



## The EXCAVATOR

Hello Everyone!

I hope this note finds everyone in good health during this cold and flu season, at least the weather has been exceptionally good for the month of November and it hasn't froze or snowed us out of work yet! I am sure that everyone is getting ready to have a break, take a few days off and get ready for Christmas and the New Year, I know I sure am! It has been a busy October and November that is for sure and it doesn't look to be slowing down anytime soon! With the amount of work we have already on the books for the winter and spring and the large amount of work we are still tendering in Red Deer each day I am sure we are going to have a busier year then we did last year.

I would like to welcome our new electrical division leaders Dewayne McConnell (VP Electrical) and Kerry Wright (Senior Project manager) I have known these guys for more than 10 years and I know they will be a great addition to the GCS Team. We are confident that the new Electrical Division will bring additional steady work for all of us as where there are cables there is usually trenching, backfilling, gravelling etc. to go with it. We have already been ISN approved and are expecting to start seeing some tender documents come in by December for us to work on.

Ritch S. has helped us pick up a few projects this winter building roads near Halkirk and crushing gravel out in Canmore for the winter, I am looking forward to the Canmore job so I can do some skiing after I do some site visits!

I would like to say thank-you to Sheralee for the extra effort she put into sourcing a new company name, building the logo options, setting up all of the email addresses and getting all of the business cards for us so quickly, there is probably more that you did and I am sure you had help from Melissa and the other girls in the office as well, so thank-you to everyone for making that change happen in less than a week, it doesn't usually go that smooth I am sure!

I hope everyone has their Christmas plans made and you will all be able to spend it with family and friends, I know I can't wait to spend a week with my daughter Emily! :) Keep Safe, Drive safe and Enjoy your Holidays!

Merry Christmas!  
Greg Schmidt

## PROJECT UPDATES

**R**ed Deer Operations - The equipment has been coming and going out much faster now that Rob R and Bertam B have been at the shop. Gord has been looking after Edmonton and other locations which leaves them to concentrate on work that has to get ready for the new jobs. Our RAP student Jesse has also been doing well and learning lots. We are still looking for a second or third year apprentice to add to the shop.

**H**ardisty Operations - We have purchased some new vehicles for the Electrical division. The truckers have been busy hauling product into job 211, 212 and 214 as well as demobilizing job 211 (Husky) and job 179 (Smoky Lake). The shop hands have been keeping busy maintaining our fleet and equipment.

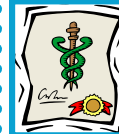
**V**irden Operations - The Virden team has

(Continued on page 2)



## Digging Around GCS

◆ STAFF COUNT IS ~ 233



### OLYMPIA HEALTH BENEFITS

Olympia Health Benefits reimbursement can now be deposited

directly into your bank account. Forms to sign up for direct deposit are available online through your "My Olympia" account or you can request the form from the Site Office or Hardisty Office.



### PAYROLL NEWS

Did you know you can access your T4's, view your hours, subsistence and any notes posted by the office by logging in to the **Payworks** site using the login information given to you when you signed up for electronic paystubs. If you haven't yet signed up for electronic paystubs, email [thendricks@gcsenergy.ca](mailto:thendricks@gcsenergy.ca) and sign up today!



### DID YOU KNOW

That you can get the GCS newsletter delivered directly to your inbox every month. To sign up go to our website our website or email [sladd@gcsenergy.ca](mailto:sladd@gcsenergy.ca)



Our website address has changed!! Check out our new site currently under construction at [www.gcsenergy.ca](http://www.gcsenergy.ca)



**Equipment Activity**  
External Rentals - 38

been quite busy with all the jobs on the go in Manitoba and they will soon be starting some renovations to add more offices and a training room.

**E**nbridge Cheecham - Job #126 - This project has been completed.

**C**ord - Christina Lake, AB - Job # 149 - David and Myra have been busy excavating and backfilling for cathodic and electrical ditches along with placing gravel and the 42" frost box and placing rip rap around the culverts.

**C**ord - Smoky Lake - Job # 179 - Bud and a crew of 9 are busy spreading and compacting clay in the ROW, stripping topsoil and clay from the NE ROW areas, constructing a division berm and excavating for electrical cable.

