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Sheet Metal Journal

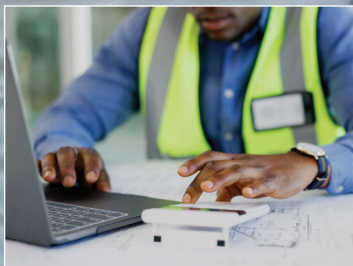
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British Columbia



BC REPRESENTS AT PARTNERS IN PROGRESS

Also in this Issue:



Myths & Realities of Prompt Payment in BC



Funding Increase for Trades Training



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Record for SMACNA-BC

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Formed in 1969, the British Columbia Sheet Metal Association (SMACNA-BC) was the first international chapter of the Sheet Metal & Air-conditioning Contractors National Association (SMACNA). Founded in 1934, SMACNA traces its history to the National Association of Sheet Metal Contractors established in 1910, and has 2,300 members worldwide.

SMACNA-BC is a member-driven association representing unionized sheet metal contractors in the Mainland of BC, and suppliers to our industry. It promotes the growth and stability of the members and industry.

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- To promote harmony in labour relations
- To study and help in the development and enforcement of governmental codes and regulations, and such legislation as may be necessary for the best interest of the public and the sheet metal industry
- To exchange technical, professional, and educational information with other contractor associations in the sheet metal industry and its allied trades in Canada and other countries
- To affiliate as a Chapter with the Sheet Metal & Air-conditioning Contractors National Association, Inc.

BC Sheet Metal Association (SMACNA-BC) • Executive Director: Jeremy Hallman
705 - 9639 137A Street Surrey, BC V3T 0M1
Phone: (604) 585-4641 • E-mail: smacnabc@smacna-bc.org

Learn more at

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PUBLISHER / EDITOR

Jessica Kirby
jessica.kirby@pointonemedia.com

CONTRIBUTORS

Norm Grusnick
Jeremy Hallman
Geoff Williams

COVER PHOTO

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ADVERTISING SALES / DESIGN

Lara Perraton
877.755.2762
lperraton@pointonemedia.com

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EVENTS, PLANNING, AND LEARNING AT SMACNA-BC

Spring has been busy around the SMACNA-BC office. Planning is well underway for our 57th Annual AGM & Convention, taking place May 7–9, 2026, at the Delta Grand Okanagan Resort in Kelowna, BC. Based on early interest, it’s shaping up to be another strong event, with 262 registered guests as of writing this. A big thank you to Leanne for continuing to put together a great program that gives members the opportunity to connect, unwind, and enjoy some time together outside of the day-to-day demands of the industry.

Kelowna is one of my favourite stops on our cycle, as my family and I spend time there in the summers. It’s hard to go wrong with the lake surrounded by mountains, vineyards, and orchards. In addition to the Annual General Meeting, members can look forward to a variety of activities and networking opportunities throughout the weekend. This year will also feature an “Eras”-themed Friday Fun Night, giving attendees a chance to dress up, have some fun, and enjoy a bit of nostalgia with fellow members. I know it’s been a while since we’ve tried something like this, but we’re hoping it makes for a great night. If dressing up isn’t for you, you can always say you’re from 2026.

I’ve been getting out to speak with contractors in person to gather their market outlook, and the feedback has been fairly consistent. Most feel they have enough work on hand to stay busy



Jeremy Hallman,
Executive Director, SMACNA-BC

through 2026, with only a minor reduction in hours. However, there are growing concerns about 2027 and beyond. Margins are tightening quickly, and the number of contractors bidding on projects has increased significantly. While it’s nice to see the pace relax slightly, I don’t think anyone wants things to swing too far in that direction.

I’m also pleased to announce that SMACNA-BC and SMART Local Union No. 280 have finalized a new Testing and Balancing (TAB) agreement. This is an important step in strengthening collaboration and supporting quality standards across our industry.

I would like to thank Dennis St. Hilaire of Western Mechanical Services and Steve Davis for their efforts in bringing this agreement together. Participating contractors include Novagreen Mechanical, Tempest Balancing, and Western Mechanical Air Balance Co. I encourage members to keep these firms in mind for your balancing and commissioning needs.

Recent Events

At the *Partners in Progress* Conference in February, Steve Davis, Business Manager and FST, and I were asked to speak at one of the breakout sessions. We discussed the union/management relationship we have here in BC. Based on the feedback we received, relationships in other regions can be more strained.

We made sure to give credit to Bruce Sychuk and James Paquette for the groundwork they laid for us. Some of the things we take for granted here generated strong interest during the session and led to some tough questions afterward.

In my opinion, our Joint Conference Board is one of the biggest differences. The fact that union and management meet nine times per year, with a formal agenda to discuss industry issues, certainly helps when challenges or negotiations arise. Just as importantly, it gives us the opportunity to get to know each other on a more personal level. Conversations about family, sports, and shared interests go a long way in building understanding and seeing each other in a different light.

We held a dinner meeting on January 22 at the Civic Hotel in Surrey, featuring guest speaker Chris Atchison, President of the BC Construction Association. Chris provided an overview of British Columbia’s Prompt Payment legislation (Bill 20:



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Construction Prompt Payment Act), outlining what it could mean for owners, contractors, and subcontractors across the province. The legislation aims to improve payment certainty, reduce delays, and modernize dispute resolution. While it's a positive step forward, the enforcement side is still being finalized, with expectations that it could be in place within the next 18 months if things proceed as planned.

Our March 19 dinner meeting featured Laura King, Regional Director (Canada) with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), who joined us from Ontario. Laura delivered an informative session on NFPA-96. She did an excellent job walking the group through how to use both the online and print versions to find answers efficiently. It reinforced an important point: while it's impossible to remember every detail, it's critical to know where the information is and how to navigate the manuals, much like our SMACNA resources.

