



WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hi everyone!

Spring has arrived, at last!!! We had to wait for a long time, but the nice weather is finally back!

As you all know, the construction industry has seen better days. However, I firmly believe that we can only go upward from now on and that the worst is behind us.



As I often mention to you, we are better off than most in this industry. Proof of this is that in the latest issue of the "Champions de la construction" magazine (published in French only), ABF has maintained a leading position in our industry with its first place for the amount of hours worked in our trade (see p.26 of the magazine).

Furthermore, we are the 11th biggest employer overall in the Quebec Construction industry, all trades combined (see p. 28 of the magazine).

So, congratulations are in order for all of you! Without you, none of this would be possible.

Have a nice summer!

Éric Bernier, President



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Recognition for ABF!

Armatures Bois-Francis, together with Nmédia Solutions, received a prestigious award that recognizes excellence in Information Technology (IT) at the 28th OCTAS Gala held on Saturday, May 24, 2014.

The two companies, which were honoured for the **Excalibur** project (estimation and inventory software), were presented with the award in the Business Solution - Internal or Customized Development - Over 500 employees category



Luc Renaud, estimateur et responsable du logiciel, Armatures Bois-Francis et
Louis-Philippe Baril, président, Nmédia Solutions

Excalibur... the beginning!

On my first day working as an estimator, in August 1980, the first words from my boss were: "We're a bit rushed today, so you will have to calculate the weights for our bids". He put me in front of this calculator and a humongous quantity of slips. I told myself: "There must be another way to do this!" This is when I started to cogitate...



Thirteen years later, following the 1993 economic recession, I found myself hired by Armatures Bois-Francis for a short term of three months. There was an old computer that was not being used and sitting in the corner of the office located then on Hamel Blvd, in Québec City. There was also a Lotus software user guide. The Head Office in Victoriaville gave me permission to bring this old computer at home.

Every evening, I would develop applications to increase my speed in calculating my bids. One day, Excel was available and from then on I never ceased improving my applications.

Fourteen years later, the first words I said to François Vallières, who was offering me a position in the company, were: "Which platform are your estimators using to calculate their bids?" He answered me: "They work on 8 1/2 x 14 slips..." I told him that if I accepted to work for ABF, I would work at implementing an estimation software. **Excalibur was born!**

I would like to thank Éric Bernier and François Vallières for believing in this project. Thanks to Claude Collin, for his support, and to Stéphane Hamel, our Chief Estimator, for his patience and understanding. I would also like to thank Geneviève Beaudoin for her support and her ideas. Thanks to all the ABF team and our partners Nmédia Solutions.

Luc Renaud, Estimator responsible for the Excalibur software

A WORD FROM THE VICE-PRESIDENT



THE IMPORTANCE OF COMBINING PREVENTION WITH PRODUCTION

For a few years now, we've realized the ever increasing importance of our company occupational health and safety record when dealing with major contractors. We see more and more Health and Safety pre-qualifications becoming mandatory prior to bidding on major projects. Our records at the CSST in Quebec, and the WSIB in Ontario, are of the utmost importance in order to be selected or invited for bidding and possibly be part of the realization of major projects.

You will understand why our two Health and Safety Coordinators – Alain Perron for Quebec, and Mark Clarke for Ontario – are so busy spending time and energy towards prevention on your jobsites, in order to keep our insurance rates as low as possible.

The Management is always surprised to see the results when comparing the costs of jobsites (hours/tons) and/or production with the accidents costs. Far from being contradictory, these two aspects are actually dependent one of the other. To progress and stay competitive in this fierce industry environment, Armatures Bois-Francs must excel in all aspects and especially in terms of occupational health and safety. The integration of prevention in our production activities is important since it is tightly linked to work quality, equipment performance and personnel productivity. In this context, you will understand that any good foreman must know how to integrate occupational health and safety in their daily activities. In time, this kind of attitude will become second nature for everyone and will require no more effort from your part.

For us, members of the Management, it is clear that not only prevention and accidents management are - and will be - key elements in the course of our work, but will also be a constant preoccupation for all, at all levels... Especially if it allows us to be obtain precious contracts!!

Have a nice summer and be safe!

François Vallières, Vice President

Miscellaneous

Here's the result when a Bruins fan attacks the two best defenders of Armatures Bois-Francs, proud supporters of the Montreal Canadiens.



Good news!

Here are some of the new projects recently obtained by ABF:

- ✱ 319 McRae Avenue / Ottawa, ON
- ✱ SIQ Wilder Building / Montreal, QC
- ✱ The Vice Versa Housing Complex / St-Jerome, QC
- ✱ Providence Care Hospital / Kingston, ON
- ✱ Canon Canada Headquarters / Brampton, ON
- ✱ McInnis Cement, Cement Plant / Port-Daniel-Gascons, QC
- ✱ COOP site of the Norampac plant Lot 2 / Rosemont-La Petite Patrie, QC

DELOITTE TOWER PROJECT

ABF started working on this project in the spring of 2013. It consists in the construction of a 27 storey office building located in the heart of downtown Montreal, back-to-back with the Bell Centre.

With a space area of approximately 22,000 square feet per floor, this building will provide more than 500,000 square feet of renting space (offices). All elevators, mechanical wells, lifts, etc. will be located in the core of the building, thus making it the "Core Wall" (huge concrete walls) of the building.

Offering three floors of underground parking and an outdoor courtyard with water fountain, this building will have its exterior walls made of glass. A Platinum LEED certification will make the conception of this building one of high prestige in the heart of Montreal.



