

June 2005

The Conduit

News and Views of the Electrical Contractors Association of BC

Interesting Facts about BC's Military History

During the Cold War, a top-secret bunker was constructed in Nanaimo to shelter the provincial government in case of nuclear attack?

The bunker was built on the grounds of the Nanaimo military camp in the 1960s at cost of \$2 million. Buried beneath an earth and concrete cover, with walls 15 inches thick, it was designed to withstand a nuclear detonation.

Estevan Point on Vancouver Island was the only place attacked in western Canada in World War Two?

In 1942, a Japanese submarine shelled the lighthouse and tiny naval radio station at Estevan Point on the rocky west coast of Vancouver Island. The gunners seem to have been poor shots, for the lighthouse and other buildings sustained almost no damage.

Construction of the drydock in the Esquimalt naval base was a condition for BC's entry into Confederation?

At the time BC joined Canada in 1871, a drydock was badly needed on the west coast, and BC made this a condition of the entry into confederation. Still functioning today, it is now the oldest working drydock in North America.

First Nations and Metis military personnel returning from service in World WW1, WW2 and the Korean War were not granted veterans' benefits?

Over 12,000 Metis and First Nations soldiers, sailors and airmen served overseas in these three wars; over 500 of them never returned. Soldiers were refused the benefits given to other Canadian veterans.

New Westminster's Armoury is the largest open-space wooden structure in western Canada?

The traditional home of the Royal Westminster Regiment, the Armoury was built in 1896 to provide military facilities for New Westminster's army units. Built on a huge scale, it is the oldest continuously functioning armoury in the province, and still houses the regiment.

Many Vancouver parks began as defence installations?

In 1859, a number of sites in the area which would become the City of Vancouver were selected as strategic locations to defend the new colony of BC against naval attack. But not until 1939 were these lands at Little Mountain, Kitsilano, Steveston, Sea Island, Point Grey, Ferguson Point, Siwash Rock and Point Atkinson were not used for either military or civilian purposes. After the war, the military reserves were turned over to the city, which developed them as municipal parks.

The oldest site of British settlement in BC was a fort on the west coast of Vancouver Island?

Fort Defiance near Tofino was the first British settlement in the province. It was constructed in 1791 at Adventure Cove to establish a British claim to the territory that is now BC.

The first officially authorized military force in western Canada was composed solely of African-Americans who had fled the United States?

In 1860, a number of African-Americans settled in Vancouver Island. After being denied the right to join the fire brigade, they formed their own volunteer militia known as the Victoria Pioneer Rifle Corps, arming themselves, providing uniforms, and building their own drill hall, all without pay. The Victoria Pioneer Rifle Corps was one of several militia units that defended BC during the San Juan Islands dispute with the United States.

Okanagan Mountain Provincial Park was home to a top-secret commando training base during World War Two?

To train operatives for guerrilla action in territories occupied by Imperial Japanese forces, a camp was established during WW2 at Commando Bay on Okanagan Lake. The camp trained 13 Chinese Canadians who later served with great distinction behind enemy lines in China, Malaysia and the Philippines.

Shipyards in BC were responsible for producing more than half of the shipping produced in Canada during WW2?

The shipyards of Vancouver, Prince Rupert, Esquimalt and Victoria built hundreds of freighters and fighting ships from 1939 to 1945. Vancouver was the biggest producer, turning out 244 freighters, 22 minesweepers, 14 corvettes and 21 frigates. These vessels were essential to the Battle of the North Atlantic, and supplying our allies in Europe.

Industry Bidding Practices Create Havoc for Contractors

Editorial by Richard Campbell

I recently attended a panel discussion on "Industry Bidding Practices," sponsored by the BC Electrical Association. Moderated by **Keith Sashaw** of VRCA, the panel included **Paul Gill** of Mac's 11 Agencies, **Dean Kaardal** of Stantec Engineering, **Wes Oliver** of Wesco, **Jim Griffiths** of Mott Electric, **Ken Scambler** of Schneider Canada and **John Barker** of Robinson Contracting in Nanaimo.

With the notable exception of **Mott Electric**, the event was poorly attended by contractors and well attended by suppliers. I'm not sure why more contractors didn't attend unless they felt it would be non-productive and/or that they believed that it is an issue that is best addressed on a personalized basis. To the first point, I would have to agree, as there seemed to be considerable venting, finger pointing and excuse making, but little offered in the way of constructive solutions.