Our next dinner meeting is scheduled for April, and we continue working to identify topics that keep turnout strong. Between 2024 and 2025, we've seen average attendance increase by nearly 50%. While much of that is tied to how busy the industry has been, I'd also like to think it reflects the quality and relevance of the topics being presented. If you have suggestions for future speakers or subjects, please reach out to the SMACNA-BC office.

By the time you read this, nominations for SMACNA-BC board positions will be closed. If you're interested in getting involved or would like to learn more about what's involved, please contact the office. Member participation is critical to the continued success and direction of the association.

SMACNA National Convention

On the national level, planning is also underway for the SMACNA Annual Convention, taking place October 25–28, 2026, in Orlando, Florida, at the Signia by Hilton Bonnet Creek and Waldorf Astoria. This event brings together contractors, partners, and chapter executives for several days of education, networking, and social events. Attendees can expect a full program of sessions, along with popular activities such as the College of Fellows Golf Tournament, pickleball, and clay shooting, as well as a new SMACNA Block Party at Universal CityWalk. I've also finalized our contract for Chapter Night, which will be held at Splitsville Luxury Lanes on Tuesday, October 27. We'll be joining the Oregon and Washington chapters again this year, so it should be a great time.

As always, for a full list of upcoming SMACNA-BC events and registration details, please visit our website or contact the office directly. ■





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NATIONAL CAREERS IN TRADES WEEK BUILDS AWARENESS FOR REWARDING AND ESSENTIAL SKILLED TRADE JOBS

New research shows the majority of teens would consider a job in the skilled trades over college knowing the pay is higher than average

National Careers in Trades Week (NCIT), which took place April 6-10, 2026, comes at an opportune time for people across Canada seeking rewarding, essential careers with excellent pay and strong benefits, including extended healthcare and pensions.

Professions in the skilled trades will experience faster-than-average job growth between 2024 and 2034, and the Occupational Outlook predicts over 600,000 construction job openings each year and a current median annual wage remaining higher than the median for all occupations. Trade jobs also do not result in debt that can accompany a college path. And according to Construction Labor Research Council, workers are averaging pay hikes above 4%, as employers look to attract and retain workers in a tight labor market.

New research conducted by Wakefield Research on SMACNA National's behalf of shows that 75 percent of teens aged 13-18 would consider a trade job over going to college. The most compelling reasons for teens opting for a trade over college are higher pay, good benefits, and paid apprenticeships. Other considerations include opportunity to be promoted (24%), knowing a job is vital to the economy (21%), and the number of available trade positions growing faster than the average job (19%).

“Skilled professions offer rewarding career opportunities for all people, including young adults, women, veterans, and anyone

who is looking for a career change,” said SMACNA CEO Frank Wall. “The wages and job security trade careers offer provide a faster means to home ownership, upward mobility, and saving for retirement that other pathways don’t always ensure.”

Throughout National Careers in Trades Week, cross-industry visibility efforts showcased the benefits of choosing careers in the skilled trades among job seekers and the public. The goal is to fill the hundreds of thousands of jobs that are essential to national and global economies and infrastructure projects, including, for example, the construction of chip plants, stadiums, healthcare facilities, factories, and data centers.

“There is a lot that has changed about our country over the years: technology, artificial intelligence, you name it. But one thing that won’t ever change is this simple fact: We need skilled trades workers to build our country,” said Michael Coleman, General President of SMART. “SMART members are doing that from coast to coast, whether building new hospitals, ensuring air quality in schools, or making sure apartment and office buildings run as efficiently as possible. We’re excited to shine a light on the many career paths available to workers in our industry during National Careers in Trades Week—and well beyond.”

Learn more at nationalcareersintrades.com ■

BC BUILDING TRADES LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN TO ENSURE LOCAL BRITISH COLUMBIANS BUILD BC

BC Conservative bill puts local jobs on public projects at risk

The BC Building Trades has launched a campaign to protect Community Benefit and Project Labour Agreements to ensure major public projects are built by local, skilled workers from British Columbia, while expanding apprenticeships, training, and providing safe working conditions and paying family sustaining wages.

In early March, the BC Conservatives introduced legislation that would ban Community Benefits and Project Labour Agreements on all public projects.

“Community Benefit Agreements and Project Labour Agreements ensure BC workers build BC infrastructure and train the next generation of trades workers,” said Brynn Bourke, Executive Director for the BC Building Trades. “At a time when we’re facing a skilled labour shortage, major private-sector projects are choosing to sign agreements with the BC Building

Trades to secure skilled labour. The BC Conservatives’ bill would move BC backwards, preventing public projects from signing agreements and accessing that same stable labour supply.”

“We’ve seen what can happen when public projects are built without these agreements,” continued Bourke. “The BC Conservatives want to take us back to a time when public projects like the Canada Line were built using temporary foreign labour. On that project, foreign workers were paid less than \$4 an hour.”

The BC Building Trades is calling on the BC Conservatives to stand with—not against—BC skilled trades workers and to withdraw their bill.

Visit bcbuildingtrades.org to learn more. ■

BC CENTRE FOR WOMEN IN THE TRADES SHOW UP TRAINING CALENDAR

BC Centre for Women in the Trades is excited to share its April to June 2026 training calendar, with additional locations around the province.

- April 20-23 at the BCFED Health & Safety Training Centre in Burnaby
- May 11-14 at the Maritime Heritage Centre in Campbell River (with NVIATS)
- May 25-28 at the UFV Trades and Technology Centre in Chilliwack
- June 22-25 at the BCFED Health & Safety Training Centre in Burnaby

Show Up is an innovative new program that will create safer, healthier, and more productive workplaces throughout the construction sector by giving workers and employers the practical tools to address urgent psychological safety hazards—including addressing mental health and addiction, suicide prevention, and bullying and harassment.

Show Up is designed as a four-day comprehensive training program that can help people recognize and support mental health and substance use concerns, prevent toxic workplace

culture, and become active partners in creating healthier and more stable work environments.

