

## ALBERTA READY-MIXED CONCRETE ASSOCIATION

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the winter edition of the Mixer! The board has continued to meet face to face monthly executing objectives defined in our strategic plan and discussing items related to the industry. October 27th marked a significant day for Albertans when Joe Ceci released the 2015 budget. The budget announced will create the largest deficit in the provinces history, which is expected to balance out by 2020. There are mixed emotions for Albertans, personally and professionally. Professionally, as an industry, taking advantage of low interest rates, decreased demand, efficiencies and availability of skilled labour is critical. This will maximize investments in sustainable and resilient infrastructure projects across our province. The budget couldn't have been communicated at a more favorable time as our provinces economy has imminent layers of uncertainty.

Our association was fortunate to meet with the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, Brian Mason, to discuss his five year capitol plan and support his strategy to borrow \$29.9 billion dollars to execute this ambitious but achievable plan. Population growth and net migration is expected to be well below forecast which will directly impact housing starts; which is a large portfolio of concrete supply year over year in the residential segment across Alberta. Supporting this spend holistically will only stimulate opportunities and have a favorable impact on the industry.

It is important we recognize milestones within our group and October 1st, Ed Kalis achieved 25 years of service. Ed has been instrumental in many facets of the association during his tenure. His technical experience, knowledge



Kris Lasek - President

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and passion for the industry is well respected. Ed has been a champion for our certification programs, industry specifications, training and educational requirements across the province. Many of our members have built professional and personal relationships with Ed. Please join me in congratulating Ed for his continued contribution to AMRCA and our industry.

The association has a newly developed Government Affairs Committee which was implemented to develop and deliver industry messaging as well as develop a road map for advocacy opportunities across the province. If you are interested in volunteering your time to this committee, please contact the ARMCA office. The organization and commitment of this committee is required as we continue to influence our position and align with other associations and strategic partners in Alberta and Canada.

I encourage all members to be clear in your expectations with the association as we continue to be more relevant and vocal throughout the concrete industry provincially and federally. Please visit the ARMCA website to enquire about upcoming educational programs and the 2016 Annual General Meeting in Jasper.

I would like to personally wish all our members and their families a safe holiday season and a Happy New Year!

Regards,  
Kris Lasek  
AMRCA President

## **ARMCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS - 2015/2016**

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## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Well, another busy construction season under our belts; and by all accounts, it was a reasonably successful season despite a few challenges. In the past several months, we've seen the direction of our new provincial government take shape, and the beginning of a new Trudeau era in Ottawa; all while our economy continues to decline and job losses increase. There is hope for our industry, however...despite what you might read and see in the news on a daily basis.

On October 27, the provincial government released its first budget. Subsequently, I was invited into the "lock-up" which is essentially a private briefing on the contents of the budget for key stakeholders. This is a first for ARMCA, and it signals recognition by the provincial government as to their recognition of the importance of our industry to the economy. As an outcome of this briefing, and a discussion with Hon. Brian Mason, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, we issued a news release supporting the government's plan to invest over \$30 Billion over the next five years to build new (or repair aging) critical infrastructure. This commitment to new construction should help to buffer the effects of our lagging economy for ARMCA members, as well as others in the construction industry.

We expect that this investment by the provincial government will be shadowed by the federal Liberal government's plans for a build out of Canada's infrastructure, as they promised in the recent federal election. During the election, Prime Minister Trudeau made various announcements about his party's plans for investing in infrastructure as a means to boost the economy, to the tune of \$125 Billion over the next ten years. The ready-mixed industry is sure to see its fair share of those investment dollars.

I've also had some encouraging discussions with the provincial government and various municipalities with respect to the use of concrete as a viable solution for their paving projects, and the message seems to be gaining traction. In my discussions, I speak to the long-term cost savings of utilizing concrete instead of asphalt for high-use and heavy traffic applications, as well as the short- and long-term environmental benefits of implementing a concrete paving program. We still have a long road (pun intended) ahead of us for any kind of full-scale adoption, but we have a great story to tell, and we're making progress.

Working with our partners in the Concrete Council of Canada (CCC) and the Canadian Ready-Mixed Concrete Association (CRMCA), ARMCA continues to work on a strategy to educate the development and construction industry on the issue of wood versus concrete as a preferred building material for mid- and high-rise construction. Recently, we hosted seminars in both Edmonton and Calgary, in partnership with the CCC, that were geared towards engineers, builders and developers on the topic of building material selection. The seminar was delivered by Dr. John Straube, an expert in building materials at the University of Waterloo, who provided an unbiased overview of what building materials were the best choices for a variety of projects. That being said, it was clear by the end of the presentation that concrete is by far the most versatile of the products discussed (wood, concrete and steel), and is therefore a superior building material which has the widest range of applications. This seminar is being put on all across the country, with the outcome of educating the design and building communities on the pros of concrete and the cons of wood. Again, this battle won't be won in the short-term, but it's encouraging to see players from across the country and across the spectrum of the concrete and related industries, including cement, join together to protect your market share from being eroded by other building materials.

Further to this issue, I was invited to attend the BC Ready-Mixed Concrete Association AGM in Kelowna to speak to the concrete industry's work to date, and future plans, to combat this recent push by wood to see more mid- and high-rise buildings be erected across the country. It was a great opportunity for me to continue my education of the issues that are important to the industry and to build even more partnerships that I hope will benefit ARMCA members in the future.