I wasn't aware of how serious the problem of late price submissions was becoming, until I received a copy of a letter from **John Barker** to one of my members there. Following are excerpts from his letter that illustrate just how serious the problem is:

"The general contract closing time for yesterday's bid was 2:00 pm. We received two electrical bids, the first at 1:45 pm and the second at 1:56 pm. Note that these are the times received into our FAX memory. Add a couple of minutes for printing and delivering to the estimating desk."

"General Contractors are in danger of making serious mistakes or missing closing times in tendering projects because of the Electrical suppliers' unnecessarily delaying their pricing to you. We spend two or three weeks to make an accurate estimate for a project and then are forced by others into a panic situation in the last ten minutes before closing while we plug in subcontract bids without any review. We are making errors because of this, we and you are losing jobs because of this, and if we make a significant error we are losing money unnecessarily."

"This problem with the electrical suppliers has been growing over the last few years to a point where it is now intolerable and General Contractors are angry. We ask that you and all electrical contractors get on this issue, individually and at the ECA association level and impress on your suppliers that this problem must be rectified for the good of the whole industry."

Following are comments in a similar vein received from an electrical contractor member in the Northern Interior:

"The job closed for general contractors on Friday at 2:00 PM. The main quotes required were from these 2 companies. We did not receive our pricing until after 12:00 noon on this day. If electrical contractors are getting a reputation for being late with our quotes, maybe we should be directing most of this to the manufacturers, their agents and distributors. It is extremely difficult for us to access our quote and give a general contractor pricing in a timely manner, if we don't get the required support from our suppliers."

"I realize that the manufacturers and distributors are concerned with pricing getting into the wrong hands. We as contractors will have to ensure these people that we have scruples when bidding jobs."

Obviously this is an extremely serious and pervasive problem that is placing electrical contractors and general contractors in an extremely difficult and often impossible position. Jobs are being lost and mistakes are being made because of it. What then is the solution?

I would like to suggest that contractors attach a deadline to projects that will give them adequate time to analyze pricing and prepare their own submissions in a timely fashion. Quotations received after the deadline, should be rejected. Once a supplier receives a few rejections, they may be more inclined to observe deadlines.

The only problem with this idea of course, is that a lower price will inevitably come in after the deadline and will often be too attractive to ignore. Rejecting it could conceivably cost a contractor the job.

A more effective solution may be to build and reinforce relationships with trusted contractors by providing the sharpest price first and providing it in a timely fashion. Perhaps contractors with whom there is little experience and/or trust, haven't earned or do not deserve the same consideration.

Trust rather than paranoia is the foundation on which successful business relationships are built. It is those that understand this who will benefit the most in the coming years of unprecedented construction activity.

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Trust Said Lacking in Electrical Bids

by Brian Martin—Courtesy: Journal of Commerce

(A similar message from a different perspective)

On May 20 the BC Electrical Association (BCEA) called a meeting but the people being talked about the most never showed up. It was rather like 'What If You Called a War and Nobody Came?'

The panel discussion was held to discuss problems the construction industry is having with tenders from electrical contractors. (The BCEA, made up largely of manufacturers, agents and distributors, is not to be confused with the Electrical Contractors Association of BC)

The promotion BCEA sent out was certainly provocative. It asked: "Is the electrical sub-trade really the worst at submitting bids in a timely manner? What is the impact on the different segments of the electrical industry? Is the last minute too late? What if anything can be done?"

Despite this the only electrical contractor among the 70 participants was **Mott Electric** – and they were on the panel. In addition, everyone at the meeting agreed that Mott is an excellent company and not a part of the problem.

The meeting was inspired by a letter sent out by John Barker, P. Eng., president of D Robinson Contracting, a Nanaimo general contractor. His patience snapped recently when only 15 minutes before a 2 p.m. closing on a municipal job he still had no electrical bids. At 1:45 p.m. what he called a "scribbled" quote arrived over the fax. A second bid arrived four minutes before closing.

"Is the electrical trade really the worst?" asked Barker who was a panel member. "The answer is 'yes'".

