

# DC38

## Council Chronicle



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## STAR program will keep us safe, and will help create more jobs

A STAR is coming to a workplace near you, and this star will help you to work safer.

STAR, which stands for Safety Training Awards Recognition, is a new program now being instituted in DC38. Its aim is to improve safety awareness by rewarding safe working habits and the participation in continuing safety education programs.

DC38 is setting up a joint labour-management committee with Construction Labour Relations to manage the STAR program. Goals of the program include worker participation in safety programs and reducing injuries on the job, thereby avoiding the pain and family stress which comes with workplace injuries.

"We know our members want to work as safely as possible, and a safe workplace can also help reduce WCB costs. Keeping control of costs will create more jobs, which is good for all of us," said DC38 Assistant Business Manager Pat Byrne. "Our companies are coming on board because they recognize that safety is good for their workers and good for business. We all win."

Construction generates more WCB claims than any other industry. Training is the key to creating safer workplaces. Highly trained workers have fewer accidents than unskilled workers, and can therefore count on having a longer injury-free career. The STAR program will encourage members to take safety courses throughout the year, with a system of rewards and incentives built in to encourage participation.

"We're in the process of setting up the program right now and we hope to have it in full swing by 2009," says Byrne. "It's one of the many ways this union is trying to build the union sector of our construction industry so all DC38 members can benefit."

One of the incentives being considered is a draw among all participating members, with the top prize being a vehicle. Further details will be coming to all worksites over the summer and fall on how you can participate in this exciting program.



## Our union is growing by organizing

DC38 is on the move. We're growing because the construction industry is growing and needs our skills, and we're also growing because more and more workers out there want to be represented by DC38.

But it doesn't just happen automatically. It's hard work. There are costs associated with meeting with groups of workers to explain the advantages of working union. Good, safe, clean jobs, good pay, benefits, pension, good training programs, and a say in how things are run at the worksite are benefits that need to be explained to non-union workers.

Getting a majority of the workers on a job to sign cards and then preparing for the vote costs money. More meetings to provide information and often some legal challenges to deal with before the votes are counted adds further costs to organizing.

As the union grows by organizing more and more workers, we all benefit. It means a larger pool of members is supporting our pension fund and our other benefits programs. We can offer our employers more well-trained and highly motivated employees, so this creates more work for us all. And a larger share of the market means we can support negotiations for higher wages.

To help in this important business, the DC38 Bylaw Committee chaired by Dan Jajic, will be calling for a vote to add four cents an hour into a dedicated organizing fund to finance these activities. These new bylaws will be up for discussion by all DC38 members at the upcoming meetings. Meeting notices containing further details will be mailed out in the following weeks.

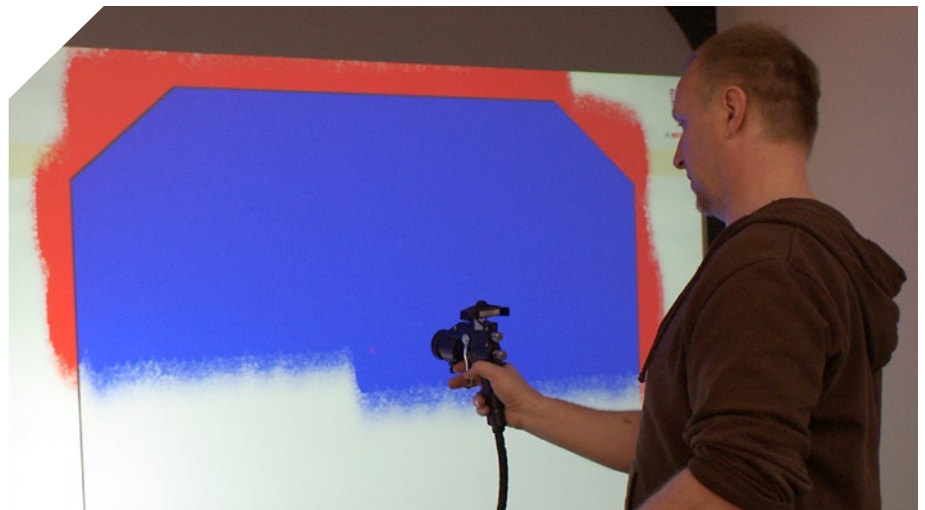
## Virtual paint simulator gives our people the training edge

The DC38 training centre has invested in a state-of-the-art spray painting simulator to help train our apprentices and journeypersons in this rapidly growing area of the trade.