The construction of the concrete structure has its peculiarities, and a new concrete formwork self-climbing system was used for the Core Wall: the DOKA system. This system allows to set up the walls of the Core Wall in advance instead of doing so only once the floor concrete has been poured. The floors are then built afterwards and they take their support from the walls.

For ABF, this was the first time we've ever used such a system. In fact, the DOKA system is very new in this province. However, the system – although very safe for workers – has its flaws for our own trade: access is difficult, a lot of manual handling of the rebar is required, and work space is tight.

Technically, the major difficulty comes from the fact that with this system, mechanical sleeves must be installed with precision in the walls in order to receive the rebar for the floors.

For each floor, ABF had to plan in advance and install over 900 mechanical sleeves before each concrete pouring. For people in our plant, you now understand better why we had to thread so many rods for this project.

Our part of the work for this project should be complete by the beginning of fall 2014.

Another great challenge for Armatures Bois-Francis!

Luis Monte, ing.
Vice President Construction

Miscellaneous

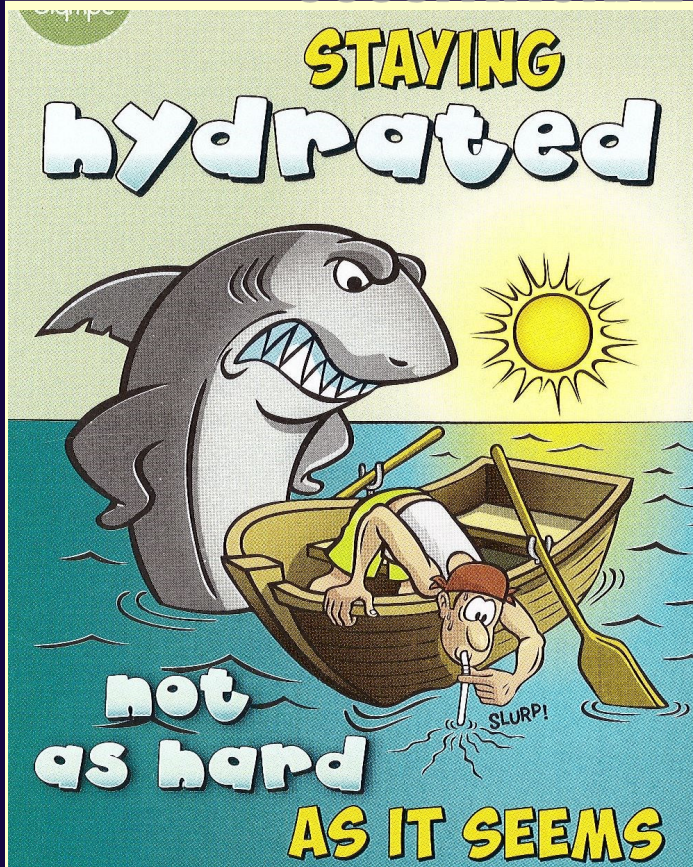
Upcoming Statutory Holidays

Monday June 30th, 2014 (Canada Day)

Monday August 4th, 2014 (Simcoe Day, Civic Day)

Welcome to all new employees
in the ABF's team.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY



The importance of staying hydrated

We all know that life is not possible without water. Our body depends on it to function properly. However, most of us either do not drink enough water, or absorb liquids high in carbohydrates or caffeine, substances we could really do without. Why not simply opt for water? It is free, available everywhere, and so important to feel your very best!

When you are hot, your body reacts

When we are exposed to heat or put forth physical effort, our body adapts and cools off thanks to thermoregulatory processes, such as sweating. In extreme cases, one can lose up to one litre per hour! Add to that the loss of electrolytes (mineral salts) and you end up with a serious situation on your hands.

Dehydration can cause fatigue, cramps, concentration and coordination issues, and even heart problems.

It is important to drink...

✱ **When we are thirsty.** Do it now! When your body wants you to know it is starting to suffer from dehydration, it sets off an alert mechanism: thirst. Children and the elderly should not wait to feel thirsty as this may indicate a critical state of dehydration.

✱ **Even when we are not thirsty!** As a rule, it is recommended to drink about 2.5 litres throughout each day. Keep a glass or a bottle of water near your working area.

✱ **Water, especially water.** In most cases, consuming water is enough to avoid dehydration. However, after intense physical activity or exposure to high temperatures exceeding one hour, sport drinks (Gatorade-type beverages) can be a good idea thanks to the electrolytes and carbohydrates they contain.

Homemade energy drinks?

Are you torn between your reluctance to buy the beverages sold on the market and the appeal of enjoying the benefits these drinks can offer? Here are a few easy solutions:

- ✓ 500 mL (2 cups) of water / 500 mL (2 cups) of 100% pure apple or orange juice. Add half a teaspoon of salt.
- or
- ✓ 750 mL (3 cups) of water / 250 mL (1 cup) of 100% pure grape, pineapple or cranberry juice. Add half a teaspoon of salt.

Stir and enjoy!



Can one drink too much?

Yes and no. It is possible to drink too much; especially if we choose poorly. The beverage industry spends millions of dollars on publicity to get you to consume liquids that can cause you as much harm as they can do you good. Note that it is also possible to drink too much water, but this rather rare event (called hyponatremia, or blood sodium deficiency) happens mostly to endurance athletes who, out of fear of dehydration, go to the other extreme and drink too much. You can usually trust the body's regulatory mechanisms to perform adequately.

Alain Perron, Health and Safety Manager