With Barker on the panel were: **Dean Kaardal**, Stantec Consulting; Ken Scamble, Schneider Canada; **Paul Gill**, Mac's II; **Wes Oliver**, Wesco distribution; **Jim Griffith**, Mott Electric. Moderator was **Keith Sashaw**, president of the Vancouver Regional Construction Association. As fingers pointed in all directions, it became evident that the complaints laid against electrical contractors were equally applicable throughout the electrical food chain.

The distributors and agents have trouble getting timely prices back from the manufacturers to pass onto the sub-trades who in turn are then late passing them onto the general contractors. And the generals in turn, of course, wind up depending on scribbled quotes received minutes before tender closing.

Jim Griffith, chief estimator at Mott Electric, and a 30-year veteran of the industry, said the problem of late supplier prices goes "from one end of the country to the other". He said he had recently closed a multi-million dollar tender which only two suppliers could potentially handle. The tender closed at three o'clock. One supplier's bid came in at 2:15 p.m., while the other didn't arrive until 3:12 p.m..

There can be a multitude of reasons for last minute tenders and supplier prices, ranging from outright incompetence to yet another normal symptom of an extremely busy construction industry but one reason stood out: trust. Discussion indicated few people in today's construction industry trust each other to not shop their prices around. As a result they don't submit them until the very last minute – sometimes not until after the very last minute. This can hold true for contractors and suppliers alike.

"We put specifications together and you guys go out and beat the crap out of each other," said Stantec's Kaardal. Referring to price shopping or bid peddling he added, "We all know why you're holding your prices in until the very last minute."

The almost total absence of electrical contractors disappointed many at the meeting, no one more so than **Richard Campbell**, executive director of the Electrical Contractors Association of BC. He had no idea why the contractors had failed to show and said the meeting had been well-publicized. Campbell added this has to be only "the first step in cleaning up this mess".

Campbell said he will suggest that his members impose a minimum deadline on suppliers. Once a deadline has gone, contractors would return prices received.

Why shouldn't suppliers give their best prices in a timely fashion to contractor they know they can trust, he asked? He said there is no reason suppliers can't treat their trusted customers in one way and treat unknown customers in a different way.

Campbell also said there must be further meetings between his group and the BCEA. **Don Eldridge**, chairman of the B. C. Electrical Association, also welcomes further meetings.

Asked why he thought the electrical contractors had failed to show he responded: "that's a good question". Eldridge is western Canadian marketing and distribution manager with Wesco Distribution, one of Canada's largest electrical supply firms. "We may have to do this two or three times."

Passings

Tragically, we recently lost two well respected members of our extended electrical family. After short illnesses, Bev Sewell, wife of Ken Sewell, passed away on Friday, May 20th and Peter Bridge Sr., CEO & President of Bridge Systems and ECABC director, also passed away two days later.

The two families knew each other well as Peter managed the Ricketts-

Sewell operation in Victoria, prior to starting his own business. On behalf of the ECABC membership, I would like to express our sincerest condolences to Ken and Peter's wife Olga, their families and their many friends. As suggested, ECABC has made a donation on behalf of Bev to the Bev Sewell Scholarship - International Order of Job's Daughters.

International News

Dubai begins work on world's tallest tower

Construction has begun in Dubai on a skyscraper which aims to be the tallest building in the world on completion in three years' time. "This will be the tallest building in the world when finished," Naaman Atallah, sales manager for its owner Emaar, told journalists on a tour of the site yesterday. The Burj Dubai would dwarf the 553-metre CN Tower in Toronto and planned high-rises in Shanghai and New York, he said. Some 4,000 workers and 100 cranes have gathered to build the hotel, residential and shopping complex of at least 700 metres (2,300 ft) which will include over 1,000 luxury apartments. The exact height is being kept a secret, partly for fear of rival bids to be the tallest

free-standing building, and because by 2008 it might be technologically possible to go even higher. Dubai-based architects say they expect Burj Dubai (Dubai Tower) to hit at least 800 metres (15' shy of 1/2 mile) alone would cost at least \$1bn to construct, excluding the complex's malls, lakes and smaller tower blocs. Emaar, which recently posted record profits, is one of the firms leading a construction boom in Dubai, a member of the United Arab Emirates federation and one-third owner of Emaar. "The design has pushed the limits of what technology can achieve, no one has gone that high before. You have to invent new elevators that can sustain such heights," Atallah said, adding the lift units are "still being designed as we speak".

