

*Service*

*Safety*

*Quality*

JANUARY, 2009

# the **Block**

**C O N N E C T I O N**

- JACK BLOCK

*Safety* 3

*Events* 4

***“We will  
work  
safer,  
and more  
productively.”***

**Happy New Year!** I say this with my sincerest hope that 2009 will be a productive and busy year for all of us.

Our new President takes office this month, and from what I can tell he is ready to hit the ground running. The economy is certainly appearing to be braced for the worst. I guess the good news is that things can only get better. The federal government is putting a lot of money and efforts to getting the economy back on track. We should start to see the results sometime later this year.

We are positioned as well or better than most contractors to ride through this recession. Our economy can't stay on its back forever. That's the beautiful part about being an American. We are an innovative people that love to change and adapt. As far as Block Electric is concerned look for us to begin making a technology shift this year. We are going to concentrate our efforts on providing our work force with better systems that increase production. We will be making new strides toward Safety, Production, Profitability and **“Customer Delight.”**

Our customers are becoming larger and more demanding. We are going to change to meet the needs of our marketplace. This takes people willing to change and become change agents. It is not change for the sake of change, it's customer driven. We need to stay ahead of with the demands of the marketplace and our customers. We must give our customers a better value for their construction dollar.

I look for a tougher year competition wise. Everyone in the business will be competing for fewer construction dollars. I see us being more aggressive in our approach but with an eye always on profitable work. We will invest more time and efforts to making the construction process less complicated. We will filter through the massive amounts of information that is presented and format it into what is important and useful. We will continue to improve the office to field communication process. We will work safer, and more productively. We will improve **“Customer Delight.”** In short, we will become better contractors and widen the distance between the competition and us.

## SAFETY TRENDS

- MIKE DEGER

Our latest election was won on the promise of change. Change can be a good thing. One change happening at Block Electric is the steady improvement of our safety performance. In 2008 our reported accidents were half of the 2007 number. And the number has been trending down for several years. Thank you and great job to all of you for working safer.

Our customers are putting another change upon us. It is a change that is catching on and will take over the industry in a couple of years: More training and certifications. More certified training is required to work for specific general contractors, customers, and jobsites. You may have heard that the refineries being built in Indiana require all workers to have 10-hour OSHA training. It's not just these refineries. In several years it will be the industry standard.

Another trend that has been growing over the past several years is supervisor training. Most large general contractors are requiring that the General Foreman on the site have a 30-hour OSHA certificate. We are now seeing this requirement being added for all Foremen. As the trend continues here is what we believe will be required to work on most large projects:

For all workers at the site

- 10-hour OSHA Certificate
- First Aid/CPR Certificate
- PPE training
- Work Zone Hazard Awareness (Anytime trucks or heavy equipment are on site)
- Specific Encountered Hazard Training (such as confined space or excavation)

For Supervision

- 30-Hour OSHA Certificate
- Competent Person For Specific hazards.

Right now while work in the industry is a little slow is a perfect time to consider getting some of this training. We are lucky in this area to have the Chicagoland Construction Safety Council (CCSC). The CCSC was created by the construction industry 19 years ago. Contractors contribute a penny or more per hour for operation of the CCSC. It is the premier safety training and education resource in the entire country. Classes are held year round and are available on many different schedules. Their phone number is 800-552-7744.

Please consider taking the OSHA 10-hour or 30-hour course if you haven't already. Crissy can get you the class schedule and sign you up. Block Electric will reimburse 100% of any class fees for safety training. Just let us know ahead of taking the class. Let's keep our safety record improving every year until there are no more accidents.

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## NEW JOURNEYMAN

Congratulations to David Boonstra and Steven Sansone who recently completed the on-the-job training and related instructions qualifying them as journeyman.

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## ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations and thank you to the following employees for their years of loyalty, service, and dedication to Block Electric.

Leo Keigher	35 Years	January 1, 1974
Bill Enz	35 Years	January 12, 1974
Jeff Keltz	25 Years	February 1, 1984

# SPRAINS & STRAINS

- DREW BOYCE

Sprains and strains are some of the most common injuries in all industries, including construction. Material handling tasks are some of the most common causes of sprains and strains. In the construction industry, slips, trips and falls account for almost half of these injuries. With that in mind, let's take a look at a few simple things you can do to reduce the chance of injury.

