

Service

Safety

Quality

JUNE, 2009

the **Block**

C O N N E C T I O N

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*“We have
always
believed in a
fair price
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PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

- JACK BLOCK

This past week there was a media event held at the Shedd Aquarium on Chicago’s lakefront. It was the unveiling of 9 months of very intense renovation. The tanks were filled and the residents returned. Over 2 million people a year visit the Shedd. It was a proud moment for us. We performed the very delicate electrical construction for the newly renovated Oceanarium. It was done in a compressed, complicated, and exhaustive schedule. Mike Benninger was our team leader. Brad Popovich, Shedd’s Vice President of Facilities, said “The project was successful because we used the best electrical contractor, Block Electric.” When renovations take place the requirement to get it right the first time is paramount. No easy task. Thank you Mike, and thanks to your whole team for delighting another customer.

The work environment continues to be extremely difficult. Our philosophy of not taking jobs at any cost seems to be hurting us. Or maybe it isn’t. It may be hard to see but I believe that there is no reason to compromise our values just to stay in the game. If we begin to compromise our values now it won’t be long before we will be gone. No one wants to deal with a contractor that doesn’t bring value at a fair price to the table. The thought that there is a free lunch out there is misconceived. In tough times contractors often bid below their costs then when the owner changes their scope they gouge them with inflated extras.

The truth of the matter is that at the end of the project all contractors have similar costs. It is how we approach the project and the customer that makes all the difference. If we cut corners to reduce costs it won’t be long until the customer suffers. If we are to inflate costs of extras beyond what the project dictates then customers refuse to pay. Jobs just get ugly, no one wins, and customer delight is gone. We have always believed in a fair price for an extraordinary job. That is a simple phrase, but it lies at the heart of our philosophies. It’s up to each of us to deliver a fair and equitable project delivering “*Customer Delight*” to the max. It is what we do best. It is why we survived past slowdowns and it is what will keep us in the game for the long run.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- MIKE DEGER

The Science and Math Excellence Network is dedicated to finding innovative ways to improve Chicago's west and southwest side students with science, math, reading, and comprehension skills to prepare for college or the work force. SAME Network contacted Block Electric last year to discuss building a state of the art Science Lab. Bill Gran from Proteus Group Architects was brought in for the design and together with Pepper Construction we completed the new lab over the winter.

Block Electric along with the S.A.M.E network has donated our labor and materials to complete five science labs at various schools. On April 28th, there was a ribbon cutting ceremony to open a state of the art Science Lab at St. Angela School. At the ribbon cutting ceremony there were dignitaries from Rush and the Archdiocese. The principal, Sister Mary Finnegan, and the board members of St. Angela School plan to make this a model for science labs and science education for all the Archdiocese elementary schools in Illinois.

Thank you to George Masters, Michael Haines, and Dan Stieber for their excellent work and help making this dream a possibility. It was a challenge to provide power and lighting in a nearly 50-year-old school building. As usual our people were innovative and came through.

CUSTOMER DELIGHT

An email sent to Mike Deger from Bob Curtin, Chief Engineer, Plant Operations at Adventist GlenOaks Hospital

I am just writing to let you know how much our hospital appreciates the outstanding work and service that Block Electric has provided. I have known Kris Hajek and Keith Howen since my start here. We have accomplished many things including a major emergency power upgrade which was extremely well coordinated and planned. Special mention should also go out to Jeff McDonald who was the lead on this project. During the time they have been here at GlenOaks, I have been able to utilize them to put out many urgent fires. I had a control problem on our high pressure boiler and I called Kris at 6:00 a.m. for help and he had it diagnosed and back on line by 8:00 a.m. As long as I have some input of contractors, Block leads the way. Thank you.

CUSTOMER DELIGHT

A letter sent to Mike Deger from Fred Loffredo, Chief Engineer at Johnson Controls, Inc. on the Water Tower Place project.

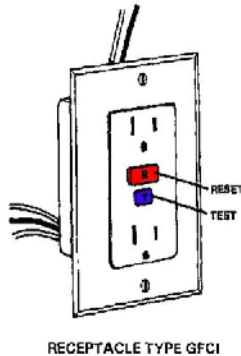
The purpose of this letter is to provide feedback regarding the terrific effort Bill Kuta has provided to Water Tower Place while installing our new life safety fire alarm system. There were many challenges presented to Bill during the upgrade of the alarm system and I have to say he met each challenge with robust enthusiasm. His attention to detail and his focused dedication to getting the job done right made our life easier during this equipment transition.

Communication throughout the project was paramount. Bill always answered phone calls and radio calls. He took the time to stop whatever he was doing at a moment's notice if we had a question and needed clarification from him on some issue. Bill is definitely an asset to your company. He runs a job like the true pro that he is. His dedication to the mission is inspiring. I look forward to any opportunity to work with Bill again in the future.

Continued Success to you and your company.