CSABC & WCB Announce 5% Rebate Program

In a significant development aimed at reducing accidents and injuries on BC construction sites, the Workers' Compensation Board has partnered with the Construction Safety Association of BC (CSABC) to offer a 5% rebate to companies that complete the CSABC STAR COR safety program for workers, supervisors, and owners/managers.

The savings from the pilot project, which will run over the next 12 months, could be substantial. For example, a firm with a base annual assessment of \$1 million would be entitled to a \$50,000 payback; a mid-range company with a \$100,000 assessment would reap a \$5,000 return; and even smaller companies will benefit, thanks to a minimum rebate of \$500 that can be put toward the cost of the training.

"This is an exciting day for our industry, and the WCB is to be commended for its decision to provide this important incentive," said **Grant McMillan**, Chair of the CSABC. "Besides the pain and suffering associated with injuries, employers pay about \$200 per day on average for every day a worker is off the job, so I am confident that this program can make a difference."

Steve Barnett, Vice President and Assistant Chief Financial Officer for the WCB, agrees: "We view this as a positive component that fits nicely with our general objective of reducing the accident rate in construction, which is higher than we'd like to see. The CSABC is a good partner in this initiative because this organization has been working hard to promote safety," says Barnett, adding that the Board is also offering the same rebate to two other industry groups and hopes to eventually extend it to all industries in the province.

To qualify for the rebate (the program takes effect immediately), a company must complete the three courses that comprise the CSABC STAR program (Safety Training Accountability Recognition; COR stands for Certificate of Recognition); along with two other courses offered by the WCB -- one of which must be the Safety Audit course. Companies must also meet other criteria set out by the WCB, including passing an safety audit and having a written safety program in place.

Although the rebate will not amount to huge savings for all companies, contractors are pleased with the offer because it applies to all firms and because they believe it will encourage smaller companies especially to take a closer look at the CSABC program, which was designed by and for the construction industry.

"This is excellent news," says **Roger Pelletier**, owner of Lakewood Electric in Prince George. "In this business we're all working with the same tight margins, so every little bit helps. I do think this incentive will encourage more companies to consider the STAR program. It's important for everyone in the industry to have basic safety awareness and this represents an opportunity for company's that offers at least some saving."

Don McNiven, General Manager of McNiven Masonry in Kelowna, adds that another good reason for companies to explore the CSABC program is because they are required to meet WCB requirements for health and safety training. "The regulations state that you must have something in place and our program takes owners along the path to meeting those requirements," says McNiven, also chair of the CSABC Curriculum Committee. "It comes down to, the regulations say you have to have it, CSABC is a tool to provide the training, and you get some money back. So why not? But more important, I would hate to see someone get injured when the training is there and can make such a difference."

Don Schouten, General Manager of Trans West in Surrey, agrees. "The STAR COR program is designed to create a culture of safety within the industry and provides top-down training that involves the whole company. It offers savings but most importantly, it can save lives," says Schouten, also a member of the CSABC Board, who says that he and others from his company have also taken the courses. "It's opened people's eyes to the importance of safety."

What I've heard from employees who have taken the courses is that they believe that everyone in the company should take them. This WCB incentive adds to the benefits and I have no doubt that more companies will take advantage of it. "

The CSABC Safety STAR program is the first and only broad-based safety program for the construction industry. It offers state-of-the-art training and education that focuses on real-life hazards and effective prevention strategies; features a hands-on, interactive approach to learning; and is open to all members of the construction industry, regardless of affiliation. Courses are now being delivered in all major regions of the province by several provincial training partners.

For more information contact Grant McMillan at the CSABC at 604-241-7667

BC Schools Going Solar

Courtesy: Electrical Business Magazine May 2005

British Columbia is bringing solar energy to Fort Nelson secondary school with \$300,000 in provincial funding through its Solar for Schools pilot program.

The province is, in fact, contributing to projects at two high schools (the other being Fulton Secondary School in Vernon). The Solar for

Schools pilot program is a partnership between the province and SPS Energy Solutions. SPS will supply and install the photovoltaic energy system prototypes and create interactive displays in school lobbies to teach students about alternative energy. These solar panels will generate about 10,000 kW of electricity per year, enough

to light three classrooms or run 50 computers.

Fort Nelson and Vernon are located in high solar radiation zones. Both SPS and the Ministry of Energy and Mines Alternative Energy Branch will monitor the two locations and track any performance differences between the two sites.



