of performance...

While Canadians can look forward to a somewhat brighter future, the turnaround in the economy is likely to be gradual. This implies relatively slow growth, with unemployment rates forecast to decline very gradually...

In this ongoing slow market environment, competition will remain extremely keen and the necessity for joint action to improve the relative position of union construction must continue to be of highest priority...

The purchasers of construction are also caught in a cost-benefit squeeze and have become very selective in determining size and location and method of constructing new plant facilities...

Despite the fact that union construction has traditionally supplied a product which our clients found to be well constructed and of lasting value, they too are re-assessing their investments with great care...

The National Joint Committee is genuinely concerned about the direction in which union construction is headed...

The unionized construction industry has a long and proud record of achievement. Now is the time for major adjustments to ensure that familiar markets are regained, and new ones are within our competitive grasp...

We encourage everyone concerned to become involved..."

"Ensuring Our Future" was published in 1985 by the Canadian National Joint Committee, a Committee of the Canadian Executive Board of the Building Trades and the Unionized Contractors of the Canadian Construction Association.



In solidarity,

Phil Flemming, IVP

Welcoming the Political Action Media Strategist Coordinator

It is with pleasure to announce that effective February 1, 2009, Brother Barry Stevens, the President of IBEW Local 353, took the job of *Political Action Media Strategist Coordinator* for the First District.

Barry already has a great business plan to make us more effective politically at all levels of government and in the near future, Barry will have correspondence going to all Local Unions and that will include all his contact information.

Please welcome Barry and give him your cooperation and support so that we can improve our lot for the membership by being more politically active.

Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Announces New Measures To Help Protect Children From Electrical Shocks In The Home

(This article has been taken from CSA's Media Relations News Release)

On January 22, 2009 the CSA announced the 21st Edition of the CE Code, Part I, which contains requirements calling for tamper-resistant receptacles with built-in shutter systems designed to prevent single-pronged, foreign objects like pins, keys and nails and

from touching live electrical parts if inserted into the receptacle slots. Other means of protection for “child-proofing” a home’s electrical outlets, such as plastic caps, may not be as effective as many of these measures can be removed in seconds by children. The tamper-resistant receptacles in the 2009 CE Code are fixed in place and will help protect children against electrical burns without impairing normal plug insertion, removal or function.

“This new Code requirement will significantly reduce tragic and unnecessary electrical contact incidents involving children”, stated IBEW International Representative Laird Cronk, who sits on the Canadian Electrical Code, Part I, Technical Committee and voted in favour of the rule change. “Safety in the workplace and consumer safety are both high priorities for the IBEW” said Cronk “and this is one simple step that will help protect children in a tangible way.”

Even with the new requirements, parental supervision is very important as the new receptacles do not protect against two, single-pronged items inserted simultaneously. The shutters would interpret such items as a two-pronged plug and allow insertion.

The 2009 Canadian Electrical Code, Part I, includes numerous updates, including:

- requirements for electrically connected carbon monoxide alarms;
- recognition of new technologies such as under-carpet wires and cables;
- new specifications for receptacle locations for combination microwave oven / range hoods;
- new bonding requirements for swimming pools;
- electrical safety requirements for ski-lift, tow rope, and similar installations; and
- new requirements for hazardous locations, emergency power supply systems, and motor overload devices.

The 2009 Canadian Electrical Code will be priced for **IBEW members only for \$112.50 CAD**—regularly \$150 CAD. It is available online at www.shopcsa.ca, by calling CSA Standards Sales at 800-463-6727, or by e-mail at sales@csa.ca. The code is available in print, PDF and the new Mobile Device Format (MDF). To help industry understand and apply the code, CSA’s Learning Centre

is offering numerous training programs and seminars. Information on training is available at <https://learningcentre.csa.ca/>

*****SPECIAL OFFER***
FOR IBEW MEMBERS ONLY**

*Enroll prior to **March 15th, 2009** and CSA will offer IBEW Members:*

2009 CE Code Part I, What’s New Online Learning Program for **\$175.00** – regularly \$395.00 - This interactive online course teaches the critical changes to the new edition of the Canadian Electrical Code, including rationale for change and the impact those changes will have on your business. **Upon completion of the course, a certificate will be available for printing. Includes: CSA C22.1-09 PDF Standard.**