The simulator projects a work surface onto a screen, and the trainee uses

He noted that more and more painting work is being done with spray equipment because it's much more efficient than rollers.

"For today's tradespeople, having skills all the way around the trade is a big advantage. Having this kind of



*Instructor Mark Tenbroek demonstrates the use of the paintless virtual paint simulator which is now in use training painters at the DC38 Training Centre.*

a computer-controlled paint gun to apply the paint. Except, there's no paint. The simulator lays down an image of the sprayed paint based on your performance with the gun. Too quick, it goes on thin. Too slow, it's thick.

When you complete the task the read-out at the bottom of the screen tells the tale. How much paint you used, how many mils applied, how efficient you were, your overall score.

"This simulator allows students to practice their spraying technique without churning through gallons of paint or damaging the ozone layer," says Mark Tenbroek, instructor and painting coordinator. "It allows our apprentices to develop and sharpen their skills in a very efficient way." He said the simulator reduces the time required for hands-on training with real paint and real sprayers by 60 per cent.

specialized equipment means we're getting better trained apprentices into the field than ever before."

Before the virtual paint simulator, he said, the school would easily go through five gallons of paint an hour using real spraying equipment.

Tenbroek noted that the apprentices take to the equipment like it's a video game; they become very competitive on the scores they achieve on the evaluation screen. They want to improve their personal best, and they also want to beat the other students. "That kind of in-house enthusiasm and competition is a good thing," he said.

The training centre's Virtual Paint is one of only two such machines in Canada. It cost more than \$50,000 to bring in and set up, but it's a valuable and necessary addition to our leading-edge training centre.

# Our Union is on a roll; the future looks even brighter

Thank you for setting aside the time to read this newsletter. It is our intention to pick up the pace of our communications activities because there is lots going on in our proud union and we need to keep you up to date. We will also be stepping up our use of our web site as a means of informing our members of important issues. We plan on implementing an electronic newsletter which will be sent to the email addresses of participating members. This will enable you to keep up-to-the-minute with important union business.

As we head into the summer of 2008, we find all our members hard at work across BC; our school is going full-tilt training much-needed apprentices and providing upgrading courses to our journeypersons; The centre's expansion is well in hand, and the lathers and drywall finishers sections are scheduled to be up and running by the fall.

I'm proud to report to you that Lathers Local 163 approved a group of bylaws at its meeting in May, and will be holding elections during their meetings in June. We are proud to welcome this new group of members into DC38.

But along with the growth and prosperity we currently enjoy, there are challenges. Several articles in this newsletter point to some of the more important issues before us. Our membership is growing, and we need to grow even more if we are to secure our future. We also need to increase the number of our signatory contractors by demonstrating to non-union contractors that it is in their economic interest to have work crews who are working under our collective agreement.

To achieve these goals we need to take steps to ensure DC38 workers are providing the best quality work available anywhere in BC. We need to respond to our growth pressures, and we need to place renewed emphasis on working safe. Separate articles in this newsletter deal with all these issues, and I want to briefly comment on them.

Nothing is more important than our health, and that's why we're announcing the STAR program, to provide further incentives for our members to work safe, to ensure that every one of our members who goes to work in the morning returns home at the end of the day without injury. Safety training



*Dave Holmes,  
Business Manager*

continues to be a major priority at our training centre, but on the job we can sometimes forget the basics as we rush to get the job done. The STAR program has the total support of the industry, and will address that continuing need to work in a safe manner. I hope you'll all get involved.