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Trial Voluntary Bid Depository

Courtesy: BCCA Bulletin

The BCCA Board of Directors will be reviewing the outcome of a trial voluntary use of Bid Depository and considering future support of such a system.

About two weeks ago the BCCA ran its first ever Voluntary Bid Depository on a \$14 million dollar school project on Vancouver Island. Use of bid depository was not specified in the bidding documents, however, two of the General Contractors involved and some of the Mechanical & Electrical trades agreed to implement the bid depository without the involvement of the owner. Draft supplementary rules were developed and the BCCA Board of Directors gave approval for their use on a trial run basis.

The Rules were developed by examining a number of voluntary bid depositories used in the USA. Some of the highlights of requirements that the Supplementary Rules put into effect

were as follows:

1. Trade Contractors choosing to Bid inside the Bid Depository cannot also Bid outside the Bid Depository. If you are bidding you must elect to do one or the other. On this project the Bonding requirements for the Rules apply.
2. The submission of a Contractor's Confirmation must be submitted by the Trade Contractors prior to submission of Bids or with the Bids. Bids will not be forwarded to the General Contractors until the Contractor's Confirmation has been received by the Bid Depository.
3. The submission of the Contractor's Confirmation must also be submitted by the General Contractors in accordance with the requirements of Rules.
4. A General Contractor wishing to select a Non- Bid Depository Bidder can only do so if they have provided the Bid Depository with a copy of the Bid prior to receiving their Bid Depository Bids. Hence Bidders should confirm with the General Contractor whether they will accept non-Bid Depository Bids or not.
5. General Contractors must supply a List of Bid Depository Subcontractors no later than two hours after the General Contractor's closing.

On this trial project, masonry, steel work, architectural woodwork, metal siding, roofing, windows and doors, wallboard and ceilings, flooring, painting, mechanical and electrical all closed 24 hours prior to the General Contractor closing.

Construction Sector Council Update

CCDA Newsletter - Spring 2005

A partnership between business and labour with funding from the federal government, the CSC was created in 2001 to address human resource challenges facing the construction industry. The Council is committed to the development of a highly skilled workforce and a safe workplace environment that contributes to the organizational productivity and individual prosperity of the members of the construction industry.

Replacing the loss of skilled trades people due to an aging workforce, removing barriers to worker mobility, improving the image of the trades as a viable career option, and improving productivity with accurate labour supply and demand information are among the CSC's priorities. Several of the CSC's projects and initiatives draw on the support and expertise of the Canadian Council for the Directors of Apprenticeship (CCDA).

For example, because occupational standards dictate the nature of apprenticeship training, the CSC relies heavily on the input of apprenticeship experts for its standards development initiatives. These include the development of standards for 29 operating engineer occupations, an on-the-job training "best practices" guide for the masonry trade, the development of certification and accreditation models for home inspectors and building officials, and a study of the impact of implementing the Carpenter Inter-provincial Common Core Curriculum Standard.

The CSC also works with the CCDA on the development of career awareness programs, namely the Boilermaker Career Awareness Project, the Ironworker Aboriginal Career Awareness Campaign, and the development of a Construction Careers Portal to promote opportunities in the construction industry.

To get a better handle on forecasting trade requirements, directors of apprenticeship are also involved in our Labour Market Information (LMI) program in varying degrees from providing valuable input as members of CSC regional LMI committees to a full partnership with the Atlantic Apprenticeship Council in the East where the Atlantic directors of apprenticeship were instrumental in working with the CSC to set up and participate on the Atlantic Steering Committee and LMI Working Group.

The CSC is also in the process of building a national "Construction e-Learning Centre" that addresses the industry's need, in many cases, for consistent, affordable, pan-Canadian education and training that is easily accessible to the learner. The e-Learning Centre could have far-reaching implications on the delivery of education and training in the construction industry, and to be successful, will depend on the continued support of the apprenticeship community.

For more information on these and other Construction Sector Council initiatives, visit www.csc-ca.org.

How to Implement a Formal Occupational Health & Safety Program

Courtesy: VRCA Jackhammer

The booklet found through the link below is for employers, workers and joint health and safety committees. It will help you develop and maintain an effective occupational health and safety (OHS) program.