Workplace Electrical Safety (Based on CSA Z462-08) Online Learning Program for **\$190.00** – regularly \$375.00 - As an employer, you have a legal duty to protect your workers from workplace hazards. Shock and arc flash are potentially catastrophic events that can cause severe or fatal injuries. This on-line training course is designed to assist organizations to identify shock and arc flash hazards and prevent injuries and incidents associated with those hazards. **Upon completion of the course, a certificate will be available for printing. Includes CSA Z462-08 PDF Standard.**

For more information or to enroll, please contact:

Amanda S. Ramkalawan, Key Account Coordinator, Canadian Standards Association
Toll-Free – 1-866-206-0812 ext. 5569 or
Direct Line – 416-747-5569
Email Address – amanda.ramkalawan@csa.ca
Website – www.csa.ca

\$2.4 Million Awarded By Human Rights Tribunal to Latin American Workers Who Alleged Pay Discrimination While Working On Olympics Construction (Article taken from Lancaster’s Labour Law E-Bulletin – Issue No. 230)

In a trailblazing ruling that could change the way international companies do business in Canada, the British Columbia Human Rights Tribunal awarded \$2.4 million in compensation to a group of Latin American employees who worked on the underground portion of the \$2 billion rail line that is being built in Vancouver in preparation for the 2010 Olympic Games.

pic Games.

SNCP-SELI, the joint venture contracted to construct the tunnel, brought in a specialized temporary foreign workforce to conduct the tunnel boring operation. The workers all had previous experience with SELI, which operates worldwide, in the range of three to 25 years on projects around the globe.

When the tunnel work on the Canada Line in Vancouver commenced in April 2006, it consisted of two shifts, staffed by 38 skilled workers from Costa Rica, Colombia and Ecuador. The contractor added a third shift in July, for which it brought in workers from Europe. Although they performed the same work, the employees from Latin America were paid substantially less – roughly 60 percent – than those from Europe. Their arrangements for accommodation, meals and expenses were all substandard in comparison to the Europeans.

The British Columbia Human Rights Tribunal found these differences discriminatory and ordered that the complainants be compensated for the wage differential plus \$10,000 each for injury to feelings, self respect and dignity. "For two years, the respondents' treatment of the [workers] conveyed to them the message that they were worth less and less worthy than other employees, because they were Latin American," the Tribunal stated in a 218-page ruling.

The company immediately announced that it would challenge the decision in the B.C. Supreme Court. While conceding that SELI paid the group of workers from Europe more than it did those from countries with "significantly lower labour costs," the company's position was that "this adverse treatment is not based on race, colour, ancestry or place of origin as these terms are understood in human rights law." SELI pointed to the fact that Canadian employees working on the same project were paid less than both the European and Latin American temporary employees, and could trace their origins to Europe, Latin America and other countries.

According to SELI's counsel, Peter Gall, quoted in a *Globe and Mail* article, the Tribunal's decision was a "dramatic overreaching [that] throws into doubt the entire economic underpinning of the foreign workers program [by] condemning the notion of shopping around the globe for labour rates as inherently discriminatory." Company counsel expressed confidence in victory on appeal given the "extensive record of over-the-top tribunal rulings that have been quashed by the courts."

The complainants, who had all returned to their home countries by the time the decision was released in December 2008, were reportedly overwhelmed by the decision. The Constructors and Specialized Workers Union (CSWU), Local 1611, which represented the Latin American employees before the Tribunal, described the decision as precedent-setting, but acknowledged that the battle had just begun.

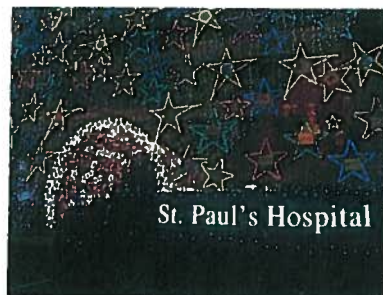
Read the full text of the [B.C. Human Rights Tribunal's ruling](http://onlinedb.lancasterhouse.com/images/up-BCHRT_CSWU.pdf): http://onlinedb.lancasterhouse.com/images/up-BCHRT_CSWU.pdf, and an article entitled "[Latin American workers win \\$2.4 million award](#)" in *The Vancouver Sun*. An article entitled "[SNCP-SELI Joint Venture will appeal tribunal ruling](#)" appears in the *Journal of Commerce*: <http://www.journalofcommerce.com/article/id31692>.

