



# Building a Better Alberta

2011 Contractor of the Year Awards honour best of the construction industry

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**UNDER \$10 MILLION ANNUAL REVENUE**

**C**ompanies that build, subcontract and erect structures to house people, businesses and industries are an important part of a resurgent economy. The new Alberta Contractor of the Year Awards, presented by the Merit Contractors Association and *Alberta Venture*, highlights the industry's achievements by recognizing companies and individuals whose efforts stand out.

Companies were judged in four categories and across various criteria, including safety programs, environmental practices, staff development opportunities and the diversity of their building projects. An individual who has made a significant contribution to the industry is honoured with the prestigious Construction Person of the Year Award.

**FINALIST:** It's what you don't see that makes **Avalanche Air Systems** of Calgary so good at what it does. Avalanche works behind the scenes designing and installing all-important heating and ventilation systems for commercial and industrial buildings. It has built LEED-certified air systems for major retail projects, including CrossIron Mills, Pro Hockey Life, Forever 21, Bed Bath & Beyond and Toys "R" Us.

**FINALIST:** Bonnyville-based **Horizon Mechanical Ltd.** is a young company specializing in plumbing, heating and cooling requirements. Since starting as a one-man operation in February 2006, Horizon has grown to a 40-person firm. Its work ranges from residential service calls to multimillion-dollar mechanical

systems, and the company serves both individual customers and big firms like Cenovus Energy and SNC Lavalin. Recent projects include an RBC branch in Cold Lake and a recreation centre at Foster Creek for Encana.

**WINNER:** As an electrical contractor, **Alta Pro Electric Ltd.** of Edmonton offers more than off-the-shelf solutions with its design-build capability. Their expertise produces cost-effective electrical installations incorporating practical design and leading technology. Among recent projects, Alta Pro provided integrated security systems at the St. Francis Xavier high school field house in Edmonton and co-ordinated separate landlord and tenant systems for a FedEx building in Edmonton.



**ALTA PRO ELECTRIC:** St. Francis Xavier high school field house in Edmonton (top). **UNITECH ELECTRICAL CONTRACTING:** Alberta Processing Plant (above).

## \$10 MILLION TO \$30 MILLION ANNUAL REVENUE

**FINALIST:** **Camdon Construction** of Red Deer has built a reputation as one of central Alberta's prime general contractors because of its ability to construct buildings for diverse purposes. It has been involved in a wide variety of commercial, agricultural and industrial building projects, ranging from the Brazeau County fire hall in Drayton Valley to the Galloway Riding Academy in Ponoka to the Comfort Inn and Suites in Red Deer to the Packers Plus energy services complex in Red Deer County.

**FINALIST:** Though I.W. Kuhn Environmental Ltd. calls the small town of Acadia Valley home, the company works throughout Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. I.W. Kuhn specializes in environmental remediation and reclamation solutions for oil

and gas and industrial clients. It has diversified recently to provide services to agricultural and feedlot clients. The company attributes much of its success to its focus on safety.

**WINNER:** **Unitech Electrical Contracting Inc.** cemented its reputation during 2009's H1N1 flu pandemic when it was contracted for vaccination clinics in Calgary. The company not only completed electrical and data requirements for the accelerated project, but took care of other details such as carpet installation, painting and ceiling work, often working through the night to meet the hurried opening dates. Among other major projects, Unitech also supplied and installed processing equipment for the Alberta Processing rendering plant.



TERRITORIAL ELECTRIC LTD.: Southgate Centre (above).  
CLARK BUILDERS LTD.: Commonwealth Community Recreation Centre (below left).

### GREATER THAN \$100 MILLION ANNUAL REVENUE

**FINALIST:** Over its 30-year history, **Chandos Construction** has grown from a regional contractor in northern Alberta to a province-wide giant of the industry, ranking as the 17th largest contractor in Canada, as deemed by Onsite Magazine. Chandos offers services ranging from pre-construction to construction management, design build, general contracting and energy retrofit. The company has completed 15 LEED projects, including the Intact Insurance Building in Edmonton, Red Deer RCMP headquarters and the University of Alberta East Campus Village graduate student housing.

**FINALIST:** A stalwart in the energy sector, **Flint Energy Services** specializes in construction ranging from well-site preparation, rig moving, pipeline construction and field facilities for both oil and gas. It has 60 branch offices, including 37 located in Canada. Flint recently completed a froth treatment facility and tank farm at the Shell Albian Sands oil sands plant and was recognized for both safety and efficiency of construction. Other recent major projects include Suncor's Firebag 3 fabrication and field construction and the StatoilHydro Leismer demonstration project.

**FINALIST:** **Graham Group Ltd.**, the fifth-largest construction company in Canada, has 1,100 staff, annual revenues exceeding \$1.8 billion and offices throughout North America. The employee-owned organization recently completed the first social infrastructure P3 project in Alberta, which consisted of 18 elementary and junior high schools in Calgary and Edmonton. Other projects include upgrading the Icefields Parkway Interchange near Lake Louise and renovating a six-storey medical centre into the new University of Calgary downtown campus.

