



Houle Electric Celebrates 65 Years



Lionel Houle in front of his Service Van 1944

Far from retirement Houle Electric turned sixty-five years old this year, founded by Lionel Houle in 1944 as a residential service provider in Port Alberni. Houle has become one of B.C.'s largest and most distinguished electrical contractors with projects in every sector of the Industrial, Commercial and Institutional industries, from Pulp and paper mills, mines and office towers to schools, hospitals and bridges they have taken on projects of every size with confidence and professionalism. Now headquartered in Vancouver, the company has grown to cover the entire Province with branch offices in Kelowna, Prince George, Victoria and Nanaimo.

Houle has grown in other ways as well with the industry in areas of Integrated Security Systems, Data Networks, Automated Building Controls, and Preventative Electrical Maintenance, and with over 60 vans on the road a very large Electrical Service Department, in addition to their base of Electrical Construction Contracting.

Over the last decade Houle has been named the Safety Award Winner in the Large Contractor Category by the Vancouver Regional Contractors Association. They received the 2008 Gold Award for the Prenatal Building at the Nanaimo General Hospital; they have also been awarded over several years the Consumer Choice Award.

These Awards serve as strong testament of our members' capabilities, their work ethic and professionalism while working at Houle.

Some of Houle's latest construction projects on the Island are; the Terminal Park Liquor Store, Ladysmith Safeway, Bowen Road Tim Horton's, BC Ferries Security Systems, Royal Jubilee Hospital Pharmacy, HSBC Expansion, Ocean Sciences Radionuclide Monitoring Station, Bear Cove Ferry Electrical Upgrade, Ecole Willow Point, Cowichan District Hospital, Camosun College Lighting Upgrade, Highland Village Shopping Centre, a fire alarm upgrade at Clover Place Apartments, and the Kiwanis Villa in Nanaimo.



Houle's new office for the Nanaimo Branch.

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Inside This Quarterly

Page 1:

- Houle Electric celebrates 65 years

Page 2:

- Business Manager's Report
- Unit Meeting Changes

Page 3:

- Sector Report

Page 4:

- Safety Training Courses
- Apprenticeship Completion Grant

News/Notes:

Special Meeting Called for:

- Complaints vs. DTLC
- 4:45 PM August 11, 2009
- Dockyard Legion upstairs

Information Meeting

Tyee Motel Port Alberni
8:00 PM August 5, 2009

Business Manager's Report



Philip M. Venoit
Business Manager/Financial Secretary

Over the last month we attended the Construction Sector Council's Labour Market Symposium in Vancouver, and the immediate outlook for the Island is very optimistic. The construction Industry is a peaks and valleys industry and although we have moved towards a valley over the last six months due

to the cooling residential market, the immediate outlook tells us this will not be prolonged situation

The Federal Government economic stimulus package over the next 3-4 years will amount to one of the largest purchasers of construction on Vancouver Island, and as we begin to ramp up jobs like the Royal Jubilee Nurse Towers, the Ladysmith LNG Plant, the new Uptown Centre and over \$20 million dollars in other smaller electrical projects awarded to our contractors over the past six months, other larger projects like the second phase of the CFB Cape Breton, submarine facility, and Hillside Mall are going to tender.

We attended the Construction Industry Training Organization (CITO) the construction arm of the Industry Training Authority (ITA) meeting to listen to how this group is grossly underfunded and therefore having no real ability to do anything positive for the construction sector, construction accounts for 12% of the Provinces GDP and one of the largest employers, to put things in perspective mining amounts to 6%, and forestry amounts to 8%, without the proper funding they will carry on dysfunctional.

How bad is it in the world of newsprint? The Seattle Times has laid 500 employees or 20% of their workforce. The New York Times is mortgaging its brand new \$400 million dollar office to raise capital. Tribune Co., owner of dailies like the Chicago Tribune, Los Angeles Times, and the Baltimore Sun went into

bankruptcy protection late last year, owing a total of \$13.5 Billion. In the U.K. a Deloitte's Report says that one in ten dailies will have to cut publication frequency, go on-line, or even shut down.