Lights of Hope (this article was written by Harry Van Beest, IBEW Local Union 213)

Every Fall over 60 members from British Columbia's IBEW Local Unions 213 and 258 along with another 50-60 volunteers from various walks of life, come together at Vancouver, BC's St.

Paul's Hospital to construct what has become a signature holiday landmark and event: the "Lights of Hope" Christmas light display.

The installation of the *larger than life* light display is well known by both local residents as well as visitors, and signifies the beginning of the Christmas season in Vancouver for many. The display, which consists of over 150,000 lights, draws donations in excess of \$1.5 million each holiday season. The event



raises funds for equipment, research, and improved patient care. IBEW Local Unions 213 and 258 members have had the privilege of working on this fundraiser for the past 11 years. The display has raised more than \$12 million dollars since 1998 including \$1.77 million in 2008.



Many of the faces at the set up are the same Sisters and Brothers year after year; it is truly a community function. The display which is designed and constructed by many dedicated volunteers truly showcases the community's commitment to funding inspired care, teaching and research at St. Paul's Hospital. For more info on the St. Paul's Lights of Hope foundation, please visit www.helpstpauls.com.

Local Union 258 – Burnaby, BC Members Travel To Kansas City to Participate In International Rodeo (Article taken from the Fall Issue of Local Union 258 'Hotline' publication)

Two teams of three linemen and one apprentice, all IBEW Local 258 members working for Allteck, took home top ten prizes when they traveled to Kansas City this fall to participate in the 25th Annual Lineman's Rodeo & Expo World Championship.

Brother Mike Scott and Brother Ben Bailey, who both work for Allteck Line Contractors in Burnaby, sat down for a moment with The Hotline to describe the competition that attracts some of the best linemen in the world to compete in events based on traditional tasks and skills such as pole climbing and rescue.

"It was an awesome experience," described Scott, who has worked at Allteck for almost 7 years. "It was great to meet so many people from around the world and share our stories of the work we do everyday."

Two Allteck Teams placed in the top ten in the Journeyman Contractor Division with Mike Scott, Doug Laity and Tyson Unruh placing 4th and Bruce Scott, Shannon Sawchuk and Clayton McKay taking 8th place.

Apprentice Ben Bailey took home 7th place in the Apprentice Contractor Division. "We're looking forward to putting together a 'dream team' for next year's competition," said Bailey. "I'd highly recommend this experience to anybody who wants to get involved."

Hosted by Kansas City Power & Light and Westar Energy, this year's rodeo saw more than 200 teams and 250 apprentices travel to Kansas where they took part in the rodeo that also featured an exhibition and safety & training conference.

Obtaining Designation Through Distance - Pilot Program Assists Aboriginals In Reaching Skills Certification

(Article taken from Northern Ontario Business: Published on 1/14/2009 and written by: Kelly Louiseize)

A pilot program is underway in almost 30 First Nation communities in the northwest to determine if more apprenticeship certification can be completed using distance education.

Earlier in March of 2007, Sioux Lookout Area Aboriginal Management Board (SLAAMB) received a grant from Human Resources Social Development Canada for Aboriginal Apprenticeship Research. The goals were for First Nation trade workers to achieve their certification through a three-year pilot program at the Centre for Aboriginal Apprentice Research or (CAAR).

Some tradespeople are gaining on-the-job experience through two new Sioux Lookout construction projects worth over \$1 million each: The Meno-Ya-Win Health Centre and the other a hostel.

Before the students could be placed however, they underwent a series of challenging exams, challenging in that the exams were in English and their native tongue is Oji-Cree.

"There were translation challenges," said Bob Bruyere, SLAAMB's coordinator.

"Some of the students were already in the workforce as apprentice electricians and carpenters but comprehension of math, particularly algebra, on paper tended to be a bit of a challenge for many", he said.

"These students have been out of school for a number of years as well."

As a result the testing marks indicated many of the students required tutoring, so SLAAMB adjusted the curriculum to add an extra six-hours-a week of math to the program.