**WINNER:** **Clark Builders Ltd.**, headquartered in Edmonton, has specialized in large-scale infrastructure projects across Alberta for 37 years. Among its recent projects, Clark built the North Central Community Recreation Centre in Edmonton, installed the artificial turf at Commonwealth Stadium, rebuilt the McMahon Stadium players' facility and constructed the \$27-million Alberta Processing rendering operation in Calgary. To develop staff, the company has an extensive internal training program called Clark Builders University, which emphasizes leadership and skills training.



### 30 To \$100 MILLION ANNUAL REVENUE

**FINALIST:** **Alberta Glass Company** views its services and products as an integral part of the complete life cycle of a complex building envelope. Its staff is nimble and responsive to the needs of customers. That's an important consideration when there is an emergency, such as last summer when the company was on-site repairing a University of Calgary skylight when a record-breaking hailstorm ripped through the city. Other major projects include enclosing the 53-storey tower at Eighth Avenue Place and doing the same at the new Bow building's atrium using unitized, glazed walls.

**FINALIST:** When the City of Calgary needed a recycling facility for a new residential recycling program, Calgary-based **Elan Construction Limited** was ready for the challenge. The company, which provides general contracting services to a range of clients in the private and public sector, completed the 100,000-square-foot plant and offices on time to receive the first loads from the city's curbside recycling program. It's just one of the more than 1,100 projects Elan has completed since its inception in 1978.

**WINNER:** An Edmonton-based commercial electrical company's commitment to safety, including developing and implementing its own program, keeps it one step ahead of the industry when it comes to workplace safety. That attitude has attracted customers, who turn to **Territorial Electric Ltd.** because of its safety record. Territorial specializes in fast-track and complex projects. Projects have included the Lois Hole Hospital for Women and Southgate Centre, where it integrated various electrical systems with existing operations at the mall.

## CONSTRUCTION PERSON OF THE YEAR

If there were a blueprint for building a leader in the construction industry, it would have to prominently feature vision, innovation, courage, commitment and a desire to bring together best industry practices. The finalists for the first Alberta Construction Person of the Year are the very embodiment of these qualities.

**FINALIST: Rick Ball**, president of Calgary's Avalanche Air Systems Ltd., is known for taking a hands-on approach to his company's work and a great deal of pride in its results. Ball believes that giving customers the best and latest technologies, delivering outstanding craftsmanship and quality control are not just important, but essential. His involvement extends to technological innovation, too: he is developing an iPad application for mechanical companies that he hopes will benefit the entire industry.

Ball believes it is important to give back to his community. He actively devotes his time and financial resources to many charitable causes, including the Alberta Children's Hospital, the SPCA, the Alberta Breast Cancer fundraising drive, the Royal Canadian Legion, the Alberta Burn Fund, Kids Up Front, Foothills Hospital, the Calgary Police Big Brothers and Sisters Association, Red Cross relief for Haiti and numerous charity golf tournaments.

**FINALIST: Louis Ravoy**, manager of Alberta Mechanical and Salvaged Recycling Ltd. of Lethbridge, is described by company owner Kathy Van Ryn as an innovator who brings forward new and exciting projects that boost both profits and employee morale. Ravoy displays outstanding leadership and workmanship and has a passion for making things easier for those working in the construction industry.

His instant recall of regulations, codes and requirements is encyclopedic. He puts that information to good use, too: one of his crowning achievements was designing and patenting a piece of equipment called the coil cinch, which is useful for hanging coiled materials like wire, chain, tubing and tools.

Ravoy also has a personal commitment to recycling construction waste as both an advocate and a strong voice with the Alberta Onsite Wastewater Management Association.

**WINNER: Roger Dootson**, vice-president of PCL Construction Management Inc., knows the value of apprenticeships and training. Starting out as a tradesman and now working as a technical construction executive, Dootson celebrates 40 years in the industry this year. He has long been involved with the Merit Contractors Association, Merit Canada and the Alberta Construction Association in various capacities and



**ROGER DOOTSON**, vice-president of PCL Construction Management Inc.

has served as a provincial advisor on apprenticeship and occupational labour training programs.

Dootson has overseen significant projects, such as the Anthony Henday southeast leg ring road, which was Alberta Infrastructure's first public-private partnership (P3), as well as the Leduc recreation facility and the Edmonton International Airport terminal expansion, among others. His industry work was recognized with the Chairman's Award of Excellence from the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board. 

**Merit and Alberta Venture** thank its adjudication panel for their assistance with the inaugural **Contractor of the Year Awards:**  
**Robin Kotyk**, Alberta Construction Safety Association  
**Bob Mulligan**, RBC  
**Dr. Aminah Robinson**, University of Alberta  
**Gord Selman**, Marsh Canada