GFCI'S AT WORK AND HOME

- DREW BOYCE



Definition: GFCI = Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter. The GFCI is a fast-acting circuit breaker that senses small imbalances in an electrical circuit caused by the electrical current leaking to ground. If this imbalance occurs, the GFCI shuts off the electricity within a fraction of a second.

How it works: The GFCI device continually matches the amount of current going to an electrical device against the amount of current returning from the device along the electrical circuit path. Whenever the amount "going" differs from the amount "returning" by approximately 5 milliamps, the GFCI interrupts the electric power by closing the circuit within as little as 1/40 of a second.

What a GFCI Can and Can Not do: It *does provide protection against the grounding fault*--which is the most common form of electrical shock hazard. A grounding fault occurs when a "hot" wire comes into contact with a grounded enclosure. If you happen to be in contact with the grounded enclosure of an electrical tool when a ground fault occurs, you will be subject to a shock unless a GFCI device is in use, and functioning as intended. The GFCI *will not protect you from line-to-line contact* hazards (i.e., holding two "hot" wires or a hot and a neutral wire in each hand).

Where GFCIs are needed in construction work: Your employer is required to provide approved ground-fault circuit interrupters for all 120-volt, single phase, 15- and 20-ampere receptacle outlets being used on construction sites that are not a part of the permanent wiring of the building or structure. Since extension cords are not part of the permanent wiring, any electrical tools or equipment plugged into extension cords must be protected by a GFCI device. Insulation around flexible extension cord conductors can be damaged through hard usage or excessive wear. If the "hot" wire conductor of the extension cord were to come into contact with the grounding wire conductor, a ground fault would occur. GFCIs should also **always** be used in wet environments. When a cord connector is wet, hazardous current leakage can occur to the grounding conductor and to anyone who picks up that connector, if they also provide a path to ground.

Where GFCIs are needed at home: The shock hazards of a grounding fault are not isolated to just your work place. A grounding fault may occur at home in areas such as bathrooms, kitchens, garages, and basements. You must be vigilant. Whenever using electrical tools or equipment in potentially wet environments, make sure that the circuits you are "plugged" into are protected by GFCIs. Most local building codes require receptacles in potentially wet locations, near sinks in bathrooms and kitchens etc., to be equipped with a GFCI device. It is also recommended that you use a GFCI device whenever you have any concerns about the integrity of the tool, equipment, or cord system.

Actions you should take for electrical safety: Always make sure the tools and cords you use are in good working condition. Inspect them on a regular basis for any visible damage. Failure in the insulation or grounding protection of your tools or cords could result in ground faults. Use GFCI devices.

Take a little extra care so that you will not have a SHOCKING experience.

Block Electric Company is an
Equal Opportunity Employer

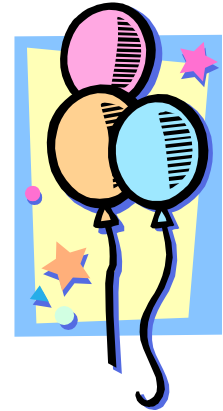
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We're on the web!
www.blockelectric.com

BIRTHDAYS

Jim	Schemmel	06/03
Kathy	Mota	06/06
Brian	Berry	06/06
Joe	Weiszhar	06/08
Bill	Kuta	06/10
Thomas	George	06/12
Bridgette	Carlyon	06/12
Jeff	Temme	06/14
Tom	Biskie	06/19
George	Brauneis	06/19
Mike	Vanderbilt	06/23
Tim	Boyce	06/24
Jermaine	Batemon	06/24
Joe	Spreitzer	06/25
Jack	Block	06/26
Mark	Flynn	06/29



NEW EMPLOYEES

Welcome to the new kid on the Block team.

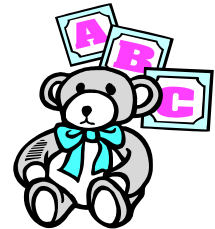
Keith Larmon

Brian Masterson

Brent Burr

NEW ARRIVAL

Congratulations to Michael and Sherry Situ on the birth of their son. Gene was born on April 29, 2009 and weighed 7 lbs. 3 ozs.



FROM THE MINDS OF YOUNGSTERS

Young innocent minds sometimes are the wisest and funniest. Here are some quotes from children that can apply to all ages:

- "Never trust a dog to watch your food." Patrick, Age 10
- "When you want something expensive, ask your grandparents." Matthew, Age 12
- "Wear a hat when feeding seagulls." Rocky, Age 9
- "Never ask for anything that costs more than \$5 when your parents are doing taxes." Carrol, Age 9
- "Don't ever be too full for dessert." Kelly, Age 10
- "Don't pick on your sister when she's holding a baseball bat." Joel, Age 12
- "Listen to your brain. It has lots of information." Chelsey, Age 7
- "Never dare your little brother to paint the family car." Phillip, Age 13
- "Forget the cake, go for the icing." Cynthia, Age 8