**C**ord - Lac La Biche - Job # 180 - is shut down until the spring due to frost.

**E**nbridge - Edmonton, AB - Job # 185 - All four tanks have been turned over to the tank builder. Work continues on trimming and cleaning up the berms and roads. Most of the gravel has been hauled to site with a small amount of clay still to be hauled offsite. There is still 42" pipe work in Phase I going into the Manifold 201 area and hydro-vac trucks are working on all the pilot holes for the concrete containment berm as well as piles for other work in Manifold 201.

**G**ibson Energy - Hardisty, AB - Job # 191 - This project has been completed.

**E**nerplus - Cromer, MB - Job # 192 - with the change in the weather, the crew has not worked on site in the past couple of weeks. We hope to be back there with a small crew to do some work in the near future.

**C**ord - Waupisoo - Job # 194 - The main contract was complete on November 10 and the crew is currently working on extras.

**T**undra Red Bed Resources - Cromer, MB - Job # 198 / 201 - We have finished the lease clean-ups and will only be building leases and assisting in the movement of drilling rigs.

**T**undra - Virden area - Job # 199 / 200 - work is continuing, we are hauling gravel

on a steady basis and we hope to continue well into the winter months.

**E**nbridge - SK and MB - Job # 202 - Work on site was completed on October 27, Glenn and Grant and their respective crews did an excellent job! Thanks all!

**C**ord - Cheecham, AB - Job # 203 - Dean and a crew of 19 are into the second shift and are busy digging the main trench for piping.

**P**rovident Energy - Cromer, MB - Job # 205 - Duwayne and crew should be wrapped up November 11, they have done a great job in completing a project that faced many challenges.

**F**lint Field Services - Hardisty, AB - Job # 206 - Kasey and a crew of 5 have been excavating, placing and spreading sand over cables, backfilling and compacting cable trench, and moving insulating rock.

**S**NC Lavalin - Hardisty, AB - Job #209 - Rob and Dave have been busy offloading materials to the SNC laydown area.

**T**undra - Cromer, MB - Job # 210 - The

contract portion was completed October 6, and we continue to work on extra's for the client as needed.

**H**usky - Hardisty, AB - Job # 211 - Chris and crew are busy finishing off this project and it should be complete around November 10.

**T**CPL - Lakesend & Monitor, AB - Job # 214 - **Lakesend** - Topsoil stripping has been completed and Eldon and crew continue to cut and fill balance the site. The weather has been favorable thus far and we hope to have the project complete near the end of November. **Monitor** - Ivan and crew are currently nearing the end of shift 2 and working on final site grading and spreading gravel along with construction of two access roads.

**T**undra - Manitoba - Job # 215 - Klinton and a small crew continue to work on the first Birtle Road for Tundra and hope to be finished mid-November, we have a couple of operators starting on the 2nd road in the same area on November 11 with Klinton overseeing both scopes.



## Corporate Name Change Announcement

Hello Everyone,

It is with great pleasure that we announce a change of our business name from Greg's Contracting Services Ltd. to **GCS Energy Services Ltd.** Despite the change, there is no change in management and we will continue to provide the same products and services in addition to our new **Electrical division.**

By the name change we hope to show familiarity and strength across the four western provinces while both expanding our areas of expertise and continuously improving upon the reputation we have built over the past 18 years.

We would also like to announce the key personnel who will be heading up our new Electrical division:

Dewayne McConnell

VP Electrical Division

Kerry Wright

Senior Project Manager, Electrical Division

Both Dewayne and Kerry will be located in our Red Deer, Alberta office and will focus on Industrial projects throughout the 4 Western Provinces which along with our Civil experience will allow us to better service our clients and enable us to take on more projects in the future.

Should you have any questions about this change, please contact either the Hardisty or Red Deer office.

## Winter Driving

Get your vehicle winter-ready with a maintenance check-up. Don't wait for winter to have your battery, belts, hoses, radiator, oil, lights, brakes, tires, exhaust system, heater/defroster, wipers, and ignition system checked. Make sure your vehicle is mechanically ready for the rigours of winter. Keep your fuel tank sufficiently full – at least half a tank is recommended.

Make sure you have sufficient windshield washer fluid in the reservoir that is rated a minimum of -40°C temperature range. Keep an extra jug in the vehicle.

Clear snow and ice from all windows, lights, mirrors, and the roof. After starting your vehicle, wait for the fog to clear from the interior of the windows so you will have good visibility all around.