Topics covered will include psychological safety, mental health first aid and suicide awareness, substance use, and bullying, harassment, and discrimination—including providing participants with strategies and resources they can take back to their jobsites that will help build more respectful, stable, and healthier workplaces. In addition to the more fulsome training and take-away tools, participants will also attain a certificate in Mental Health First Aid, as developed and recognized by the Mental Health Commission of Canada.

Learn more about how you can Show Up and apply today at bccwitt.ca/showup ■

BUILD TOGETHER: A SKILLS GAP IS HERE—AND THAT'S GOOD NEWS

Build Together BC is a campaign of the BC Building Trades that promotes, supports, and mentors women in the skilled construction trades.

In BC, women represent only about 5% of the construction trade workforce. In other skilled trades, that number is even smaller.

Studies and industry reports show that a large population of skilled trade workers are gearing up for retirement. An estimated

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300,000 new workers will need to be recruited from outside the construction industry over the next decade to compensate for this gap.

This is an enormous opportunity for women seeking secure, well-paid and fulfilling employment.

Construction: The last frontier

Construction is seen as the “last frontier” in terms of increasing numbers of female representation. Other industries & sectors—the military, law enforcement, for instance—have surpassed 15% female representation. The numbers of women in construction have remained unchanged for years. The tradeswomen of Build Together, together with industry support—plan to change this.

For centuries, construction workers passed on the knowledge of their craft from father to son. This generational “passing of the torch” led to insular recruiting strategies in the past. Contemporary advertising strategies perpetuate the assumption by heavily gearing images and language towards men. The Build Together program has tailored strategies to actively recruit and retain women to the industry.

Learn more at bcbuildingtrades.org, collegeofthebcbt.ca, or bccwitt.ca ■

Got news?

Sheet Metal Journal represents diverse voices in the sheet metal/HVAC industry, and we’d like to hear yours. We are actively seeking ideas and suggestions for upcoming stories, articles, and project highlights. If you have a significant project underway or recently completed, or the inside scoop on an industry issue, then you have something to contribute to *Sheet Metal Journal*.

We take your ideas and set our editorial team to work on developing high-quality, informative news stories and photography that fully explore your ideas.

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Share your ideas with Jessica Kirby, editor, at 250.816.3671 or jessica.kirby@pointonemedia.com.

HOUSE AND SENATE VOTE TO END CANADIAN TARIFFS; SHEET METAL INDUSTRY RESPONDS

By Austin Keating

The US House of Representatives voted in February to terminate the national emergency declaration that enabled steep tariffs on Canadian imports, following similar Senate action earlier this year. For the nation’s sheet metal and HVAC contractors, relief may finally be on the way after a year of rising costs, material shortages, and mounting uncertainty in project planning.

The tariffs, imposed under the *International Emergency Economic Powers Act*, placed a 35% duty on most Canadian imports and 10% on energy products. While intended as a show of economic strength, many in the construction and manufacturing sectors have argued the policy backfired—hurting American companies more than their northern competitors.

Stanley E. Kolbe Jr., executive director of government and political affairs at SMACNA, sent a letter to Congress voicing strong support for H.J. Res. 72, the resolution introduced by Rep. Gregory Meeks, D-N.Y., to end tariffs on Canadian goods.

“While imposing large, across-the-board tariffs on a number of other nations may be justified, Canada is our closest and most important trading partner,” Kolbe said. “Tariff penalties aimed at Canada, for non-trade objectives, have already caused harsh and unnecessary economic pain for US workers and harm to our nation’s construction and related metal fabricating, as well as HVAC equipment manufacturing businesses. In fact, it will punish businesses, labour, and economies on both sides of the border, and in direct contravention of the provisions featured in the existing USMCA.

With the resolution now heading to the White House, its fate is uncertain—President Trump could still issue a veto, which would require a two-thirds majority in both chambers to override. Meanwhile, attention in Congress is already pivoting to Brazil, where lawmakers are considering similar action on tariffs affecting coffee, metals, and other imports from one of America’s other major trading partners.

Read the full version of this article in ACHR News at tinyurl.com/bdcytw7m

WHEN WORK HAZARDS FOLLOW YOU HOME

SMOHIT’s Workplace Exposure Research Program was created to study workplace hazard exposure and educate sheet metal workers on how to best reduce their risk—and the risks they might bring home to loved ones.

The term “take-home exposures” refers to toxic substances that workers can unknowingly bring home on their clothes and bodies. These include asbestos, lead, pesticides, beryllium, and mercury, all of which the Centers for Disease Control study as take-home exposure risks. The awareness of take-home exposure goes back hundreds of years, when public health authorities noticed wives of coal miners were dying of black lung disease.

To help mitigate your danger of take-home exposures, remember to:

- Separate and wash your work clothes separately from family clothes
- Store your work items/boots in plastic or washable bags, preferably outside the home
- Shower and wash your hair at work if possible, or right away once you get home
- Wash children’s toys, play spaces, high chairs and eating surfaces often
- Vacuum and clean the inside of your vehicle with soap and water

Learn more at smohit.org/workplace-exposure-research-program ■

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BC Represents at Partners in Progress

SMACNA-BC and Local 280 talked about historical efforts, open communication, and a Labour Management Cooperation Trust at the 2026 *Partners in Progress* Conference

By Jessica Kirby

Jeremy Hallman, executive director for SMACNA-BC, and Steve Davis, business manager and FST for Local 280, co-chaired a breakout session at the 2026 *Partners in Progress* Conference, sharing the steps they and their predecessors have taken to solidify their labour-management partnership. As members of both organizations know, SMACNA-BC and Local 280 meet nine times a year, attend each other's events, and rely on a Joint Conference Board for mutual support and resolving issues leading up to negotiations.

But it hasn't always been that way.

