

Service

Safety

Quality

SEPTEMBER, 2011

the **Block**

C O N N E C T I O N

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Safety	3
Events	4

“Keep our customers in the forefront of everything we do.”



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

- JACK BLOCK

Summer is winding down and by now the kids are back in school. It hasn't been a bad summer work wise as we have been able to maintain a good backlog. Where we go from here is anyone's guess. Right now there really isn't a clear path in order to predict upturns or downturns. What seems to be happening is that the economy is struggling to find a direction. What does all this mean for us? I think that work is going to become even more difficult to acquire. There is going to be more competition and pricing is going to go down further. None of this is good news.

There is something that we can do. We have to continue to distinguish ourselves from our competition. When prices go down people start to do sloppy work to try to make up for their lack of cost disciplines. That's only part of the story. Maintaining quality standards in these times is difficult; however, it has to be done. More importantly it is the impression our people leave with the customers. We must make our construction process a completely different experience than our competitors.

Our interactions with our customers have to be a more unique experience than dealing with any another contractor. After all, we all have the same roots, the IBEW, and we are all capable of installing electrical work. It is the people, their attitudes, and approaches to problem solving that will distinguish us from our competition. I have said so many times in the past, our customers really don't want to hear about roadblocks to electrical installations. They want to know that there was a problem and that we have well thought out means and methods to bring about a positive solution. So many people just want to throw the ball in another court and want someone else to deal with tough situations. Owners and general contractors become very frustrated with people who keep bringing up problems with no solutions.

It's simple. It's ***“Customer Delight,”*** It's putting our customers first. It's operating safely and efficiently that impresses people. That's what we have to do to stay ahead of this roller coaster economy. It's never easy, but if we all participate it will put us in the best position possible to pull through. Customers, new and old, are getting to be harder to maintain. So far we have been doing a pretty good job of holding our own. Keep working on it and keep our customers in the forefront of everything we do. We have done it in the past. Keep trying new methods and ways of accomplishing our goals. It's the only way forward.

I wish everyone and their families a Happy and Safe Labor Day!



APPRENTICESHIP OPPORTUNITIES

- MIKE DEGER

I. B. E. W. Local 134 and the Electrical Contractors' Association sponsor an apprenticeship program in Cook County, Illinois through the Electrical Joint Apprenticeship and Training Trust (EJATT). EJATT has permission from the U.S. Department of Labor to open a registration for new applicants for its **Electrical Construction Program**. In the **Electrical Construction Program**, apprentices learn to install and maintain power, communications, and lighting systems in commercial, industrial, and residential settings. Applicants who are selected into the program from this registration will begin classes in 2012.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION FOR THE ELECTRICAL CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM

will take place at the
IBEW-NECA Technical Institute
6201 W. 115th Street, Alsip, Illinois
on the following days and times
Monday through Friday
September 19th to September 30th 2011
9:00 A.M. until 11:00 A.M.

All applicants must report in person and bring the following documentation to register:

1. Your valid Driver's License.
2. Your original Social Security Card. (You must prove legal eligibility to work in the U.S.A.).
3. A \$25.00 non-refundable registration fee. (Money Order only, payable to EJATT).
4. A copy of your Birth Certificate to be kept by EJATT. (Minimum age of 17 at registration).
5. A copy of your High School transcript to be kept by EJATT, official or unofficial, to prove:
 - a.) High School (HS) graduation, or G.E.D. (G.E.D. Certificate must be provided). Current HS seniors may register with acceptance contingent upon graduation, and
 - b.) One full year of HS level Algebra with a grade of at least "C", or one post HS level Algebra course with a grade of at least "C". Higher level courses may be accepted to satisfy the Algebra requirement at the discretion of the Trustees.

Upon an offer of apprenticeship, you must be able to demonstrate that you can perform the essential functions of an apprentice electrician with or without a reasonable accommodation. In addition, a drug screen and a background check will be required.

The recruitment, selection, employment, and training of apprentices shall be without discrimination because of race, color, religion, national origin, or sex. EJATT will provide equal opportunity in the apprenticeship program, and will operate as required under all applicable laws and regulations.

CUSTOMER DELIGHT

An email sent to Jim McCormick from Jim Karales, I&E Supervisor at Akzo Nobel Surface Chemistry LLC on the Dowtherm Fire project.

Just a few short words of "Thank You" to all at Block Electric. Alex and his crew worked alongside of the Jacob's Instrument & Electrical mechanics as both groups completed a great deal of work this last week around the clock and in extreme heat conditions along with the fire damage in the area. Block Electric, Jacobs I&E; along with the Maintenance Mechanics and many others all deserve a lot of credit for getting the Dowtherm Heater and South Cooling Tower up and operational in a week's time especially with no injuries. Thank You.

Thank you to Alex Giese and the team for a job well done.