### How to Regain Control of Your Vehicle in a Skid

A skid happens when the wheels slide out of control on a slippery surface. Skids can involve the front, rear, or all four wheels. Most skids result from driving too fast for road or traffic conditions. Sudden, hard braking, going too fast on a curve, or accelerating too quickly can cause the vehicle to skid and even roll over.

Once in a skid, steer in the direction of the skid. To do this, look where you want your vehicle to go and steer toward that spot. Be careful not to over steer. If you are on ice and skidding in a straight line, step on the clutch or shift to neutral.

### It takes vehicles longer to stop in winter weather conditions and driving downhill.

In winter driving conditions, it takes all vehicles longer to stop on snow-covered roads. Below, the winter tire and all-season stopping distance comparison graphic is based on stopping in a straight line from a speed of 50 km/h. In some provinces, people can legally use studded tires. The stopping distances of studded tires are comparable to those of winter tires, under most winter conditions. Vehicles equipped with studded tires have a slightly shorter stopping distance on wet ice. On bare pavement the stopping distance of studded tires is longer.



Stay alert, slow down, and stay in control – the three key elements of safe winter driving. Drive according to highway and weather conditions. Keep a safe distance between you and the vehicle in front of you to avoid situations where you may have to brake suddenly on a slippery surface.

Have your tires checked before winter begins. Remember to check tire air pressure frequently, as it decreases in cold weather. The condition of your vehicle's tires is important. Worn or damaged tires can hamper your ability to drive safely. It is best to replace tires before the tread depth is the regulatory minimum of 1.5 mm.\* Studies indicate that a 3mm deep tread can stop a vehicle on wet pavement in a 25% shorter distance than a tire with 1.5mm deep tread. Drivers should check the manufacturer's wear indicator mark on tires to see if they need replacing. All tires have tread wear indicators, which are small bars of rubber found between the tread blocks of a tire. When the tread is worn flush with the tread wear indicators, the tire has reached its wear limit and must be replaced as it no longer provides sufficient traction in the rain or snow. \*\*

Regular or "all-season" tires, including wide and high-performance tires, may be adequate in some areas; but may not be suitable for driving in the snowbelt regions and throughout the north. If you live and drive in these areas, consider using winter tires. They improve driving safety by providing better traction, braking and handling during frost, snow, slush, and particularly under icy conditions. Installing four winter tires provides greater control and stability. Never mix tires of different tread, size and construction. Also, consider adding traction control and stability control options when purchasing your next vehicle.

Cruise control should not be used on wet, snowy or icy pavement. If the vehicle skids or hydroplanes, cruise control will cause the vehicle to continue to accelerate, reducing reaction time and the ability to control the vehicle.

\* Fournier L., Comparative Evaluation of Performance of All-Season tires and Winter tires. Ministry of Transportation, Quebec, 2002.

It takes longer to stop on a slippery road.

#### Four-second rule:

1. Pick a marker on the road ahead, such as a road sign or telephone pole.
2. When the rear of the vehicle ahead passes the marker, count "one thousand and one, one thousand and two, one thousand and three, one thousand and four".

When the front of your vehicle reaches the marker, stop counting. If you reach the marker before you count "one thousand and two," you are following too closely

#### Play it Safe!

Severe winter driving conditions may make you nervous, uncomfortable, or fearful. Stay off the road unless your trip is absolutely necessary. Proper preparation and the right skills will help you face the challenge of winter driving.

#### Highway Closures

Extreme weather may result in the closing of highways. Respect highway closures and do not attempt to drive on these highways until they are re-opened. Always obey emergency road closing signs and barriers and follow the directions of any police officer. It's for your safety. Remember, it is against the law to drive on a closed highway.

#### The Unexpected

If you get stuck or stranded, don't panic. Stay with your vehicle for safety and warmth. Wait for help to arrive. If you are in an area with cell phone service and have a cell phone, call for help. If you must get out of the vehicle use the door away from traffic. If you attempt to free your vehicle from the snow, be careful. Dress warmly, shovel slowly, and do not overexert yourself. Do not attempt to shovel or push your vehicle if you have a medical condition. Body heat is retained when clothing is kept dry. Wet clothing, due to the weather or perspiration, can lead to a dangerous loss of body heat. Draw attention to your vehicle. Use emergency flashers or flares. Run your motor sparingly. Be careful of exhaust fumes. For fresh air, slightly open a window away from the wind. Make sure the exhaust pipe is clear of drifting snow before running the engine. In blizzard conditions, make sure one person stays awake in case help arrives. Maintain circulation by moving your feet, hands, and arms.