When the CAAR program began, an estimated 78 participants enrolled with two students reaching domestic and rural journeyman electrician designation, three journeyman carpenters and eight carpenter apprentices, five labourers, two heavy equipment operators, one job site superintendent trainee and one project manager trainee working at the above construction sites.

Now, more than 300 First Nation people are registered in the pilot program and are working or have worked on their tutoring or pre-apprenticeship employment studies, states Bruyere in a report. They are waiting to jump in with a company as a labourer or apprentice.

The challenge is most of the students don't want to leave their communities, says **Glen Drewes, Business Manager with the International Brotherhood Electrical Workers Local 402.**

He and Bruyere have met in Thunder Bay to determine what kind of education can be delivered to remote communities using a pilot program for line maintenance workers.

Although there are many more programs that are being delivered, this particular one is of interest to dozens of First Nation communities.

Electrical technicians often have to fly into remote communities to turn the break switch back on after an electrical surge. This can cost the community \$10,000, Drewes says.

Some areas have diesel generators, while others have wind, solar, or co-generation power. The intent will be for tutors to educate students in the community's respective energy source, but they will not obtain designation or certification, unless they obtain the academic portion of the training.

Course delivery is done through Confederation College distance education operations. Bruyere said more than 15 trade union are in contact with SLAAMB to establish a working relationship to place or employ as many First Nation skilled trade students as they can. Moreover, the program has become nationally recognized as other areas of Canada are eager to adopt new strategies for First Nation skills development.

Electricity Sector Faces Labour Shortage - Problems Include Aging Workforce, Low Recruitment And High Demand

(Article taken from the publication Business Edge - Ontario's Business News; Volume 8, No. 25 by Laura Severs)

Canada's electricity sector, the engine that allows Canada to light up its economy and power homes from coast to coast, is facing a serious labour shortage, a new report reveals.

An aging workforce, coupled with low recruiting numbers and a continual increase in demand from domestic and export markets, are converging to create a problem that could power down an industry that employs some 100,000 people.

The electricity industry faces an immediate shortfall of 1,300 positions every year for the next three years and needs to replace nearly 30 percent of industry positions, or approximately 25,000 people within the next six years, to meet Canada's energy demands - currently rising by one percent each year.

But while the numbers look bleak - estimates show that 28.8 percent of the electricity workforce is expected to retire between 2007 and 2012 - industry officials remain hopeful that a new report will be the warning shot that will help to turn things around.

The Electricity Sector Council (ESC) is bringing representatives from government, business, labour and education groups together to tackle the labour shortage, says Catherine Cottingham, executive director and CEO of the Ottawa-based ESC, which provides human resource and workplace development support to workers in the electrical industry and related fields.

But even so, the 2008 ESC Labour Market Information (LMI) study startled some stakeholders with its findings.

Cottingham says the new study follows up on another in 2005 that showed what the electricity business knew anecdotally about growing labour concerns, "but didn't realize it was so national in scope."

"Subsequent to that, business put in a lot of effort to address that," she says. "People have invested in apprenticeships, but the number of people going out the door is faster than we can keep up with. We're finding in some jurisdictions that they need more apprentices than they have journeyman to train them."

While the current study shows progress is being made, "it's not enough, which was a bit of a surprise," Cottingham adds.

Part of the problem is the traditionally stable nature of the electricity industry, according to Damon Rondeau, a human resource planner at Manitoba Hydro and chair of the ESC's labour market information project's steering committee.

"The entire electricity sector grew substantially in the 1960s and 1970s in response to growth in the Canadian economy and these people are all retiring now," says Rondeau. "We've always been a long-service, low-turnover industry. It's always been a bit of an older-age employee; that's fairly natural because of the long training lead-time and the highly skilled positions."

Retirements are likely going to stay high for another four to five years and then take another couple of years to stabilize, he says but Rondeau adds that the labour problem does not mean the power will go out any time soon.

"As somebody who has been watching this develop for some time, we're used to things moving fairly slowly in this segment of the economy - and they are on the move now," he says. "Sometimes we get the sense that there are drastic and dire shortages on the horizon, but the situation I see isn't so dire that the lights are going to go off."

Manitoba Hydro finds itself in a slightly different situation when it comes to labour concerns. While it also has older workers, it has positioned itself as a training utility, one that places a focus on grooming new staff in addition to its experienced workforce.

