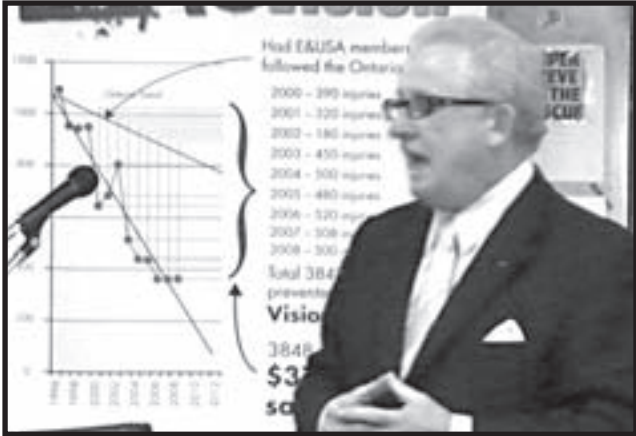


# Safety rules supreme at Halton Hills Hydro



**SAFETY CREW:** Members of the Health and Safety committee at Halton Hills Hydro celebrated Hydro's 500,000 consecutive hours without an injury or accident at a luncheon on Friday. On hand were, from left: Meg Gonzales, Don Matthews, Pam Murray and Leigh Scully. Back: Alex Goodfellow, Art Skidmore, Kevin Bush, Kate Sweetman and Rick Bonnette. — Frances Niblock photo



**SAFETY PRAISED:** Steve Mahoney, Chair of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, praised Halton Hills Hydro's safety record at a luncheon on Friday to celebrate Hydro's 500,000 consecutive injury free hours.

— Frances Niblock photo

By Frances Niblock

Along with the sobering stories of young workers who have lost their lives in workplace accidents, Steve Mahoney, chair of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) now has a happy tale to tell when visiting Ontario job sites, and it involves Halton Hills Hydro.

On Friday, Mahoney was one of the special guests invited to help Hydro celebrate 500,000 consecutive hours without any lost time injuries or accidents. He praised the company for its culture of safety and noted that every hour of every day, the WSIB receives 40 claims for injuries, illnesses or fatalities — 2,000 a day, 7,000 a week and 360,000 a year, one-thirds of which are approved.

"We need to showcase organizations like yours to show the success people can have when they have strong leadership," Mahoney said, adding they will have approximately 70 workplace deaths this year, a number that is "absolutely unacceptable."

Pointing to changes in societal attitudes that have made not smoking, car seats and bicycle helmets mandatory. Mahoney asked why the same attitude changes can't be made to health and safety in the work-

place.

He said changes are coming at the WSIB in the New Year, including a move to stop paying for narcotics for injured workers — drug addicts he called some of them — as the first line of treatment for an injured worker, who he said often have shopping bags full of prescribed pain medication.

Mahoney said when he travels the province to talk about workplace safety, he can now talk about Halton Hills Hydro and its safety record in a very dangerous business.

Hydro CEO Art Skidmore said it took them six and a half years to achieve the 500,000 hours and it was achieved with employee commitment and Hydro's culture of safety.

"Over the six and a half years our Health and Safety program has gained momentum ... I think we've got a robust program that deals with employee well-being, both at work and at home," Skidmore said, adding it ties into Hydro's mission statement which is to provide Halton Hills with electricity distribution excellence in a safe and reliable manner.

Electrical and Utility Safety Association (E&USA) president Dr. Ted Vandevs talked about the Association's

ZeroQuest program — a health and safety plan that uses a systems approach to taking the guesswork out of safety. ZeroQuest offers third party evaluation and customized recommendations for change and sets a new industry benchmark.

Using a chart, Vandevs explained that 10 years ago when E&USA members experienced 950 lost time injuries per year they began a quest for zero injuries. He said in the last three years, they've annually had approximately 380 lost time injuries and hope to hit the zero mark by 2012.

"Over a period of nine years, 3,848 injuries were prevented and at \$98,000 a piece — the WSIB estimate of the cost of a lost time injury — our small industry of 50,000 workers has saved something like \$377-million dollars, but more importantly, 3,848 workers have gone home in the same shape that they came to work," Vandevs said.



## Fuel leak

Acton firefighters used absorbent material to soak up gasoline that leaked from a car parked at a Kingham Road residence at 9:57 on Sunday morning. The owner was able to collect some of the gas in a container until the vehicle was moved for repair.

## No permit

A Nassagaweya homeowner was forced to extinguish a large pit fire being used to dispose of garbage and furniture because the occupant did not have the required burn permit.

Acton firefighters responded to what was initially reported as a barn fire on the Sixth Line on Thursday at 6:24 p.m.

## Alarm activation

Dust generated when a Coles Court resident swept the basement floor set off the smoke alarm system at 7:22 last Tuesday night. No action was required by Acton firefighters.

For those who have suffered the loss of a loved one,  
Christmas can be one of the most difficult times of the year.

You, your family and friends are invited  
to join us for a multi-denominational

## Community Christmas Service of Hope

Friday, December 4th, 2009

7:30 p.m.

St. Joseph, Patron of Canada, Roman Catholic Church  
64 Church Street East, Acton

## followed by refreshments

This service is being conducted  
under the auspices of the  
Acton Ministerial Association

If you would like to attend but need transportation please call

Margaret and Bob MacKinnon  
MacKinnon Family  
Funeral Home  
55 Mill Street East, Acton

519-853-0350

Ian Pasmore  
Blue Springs  
Funeral Home  
12 Church Street East, Acton

519-853-2399

**KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
ACTON ONTARIO  
FRIDAY, DEC. 11, 2009 • 7:30P.M.  
Tickets - Adults \$20 - Ages 5-12 \$10 - under 5 free  
Call church office 519-853-2360 or 853-0318, 853-0216, 856-9981  
Refreshments served after the concert.