

# ABSA THE PRESSURE NEWS

Alberta Boilers Safety Association

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## ED YAREMICHUK RETIRES



Ed and Fran Yaremichuk

Ed Yaremichuk, Southern Region Manager retired from ABSA effective February 1st, 2003. Ed started with the Boilers Branch in 1975 and was one of those individuals committed to pressure equipment safety who transferred over to ABSA when it was formed in 1995. His reputation with the industry is excellent as is his commitment to ensuring that pressure equipment is constructed and operated in a manner that protects public safety. Ed and his wife Fran celebrated their retirement with a trip to Australia and New Zealand in February and March. They will remain living in Calgary, where they have immediate and extended family. A retirement recognition event was held April 5<sup>th</sup> in Calgary.

Ed, on behalf of ABSA's staff and the industry, thank you for your contribution!



## FLANGE GASKETS A WARNING TO ALL

Over the years, we have recorded many incidents involving flange failures which have caused serious incidents. In the last few months, we have seen three incidents which were directly related to flange gaskets, resulting in millions of dollars of damage and in one case, an injury. These incidents were summarized as follows:

- a) A Class 300 gasket was installed in a Class 600 service. This gasket failed, causing a fire.
- b) A gasket failed in high temperature service. The bolt tensioning had not compensated for the high temperature.
- c) A temporary gasket used during a hydrostatic test failed and injured a shop worker.

To ensure pressure equipment safety, it is critical that flange design and the principles thereof be clearly understood and applied by all user groups.

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## NEW FEE SCHEDULE

On February 25, 2003, a new ABSA fee schedule effective April 1, 2003, was approved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs, the Honorable Guy Boutilier. Changes were made in Quality Control, Initial Inspections, Power Engineers, Pressure Welders and Annual Registration fees. No changes were made to fees in Design Survey, Shop Inspection or Special Inspections.

These fee changes are a result of a review of ABSA's current fee schedule. The purpose of the review was to ensure that fees are in line with the services provided, as per a precedent-setting 1998 Ontario court decision. The *Eurig Estate* decision had widespread implications for all

provinces and the Government of Alberta responded by establishing a Fees and Charges Review Committee.

As a result of recommendations from the Fees and Charges Review Committee, all Alberta public bodies, including ABSA, were expected to review their respective fee schedules. This review led ABSA to propose changes to the fee schedule that will see some fees increased due to two main issues highlighted during the review:

1. In some instances, fees paid by some stakeholder groups have been subsidizing other stakeholder groups. This subsidization of one

group by another is not equitable, and in fact is contrary to the court decision cited previously.

2. Annual Registration Fees had not been revised since before ABSA's inception in 1995, while the scope and costs of services ABSA provides have increased in response to the province's rapidly growing economy. As a result, ABSA's expenses now outpace revenues under the current fee schedule, leaving ABSA potentially unable to fulfill its obligations under the *Safety Codes Act*.

For a complete listing of the specific changes to each program please visit our Web site at [www.absa.ca](http://www.absa.ca). ❖

Have you visited us on the Internet yet? - [www.absa.ca](http://www.absa.ca)

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In general, flange connections consist of mating flanges, gaskets and the bolting elements. Failure to consider each and every one of these elements when doing up a flange may result in premature failure, leakage, environmental emissions and even

worse, a serious incident. For standard ASME B16.5 flanges, the standard determines the bolt circle diameter, the number of bolts in the flange and the allowable operating pressure and temperature.

There are also a number of flange face designs (e.g., raised face, flat face, ring joint, etc.) and surface finishes, and gasket designs (e.g., rubber, spiral wound, garlock, or any number of acrylics, Tuflin, steel ring, etc.)

It should be noted that each component of a flange has a design parameter or limits that must be considered whenever a flange is assembled.

- Flange material specification
- Rated allowable operating pressure and temperature.
- Gasket selection required for the flange rating.
- Gasket material suitability for the

process contained.