#### Snowy Roads

Snow on a road may be hard-packed and slippery as ice. It can also be rutted and full of hard tracks and gullies. Or it can be smooth and soft. Wet snow can make for slushy roads. Heavy slush can build up in the wheel wells of your vehicle and can affect your ability to steer. Remember, look far ahead as you drive, so you can recognize hazards and have plenty of time to respond. Adjust your driving to the road and weather conditions. Slow down and avoid sudden turns of the steering wheel, and sudden braking and accelerating, which could cause a skid. Extra caution should be exercised when driving in these road conditions

#### Ice

Be careful when approaching shaded areas, bridges, and overpasses, as these sections of road freeze much sooner in cold weather and stay frozen long after the sun has risen. Watch out for frost, areas of the road that appear black and shiny, as they can cause your vehicle to suddenly lose traction. Slow down, keep your foot off the brake, and be ready to shift to neutral or step on the clutch as your vehicle crosses these areas.

Things to remember when approaching a snowplow:

- Snowplows are equipped with flashing amber lights to make them more visible. Remember ***flashing amber and red, means snowplow ahead.*** (some provinces use blue flashing lights)
- Maintain a safe following distance behind the snowplow. This will not only give you more time to react to the unexpected, but may also help you avoid rock damage from the plows sanding unit.

Before passing a snowplow, be sure you can see far enough ahead and that passing is permitted.

Even if passing is permitted, it is safer to stay well back until the snowplow operator can safely pull over to let vehicles pass. They will pull over every 8 to 12 kilometers.

The police have the authority to close highways. Sometimes the safest and best action is to close a highway until weather conditions improve enough to allow snow and ice control.



"Take it easy - it's a bit slippery this morning"



## Safety Training Courses

All individuals attending any field sites must have the following certificates and training:

- WHMIS
- CSTS/IRP 16/ or equivalent
- Ground Disturbance Level II – Approved by the Alberta Damage Prevention Council 201 Standard
- Standard First Aid Level C (provided by Canadian Red Cross/St John's Ambulance/or equivalent)
- H2S Alive (provided by EnForm)

“Current Employees” are required to keep all of the above certifications current, regardless of location and are expected to book and pay for each course. Upon successful certification of the course, GCS will reimburse all current employees for the full price of the course when:

- A copy of the certificate is submitted,
- A copy of the receipt is submitted,
- An expense claim form is completed and submitted.

The reimbursement will be allotted for on the following pay cheque.

All “new hires” gaining certification in the above courses, after January 1, 2011, GCS will reimburse the individual for the full price of the course when:

- A copy of the certificate is submitted,
- A copy of the receipt is submitted,
- An expense claim form is completed and submitted.

The reimbursement will be allotted for on the 2<sup>nd</sup> pay period following employment.

**GCS does not pay employees for any time participating in the above courses.**

All individuals performing work shall have the proper education, experience and training before attempting a job. All on the job training will be documented and placed on the employee’s file.



## Sudoku #12

9			1	3				2
		6	5			7		4
	4	8		6	2			
		7			1	9		8
		2	8		9	4		
8		9	4			1		
			2	4		8	6	
7		4			5	2		
2				1	6			7

Employees are reminded to send in their completed Benefit Packages to the Hardisty office as soon as possible as Benefits do not start until after the paperwork has been submitted!

During November each year, Movember is responsible for the sprouting of mustaches on thousands of men’s faces, in Canada and around the world. With their “Mo’s”, these men raise vital funds and awareness for men’s health, specifically prostate cancer. To find out what you can do or for more information, visit <http://ca.movember.com>

Answer to September Sudoku # 11

5	4	2	3	7	6	1	8	9
7	1	3	9	8	5	6	2	4
9	8	6	1	2	4	7	3	5
1	3	4	8	5	2	9	6	7
2	9	5	6	3	7	8	4	1
6	7	8	4	9	1	3	5	2
3	6	1	5	4	9	2	7	8
8	5	7	2	1	3	4	9	6
4	2	9	7	6	8	5	1	3



For information or submission of news and interviews, please call Sheralee at the Hardisty Office (780) 888-3845 or email: [sladd@gcsenergy.ca](mailto:sladd@gcsenergy.ca)