Second, we'll be putting new emphasis on our organizing initiatives. We need to increase the size of our membership so there are more people supporting our pensions, our health benefits and other programs. A larger membership also gives us much more leverage at the bargaining table to ask for wage increases. Our organizing initiatives cost money, and that's why it's important for us to approve the four cents an hour to go into our dedicated organizing fund.

And last, the Top Workplace Performance Plan will give us the means to improve the quality of our work by helping members deal with any deficiencies in their work performance. The great majority of our members are well trained, well motivated and diligent workers who earn their pay every day. But in today's competitive world, we cannot let the few on our crews who are not pulling their weight to create a bad name for our entire membership. Our enemies are only too willing to point out any flaws they can find in a unionized workforce, so let's not give them any ammunition. We're confident that

*"But along with the growth and prosperity we currently enjoy, there are challenges."*

this program will help improve the overall performance and reputation of our membership, and all of us will benefit from that.

All of these issues are on the table for discussion, debate and resolution at our upcoming membership meetings. Notices will be going out in the mail in the next few weeks with details of the meeting dates, time and locations. Democracy and the opinions of our members are the cornerstones on which this great union is built, so I urge to you participate, ask questions, express your point of view, and make your union stronger.

See you at the meetings.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dave Holmes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

# We want ALL DC38 members to be top performers at work

As members of a union working in the construction industry, you are a minority. Most construction in BC and in North America today is done non-union. Twenty years ago it was a different story. Non-union construction was restricted to the housing industry and minor projects in the commercial sector. All the big commercial/institutional and industrial sector construction jobs were done by the building trades unions, including our own.

There are a million reasons offered up to explain why the union share of construction dropped from 80 per cent in the 80s to an estimated 20 per cent today. Mainly, it's because we took it for granted that all serious construction would go union. We got expensive, we got complacent, and we slowed down the pace of work.

On the other hand, the non-union workers, hungry for a pay cheque, turned up for work on time, every day. They worked hard, and even if they didn't have the skills and training of the average union worker, they outperformed us. 80-20 became 20-80 in a few short years.

DC38 is out to change all of that. In addition to working hard to organize more and more groups of non-union workers, we are also heavily engaged in top-down organizing. That's where we convince an employer that there are significant benefits to having a workforce represented by DC38.

Our top selling feature is the skill, quality craftsmanship, superior work performance and dependability of DC38 members. We'll get the job done right, on time and within budget because we're the best!

To back up this claim, DC38 is adopting the Top Workplace Performance Plan developed by our International Union of Painters and Allied Trades (IUPAT). Under this plan the union and the employer will work with any of our members whose on-the-job performance falls short of expectations.

When an employer reports that a member is not performing on the job, DC38 will provide whatever training, counseling or other assistance the member requires to bring his performance up to standard.

If the member runs into problems again on the worksite, the union will re-double its efforts to help the member straighten out his problems.

If the member persists in his or her poor attitude or sub-par performance on the job after these efforts, then he'll be out of a job and out of the union.

We anticipate this program will impact only a small minority of our members. Most DC38 members put in a honest day's work, are diligent about their craft, and they do a great job day in and day out. A small minority of workers who don't always pull their weight cannot be allowed to harm the reputation of our entire membership.

The Top Workplace Performance Plan is a tough but necessary part of your union's efforts to regain the dominant position in the construction industry that it once enjoyed.

For additional details, view the video The Top Workplace Performance Plan: Failure is Not an Option on our International Union web site at [www.iupat.org/cl.htm](http://www.iupat.org/cl.htm)

## A new visual identity for DC38

# DC38

You may have noticed a new look to our logo and this newsletter. It's part of some changes we're making to our graphics to present a new, fresh, distinctive, cleaner and more readable style. We have also cleaned up the icons we use to identify the crafts represented by DC38.

Over the following months you will notice these changes being incorporated in our web site including a new section featuring our first-class training centre. Eventually it will appear on our signage and everything we do in the way of communicating with our members, our employers, other workers and the public.

WE HOPE YOU LIKE THE CHANGES.

# DC38



THE FINISHING TRADES



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