- Bolt selection: material compatibility with the flange material; loading and operating temperature
- Gasket loading for the gasket material and the flange design: torque values. (some owner/user companies may have standards that are different from the gasket supplier).
- Tradesman trained in installation (including bolting up) practice.
- Installation details communicated to the tradesman: gasket rating, material, torque values, etc.
- Checklist to ensure that all the requirements were met.

In summary: Consult your design engineer and gasket supplier prior to bolting up any flange. That is the only way to obtain satisfactory results in containment and more critically, to ensure that the flange connection will not cause a serious incident in operation. ❖

## IN-SERVICE PRESSURE EQUIPMENT CERTIFICATION PROGRAM IS A SUCCESS

In October 2001, the Safety Codes Council determined that the role of Safety Codes Officer in the boilers and pressure vessels discipline should be limited to persons in the employ of the jurisdictional authority, i.e. ABSA. To address the fact that there would no longer be safety Codes Officers employed by industry, the In-Service Pressure Equipment Certification Program was created in consultation with industry stakeholders.

To enhance and enforce safety of approximately 300,000 items of pressure equipment in Alberta, a large professional body of certified and experienced In-Service Pressure Equipment Inspectors is required. Before this change, 96 Safety Codes Officers had been certified. Of these 96 Safety Codes Officers, 31 were not working for ABSA. As of the beginning of March this year, a total of 192 In-Service Pressure Equipment Inspectors have been certified. These certified In-Service Pressure Equipment Inspectors work together with the ABSA Safety Codes Officers in establishing appropriate inspection

standards for assessing the integrity of in-service pressure equipment and maintaining an excellent pressure equipment safety record for Alberta.

Information Bulletin No IB02-002, Certification of In-Service Pressure Equipment Inspectors Directive, issued by Chief Inspector and Administrator Dr. K. T. Lau on February 12, 2002 makes certification mandatory as of January 1, 2003 for all persons responsible for the certification of pressure equipment in Alberta. Section 4 of the directive describes the authority and responsibility of certificate holders. The authority and responsibility of the certificate holder will be limited to those duties designated by his/her employer under the employer's accepted owner-user program. A certified In-Service Pressure Equipment Inspector shall be directly involved in inspection activities and must be present at the plant-site during pressure equipment shutdowns for internal inspection or when an Owner-User certified repair is being done. ❖

## NATIONAL BOARD - 72nd GENERAL MEETING

The 72nd Annual General Meeting of the National Board will be held in Honolulu, Hawaii in conjunction with the ASME International Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code Committee meetings on April 28 - May 2, 2003.

Eminent featured speakers will make presentations on various aspects of pressure equipment safety. Numerous ASME Boiler and Pressure Vessel Code committees meetings will also be held during the week, including Sections I, III, IV, V, VIII, etc., and the ASME Boiler and Pressure Vessel Main Committee.

For further information, please visit the "infoLink!" Page on the National Board Web site [www.nationalboard.org](http://www.nationalboard.org), or call the National Board directly at:

Tel (614)888-8320 or  
Fax (614)888-0750. ❖

## ABSA REORGANIZATION

Gordon Campbell, General Manager of the Alberta Boilers Safety Association, is pleased to announce a restructuring of the inspection side of the ABSA organization. With the retirement of Ed Yaremichuk from the position of Southern Regional Manager, ABSA has taken this opportunity to further improve program delivery. A decision was made to move away from a regional inspection management structure to a head-office management structure with appropriate supervisors in the Regional Offices. To this end, on March 1st Mike Poehlmann, RPT (Eng), assumed the new post of Manager of Inspections with responsibility for province-wide delivery of new construction inspections, field services and quality system certifications.



Mike joined ABSA in October, 1996. He is a 1st Class Power Engineer with a National Board Commission and both "A" and "B" endorsements. Prior to joining

ABSA, Mike was a boiler and pressure vessel inspector in Saskatchewan and prior to that, Chief Engineer of a first class steam plant. He has been ABSA's Manager, Education and Certification since April 1, 2001. Before that he was an integral part of the delivery of ABSA's owner-user program. Mike is well respected by Managers and staff alike for his energy, enthusiasm and knowledge.



