

Construction Industry Amid COVID-19



LNG in Kitimat, Photo by LNG Canada

OVERVIEW OF CONSTRUCTION

COVID disrupted and dramatically transformed the construction landscape. In March 2020, we were at the start of the global pandemic and we had no idea how we would fare. We watched as those before us, Germany, France, Italy, and China, closed everything to curb the spread of the virus. Construction work around the world has been affected and everything was left with great uncertainty. In fact, Europe experienced an unprecedented decline in construction in March and April. As COVID-19 became better understood, construction started to increase in May 2020, and by December, 95% of construction levels were regained. These European statistics provide us with great news and a good indication that North America's construction can bounce back.

Similarly, Canada's construction activity was hit hard with major drops in activity in several provinces. B.C.'s unemployment rate was the most impacted in Canada by COVID-19. Early in the pandemic, 10.44% of British Columbians had lost their jobs in a one-month period and the worst of the unemployment was between December 2019 and April 2020 when B.C. had lost over 400,000 jobs. Our province started bouncing back in the summer, but now we are seeing unemployment rates creep up again. In November 2020, B.C. had an unemployment rate of 7.1%, in December it was 7.2%, and in January 2021 we saw it continue to rise to 8.0%.

LESSONS OF 2020

The construction industry managed to prevail safely. We learned that risk management is key to survival and that working together makes us stronger.

We also learned that even in a pandemic, construction is needed and construction workers are essential. While many worked from the comforting confines of their home, our members travelled to their job sites all over North America. Construction is a major employer in B.C. and we saw first-hand that good relationships with government is key. Under duress, we witnessed how quickly government can act and how these actions can make or break business. Our great

working relationship with the NDP resulted in secured jobs and safety for our members.

TRENDS FOR 2021

To no surprise, smart connected cities are on the rise; defined as high-tech intensive, urban developments that connect people, data and city elements. Smart cities will result in more complex construction processes as they include wifi-enabled lighting, pedestrian sensors, and much more. Greening of infrastructure will also persist as the federal and provincial governments continue to advance their sustainable strategies.

To stay competitive, contractors and our members will need to increase their technological know-how. We need to shift our minds on how cities are built, especially because there will be increased pressure from the bottom line. The cost of building materials is set to rise and the price of goods in general is anticipated to increase in 2021. Lumber prices specifically have boomed and are expected to rise throughout 2021. This price increase has added about \$30,000 to the cost of a typical new home (2,500 sq ft.). We also need to watch out for supply chain interruptions during COVID leading to material shortages or delays.

In addition, the workforce shortage is expected to worsen and demand for skilled workers will increase. This demand reflects a workforce that is reaching retirement, so construction remains a strong employment option.

Volume 1: 2021

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Member's Dues Autodeposit

To send dues payments via e-Transfer, just email dues@ibew230.org

Remember to include your name and IBEW *card number in the e-Transfer "message" section

*Note: your card number is printed on your yellow dues receipt

News & Notes

Due to multiple variants of COVID-19 and increased cases, our office doors remain locked to reduce the risk of transmission through the office. Our staff continue to work regular hours and are able to assist you by phone, by email, or in-person outside our office doors. Please note that we require you to wear a mask and be sure to dress accordingly for the weather if you plan on visiting either office.

Upcoming Training:

- Apr. 10/21 | Front Line Leadership 1 | Online
- Apr. 11/21 | Front Line Leadership 2 | Online - FULL
- Apr. 17/21 | Code Update | Online
- Apr. 24/21 | Fire Alarm | In-Person - FULL
- May 8/21 | Code Update | Online
- Jun. 12/21 | Code Update | Online

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Business Manager's Report



Phil Venoit, Business Manager/Financial Secretary

A year ago, I instructed the staff to lock our front doors, as I had learned we were in close contact with someone who just checked themselves into the hospital with COVID-19 symptoms. Our doors stayed locked for 11 days while we waited for the results to get back to us. Although, the results came back as negative, over those eleven days all of our lives were transformed, from concern, to flat-out growing global crisis as the World Health Organization, governments and countries declared a state of emergency. Although our doors have remained locked the entire time, we've adapted the way we do business so we could continue to serve and represent our 230 membership.

The Union continues to lobby our Provincial and Federal governments to advocate for more infrastructure work to put construction workers back on the job, and improved safety and sanitation at work sites. We have been louder on this issue since COVID and I'm pleased to share that our concerns were recognized and published in the Times Colonist:

<https://www.timescolonist.com/business/unions-demand-improved-safety-protocols-at-construction-sites-1.24186338>.