Growing roots in partnership

Davis and Hallman gave credit to their predecessors—James

Paquette and Bruce Sychuk—for setting the groundwork for a cooperative relationship. “This kind of relationship doesn't happen overnight,” Hallman said. “Bruce and James forged it over 18 years with a lot of honest conversations, they hired a consultant, and they even went on a traveling road show to share what they learned.”

“Throughout my career, our business managers had this relationship with SMACNA, collaborating on different events and initiatives,” Davis explained. “We always had a good group of people around us that taught us unionism and that when it came to the contractors, we didn't have to fight with each other.”



Photo courtesy of SMACNA

Uneasy beginnings

To understand the relationship Hallman and Davis were describing at Partners, it is necessary to have a clear picture of where it came from. When Sychuk and then-Business Manager Robert Colvin got started in the 90s, they had their work cut out for them. The union was financially unstable, and the industry's market share was about 28%. When it came to negotiations, neither side encouraged the process, and when they did get together, negotiations were unproductive and often ended in fighting.

"It was definitely a tougher time," Davis said.

“Everyone bared their souls and wore their hearts on their sleeves. It was not easy. Some came to the table kicking and screaming, and others came and did their best to encourage those who were apprehensive to take a leap of faith.”

—Jim Paquette, former Business Manager-FST, Local 280

“Bruce felt that SMACNA members were informed and they had good participation, but there was certainly no compassion for the business managers or their interests,” Hallman said. “On both sides, there was a lot of pointing out mistakes and not collectively trying to bring each other together.”

Labour Partnership Program

In 2001, SMACNA National ran a pilot program in Ohio and West Virginia that proved an important catalyst for change. The two-day Labor Partnership Program (LPP) was facilitated by Bernie Flaherty of Cornell University. Its focus was on establishing trust and respect, finding ways to make the relationship primary, and developing and strengthening personal relationships.

The program's initial success caught Sychuk's attention, and he worked with Colvin to bring the program North. “Basically, the program was about listening and understanding the other side's needs, goals, and issues,” Sychuk said, in an interview with *Sheet Metal Journal* during his tenure. “It was simple and broken down in a straightforward way so that we could absorb it.

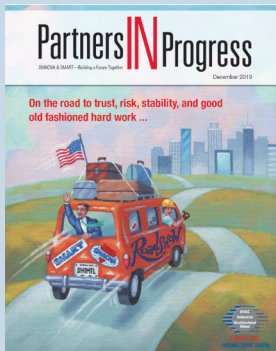
“Everyone bared their souls and wore their hearts on their sleeves,” Paquette added, in the same interview. “It was not easy. Some came to the table kicking and screaming, and others came and did their best to encourage those who were apprehensive to take a leap of faith.”

And leap they did. The LPP training resulted in SMACNA and Local 280 creating and signing off on a shared mandate outlining the steps they would commit to moving forward. From there, the partnership grew, as both sides bent a little, initially with changes to the CBA and working together on recruitment initiatives.

And then came the Tin Soldier.

Building community

Around the same time, Colvin was approached by a charity group to do something monumental in New Westminster, and Local 280, SMACNA-BC, and Austin Metal Fabricators collaborated to build the 32-foot-tall and 10,000 lb toy soldier that currently sits at the Westminster Quay.



The Partnering Roadshow was developed in 2002, when Sychuk was inspired after listening to Doug McDonald, a sheet metal labor representative who presented on partnership in Vancouver. Sychuk and Colvin hit the road to 10 locations across BC, bringing the labor-management partnership message into shops.

Market share became the common ground to unite parties and demonstrate how one side couldn't be successful without the other.

"The person on the job site isn't always aware of market share if they are employed full-time," Paquette says. "They need to know that, although they might be working 12 months of the year, that means a person is 100% employed, but it doesn't really indicate that the signatory industry is only getting 35% of the work."

On the second Road Show, held in 2010, Sychuk and Paquette visited shops and training centers to share what had been accomplished.

"If you can't bring the horse to water, bring the water to the horse," Paquette says. "That's what the Roadshow was about. We went to places of work and employers excused the employees for the afternoon to attend a presentation from labor and management."

"We spoke to 900 people about how the employer and union are not enemies, and about what we need to do to accept change," Sychuk says. "We wanted them to embrace the challenge and not blame others for challenges or for what is happening. Our message was to accept the challenges given and work together toward solving them."

Read the full story about the Road Show in "How to Build a Labor-Management Partnership" featured in the December 2019 issue of *Partners in Progress*. issuu.com/partnersinprogress/docs/pinp_dec2019-final

“ Relationships are built when you are out there meeting one another and their spouses. You start to understand that your labour or management partner is a person you can get to know and not someone you just butt heads with all the time. ”

—Jeremy Hallman, executive director, SMACNA-BC

“This was an important collaboration and where things started to change,” Davis said in the presentation. “It was a joint venture, and nobody was looking to one-up the other or get something out of it.”

“At that time, it may have been hard to sit across the table from one another, but if you're just working on sheet metal, that becomes a much easier collective accomplishment,” Hallman added. “Starting with something everyone could agree on, you end up standing shoulder to shoulder and doing good for the community and from there you start thinking about ways to collaborate on making the industry better.”

Today, SMACNA-BC and Local 280 members enjoy events, activities, and conferences together, along with the benefits of social connections away from the office.

“Relationships are built when you are out there meeting one another and their spouses,” Hallman says. “You start to understand that your labour or management partner is a person you can get to know and not someone you just butt heads with all the time.”

Labor-Management Cooperation Trust

Hallman and Davis explained that SMACNA-BC and Local 280 have always had a JCB, which meets to discuss industry issues, successes, challenges, and points of interest leading up to negotiations. Meetings are typically followed by social time. This interaction is crucial because it allows Hallman and Davis to go into negotiations ready to ensure their members are taken care of, but also willing to give a little since they've each spent the year building social credit.

