

## Game of Thrones - Better Sanitation Coming For Construction Workers



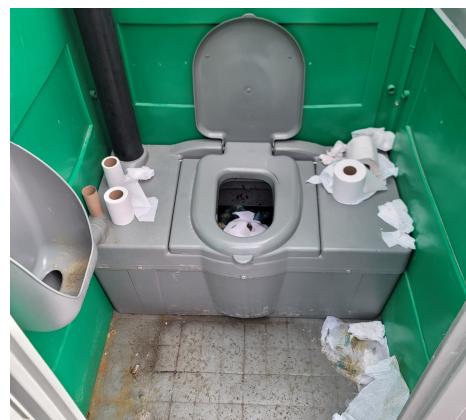
**Premier Eby with Business Manager Venoit**

In January 2001, I wrote to the Minister of Labour in BC to say that it was time to bring flush toilets to construction workers, after hearing the conditions on the Royal Jubilee project. "At times, the portable johns have been left in putrid neglect, often overflowing. Some workers are bringing in their own toilet paper from home..." a few short months later the BC Liberals became government, and, well, the first few years we went into defensive mode as it seemed like we were reeling from a barrage of collective agreement cuts and attacks on our labour monthly. Then, in March 2020 came along with COVID-19 and Dr. Bonnie Henry telling us we had to wash our hands to stay safe, while our construction members were deemed essential service workers.

Literally, before the World Health Organization declared the global pandemic, I was expressing to government the only way to keep construction workers safe from this virus was to institute Province wide requirements to provide flush toilets and hot and cold running water with soap to wash their hands with, as on most jobsites these things just didn't exist. At the time, I was the President of BC's Building Trades, and we started the "Get Flushed" campaign with the weight of 40,000 union construction workers in BC behind this humane change. Well, that resulted in meetings, and more meetings, and disappointing conversations with bureaucrats that never had to use a plastic feces bucket in their lives, and even

though I tried to be as graphic as possible, over two years went by with no real movement from WorkSafeBC. Hearing about the conditions of our construction porta-johns is no substitute for experiencing them, seeing them, and certainly smelling them.

In early fall, we met with Premier Eby, who's background is civil rights litigation, and he immediately understood the abhorrent treatment of construction workers sanitation conditions in the backdrop of the Canadian labour landscape, and the United Nations Declaration that all people had the right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation. Weeks later, Premier Eby visited the BC Building Trades Convention in October 2023 in Victoria, and announced that construction workers deserved better, and will get better sanitation conditions including flush toilets and running water on all job-sites with 25 workers or more. Since then, WorkSafeBC has conducted and wrapped up public consultations and we are awaiting the legislation coming next month. (Our Local 230 Submission to WorkSafeBC is on our website). This has been a long and frustrating battle with many focused on making construction a little more like a normal job and, as we see the changes to our jobsites providing for better sanitation know full well, it was our Premier David Eby who saw the injustice, and he decided we all deserved better. I implore you to remember that.



## Volume 3: 2024

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### Member's Dues Auto-Deposit

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

Nonworking dues rate as of July 1st, 2024:

"A" Members = \$55/month

"BA" Members = \$33/month

### News and Notes

#### Are you moving?

Statistically, people under 25 years old move every 3 years, and over 25-year-olds move every 7 years. Considering our demographic, roughly 30 members move every single month.

As a reminder, if you are planning a move, send us your new address so we can continue to send you your dues information and the Newsletter.

### Business Hours

Main Office: 8:00am - 5:00pm

Training Centre: 8:00am - 5:00pm

### Upcoming Training

Sept 24, 25 | Code Update 2021 | Zoom

Oct 19 | Code Update 2021 | Zoom

Oct 5 | Conduit Level 1- 3/4" EMT | Victoria

Oct 6 | Conduit Level 3 - Rigid Conduit | Victoria

Oct 25-27 | Fiber Optic Splicing | Victoria

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# BUSINESS MANAGER'S REPORT



**Business Manager Phil Venoit**

The BC Infrastructure Benefits (BCIB) celebrated its 5th Anniversary last month. This is the Provincial Government Agency that oversees payroll and HR functions on the Cowichan Hospital project. The AIRCC, the Construction Council who has the union authority over all BCIB projects like the Cowichan Hospital, met to consider the ramifications of the Carpenters' continued poor behavior on encroaching on other trades working jurisdictions, along with their letter to the government proposing they could do these jobs safer and more efficient as one trade. This is just a bad joke from my viewpoint, as they have had 20% of their crews absent throughout the project, slowing everyone else down, and the two major safety shut downs sending everyone home were caused by their crews. *"Safer and more efficient,"* in their dreams.