"Training lead times can range from four to seven years," says Rondeau. "The practice of a lot of utilities is to hire those who have procured their own training privately. Manitoba Hydro is a bit different that way. We've always recruited our trades' workforce right at the beginning of their career, even if they have no experience in the trades."

"Because we've done that for a long time and are good in planning what we need, we're not as surprised or alarmed by some of the findings of the LMI study as some of our peer companies might be."

Calgary-based Enmax, an energy distribution, supply and service company that is a wholly owned subsidiary of the City of Calgary, found itself in a precarious situation in 2007 when it had a shortage of power linemen.

After conventional methods failed, it hired eight linemen from the Philippines.

"We were one of the first utilities in Alberta to recruit linemen internationally," says Erin Kurchina, vice-president of human resources for Enmax, noting that of the eight, who were retained on two-year contracts, three have been hired on a permanent basis.

"We do forecast some (more) retirements," adds Kurchina. "They're not excessive and we've been able to manage our staffing levels through redeployments and the succession planning (for all staffing levels) that we've done. We've also partnered with the Calgary Catholic Immigration Society to help us explore the recruitment of international immigrants."

The ESC is also working on a number of initiatives to ensure that the sector has enough employees to meet the retirement crunch.

It's partnering with associations, labour organizations and educators in the energy sector and has provincial working groups in Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia working directly with the energy ministries in each of those provinces.

Its Electricity First work program provides wage subsidies to small and medium-size companies that offer employment to recent engineering and technical graduates. It's also working to create a national HR strategy and is developing sector-specific online tools such as templates and tracking forms to help organizations prepare for the radical demographic shift in the electricity workforce.

"If we don't get these workers I think there are going to have to be some adjustments," says Cottingham.

"One of the opportunities is technology - necessity spawns innovation. The other is to change the way we organize work, changing roles and responsibilities."

While the council feels it is making progress, "we are surprised that it's not closing the gap as much as we'd like," says Cottingham. "What that suggests is they're (the electrical companies) going to have to be more creative and focus more attention in those areas."

ANNOUNCEMENT – New Nickel Processing Plant in Long Harbour, NL *(This article has been taken from the NEWS RELEASE from Resource Development Trades Council of Newfoundland and Labrador)*

ST JOHN'S, NFLD. – February 4th, 2009 – The Resource Development Trades Council of Newfoundland and Labrador (RDC) comprised of sixteen trade

unions representing all unionized construction workers in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, are pleased to announce that the Council has reached a tentative agreement with the Voisey's Bay Employers Association Inc. on behalf of the owner, Vale Inco Newfoundland and Labrador Limited, for the construction of a new Nickel Processing Plant in Long Harbour, Newfoundland.

The President of the Council, Mr. Calvin Jones says, "This will be a great project for our workers in this province. It comes at a time when the stability that a project of this magnitude provides is greatly needed by our membership."

Mr. Jones and his staff will be travelling across the province starting early this week to encourage his membership to ratify the Project Agreement.

Mr. David Wade, Executive Director of the Council confirms that the RDC and the Association reached a deal late Friday, January 30th, 2009. He says, "The Council and the Association have reached a settlement that both parties are quite happy with. The negotiations were conducted on a professional level and made it a pleasure to be part of the negotiating committee".

Mr. Bob Cooper, President of Vale Inco Newfoundland and Labrador Limited, says "reaching agreement with the RDC marks an important milestone for the Long Harbour Project. We are pleased to have concluded our negotiations in a collaborative fashion – and we look forward to beginning construction this spring."

The Project is scheduled to start in April 2009 and run until February 2013, giving a much needed boost to the economy of the province.

Both the Association and the Council are convinced this will be the project of choice for the workers of Newfoundland and Labrador and have jointly incorporated incentives to ensure it becomes a benchmark for the province.

All local unions will have the tentative agreement ratified over the next few weeks and ready to supply workers for the April 2009 start.

The Council believes it has concluded a monumental agreement in a time of uncertainty in most

quarters and a great milestone for the members of the Resource Development Trades Council of Newfoundland and Labrador.