Here in Canada, Canwest who is the owner of the Times Colonist after 151 years has gone to a six day news publication week, Global, and CHEK TV (which is currently up for sale) owes the banks \$3.5 Billion dollars. The Black Press who runs the Islands smaller dailies appears to be in trouble as well. If you look at Torstar Corporation who owns almost 20% of these newspapers and reported a \$3 Million dollar loss last year, simply multiply that by 5 to get the approximate real losses. Much of this can be contributed to the move towards online newspapers, but when the news goes out of business who will report the news? The State? YouTube? Opinions from Bloggers? What will happen to neutrally reported journalism? This is not good news for our members or contractors who look toward the Islands pulp and paper mills for employment. We met with Spiro Risvos the Senior Vice-President of the Washington Marine Group to discuss the upcoming 12 mid-shore vessel project, bidding against Irving on the East Coast and The Upper Lakes Group, which should be awarded by October. Trans-link will need 4-5 new Sea buses for Vancouver. His focus returning to the west coast will be on creating a better relationship with BC Ferries. No one will go public on this but we believe Fleinsburger Shipyard lost approximately \$100 million dollars on the 4 BC German built ferries.

Currently there are 58 different entrance standards for Employment Insurance across our Country, we need a minimum single standard, this would add 150,000 people onto E.I. today, so they can spend those monies on food and utilities and other necessities. The Federal Conservative and Liberal parties have delegated 3 individuals each to sit upon a committee struck to look at recommended changes to the E.I. system. To read the IBEW Local 230's recommendations in making the E.I. system better for Canadians visit the media page on our website at www.ibew230.org If you're unemployed you can also stop in at your local MP's office and let them know how important the EI system is to you and your families ability to maintain a household on Vancouver Island. With the growing population of jobless citizens be prepared for a federal election with this issue in the forefront this fall.

Unit Meeting Changes

Please be advised of the following Unit Meeting changes beginning the month of September:

Nanaimo moves to the 3rd Wednesday of each month, with a time change to 7:00PM

Campbell River/Courtenay moves to the 3rd Thursday of each month, with no time change. These Unit meeting changes were required to move the Executive Board Meeting to the first week of the month so our dues reached the International Office in a more timely fashion.

Sector Report

Appliance Repair – We wrapped up negotiations with Direct Energy providing for a 3 year agreement with increases of 2%, 2% & 3%, to wages, increases to the vision care and safety vision care.

Cable vision – The purchase of CRTV by Shaw Cable systems has gone through earlier this year, and the only two lay-offs as yet were 2 of the “managers” who wanted out of the Union. We have agreed to a one year rollover of the collective agreement, while both parties settle in to our new relationship. I would also like to thank Sister Anita Prendergast for her years as shop steward at CRTV, Anita opted for a severance package earlier this year and I wish her all the best life brings her. Meanwhile Shaw has hired more Customer Service Reps, and CATV Installers.

Construction -

Commercial/Institutional -

Canem Systems picked up the Ministry of Economic Development Building, Six Mile Furniture Addition, Mayfair Mall Tim Horton's, the second phase to the Passport Office in Victoria, the Victoria Airport Bridge Expansion, the Duncan Village Green project, new London Drugs, and a new Canadian Tire store in Duncan, Ellice Street Shelter, Phase 1 Shaw Communications, and lighting retro-fits to every Canadian Tire store on Vancouver Island; *Houle Electric* (see front page story); *Raylec Power* picked up the Comox Airfield Lighting and Power, and the Nanaimo Airport expansion; *Emery Electric* picked up the wastewater treatment facility in Ganges, the Victoria Cool Aid Society, BC Transit Administration Building; *F&M Installations* picked up the renovation of 22 7-11's on the Island and the Duke Point Ferry security upgrade; *Mazzei Electric* picked up the Comox Rec. Centre Addition; *Thomis Electric* picked up the Wholesale Sports in Nanaimo, Victoria General Hospital Access Corridor, and the Patient Care Centre at the Royal Jubilee Hospital;

Industrial – *Aines & Tyler* installed a couple of 34 thousand HP motors in the CTMP at the Port Alberni Catalyst Pulp Mill; The Gold River Waste Incinerator Co Generation

Plant is seeing some interest again, but may require further environmental review, which could push it back to some future date.

Residential – *Mazzei Electric* was successful on the Bowen Road Affordable Housing project; *Houle Electric* (see front page story).

Motor Winders – The Motor Winders recently ratified a 2 year agreement which provided them around a 3% increase to their wages and RRSP's in each of the 2 years, an earlier threshold to receive 5 weeks vacation, a general increase of 5% when they leave their shop to perform fieldwork, with other general inflationary increases to meals and boot allowance. In consideration of their primary clientele the forest industry is in trouble, we opted to minimize the length of the Agreement in hopes that the greater economic climate will rebound by early 2011.

Municipal Government – Over the winter a City of Victoria electrical pole blew over in high winds just missing a traffic control worker, which pushed an assessment of all City poles, resulting in a pole replacement program which has resulted in hiring four more members to the City's workforce.

