

# PIPELINE NEWSLETTER

**JUNE 2020**

June 3/2020

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Here is a brief UA Local Membership update regarding the two sectors that I oversee, Commercial Plumbing Sector and the Sprinkler Sector.

I will start with the Sprinkler Sector. This sector is inundated with very cost competitive open shops targeting the markets that generally have been performed Union. This sector would be specialized fire protection and the Industrial markets. The Sprinkler Sector has been a blessing for the ticketed Journeyman Sprinkler fitter as this is a very heavy Journeyman discipline. A skilled labour force at this time is not as recognized in the past. With the new Provincial Health Pandemic and the low barrel of oil, new construction projects are nowhere to be seen. And the clients want the cheapest install out there. In time, this type of client will understand the cost this will have on their end installation. So, the strength of the Union is in the Maintenance and Inspection aspects of Sprinkler. This is where the Membership of the Local 488 reigns supreme. With this being said, the strength is to continue with Sprinkler Journeyman upgrading courses. Hopefully, this can be established sooner, so once the APTC gets the go ahead to proceed in the new Provincial Health guidelines, I am encouraging all Journeyman Sprinkler Fitters to take our upgrading courses. This course work is what is going to keep you readily and steadily employed in the upcoming months and years.

As for the working Sprinkler Fitter member, currently we are holding our own. All our Union Signatory contractors are being aggressive targeting what's out there for work. Hiring will be slow, but I do not foresee any more layoffs. There are very solid projects on the horizon for Sprinkler. Podium BG and a Costco or two plus a high school in GP. One more substantial Sprinkler project not known yet is the Norwood Project. See more details about these projects below.

Now with the Plumbing Sector. Finally, an end to the 7-year Grande Prairie Regional Hospital. Modern Niagara is down to a skeleton crew. Modern has come to the aid of the Clarke Builders as the subtrade of choice. Hopefully, the residents of Grande Prairie are aware of the hard work behind the walls that Modern Niagara secured to provide a finished product. This new Regional Hospital will be able to last another 50 years or so.

There are two substantial projects on the horizon, first one being the forecasted Tower BG, now called the Podium BG. Strathcona Mechanical is back into the ICE District and it has been almost 3 years since they completed their last ICE District project- Tower D now known as the Edmonton Tower. This was potentially put on the shelf until 2021 but may come to be in mid to late Summer. SML also has the high

school in GP. This potentially has the makings to be a one two punch for the Mechanical and Sprinkler to both be done Union.

The other substantial project is the Norwood Project. This is a 364-Million-dollar project and could be a solid 4-5 years' worth of work if this all goes Union. I will share now that there has been a Project Labour Agreement established for the project. This PLA will ensure that our Union Signatory contractors are cost competitive as the dwindling market share cannot shrink any more than it is. Stay tuned for a mailout to come to your house with the details of this PLA.

Our Commercial sector is also being aggressively targeted by our Union Mechanical contractors. Only time will tell if we can secure any more work.

I do want to truly thank all our Mechanical and Sprinkler Union Signatory Contractors. None have thrown in the towel and are all sharpening their pencils. All are continuing to support a Unionized labour force.

I also want to thank you, current elected UA Local 488 leadership. To come into a role with the COVID 19 pandemic happening and the barrel of oil, this would decimate most individuals by leaving them spinning on how you would persevere. Hindsight is 20/20, and not many have led through two culminating factors. So right now, we need to support our elected leaders and do what we do best as an organized workforce, which is to perform and to continue to perform as the piping professionals that we are.

Thank you for your time and your continued support. Also, a great big thank you for representing your Union and continue to remain safe.

Fraternally yours,

Angus Potskin