The purpose of an OHS program is to prevent injuries and occupational diseases and to deal effectively with any accidents or inci-

dents that occur.

http://www.worksafebc.com/publications/high_resolution_publications/assets/pdf/bk14.pdf

Editors Note: The ECABC Health & Safety Policy Manual is designed specifically for electrical contractors and is an essential part of any OHS program.

What's New at the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum (CAF-FCA)?

CCDA Newsletter - Spring 2005

CAF-FCA begins work calculating Cost of Apprenticeship/Return on Training

Investment

The Canadian Apprenticeship Forum-Forum (CAF-FCA) is pleased to announce that Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) has approved its proposal to initiate a project which would calculate the cost/benefit of apprenticeship training for various stakeholders such as the apprentice, the employer, unions, educators, equity seeking groups, governments and/or other stakeholders.

CAF-FCA will complete the project in three (3) phases. Phase I (which began January 2005) involves a comprehensive literature review and the development of research methodologies. Phase II involves the collection of data from a range of stakeholders and from a number of trade categories. Phase III will involve communicating and validating the findings of this research.

Employer Toolkit in development

The CAF-FCA/SCC Skilled Trades Promotion project is currently developing an Employer Toolkit that will be a key element of an employer

strategy. The goal of the toolkit is to encourage employers to hire more apprentices. The toolkit will provide employers with tips and tools they can use to work with apprentices.

Distribution is planned for spring 2005.

Inventory Portal visitation skyrockets; campaign ads to resume in spring

Last fall, the "Skilled Trades: A Career You Can Build On" campaign drove tens of thousands of visitors to the one-stop source of apprenticeship information at www.apprenticetrades.ca/www.apprendsunmetier.ca. A second wave of the successful TV, movie trailer, radio, internet and print ads will air across the country beginning in the spring of 2005.

Final Accessibility and Barriers Report ready April 2005

Over the past year, the CAF-FCA has been consulting with apprenticeship stakeholders across the country to obtain feedback on the *Assessing and Completing Apprenticeship Training in Canada – Perceptions of Barriers* report (January 2004). A final report on the findings of this project will be available on the CAF-FCA web site by the first of April.

Please visit our web site at: www.caf-fca.org

Identity Thieves Update

Please read this and make a copy for your files in case you need to refer to it someday! Maybe we should all take some of a corporate attorney's advice who sent the following out to the employees in his company:

1. The next time you order cheques have only your initials (instead of first name) and last name put on them. If someone takes your cheque book, they will not know if you sign your checks with just your initials or your first name, but your bank will know how you sign your cheques
2. Do not sign the back of your credit cards. Instead, put "PHOTO ID REQUIRED".
3. When you are writing cheques to pay on your credit card accounts, DO NOT put the complete account number on the "For" line. Instead, just put the last four numbers. The credit card company knows the rest of the number, and anyone who might be handling your check as it passes through all the check processing channels won't have access to it.
4. Put your work phone # on your cheques instead of your home phone. If you have a PO box, use that instead of your home address. If you do not have a PO box, use your work address. Never have your SIN # printed on your cheques. You can add it if it is necessary. But if you have it printed, anyone can get it. Place the contents of your wallet on a photocopy machine. Do both sides of each license, credit card, etc. You will know what you had in your wallet and all of the account numbers and phone numbers to call and cancel. Keep the photocopy in a safe place. I also carry a photocopy of my passport when travel either here or abroad. We've all heard horror stories about fraud that's committed on us in stealing a name, address, SIN, and credit cards.

Unfortunately, I, an attorney, have firsthand knowledge because my wallet was stolen last month. Within a week, the thief(s) ordered an expensive monthly cell phone package, applied for a VISA credit card, had a credit line approved to buy a Gateway computer, received a PIN number

from DMV to change my driving record information online, and more. But here's some critical information to limit the damage in case this happens to you or someone you know:

1. We have been told we should cancel our credit cards immediately. But the key is having the toll free numbers and your card numbers handy so you know whom to call. Keep those where you can find them.
2. File a police report immediately in the jurisdiction where your credit cards, etc. were stolen. This proves to credit providers you were diligent, and this is a first step toward an investigation, if there ever is one.
3. **But here's what is perhaps most important of all:** Call the two national credit-reporting organizations immediately to place a fraud alert on your name and Social Insurance Number. I had never heard of doing that until advised by a bank that called to tell me an application for credit was made over the Internet in my name. The alert means any company that checks your credit knows your information was stolen, and they have to contact you by phone to authorize new credit.