With the intent to remove all other construction craft unions and their members from these jobs is a direct attack on our



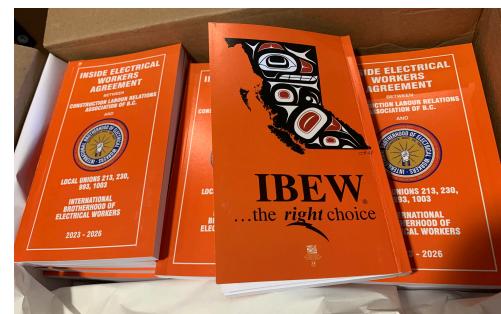
**The Last Structural Beam at Cowichan Hospital with the Houle Electric Crew**

combined membership, but at the same time this affront leaves us with the question of what we do with them at this point. I attended the Topping Off Ceremony at the Cowichan Hospital held on May 23rd. Beginning with a lunch for the crew, Beam Signing of the last structural beam to go into place on the D&T Centre, Blessing of the Beam by Cowichan Tribes Dancers, and topping off the speakers list the Minister of Health Adrien Dix, who thanked the professionals in Health Care and acknowledged the Trades who were building a stellar new hospital for the Cowichan Region. Finally, I note two of our members were recently written up for safety infractions of standing on the highest rail on a scissor lift and another removing their hard hat to peer through duct work. I understand it's busy and you are running fast to get your work done but remember it has to be done safely. This project will continue to crew-up throughout the rest of summer and well into the fall, with the expectation to wrap up at the end of 2025. Earlier this year, we understood that the BC Ferry Corporation would be announcing their intent to tender approximately 12 new replacement vessels for many of the old and tired fleet. I wrote a press release, then a 5:00 o'clock rush hour CBC radio interview with Gloria Macarenko from Vancouver, and a follow-up news piece on the viability of building ferries on the West Coast. Many say we don't have the space, the trained workforce, or the capability to compete against other countries, but these things are just not true. If there is a will, there is always a way. We sent out an opinion piece, followed

that up with a Global TV interview; and a meeting with Transportation Minister Rob Fleming to discuss ferry construction and what that could look like, even without the physical space to build out a hull, but to outfit a hull built overseas and how that would still create 400-500 good mortgage paying, family raising, union jobs either here on the Island or on the mainland. Either way, these are good jobs leaving BC for no real good reason. This month I will be joining the BC Ferries joint Service Board and Authority Board Meeting to discuss ferry construction further.

The Construction Collective Agreement is finally printed and has been available in both offices and the Training Centre for the past few months. We chose the colour orange this round to emphasize the first formal recognition of the United Nations Declaration Recognition of Indigenous Peoples, observed as a new Provincial Holiday on September 30th, otherwise known as Orange Shirt Day. We commissioned indigenous artist Trevor Husband for the Black Bear artwork on the back cover, which was rendered with the concept that the Black Bear exists in every corner of our Province with a similar tenacity of the IBEW and our work.

I would like to finally draw your attention to page 139, where you will find a list of our Counselling Services and contact information, so our members do not have to run the gauntlet of calling the local union staff to get this information to help them when they and/or their family need help.



**2023-2026 IBEW Construction Collective Agreement**

With an incredibly busy construction market, our membership is closing in on 1600, and our International expanding all local union's responsibilities on Organizing. I've hired a new Organizer for Local 230's North Island, Jake Kiernan. Jake has worked for the Nanaimo Canem office for the past eight years. Recently finishing up the new Nanaimo Correctional Centre as the General Chargehand. Jake has a steep learning curve over the next couple of years as he learns a new job, which nothing we do on the tools could prepare anyone for. Please give Jake your full support and cooperation in fulfilling his new role, our Local Union's organizing success comes from all our members helping where and when they can.

# Saanich Peninsula is Booming? Really?

The sleepy Saanich Peninsula is not associated in any way with the bustling building cycles of their Island neighbours to the south. Booming Saanich Peninsula sounds like an oxymoron, I know, but I was on my drive back from the mainland in mid-July when I started seeing a number of our contractors jobsites popping up all over the Pat Bay Highway, driving south passing the Agricultural Research site with Sasco Contractors, thirty seconds later the large condo project on the old Marigold Nurseries site with ARRM Electric, as I drove further south, I wondered who would be doing the electrical work associated to the Keating Cross Roads fly-overpass, so I called up Raylec Power from the car, who confirmed they would be doing the work there. When I got into the office, I reached out to a few other contractors to see if they had other work on the Peninsula that I hadn't driven past at 90 kilometers an hour (with the exception of the Keating flyover), and, sure enough, after a few quick texts; Thomis Electric responded with work upgrading the WiFi at the Saanich Penn. Hospital, Island Technical Installations was wiring a new veterinary clinic in Sidney, Emery Electric has pump station work as well as an HVAC job at the Panorama Rec. Centre, Fettback & Heesterman are working on the new Legacy Gathering Place for the Pauquachin Nation in North Saanich, Island Temperature Controls has work out at the airport, while Houle is out at the Department of Fisheries and Oceans installing a new fire alarm.



Sasco Contractors Breaking Bad at the Government's Newest Cook House



Arrm Electric Crew at Condo Project at the Old Marigold Nursery Property



Island Technical Installations at Sidney's Newest Veterinary Clinic

# Congratulations to our new Red Seal Electricians!



Top Left:

**Mitchell K., Carson R., Mark S.**

Middle Left:

**Tanner H., Andrew F., Conlan, W.**

Bottom Left:

**Elias J., Jordan A., Michael H.**