We also sent a letter to the Premier addressing B.C.'s roll out of the COVID-19 Immunization Plan recommending that essential workers, including construction and shipyard workers, be put ahead in the vaccine roll out as the potential to spread the virus especially on larger jobs, is greater than someone who is working from home, regardless of age.

The general population should start receiving their vaccines in April 2021 and the government is currently in Phase 2 of the plan. We continue to advocate for proper COVID-19 work protocols and measures, and encourage anyone who feels unsafe or unsure of their work situation to reach out to your Shop Steward and/or our office.

LOCAL 230 ELECTIONS

The Local 230 elections wrapped up late last year, and following are the results:

- Greg Gyorfi, **President**
- Eric Holland, **Vice President**
- Jackie Oliver, **Recording Secretary**
- Adrien Livingston, **Treasurer**
- Al Sotkowy, **Victoria Unit Chair**
- Dave Lambert, **Nanaimo Unit Chair**
- Raj Takhar, **Marine Unit Chair**
- Phil Venoit, **Business Manager/ Financial Secretary**

The Courtenay/Campbell River Unit Chair position remains vacant at this time.

Please join me in thanking the Judge of the Ballot, Brother Chris Baker, our two appointed tellers, Jackie Oliver and Janko Urban, Sergeant of Arms, Shane Scott for all their help during the election, as well as those members who put their name forward for the Officer and Executive Board positions.

PROVINCIAL ELECTION

We wrote to congratulate our Premier, John Horgan on his re-election and new majority government. Premier Horgan continues to be a strong leader and one of the biggest supporting premiers of construction unions in a long-time. The former BC Building Trades Executive Director, Andrew Mercier, who ran for the NDP in Langley also won his seat. People around the world seem to be losing trust in their democracy at a time when we most need strong inclusive leadership from people elected to represent us in our governments. Much of this is due to the increase in outside influence mostly from

Russian internet trolls distorting truths and spreading lies in their push to confuse people and destroy a free and democratic world. Every day our elected officials will be put to the test as they respond to a convergence of crises. The Covid-19 pandemic, climate change, unregulated technology, the economy, inequality, and the tipped scale of corporate power has created an age of anger and too often a population without hope. We recently held a virtual meeting with 46 newly (re)elected BC - NDP MLAs to explain who we are, what our members do every day to build BC, and to explain what we need this year with Compulsory Certification, Asbestos Awareness Training, more CBA projects and how we contribute to every community throughout BC.

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS & VACCINATIONS

Something to note is the potential for the law to change regarding vaccines and employment. It seems to me the law is heading in a certain direction, one that may require vaccines especially when front-line health projects are involved. Current employees will most likely have the right to refuse vaccination and still maintain their employment. However, workers searching for new employment could potentially see enforced proof of vaccination from employers. This is something that may apply to job sites throughout the province of B.C.



We are in			
 Phase 1 Dec 2020 - Feb 2021	 Phase 2 Feb - April 2021	 Phase 3 April - June 2021	 Phase 4 July - Sept 2021
High-risk population		General population	

Work Picture, Retirees and Fallen Members



Local 230 members maintain the electrical infrastructure at Royal Jubilee Hospital (taken before mandatory masking order).

Esquimalt and the Coast Guard bases, and the Small Boats Float with Prime Engineering. Prime is building a number of Switch-gear, Unit Sub-Stations and control panels for projects off-Island. Black and McDonald are working on the A/B Jetty and hoping to put boots on the ground over the next few months. Canem Systems is working on Grieg's Seafood in Gold River, the Nanaimo Fire Hall, work on the University of Victoria, and been successful on Docksider Green, and the Nanaimo Correctional Centre. Aines & Tyler has been picking up service while maintaining their regular clients. At Evitt Electric things have been slow, but they are still doing service and small jobs. Leemac Electric is working service and renos, they are bidding more Lumex jobs then ever before. Ravlec Power has been keeping busy, they have the Gold River power upgrade and a power upgrade for BC Ferries. They are optimistic with future work.

Shaw Electric has remained fairly steady with service and their contracts. ESC Automation is a little slow, but have only had one member laid-off at this point from when they signed up with Local 230 last year.