By the time I was advised to do this, almost two weeks after the theft, all the damage had been done. There are records of all the credit checks initiated by the thieves' purchases, none of which I knew about before placing the alert. Since then, no additional damage has been done, and the thieves threw my wallet away and someone turned it in last weekend. It seems to have stopped them dead in their tracks.

Now, here are the numbers you always need to contact about your wallet, etc. has been stolen:

1. Equifax Canada: 1-877-249-2705
2. Trans Union: 1-877-525-3823

Cost of games could jump to C\$2 billion

Courtesy: Asia Pacific Post

This is in addition to IT professionals and engineers, according to the World Wide Immigration Consultancy Services Ltd.

“The province of British Columbia needs 25,000 to 30,000 tradesmen, including electricians, plumbers and construction workers. They will help build houses and other infrastructural facilities. There are over 25,000 vacancies in other provinces. Initially, these people will get work permits. Later, they will be offered permanent residency,” said Curtis Panke, in charge of global placements for WWICS.

“Countries like Canada and Australia are facing problems due to a dipping population and a booming economy. People in these countries are aging fast and they are on the lookout for English-speaking professionals and skilled tradesmen.” There are also openings for businessmen and farmers in Canada provided they can invest money in that country.

“Businessmen and farmers with a net worth of Canadian \$300,000 can purchase land and settle in the province of Nova Scotia. Entrepreneurs with experience in management can settle in Quebec. There will be no examination in English for these categories,” said J.S. Ahluwalia, vice-president, WWICS. Ahluwalia said affluent farmers from Burdwan district can shell out such money and buy 50-acre plots in Canada.

British Columbia is on the lookout for 30,000 skilled tradesmen from India to build necessary infrastructure for the 2010 Winter Olympics, according to a report in The Times of India. “Everybody between 22 and 60 years of age can apply. The processing time is much less than in other cases. So far, 50 farmers from various parts of the country have left for Canada,” he said.

WWICS organized a seminar in Calcutta for those interested in the projects. With Vancouver Games just under five years away, construction is scheduled to begin this summer on the first of the venues being built for the Winter Games. Come summer, work is expected to begin on the \$102-million biathlon, cross-country and ski jumping facility at Callaghan Valley, about eight kilometres south of Whistler, and the \$52.8-million bobsled and luge track to be built on Blackcomb Mountain at Whistler.

Premier Gordon Campbell recently announced his Liberal government will spend \$15 million this year to help develop and support BC athletes. The 2010 Olympics will run from Feb. 12 to Feb. 28, followed by the paralympic competitions March 12 to 21. In all, more than 5,000 athletes and officials from 80 countries are expected to participate. History will be made when BC Place stadium becomes the first indoor venue for a Winter Games opening ceremony.

The men’s hockey final will be held on the last day at G.M Place, home of the NHL Vancouver Canucks. Figure skating, curling and speed skating will also be held in Vancouver. Cypress Bowl, which on a clear day offers a breathtaking view of the city and the sparkling waters of Burrard Inlet, will be home to snowboarding and freestyle skiing. The resort community of Whistler, about 110 kilometres north, will stage the Alpine skiing, Nordic events, ski jumping and bobsled.

The Games are scheduled to operate on a \$1.35-billion Cdn budget, but that cost jumps to around \$2 billion Cdn when another \$620 million in venue costs are included. The BC and federal governments have pledged \$310 million each towards building facilities. The BC government has also agreed to cover any cost overruns.

The \$60-million speed-skating oval now will be located in Richmond on Vancouver’s outskirts instead of Simon Fraser University in Burnaby. The switch was made after the proposed cost of building the arena jumped to \$80 million. Richmond will include the oval as part of a \$153-million municipal revitalization project.

Work will begin early next year on the speed skating oval. By 2007, construction will be underway on the curling venue and the athlete villages in both Vancouver, along False Creek, and in Whistler.

Editors Note: it’s odd that there hasn’t been any local publicity about this, unless government is trying to keep it under wraps. It’s difficult to conceive that 25,000 “skilled tradesmen” would be needed or available to come here to help build Olympic venues. Perhaps we should look to our resources first, before resorting to the importation of legions of “skilled tradesmen” or otherwise.