Relationship maintenance is key. Hallman and Davis explained that they speak regularly on the phone, and when Davis was Local 280's organizer, he and Hallman would sometimes go together to talk with employers who were interested in joining the union.

Most importantly, Davis and Hallman shared that they are working to ensure that the relationship they inherited from Sychuk and Paquette perseveres into the future.



SMACNA-BC and Local 280 members attended the 2026 *Partners in Progress* Conference dressed in matching attire to show solidarity in their labor-management partnership.

“Someone from Local 280, the Health Benefits Plan, and I will do a presentation on the first day of apprentice intake class,” Hallman said. “The goal is to show young people the importance of that collaboration, so they know we need each other to get the work done right.”

“We are always trying to get more education to our members

and trying to collaborate together so that our messages are the same,” Davis adds. “If our opinions on something aren’t the same, we are willing to listen to each other to decide based on what is right for the membership.”

Read more about this and other presentations from the *Partners in Progress* Conference, visit pinp.org.

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Myths & Realities of Prompt Payment in BC

By BC Construction Association

The Construction Prompt Payment Act (CPPA) is on the path to soon becoming law in British Columbia. The BC Construction Association (BCCA) has prepared this Myths and Realities resource to address common misconceptions about prompt payment and adjudication legislation.

BCCA has prepared an extensive FAQ resource providing more detailed information on the legislation. Visit bccassn.com/industry-priorities/prompt-payment to learn more.

Myth: Prompt payment will add delays or red tape to construction projects.

Reality: No, it won't. Prompt payment is designed to make projects run more smoothly, not slower. By creating clear, consistent timelines and a defined process for handling payment disputes, it provides certainty to a project's entire supply chain. With adjudication as a fast, cost-effective alternative to litigation, disputes are resolved quickly and projects keep moving. It has already been in force in other provinces, and construction continues.

Myth: Prompt payment isn't going to change anything.

Reality: Prompt payment changes everything about how money flows in construction. It requires owners to pay contractors within 28 days of a proper invoice, contractors to pay subcontractors within 7 days, and payments to keep moving down the supply chain. It eliminates the ability to sit on funds or rely on "paid-when-paid" clauses without notice or cause, and also introduces adjudication: a fast, cost-effective process to resolve disputes so projects are not stalled.

But it will only work if all parties understand and follow it, speak up when another party does not, and make use of adjudication when payment disputes arise.

Myth: My industry wasn't consulted in the development of this legislation.

Reality: Industry has been calling for prompt payment reform in BC for decades, and in our opinion, consultation has been extensive:

In fall 2023, a working group was formed to provide feedback to the Ministry of the Attorney General on the potential introduction of prompt payment legislation. The group met over six months, with many industry stakeholders invited to participate; some chose to remain engaged, while others left the process.

In summer 2025, a group of industry experts signed NDAs to review draft legislation representing trade contractors, general contractors, legal experts, labour and associations including BCCA, ECABC, RCABC, MCABC, GCAC, the Surety Association of Canada, and the BC Building Trades. This rigorous review ensured feedback reflected a broad cross-section of industry realities.

While not all feedback was accepted and incorporated, we are confident that industry voices and perspectives were considered throughout the drafting process. However, we continue to emphasize the importance of collaboration between government, industry, and other relevant stakeholders, and remain committed to our advocacy regarding the drafting of clear regulations, prompt enactment and modernization of the Builders Lien Act.

Myth: Prompt payment restricts how builders structure their projects and requires everyone to bill monthly.

Reality: The legislation does require monthly invoicing by the head contractor, unless the contract specifies otherwise. Parties have freedom to contract, so a proper invoice may be tied to

milestones or other agreed triggers, for example invoicing every three months or when a prefabricated component is delivered. The key is that once a proper invoice is required to be submitted, the legislation takes effect and the payment timelines under the law begin to run.

Myth: This legislation unfairly advantages contractors over owners.

Reality: The legislation is designed to keep money flowing fairly through the entire construction supply chain, not to tip the scales toward any one party. It sets out clear timelines and processes that apply equally to owners, contractors, and trades, ensuring accountability at every level. Owners have the right to issue notices of non-payment and to leverage adjudication when disputes arise. These tools ensure owners remain protected while reducing the risk of disputes that can stall or derail projects, outcomes owners want to avoid.

Myth: The timelines are too fast, too hard to adjust to, and will create an administrative burden.

Reality: The timelines in this legislation are consistent with those already in place in other provinces, where construction continues without disruption. Yes, it will require changes in processes and systems, but the industry has successfully adapted elsewhere ... and so will BC. With education and support, the transition will bring lasting benefits by reducing disputes

and keeping projects moving, and while it requires a shift in thinking and processes, there will be time to adapt before the legislation is enforced.

Myth: This is not the right time for prompt payment, with so much economic uncertainty.

Reality: This is exactly the right time. Construction contributes more than \$29 billion annually to BC's economy and employs over 260,000 British Columbians. Payment certainty helps businesses remain resilient and grow, protecting jobs and strengthening the industry's ability to deliver housing, infrastructure, and trade-enabling projects. A fair payment system builds a healthier construction industry, which in turn supports a stronger provincial economy.

Myth: Prompt payment legislation is only for large owners and contractors and does not help homeowners.

Reality: While homeowners are not BCCA's primary sector, our experience shows this legislation will help them too. We regularly hear from homeowners facing payment disputes on their projects as they seek to build or renovate their homes. Prompt payment can give them an efficient, structured way to address disputes with their contractor through adjudication, instead of being left in limbo or facing costly and drawn-out legal battles in the courts. ■

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Province to increase trades training for the first time in two decades

During the next three years, the Province will double trades-training funding through a \$241-million fund earmarked to strengthen BC's trades-training system

By Jessica Kirby

British Columbia has a record number of people registering as apprentices with nearly 50,000 registered apprenticeships and more than 11,000 high school participants in trades-related programs.