MARINE WORK PICTURE

Victoria Shipyard will remain slow with 105 electricians currently on all jobs until late fall when the HMCS Regina comes in. April will bring in 3 American Seafoods fish boats, but most work will be in services. They are working on the HMCS Ottawa with roughly 28 electricians. With finishing touches on the HMCS Corner Brook, and the HMCS Chicoutimi in the drydock. While FMF Cape Breton - Dockyard currently has 3 Work Packages on the go, HMCS Regina, Vancouver, and assisting the Kiwi's on completion of contract so they can head home.

CONSTRUCTION WORK PICTURE

We're in the first quarter of 2021, and large projects such as LNG Canada and Site "C" were not only delayed since mid-December, but their workforce whittled-back with an Order from the PHO limiting the number of workers on these job sites. Fortunately, projects are "crewing up" with the approval of restart plans and promising covid trajectories. Meanwhile, on Island drafting tables, there appears to be a good amount of pent-up work beginning this summer if all goes well with the vaccines.

Examples of that ongoing work; Thomis Electric has received the Nanaimo Regional General Hospital expansion, the Nanaimo Marriot Hotel; and in Victoria, the Government House, the new Allendale Seaspans offices, as well in partnership with Island Temperature Controls received Amica in the Jubilee Area and the Victoria Press Building. ITC also has the Controls at Hudson Place 2, Docksider Green, Upgrade at 1230 Government Street. Houle Electric is working on the University of Victoria Dining Hall and Dorms as well as other work on campus, Gorge Road Hospital reno, the Duncan Overdose Prevention Site, new Greater Victoria Library, new Honda Dealership in Comox, a Lighting and SCADA upgrade at CF-METR, and was awarded the preferred vendor for VIHA. Houle Courtenay is swamped with service and small jobs and will be going after bigger construction jobs in the future. Sasco Contractors are working on Makola Housing Phase 2, the Victoria Conference Centre fire alarm upgrade, Beban Park distribution upgrade in Nanaimo, two generator upgrades, one CVRD and the other for the city of Parksville. Prep Energy is keeping busy with a number of smaller HVAC projects. Emery Electric is working on the Mill Bay Sewage Treatment Plant upgrade, and busy in the marine section with work in Point Hope Shipyard, CFB

RETIRES OF 2020

The IBEW would like to thank you for your commitment and dedication to the trade and your Union. We would not exist if it weren't for hard working members like you. You're a valued member in the Union and you will be sorely missed on the job sites. Congratulations on your retirement and we wish you all the best in your future endeavors!

Drago Balaban 46-year member
Randy Beattie 39-year member
Peter Brown 42-year member
Roland Coons 21-year member
Keith Coppinger 42-year member
Daniel J. Daigle 18-year member
David Dubbin 31-year member
Mike Evans 33-year member
Kenneth Fair 43-year member
Randy Farnsworth 39-year member

Donald Haggard 25-year member
Stephen Halliday 31-year member
Paul Harding 15-year member
Jeffrey Johnson 39-year member
James Jolie 44-year member
Fred Martin 54-year member
Russel Moir 7-year member
Ivor Morgan 39-year member
Kenneth O'Neil 44-year member
Emery Savage 6-year member

In Memory of

With sadness and fond memories, we said goodbye to eleven members in 2020. They will be deeply missed and forever in our thoughts.



Norman Bailey 61-year member
Russell Batdorf 56-year member
Ted Browett 63-year member
Foster Dixon 49-year member
Richard Game 46-year member
Laurence Heney 54-year member

Richard Kulai 43-year member
Gordon Moore 45-year member
Stephen Pitre 13-year member
Michael Sevcov 63-year member
James Wolfgang 67-year member

IBEW 40th International Convention Call

The IBEW reviews its Constitution every five years; the International Convention is the body which decides what, if any amendments would look like, and how they will guide the IBEW through the next five years and beyond.

The 40th regular Convention of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers is due to convene on August 30th through September 3rd, 2021. However, due to COVID-19 and all of the various state, provincial, and federal health orders on both sides of the border and in consideration of international travel restrictions and quarantining, much is still up in the air. There is a possibility the Convention may be held virtually, in-person in Chicago as planned, or a blended version of the two (in-person and virtual). The Convention may even be postponed to a later date.

In any event, we will still need to fill our allotted Delegation for the 40th International Convention regardless how and when it occurs, and therefore, this is the Official Convention Call.

NOMINATIONS

The Delegates and Alternates are nominated, decided and appointed consistent with the Local 230 Bylaws, as well as the IBEW Constitution in Article 2, Section 10, and Article 17 (where not altered by the Local 230 Executive Board in consultation with the International Office due to the COVID-19 pandemic and explained in this Call). The Business Manager and President serve as Delegates to the Convention by virtue of their respective offices. Further Delegates and Alternates are elected at large. All Delegates must be members of Local 230 with at least 24 months in "continuous good standing" just prior to the month of Nominations.