For more information contact: Calvin Jones, President – RDC: Ph (709) 747-2249 Email: cjones@local740.nf.net or David Wade, Executive Director – RDC: Ph: (709) 726-4560 Email: dwade@nlbtc.com

IBEW Founders' Scholarship

The IBEW Founders' Scholarship is based out of the IBEW International Office in Washington, DC; this Scholarship honours the dedicated wiremen and linemen who, on November 28, 1891, organized the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. Each year the officers of the IBEW are pleased to offer its working members scholarships on a competitive basis. It is hoped that the awards will not only contribute to the personal development of our members, but also steward the electrical industry that our founders envisioned.

This award is for \$200.00 per semester credit hour at any accredited college or university toward an associate's, bachelor's, or post-graduate degree in an approved field. The maximum distribution is \$24,000 over a period not to exceed eight (8) years.

Unlike the [First District Scholarship](#), the IBEW Founders' Scholarship is for **IBEW members ONLY** who have been in continuous good standing for the four years preceding May 1st 2009. If a member has been on honorary withdrawal at any time during the aforementioned period, he/she will not be eligible to participate.

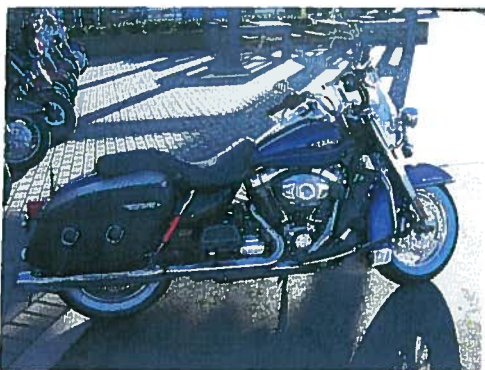
In order to enter this competition, a 'Checklist for Eligibility' (and accompanying documentation required) and an 'Application', will need to be filled out and mailed to: IBEW FOUNDERS' SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE, 900 Seventh Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001 **post-marked prior to May 1st, 2009.**

To obtain the forms for submission please visit: www.ibew1st.org or <http://www.ibew.org/articles/FoundersScholarship.pdf>. All questions and queries should be addressed to The Research Department at IBEW in Washington, DC at 202-833-7000.

2009 Harley Davidson Draw

It's that time of year again when the 1st District International Representatives fundraise by raffling off a *Black Ice/Blue-Ice 2009* "Road Kind Classic"

FLHRC and two (2) cash prizes of \$5000.00.



Only 500 tickets will be sold at \$100.00 each with an **“Early Bird” draw held at the 21st Annual MS Golf Tournament on May 21st, 2009** for one cash prize of \$5000.00. The draw for the Harley will take place as soon as all tickets are sold, or will be held at the 2009 All Canada Progress Meeting in Prince Edward Island on September 2nd, 2009 with another draw for a cash prize of \$5,000.00.

The proceeds from the ticket sales will be used to help defray the costs of hosting the 2011 First District International Representatives reception at the 2011 International Convention in Vancouver, BC.

All drawn winning tickets will go back in the draw and remain eligible for the next draw prize; *so for \$100.00 you could win cash and a Harley!*

Tickets will be available soon through your International Representative and can only be purchased by IBEW members.

A Quote to Think About

“You can’t do it unless you organize.”

— Samuel Gompers

2009 Projected Meetings

- 03/2 – 3/09 Eastern Winter School
Delta Halifax
Halifax, NS
- 05/3 – 6/09 BT Legislative Conference
Crowne Plaza Hotel
Ottawa, ON
- 05/14 – 16/09 IBEW Construction Conference
Hyatt Regency Capitol Hill
Washington, DC
- 05/19 – 21/09 Electricity Sector Council
“Bright Futures” Conference
Toronto, ON
- 05/21/2009 IBEW First District
21st Annual MS Golf Tournament
Location TBA
- 05/30 – 06/7/09 Utility Department Conference
Hyatt Regency Denver
Colorado Convention Center
Denver, Colorado
- 06/15 – 19/09 Broadcasting, Manufacturing
and Telecommunications
Conference
Sheraton Downtown
Nashville, Tennessee
- 07/13 - 14/09 Railroad Conference
Chicago, IL
Location TBA
- 08/1 – 7/09 NJATC – Nat’l Training Inst.
Location – TBA
- 09/1 – 3/09 All Canada Progress Meeting
Charlottetown, PEI
- 09/9 – 11/09 Membership Development Conference
Bally’s Las Vegas
Las Vegas, Nevada