A \$241-million investment from the government of BC, the first major upgrade in funding in over two decades, will increase per-seat funding for apprentice programs, allowing training providers to address waiting lists, ensure faster access to training, advance skilled-trades certification, and as opportunities evolve, ensure workers can move easily between industries.

Students and staff at the Sheet Metal Workers Training Centre will benefit from the funding, as it brings long-sought-after support to the school's programming.

"We worked very hard over the last 25 years to restore funding for technical training in the province of BC," says Jud Martell, training coordinator at SMWTC. "The announcement was a welcome message that this was going to be addressed. Of course, we were waiting to see how those monies would flow through SkilledTradesBC to the Sheet Metal Workers Training Centre Society."

SkilledTradesBC oversees nearly 90 trades programs and funds nearly 28,000 apprenticeship and foundation-training seats at public, union, and private institutions.

Since 2017, seven trades have been introduced as skilled-trades certification trades, and nine more have been identified for future introduction, including tower- and mobile-crane operators.

Photo courtesy of Sheet Metal Workers' Training Centre

“With this investment in skilled trades, we are not only investing to meet today’s needs, but we are laying the foundation for a thriving and prosperous future,” says Shelley Gray, CEO, SkilledTradesBC. “We are committed to ensuring more people in British Columbia can benefit from these well-paying, resilient and rewarding careers.”

BC Building Trades led the process of negotiating the new per seat funding for SkilledTradesBC designated not-for profit union training providers. Under this new funding agreement, SMWTC has developed a training plan for the next year (April 1, 2026, to March 31, 2027) that will allow it to cautiously invest in the future of training, with expansion of its current sheet metal and architectural training to double capacity.

“We have hopes that the funding continues, as it promised, over the next three years and with that promise the Sheet Metal Industry Training Board can now explore completing the expansion of the Training Centres to meet the expected needs of our industry,” Martell says.

In the meantime, BC Building Trades remains committed to partnering with the province and to foster the next generation of skilled-trade workers.

“This funding will allow our joint board and union training schools to deliver on this and serve the needs of the industry,” says Brynn Bourke, executive director, BC Building Trades. “We welcome this historic investment in our trades-training system, and we look forward to partnering with the government to foster the next generation of skilled-trade workers.”

Collaboration with unions, industry, and post-secondary partners is central to building the programs and workforce necessary in BC.

“Enhancing access to quality trades programs across every region ensures more people in British Columbia can build their skills and move into well-paying jobs, which further strengthens the province’s workforce and economy, and helps communities thrive,” says Maggie Matear, president and CEO of Selkirk College, chair of Skilled Trades Training Council.

“We are grateful to the BC government for this economy-building investment in trades training, which will create more opportunities for students in northern and rural communities who wish to pursue trades careers close to home where they are in high demand,” says Laurie Waye, president and CEO, Coast Mountain College. “This investment is supporting the next generation of skilled tradespeople who will drive economic growth and innovation across the province.” ■

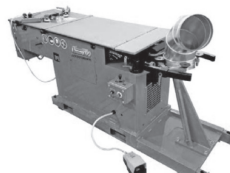


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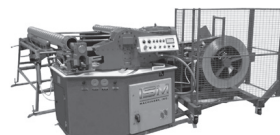
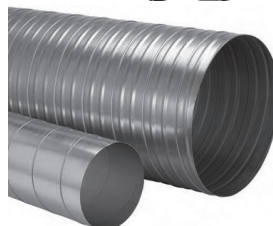
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UNDERSTANDING GRD PERFORMANCE DATA AND APPLICATIONS

Grilles, registers, and diffusers (GRD) are designed to enable the efficient distribution of conditioned air in a given space. Each type of GRD product offers unique advantages and disadvantages, making them suitable for specific applications. When it comes to selecting GRD products, engineers carefully evaluate the requirements of the space to ensure optimal thermal comfort for the occupants. ASHRAE defines thermal comfort as “a condition of the mind which expresses satisfaction with the thermal environment.” The primary objective for engineers is to create an environment where most are comfortable. ASHRAE defines a thermally comfortable environment as below:

- perceived temperature: 23-25 degrees C
- relative humidity: 30-60%
- air velocity: Less than 50 feet per minute

GRD manufacturers publish performance data to provide engineers with the information they need to correctly select. The airflow quantity is measured in cubic feet per minute (CFM). Typically, the engineer would have a performance in mind, so they would use the performance tables to determine the proper size. For GRD products, three important metrics are throw distance, static pressure, and noise criteria.

Throw distance

First, the throw distance is an important measure of how far the air will travel. Engineers aim to design a space with the most effective air distribution while maximizing occupant comfort. The average person cannot feel any air movement with a velocity of less than 50 feet per minute (FPM), thus this is the threshold throw goal. The throw distance is influenced by a couple of important factors, including the initial velocity and the temperature difference between conditioned air and average air temperature. GRD manufacturers provide throw distance data to assist designers in understanding how far the air will travel before its velocity drops to the desired threshold. Many manufacturers list at 150, 100, and 50 FPM velocities. By examining the throw distance data provided by manufacturers, engineers can determine the suitable placement and spacing



By Norm Grusnick, PE
Commercial Sales Rep,
PACAIRE HVAC Suppliers Ltd.

of GRD products to obtain the desired air distribution pattern. It's important to note that throw distance is not the only factor. Other variables are layout, shape and design of the diffuser, and specific requirements of the project.

Static pressure

The static pressure is a critical factor to consider when evaluating the performance of GRD products. It refers to the resistance that the airflow encounters as it passes through the grille, register, or diffuser. Pressure drop affects the overall system efficiency. The pressure drop is typically measured in inches of water gauge (in. wg). It is important to accurately estimate the total pressure drops in the system to size out the proper fan. Most GRD manufacturers publish pressure data for their products. This data is typically presented in the form of a table that shows the pressure drop across the product at various airflow rates. By selecting a GRD with the appropriate pressure drop, designers can ensure that the HVAC system operates effectively.