Any part of the normal process altered due to the Provincial Health Officer orders are explained below. Nominations for Local 230 Delegates and Alternates will occur during the month of May 2021.

IBEW Local 230 Nominations for the positions of Delegate to the IBEW 40th International Convention will occur at the following Special Called Meetings during the month of May 2021.

These Special Called meetings are called in consideration of Article 15, Section 1 of the IBEW Constitution, and the only business to be conducted are nominations for Local 230 Convention Delegates.

Those seeking nominations to serve as a Local 230 Delegate, or a member providing a signed letter of interest from another member in good standing, will be the only members allowed to attend.

Masks and hand sanitizer will be available and mandatory to enter these buildings.

If for any reason any of these buildings are closed due to the pandemic, these Nominations will occur outside in their respective parking lots.

The President will appoint a Sergeant of Arms. Nominees wishing to stay must comply with the rules set out by the President. Non-compliance with the rules or direction as set out by the President or the Sergeant of Arms may result in the member(s) being ejected from the meeting.

Marine Unit | May 12th
5:00PM IBB Lodge 191
802 Esquimalt Road, Victoria

Victoria Unit | May 13th
7:00PM Pro Patria Legion
411 Gorge Road East, Victoria

Nanaimo Unit | May 19th
7:00PM Nanaimo Office
306-477 Wallace Street, Nanaimo

Courtenay/Campbell River Unit | May 20th
7:00PM Halbe Hall
8369 N. Island Highway, Black Creek

ELECTIONS

If an election is required, it will be by a mail-out secret ballot vote, and those receiving the highest number of votes will fill the allowable number of Delegates representing Local 230, which will be determined consistent with Article 2, Section 8 of the IBEW Constitution. All ballots must be returned in the designated post office box by 10:00 AM on June 28th, 2021.

The Vote will be counted that afternoon under the direction of the designated Judge of the Ballot as appointed by the Local Union President, after the aforementioned Unit Meetings in May.

Date: June 28th, 2021 for the Delegates to the 40th IBEW International Convention

Time: The Election Judge, Tellers, will pick up the ballots from the designated PO Box at 10:00 AM on June 28th, 2021.

Place: The ballots will be counted in the Royal Canadian Legion located at 761 Station Avenue, Langford BC.

Any ballots coming into the Post Office Box later than stipulated above will not be counted. Nominees may attend in person or have a designate attend in their place.

Chairs will be set up to provide proper physical distancing rules, and any Nominees wishing to stay must comply with the rules set out by the Judge of the Ballot. Non-compliance with the rules or direction as set out by the Judge of the Ballot or the Sergeant of Arms may result in the member(s) ejection from the count.

DELEGATE EXPENSE LIMITATIONS

The IBEW Constitution and Local 230 Bylaws contemplate Delegate reimbursement for the Convention. The Executive Board has confirmed that any lost-time wages during any quarantine time required prior to, and/or post-Convention (if held in-person) will be at the Delegates own expense. Local 230 will also NOT be held responsible for any related expense if a Local 230 Delegate contracts the virus or becomes ill in any way prohibiting them from entering or leaving the United States. Local 230 has six Health and Welfare Plans providing our members with a raft of covered expenses, so please consider your Plan in relation to Out-of-Country Travel to ensure you are sufficiently covered. If you do put your name forward to serve as a Delegate, and if, the Convention is held virtually elected Delegates are expected to provide their own computers and internet access.

ANNUAL CASH DRAW

This year's Annual Cash Draw has a top prize of \$20,000 plus two cash prizes of \$5,000. Tickets are available for sale at our Victoria office while supplies last. Please contact us if you would like one.

 **DRAW FOR \$20,000** **\$100** Per Ticket

Early Bird Draw

\$5,000

May 12, 2021 at the
2021 All Canada
Progress Meeting



Main Draw



Grand Prize of \$20,000

Draw for the \$20,000 will take place as soon as all tickets are sold or November 1, 2021.

Must be an I.B.E.W. Member to Purchase and Win Tickets \$100 each • Only 500 tickets to be sold
Winning Tickets go back in for the next draw.

A second \$5,000 cash prize will be drawn as soon as all tickets are sold, or November 1, 2021.

Proceeds to assist in funding of the reception at the IBEW International Convention in 2021.