Bernie Hurst, moves from his former position as Northern Regional Manager to the newly created position of Manager, Program Development. He will continue to

report to the General Manager and will work closely with Mike to ensure that critical program efforts receive greater attention and focus. These include:

- ABSA's Quality Management System
- Certification of new owner-users
- Development of a proposed

certification program for inspection companies, and

- Technical Support

Bernie has excellent functional and technical knowledge of ABSA programs that, along with his industry focus, will provide strong leadership toward the accomplishment of these critical program efforts.

The greatest benefits we anticipate from the new organization structure include:

- improved consistency in program delivery province wide - one manager setting standards and priorities over all shop, field and QC programs
- greater assistance and clarity regarding technical standards and support
- greater attention and focus to important program efforts

ABSA is committed to providing leadership in pressure-equipment safety and it is our opinion that this new structure will provide a framework that will enable us to improve delivery and quality of service. ❖

### SYNOPSIS OF BOILER AND PRESSURE VESSEL LAWS, RULES AND REGULATIONS

The National Board has announced it will publish the newest edition of *The National Board Synopsis of Boiler and Pressure Vessel Laws, Rules and Regulations* on March 31. The industry publication was formerly published and distributed by the recently dissolved Uniform Boiler and Pressure Vessel Laws Society.

The price for the new *National Board Synopsis of Boiler and Pressure Vessel Laws, Rules and Regulations* will be US\$100 (plus postage and handling). This completely revised publication will offer several key informational points for jurisdictions in the United States and Canada, including:

- boiler and pressure vessel rules for construction and stamping
- objects subject to such rules, as well as those subject to field inspections
- inspections required
- fees required
- jurisdictional contacts, including names, addresses and email addresses.

Orders for the *Synopsis* are now being accepted by the National Board. Purchasers can order their copies by calling the order department at 614.888.2463. Orders can also be submitted via email to [orders@nationalboard.org](mailto:orders@nationalboard.org) or through Catalog/Click2Order on the National Board Web site. ❖

### REGARDING SMALL BLOWOFF VESSELS

In accordance with Clause 6.5 of CSA B51-97, certain boilers require a blowoff vessel to cool blowoff that is being discharged to a sewer system.

The Administrator has determined that blowoff vessels having a maximum allowable working pressure up to 1725 kPa (250 psi) with a maximum volume of 150 litres are exempt from the requirement to have a certificate of inspection, under section 2(2)(c) of the Design, Construction and Installation of Boilers and Pressure Vessels Regulations.

Although these vessels will no longer require a certificate of inspection, the owner is still required to ensure that they meet the requirements of the regulations, and CSA B51, and are in proper operating condition. The ABSA Safety Codes Officer will continue to check that blowoff vessels meet the requirements of CSA B51 and are in proper safe operating condition. As part of that check, the Safety Codes Officer may require that the owner open the blowoff vessel and prepare it for inspection. ❖

## POWER ENGINEER CERTIFICATES SUSPENDED

As one of its delegated functions, ABSA investigates incidents and accidents to determine their causes and to identify appropriate actions to reduce the likelihood of the incidents' being repeated.

Last year, ABSA investigated an incident in which a boiler was damaged beyond repair due to overheating. The investigation findings indicated the boiler overheated because it was operated with the water level in the boiler lower than the minimum level required for safe operation. The incident was found to be the result of a combination of factors related to the boiler auxiliary mechanical systems and to the actions of the supervising power engineers.

It is the owner's responsibility to ensure that all pressure equipment is operated in a safe manner. The power engineers in the owner's employ are responsible for the

supervision, maintenance and safe operation of the boiler and its auxiliary systems. As a result of the investigation, the owners and the supervising power engineers were required to take some specific actions.

The owners were required to conduct a review of their equipment and operating procedures and to make any changes that would help prevent a recurrence.

Four power engineers involved in the incident were required to successfully challenge a special examination as a means of verifying their competency. The examination was made up of boiler operation and safety questions and included questions on safety legislation, codes and standards. Two of the four power engineers did not pass the examination. As a result, their power engineer certificates were suspended pending further examination. ❖

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 Please note that our St. Paul office has been closed. All services will be provided through the Edmonton Office.

Internet address  
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