## **Material Handling:**

- Use mechanical means to lift whenever possible, such as fork lifts, pallet jacks or hoists, when possible.
- Use dollies whenever possible to transport tools and materials around the job.
- Place extra pallets under materials that have to be handled by hand. Avoiding lifts from below knee height will help prevent many injuries.
- Avoid lifting over shoulder height whenever possible. When lifting large sections of pipe or other material into place, try to use a hoist of some kind; and if it is just too heavy or awkward, get some help.
- When cross stacking materials, DO NOT twist your body. Place materials far enough apart so two steps are required in between stacks. This will avoid the natural tendency to twist.
- Shoveling operations should be done both left and right-handed. Trade off every once in a while. This will help avoid over using the muscles on one side of your body. Avoid twisting when you pitch a shovel full of material.

## **Slips Trips and Falls:**

- Working on frozen surfaces requires special attention. Applying sand regularly to the ice and snow will help you avoid slips as will slip resistant tread designs on the soles of your shoes. If you have to be working on ice, grippers for your shoes can be a real asset.
- Housekeeping on construction sites is one of the most common causes of slips, trips and falls. Keep your area clean. Especially be aware of small pieces of pipe, conduit or welding rod. Hang extension cords in use up off the floor. If cords are not in use, put them away.
- Slipping off equipment is a very common cause of injury. Use the three-point rule when getting on or off equipment. This means keep three parts of your body in contact with the equipment at all times. One foot and two hands or two feet and one hand. Forget trying to carry something with both hands and climbing! Also, don't jump!
- Use scaffolding, scissor lifts or aerial baskets if your work requires two hands to accomplish the task. Adhere to applicable fall protection codes. Work from ladders should be limited to tasks that are considered light duty. If you use a ladder, make sure it is in good repair, that it is the proper height and kind, and that it is tied off to prevent slipping.

Block Electric Company is an  
Equal Opportunity Employer

Niles:  
7107 Milwaukee Avenue  
Niles, IL 60714  
Phone: 847-647-4030  
Fax: 847-647-6980

Shorewood:  
203-C Earl Road  
Shorewood, IL 60404  
Phone: 815-744-2000  
Fax: 815-744-6070

We're on the web!  
[www.blockelectric.com](http://www.blockelectric.com)

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## BIRTHDAYS

Lillian	Kirk	01/03
Brian	Quigley	01/05
Ryan	Allen	01/05
Tom	Hackett	01/06
Dave	Senko	01/06
Calvin	Blunt	01/07
Jeff	McDonald	01/10
John	Ivy	01/10
Ed	Little	01/17
Roxana	Hernandez	01/19
Andrew	Zastrow	01/23
Nicholas	Lendzion	01/24
Tom	Donovan	01/30
Fred	Rossi	01/31



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## NEW EMPLOYEES

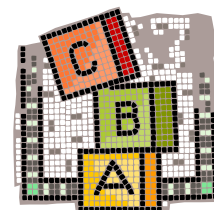
Welcome to the new kids on the Block team.

Clinton	Voights	Lukasz	Piekarczyk	Melissa	Lorek
Jermaine	Batemon	Jeffrey	Soellner	Ryan	Barnard
Danielle	Clatch	Michael	Lentine	Kenneth	Ryan
Kevin	Gonzales				

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## NEW ARRIVAL

Congratulations to Lillian Kirk on the birth of her grandson. Brendan Alexander was born on December 13, 2008 and he weighed 7 lbs. 8 ozs. The proud parents are Dara and Steven Kirk.



**Happy  
New  
Year!**

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## STAY SAFE WHEN YOU DECIDE TO GIVE

The impulse to give to those who are less fortunate is a wonderful expression of human caring and generosity. But before you donate, review these tips from the Internet Crime Center of the FBI:

- Do not respond to unsolicited (SPAM) e-mail.
- Do not click on links contained within an unsolicited e-mail.
- Do not provide personal or financial information to anyone who solicits contributions; providing such information may compromise your identity and make you vulnerable to identity theft.

You can also check out the Better Business Bureau's Wise Giving Alliance for information on national charities (<http://us.bbb.org>).