Vehicle Thieves Update

It seems that thieves have found yet another way to steal your car or truck without any effort at all. They peer through the windshield of your car or truck, write down the VIN number from the label on the dash, go to the local dealership and request a duplicate key based on the VIN number.

The dealer's parts department will readily make a duplicate key from the VIN number, and collect payment from the thief who will then return to your car. He doesn't have to break in, do any damage to the vehicle, or draw attention to himself. All

he has to do is walk up to your car, insert the key and off he goes to a local chop shop with your vehicle.

To avoid this from happening to you, simply put some tape (electrical tape, duct tape or medical tape) across the VIN metal label located on the dash board. By law, you cannot remove the VIN, but you can cover it so it can't be viewed through the windshield by a car thief.



A Partnership for Building Solutions

Alexander Holburn Beaudin Lang (AHBL) is pleased to announce our new partnership with the Electrical Contractors Association of British Columbia. Through this partnership, AHBL will provide ECABC members and their employees with the highest quality, responsive and innovative legal services, at our preferred client rates.

If you would like additional information on any of our practice areas, or individual lawyers, you can contact Norm Streu at 604.643.2192, nstreu@ahbl.ca



Electrical Contractors Association of BC

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 Email: eca@eca.bc.ca
 Website: www.eca.bc.ca

Schedule of Events

<p>June 10, 2005 AGM and Hall of Fame Dinner Locations—Executive Hotel, Coquitlam</p>	<p>July 27, 2005 Fireworks Cruise Vancouver, BC</p>
<p>June 16—19 CECA Conference Jasper, Alberta</p>	

Communication Breakdown

To celebrate the new acquisition, he decided to visit a small bistro and have a glass of wine. As he sat enjoying his wine, he noticed that the small place was quite crowded, and that the one other chair at his table was the only vacant seat in the house.

Before long, a very beautiful young Parisian girl came to his table, asked him something in French (which he did not understand), and motioned toward the chair. He invited her to sit down. He tried to speak to her in English, but she

did not speak his language so, after a couple of minutes of trying to communicate with her, he took a napkin and drew a picture of a wine glass and showed it her.

She nodded, and he ordered a glass of wine for her. After sitting together at the table for awhile, he took another napkin, and drew a picture of a plate with food on it, and she nodded. They left the bistro and found a quiet cafe that featured a small group playing romantic music.

They ordered dinner, after which he took another napkin and drew a picture of a couple dancing. She nodded, and they got up to dance. They danced until the cafe closed and the band was packing up.

Back at their table, the young lady took a napkin and drew a picture of a four-poster bed.

To this day, he has no idea how she figured out he was in the furniture business

Benefits of Membership in ECABC

Advocacy

- A strong united voice to government for expressing opinions and concerns regarding issues that directly affect the electrical industry
- Representation on other associations, committees and councils that deal with apprenticeship, safety, WCB and other issues

Consulting

- Contract Interpretation Service

Education

- Seminars or information sessions and speakers at chapter meetings
- Salaried Employees Training Trust Fund (recovers costs for some seminars/courses)
- Scholarship fund through our membership in the BC Electrical Association (BCEA)
- Seminars and courses offered from other associations

Health Care

- BCCA Group Benefit Plan

Insurance

- Industry specific insurance from Federated Insurance and a gasoline discount program

Networking

- Regular networking opportunities at monthly chapter meetings, annual general meetings, an annual national conference and social events.

News

- Safety alerts and the ECA newsletter The Conduit (monthly) and Relay (annually) to keep members current on industry events and issues

Marketing

- Electrical engineers/contractors joint committee, the ECA website, the ECA logo for stationery and web page use, and membership stickers for industry recognition

Publications

- Member only access to videos, publications and manuals such as the Seismic Restraint Standards Manual and Health & Safety Policy Manual.
- When your membership application has been accepted you receive a Seismic Restraint Standards Manual and Health & Safety Policy Manual free (2 x \$80 = \$160 value).
- Only ECA members can access CECA and NECA publications.

Discounts and Preferred Rates

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • NEBS forms discounted rates | • Accent Inn Corporate Rates |
| • Esso gasoline discount program | • Coast Hotels and Resorts |
| • Group benefit plan rates | • PetroCan SuperPass Program |
| • Legal services | • Fleet purchase/lease program |
| • Accounting services | • Answering service |
| • Imagewear - Marks WorkWearHouse | • Cellular phone rates |
| • Courier rates | • Consulting rates |