Noise criteria

Noise criteria, often abbreviated as NC, is a measure of the acoustic performance of GRD products. It quantifies the level of noise generated by the airflow passing through the grille, register, or diffuser. Noise level is an essential consideration, as excessive noise can significantly impact occupant comfort and productivity. Manufacturers conduct laboratory tests and measurements to determine the noise criteria for their products for a range of airflows. Noise criteria is typically expressed as a numerical value with lower values indicating quieter operation. Engineers need to consider the noise criteria when selecting GRD products to ensure that the resulting noise levels are within acceptable limits for the intended space.

Specifying GRD products

Now that we have discussed the metrics of throw distance, static pressure, and noise criteria it is crucial to understand the importance of considering these metrics in the selection of GRD products. By taking all three of these performance metrics into account, engineers can make informed decisions that ensure optimal performance, energy efficiency, and occupant comfort. ■



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BOOST YOUR RESIDENTIAL HVAC BUSINESS WITH SOCIAL MEDIA

Unlock the power of social media with practical strategies designed to grow your business, deepen customer relationships, and stand out in a competitive market.

In today's digital age, residential HVAC contractors face a new imperative: mastering social media. Cody Shook, director of social media for SMACNA National, shared insightful strategies at the 2025 SMACNA Annual Convention in Maui to help HVAC businesses harness this powerful tool.

"Social media isn't just a trend. It's a catalyst for real business growth," Shook says. "When done right, it builds brand trust, generates leads, and keeps your company top of mind in clients' communities." Shook offered these seven tips for social media success.

1. Know Your Starting Point. Shook outlined three typical social media stages for HVAC companies: those without any presence, those struggling to launch effectively, and those already seeing success who want to maintain momentum. "It's critical to identify where your company falls, so you can tailor your approach," he advises.

2. Prioritize the Right Platforms. For residential HVAC contractors, Shook highlighted the importance of focusing on priority platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and LinkedIn. "Each platform has a unique audience and vibe," he says. "TikTok is great for short, engaging videos that show your work and personality. Instagram helps showcase visuals and stories. LinkedIn is ideal for professional partnerships and building authority."

3. Consistency is Key. When asked about posting frequency, Shook shared data-backed best times and recommended cadence. "Aim for nine to 18 posts a week distributed across



By SMACNA National

platforms," he says. "Post when your audience is most active. For example, Instagram followers peak on weekends from 10 a.m. to noon."

4. Use Smart Tools. To manage content efficiently, Shook recommends tools like Hootsuite for scheduling and analytics, CapCut for captioned videos, and Canva to create eye-catching graphics. "You don't have to do everything manually," he explains. "Automating posts and tracking results makes a huge difference for busy contractors."

5. Content that Connects. Residential HVAC customers relate to authentic stories and helpful information. Shook encourages showing behind-the-scenes work, spotlighting team members, promoting safety practices, and celebrating milestones. For instance, sharing a quick video of an apprentice mastering a welding station not only humanizes your brand but also celebrates your commitment to craftsmanship.

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PRACTICAL SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS FOR HVAC CONTRACTORS

Start small. If overwhelmed, begin by scheduling two posts a week using free versions of Hootsuite or Canva

Show safety first. Always include photos of PPE in action to build trust.

Get visual. Short videos of projects in progress are highly engaging.

Celebrate your team. Highlight individual achievements and milestones.

Monitor feedback. Use customer comments to improve and demonstrate your commitment to service.

Tag and connect. Tag partnering businesses and local places to increase reach.

Avoid copyright issues. Use royalty-free music for videos to prevent legal trouble.

6. Engage Positively, Always. “How you react publicly to posts can define your company’s reputation,” Shook explains. Use upbeat, community-focused comments when engaging with partners or clients. Avoid negative interactions, even when tempted. Turning customer feedback into a positive story is a win-win.

7. Own Your Story Beyond the Post. Shook reminds contractors that “your story doesn’t end when you hit ‘post.’” Follow up on engagement, reshare collaborator content, and leverage SMACNA’s PR resources for larger media pushes. “Social media success is about sustained conversation and genuine connection,” he stresses.

Why Social Media Is Worth Your Time

Shook shared compelling reasons to invest in digital presence. “Over 70% of consumers who experience a brand positively on social media are likely to recommend it,” he says. “Nearly two-thirds of homeowners search online before hiring a contractor, and many trust online reviews as much as personal referrals.”

And when it comes to your time and resources, Shook sums it up, plainly. “Don’t think you’re too busy for social media. People spend almost five hours a day on their phones; your next customer could be just a post away.”

For residential HVAC contractors ready to grow their businesses, leveraging smart social media strategies is essential. As Shook explains, taking the first step with authentic content, consistent engagement, and smart tools lays the foundation for long-term success in an increasingly digital marketplace. ■

SMACNA-BC / SMART Local 280 Partnership



Left: Jud Martell, Local Union No. 280 President.
Right: Al Benning, Ames Metal Fabricators 82 Ltd., SMACNA-BC President.



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April - June 2026 Calendar

- April 23** – Membership Dinner Meeting
- April 28** – Joint Conference Board Meeting
- May 7-9** – 57th SMACNA-BC AGM & Convention, Kelowna, BC
- May 10** – Mother’s Day
- May 12** – Board of Directors Meeting
- May 18** – Victoria Day
- May 26** – Joint Conference Board Meeting
- June 9** – Board of Directors Meeting
- June 21** – Father’s Day
- June 23** – Joint Conference Board Meeting

AI ON THE JOBSITE AND IN THE CLASSROOM: TOOLS FOR A SMARTER, STRONGER WORKFORCE

Interest in artificial intelligence is almost as ubiquitous as the technology's prevalence in the workplace, training, and union environments. This prompted two AI-themed sessions at the *Partners in Progress* Conference, led by Hugh Seaton, managing director of construction with Quantum Rise, an AI consultancy based out of Austin, Texas; and Mike Harris, an executive director of ITI, NEMI, and SMOHIT. The two led the audience through the basics of AI, and some of the ways it can help just about anyone in the world of sheet metal.