Gary Crutchfield
Mike Danielewski
Nick Dillon
Mike Kammers

Jim Norberg
Fred Orlovich
Joe Parthun
Walt Peterson

Ed Skedel
Jeff Temme
John Thatcher
Joe Vignocchi

BLOCK ELECTRIC SAFETY RULES

- DREW BOYCE

1. **Block Electric issued hard hats are to be properly worn at all times.**
2. No type of canvas, athletic or leisure type shoes will be worn when on the job site.
3. When working with powder actuated tools or electrical hammers, or performing any other function where eye protection is necessary, protective goggles must be worn.
4. All electrical tools must be properly grounded or double insulated. All tools and extension cords shall be checked and color-coded in compliance with the assured grounding program.
5. Employees are prohibited from bringing to the jobsite or possessing any intoxicants, illegal drugs or substances, and shall not at any time be under the influence of intoxicants or drugs. Further, the use of alcohol or illegal drugs prior to or during the work period is prohibited.
6. Scaffolding, when used, must be in safe operating condition and used with railing. Intermediate rails, toe boards and outriggers are required.
7. Ladders must be sized properly for the job. Ladders must be free of cracks and equipped with safety shoes and steel side spreaders.
8. Safety harnesses must be worn and tied off when working on outer perimeters or in any other situation where OSHA would require them (see section 5.26, Fall Protection.)
9. All accidents must be reported immediately to supervisory personnel. Supervisory personnel must report all accidents to the office. A written statement, signed by our employees who are involved in or observed the accident, shall be taken and forwarded to the office.
10. Loose clothing, rings, earrings, studs or any other jewelry shall not be worn on the jobsite.
11. Fire extinguishers must be present where required.
12. Only qualified personnel are permitted to operate the pole truck. Safety harnesses must be worn when working in the bucket.
13. No personal radios, including earphone types, will be allowed on the jobsite for your safety and the safety of your fellow employees.



ANNIVERSARY

Congratulations to Joe Spreitzer for his years of loyalty, service, and dedication to Block Electric. Joe joined us on September 5, 1991 and this will be his 20th anniversary.

NEW JOURNEYMEN

Congratulations to David Veronda and Fade Khaleq who recently completed their on-the-job training and related instructions qualifying them as journeymen.

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

Facebook users: Friendly and trusting

Are you an average social networker. If so, you have about 229 Facebook friends, according to a recent Pew study, Social Networking Sites and Our Lives.

Just who are these "friends?" The average list includes:

- High school friends: 22 percent
- Extended family: 12 percent
- Co-workers: 10 percent
- College friends: 9 percent
- Immediate family: 8 percent
- Voluntary groups: 7 percent
- Neighbors: 2 percent
-

And chances are you trust these people, and people in general. The study found that "a Facebook user who uses the site multiple times per day is 43 percent more likely than other Internet users and more than three times as likely as non-Internet users to feel that most people can be trusted."

BIRTHDAYS

Nick	Dickson	09/02
Doug	Henline	09/03
Robert	Hoitsma	09/05
Ron	Farber	09/14
Kara	Maude	09/16
Mike	Danielewski	09/18
Brian	Lacke	09/18
Dave	Veronda	09/19
Jason	Carline	09/20
Cory	Malloy	09/21
Mike	Deger	09/24
Larry	McCormick	09/26
Paul	Schmitz	09/28



NEW EMPLOYEES

Welcome to the new kids on the Block Team.

Dawn	Thropp	Benjamin	Blanco	Cory	Malloy
Michael	Frazier	Ron	Farber	Brian	Schmieder
Jeff	Kokotan	Fender	Tate	Clinton	Voights
Michael	Plessek	Matthew	Hermes	Scott	Settles
				Barry	Wolverton

MAKE SURE YOU WASH THOSE FRUITS AND VEGGIES

What could be better for your health than fresh fruits and vegetables? But even the ripest apple or the leafiest lettuce can carry dirt and nasty bacteria that need to be thoroughly washed off before it's safe to eat. Follow these tips for making sure your produce is untainted:



Start with a clean slate. Wipe down your kitchen counter, scrub your knives and cutting boards, and wash your hands before cleaning your food.

Water is best. Don't use soap or detergents to wash your produce; they can seep into the items and potentially make people sick. Use cool water and wash for 30 to 60 seconds in most cases.

Wash peeled food, too. Dirt and microbes can hide in the crevices of such fruits and orange and bananas, so even though you don't eat the skin, washing it prevents the spread of harmful material from the peel to the fruit through contact with your fingers.

Don't wash and store. Wait until you're ready to eat the item in question. If you wash it and then stick it in the refrigerator, it will retain moisture and spoil faster.

Use a brush. For firmer fruits and vegetables such as apples and potatoes, a stiff vegetable brush can do a good job of removing dirt and particles you don't want to eat.

QUOTES

- People say that money is not the key to happiness, but if you have enough money, you can have a key made.
- Money is like an arm or leg—use it or lose it.
- Call it a clan, call it a network, call it a tribe, call it a family. Whatever you call it, whoever you are, you need one.
- If you cannot get rid of the family skeleton, you may as well make it dance.