Private Marine – Victoria Shipyard recently wrapped up cruise ship season with a couple of refits, and I would like to thank Brother Gary Eakins for making a presentation to the cruise ship owners and operators of our members capabilities. They left impressed and very interested in our workforce for future projects. The HMCS Ottawa and the Burrard Inlet Sea bus will keep our members busy throughout summer, and with the arrival of the Chicoutimi and the Submarine maintenance program comes the requirement for our members to undergo some strict security screening to

work on-board. Emery Electric has picked up the Bridge Master “E” Radar System Installation on the MCDV's.

Public Marine – We met with our Mediator to discuss our complaint against the Dockyard Trades and Labour Council for failure to represent our members when they decided to propose a “one trade rate” in the last round of negotiations. The Mediator had us sign a non-disclosure agreement, that no information from our day in mediation would be conveyed in writing. We will be holding a meeting with all of those who filled out the complaint forms in August to discuss the complaint.

Provincial Health Care – The Trade Benchmark Review discussions for the FSR Electrician have made some progress with the Employer (VIHA) finally recognizing the additional duties and responsibility, and even liability that are placed on the Field Service Representative. The next step is to somehow have that recognized in an extra level of compensation.



HMCS Submarine Chicoutimi arrives in Victoria aboard deep sea going Dockwise vessel.

Railway – The BC Provincial Government is currently assessing the viability of building a south Island Light Rail Transit system with the use of the existing E&N Railway line.

Electrical Wholesale – We are currently meeting with the members at Westburne Electrical supplies to develop proposals for upcoming negotiations.

Federal Government Apprenticeship Completion Grant

I'm very happy to let our apprentices know that after the last few years of lobbying the federal government in Ottawa along with other Business Manager's from the construction affiliate unions across the country, that although the Apprenticeship Incentive Grant (AIG) was a great start, government had to spend some resources into the back end of the apprenticeship, resulting in this year the Apprenticeship Completion Grant (ACG).

The ACG is a taxable cash grant of \$2,000 per registered apprentice after they successfully complete their apprenticeship training and obtain their Journey status in a designated "Red Seal" trade on or after January 1, 2009.

You have until June 30, 2010 to apply for this years Grant.

To be eligible for the ACG you must be:

- A Canadian citizen
- Out of High School
- In possession of your Inter-provincial Red Seal Certificate, and received it on or after January 1st this year.

To receive the ACG form you can download a paper version from our Local 230 website under the "Work" tab, click on the "Training" page, then simply click on the "Apprenticeship Completion Grant", or you can go to the Service Canada

Home page, online forms, use the form # EMP5482 in the website Search page. You can also call by phone at 1(866) 742-3644, or stop in at our office to receive a copy.

To apply you will need a photocopy of your Apprenticeship Completion Certificate and a copy of your Inter-provincial Red Seal Certificate, along with the form.

Mail to:

Alberta – Apprenticeship grants Western Processing Centre
Calgary South Service Canada Centre
100-6712 Fisher Street SE
Calgary, AB
T2H 2A7

You can also walk into any Service Canada Office Building and drop off this completed form as well. This taxable Grant is available at any time throughout the year so it is important to apply as soon as you receive your Journeyman Certificate, it is not considered as income while you are receiving Employment Insurance, and you will receive a T4 slip in the mail in February to include as taxable income from the previous year. Remember it was your dues that helped pay for this initiative to come to fruition make sure you take advantage of it!

IBEW Canada in Conjunction with our Local are proud to Announce the Availability of 15 Online Health & Safety Training Courses

We are proud to announce that we have prepaid for Health & Safety courses covering:

Confined Spaces: The Basics (CCOHS)
Electrical Hazards (CCOHS)
Health & Safety Committees (CCOHS)
Lockout (CCOHS)
Office Healthy and Safety (CCOHS)
Preventing Falls from Slips and Trips (CCOHS)
WHMIS for Workers (CCOHS)
Preventing Hearing Loss from Workplace Noise (CCOHS)

Contractor Health & Safety (CCOHS)
Emergency Preparedness for Workers (CCOHS)
Ladder Safety (CCOHS)
Office Ergonomics (CCOHS)
Pandemic Planning (CCOHS)
Return to Work: The Basics (CCOHS)
Young Workers Safety Orientation (VUBIZ)

The courses will be available to you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week until January 15, 2010. Be sure to take advantage of as many courses as possible. To start your learning experience go to:

<http://www.vubiz.com/ChAccess/IBEW4/Default.asp>

Every time that you sign on, you will need to enter the IBEW Password which is: IBEWHS

Your Membership Card Number: That is the number on your IBEW Membership Card