Seaton explained that while AI can do some extraordinary things, at the end of the day, AI is software. "In some ways, AI is not all that different from an Excel spreadsheet," he said. "The big difference is that AI is trained on data rather than explicitly coded for every instruction."

In layman's terms, that means that with Excel, users know what they will get—a spreadsheet. With AI, it is more difficult to predict what it will say. But, again, it's software, Seaton said, and it can't replace your judgment. "AI is not an easy button," he continued. "It's a tool that gets you 80% of the way there."

But completing that remaining 20% is critical, and Seaton cautioned what many people have probably already discovered—AI gets a lot right, but it can get a lot wrong, too. It can't be fully trusted to give users the required information, even if it sounds completely authoritative. "It doesn't know the job you're working on," Seaton said. "It doesn't have intuition."

Seaton also pointed out why it's so easy to trust AI, even when AI is wrong: if a human gives information that may be incorrect, they tend to hesitate. They also may not fully look you in the eye. They may not sound so confident. But AI typically always seems very sure of itself when it answers a question.

Seaton reassured everyone that AI is a tool and not likely to take over the world, and he doesn't think many people will become unemployed because of it. Well, not exactly. "You won't lose your job to AI, but you'll lose it to someone using AI," Seaton said. In other words, AI will change our industry and world, and so you can't ignore it. Your competitors won't.

Harris shared some of the translation AI tools that may benefit employers and the workforce. He focused on four tools:

- PowerPoint now offers an AI-fueled feature that recognizes nine spoken languages and can provide 60 subtitle languages, which can help hearing impaired or non-native language speakers understand a presentation.



By Geoff Williams

- AI translator earbuds (Harris recommends the Timekettle brand) allow a caller to speak one language and the recipient to hear the caller's message in another language—including regional dialects.
- Smart pen translators and recorders can scan printed text and read it back in selected languages. It supports multiple languages, but far fewer dialects compared to the earbuds.
- AI note takers used to transcribe meetings (Harris likes Plaud) can be placed on a phone or clipped to clothing to record every word spoken, and Plaud can transcribe 112 languages.

Harris cautioned users to become familiar with and observe recording laws in their jurisdictions, especially when it comes to recording people anonymously. "So be careful out there," he said, noting that it's important to be cautious about what you say going forward, regardless. "You may not own any AI note taking devices yet, but somebody else may," he said. "In the near future, I would assume that every meeting you go into is being recorded."

It's definitely a new world. Heath Allard, a vice president with Climate Engineers in Eldridge, Iowa, said, "I enjoyed this session because AI just seems to be top of mind with everybody."

Have questions about AI? SMACNA AI Office Hours are now available. Book a free appointment with Hugh Seaton, SMACNA's AI consultant, to answer any question about AI, no matter how small or complex. Visit calendly.com/hseaton/smacna-office-hour to visit Seaton's Calendly page and set up a 30-minute appointment. ■

Geoff Williams is a freelance journalist and author, specializing in business and personal finance, based out of Loveland, Ohio. He has written for cnmoney.com and the *Wall Street Journal's* Buy Sidewould, among other well-known publications.

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CANADA'S CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY POISED FOR GROWTH AMID POLICY SHIFTS AND COST PRESSURES

Latest economic data highlights positive growth indicators for Canada's construction industry, outpacing other Canadian industries, despite an ongoing rise in construction costs and supply chain disruptions.

The Canadian Construction Association its Construction Quarterly Economic Insights (CQEI) report, showing a growth in construction GDP output of 1.3 per cent in Q3 2025, successfully outpacing the all-industry average and setting the stage for continued advancement.

“The opportunities ahead for our industry are significant, but so are the risks,” said Rodrigue Gilbert, CCA’s president. “Investments from the federal government will drive growth, but rising costs and workforce constraints will continue to limit the industry’s ability to unlock its full potential and deliver on Canada’s ambitious construction agenda.”

At the end of 2025, the Building Construction Price Index increased 4.2 per cent year-over-year in Q3, with increases particularly driven by metal fabrications, structural steel, and plumbing. Canadian jurisdictions most affected by cost increases were noted as London, (ON) and Quebec City (QC). Additionally, the cost of factory construction increased by 5.7 per cent, while the cost of office building increased by 3.2 per cent.

The 2025 federal budget, published in November 2025, presented \$89.7 billion in net new measures over the next five years, with \$32.5 billion being classified as capital investments. In total, CCA noted approximately \$32 billion in new construction-related spending earmarked over the next five years.

Get your copy of the economic report at <https://www.cca-acc.com/plus>.

SMACNA NATIONAL COMMITTEE APPLICATIONS OPEN YEAR-ROUND

SMACNA is pleased to announce that members may now apply for committees at any time. The application window is no longer limited to specific dates. Committees play a vital role in supporting the Executive Board and guiding the association by sharing best practices across various subject areas. Although not all committees have vacancies, a year-round application process allows SMACNA to respond quickly to unexpected openings. You are encouraged to apply for committee positions at any

time. The main application review begins in May. Committee selections are made by the outgoing and incoming presidents after the July Board of Directors meeting. Applications received after the review has started may be considered in the next cycle. Appointment notifications are sent before the annual convention, typically in mid to late September. Terms begin on November 1 and last four years. For questions about the committee application process, contact Beth Thurston at bthurston@smacna.org ■

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at 877.755.2762 • lperraton@pointonemedia.com



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