It's been a busy few months for me, but I'm settling in nicely, having hit my six-month milestone as your Executive Director. I continue to travel the province, meeting members and learning from them. I've also been reaching out to other organizations with the view to expand our network and sphere of influence so that we can mobilize a larger group of stakeholders when we need to get our messages out and raise the profile of ARMCA and the ready-mixed concrete industry in the province. In other news, the Board approved our operating plan for 2016. The operating plan is broken down into quarters, with specific measurables built in so that the staff is held accountable for the outcomes of the plan. We report on our progress regularly to the Board and I'm excited to share the outcomes of that work with you in future communications.

Your ARMCA team, including the staff, board and volunteers, continue to work hard to add value to your ARMCA membership by providing you with the support you need to be successful. I know that 2016 will be a memorable year for ARMCA, and I'm certain that despite the challenges ahead of us, it will be a successful year for our industry.

On behalf of all of us at ARMCA, I would like to wish you, your families and your staff a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Robin Bobocel  
Executive Director







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## TOOLS AVAILABLE ON THE ARMCA WEBSITE

### MEMBERS, ARE YOU AWARE OF THE TOOLS AVAILABLE ON THE ARMCA WEBSITE?

<b>Concrete Calculator:</b>	Access an online calculator to determine approximate volume needed.
<b>Evaporation Loss Table:</b>	Avoid plastic shrinkage cracking
<b>CANPav Application:</b>	Cost Comparison Tool; understand your projects real cost of ownership. You can quickly conduct numerous “what if” scenarios comparing the initial constructions costs of both concrete and asphalt paving materials and save on projects.
<b>Impact Estimator:</b>	Buildings Lifecycle Assessment software is now available and free of charge. Includes the ability to import a bill of materials from CAD or other sources, enhanced extra materials input form, new assemblies, new materials and more!
<b>Weather Table:</b>	Access the Government of Canada Weather Office

These tools can all be accessed from your smart phone. Go to [www.armca.ca](http://www.armca.ca), click on the “Members” tab and select “Tools”.

## EDUCATION

The first round of Concrete Technology Level 1 courses in Edmonton and Calgary will have just been completed or will be completed in the next week. The classes were full and it was good to see a greater number of engineers and/or consultants attending.

### Upcoming Course Dates:

January 26-28, 2016	Concrete Technology Level 2 – Edmonton *Space available
February 17-19, 2016	Concrete Technology Level 2 – Calgary *Space Available
March – TBD	ACI Concrete Field Testing Grade 1 – Edmonton *Space Available
April 26-28, 2016	ACI Concrete Field Testing Grade 1 – Calgary *Space Available

Additional Concrete Technology 1 & 2 courses will be scheduled throughout the winter when needed as we try to ensure everyone has the opportunity to attend. Please check our website regularly for the dates of upcoming courses being offered. As the dates are confirmed, they will be posted. These classes fill up quickly. Send in your registration forms if you would like to attend.

We would like to emphatically thank our instructors, and their respective companies, for their time and commitment in the education process of the concrete industry.

Please check the website, [www.armca.ca](http://www.armca.ca) , for more information.

#### NEW MEMBERS

Beaver Plastics Ltd. (Affiliate)	ASET (Associate)
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Although TriLink Builders Ltd. was established in 2014 as our newest company, our sister company Prism Interiors Ltd. under the same owner Paul Nagel, has been in business for over 25 years. TriLink Builders Ltd. maintains the same philosophy as Prism Interiors Ltd. by providing our Clients with full pricing transparency of all our Trade Partner and supplier quotes throughout the course of your project. To take it one step further than our competitors, we pass on our Builder pricing to all our Clients to keep you from paying retail pricing even with our management fee. At TriLink Builders, we do things differently and that is why our Clients continue to choose us!

Meet the Business Owner - Paul Nagel, Principal

Thirty years ago Paul started his career in Regina, Saskatchewan working as a 3rd year Apprentice Journeyman Carpenter. As part of his apprenticeship training, Paul's work experience included concrete form work, framing, interior finishing and specialty millwork which brought him to Calgary in 1990 where he started his first company - Prism Interiors Ltd. From there Prism Interiors has grown into a thriving company with an Interior Finishing division and Renovations division. His wife Erica is a Sr. Accountant and together they operate two well-managed companies which have proven to be a good fit for their Clients.

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## INDUSTRY NEWS

### ALBERTA BUILDING CODE 2014

As of November 1<sup>st</sup> 2015, the transition period has passed and we are now governed by the new ABC. What does this mean for our industry? It means we have an opportunity to promote all the benefits that concrete brings to continue to support the construction industry in this province as the building code evolves to meet the needs of our residents and businesses.

One of the code changes that presents an opportunity for us includes provisions for protection against termites. Although this change is predominantly applicable to the southeastern part of our province, it's still another chance for us to remind prospective owners that this issue is put to rest when foundations and retaining walls are constructed using concrete.

The issue of Radon gas in dwellings is being addressed in the new code through required provisions for a rough-in soil depressurization system to vent the gas should this become a concern post construction. To date, the concern about radon has been limited in Alberta but with recent adjustments (lowering) in allowable exposure limits established by Health Canada, more Alberta homes are being found to exceed these new limits. As a result home owners are on the hook at substantial cost to install systems to depressurize the soil beneath their foundations in order to vent the radon gas to the exterior. The new rough-in requirement makes installing a venting system much easier and less costly to the homeowner in the event that it should be discovered necessary.

How does this change play out in our industry? The new rough-in system mandates the placement of polyethylene sheet directly below the concrete slab to act not only as a vapour retarder but also as a soil gas barrier. As such it must not be compromised with any perforations that are not subsequently sealed to prevent any uncontrolled migration of any gases from the soil below. To the concrete placer and finisher using the floor slab mix we as an industry have supplied to date, this means more bleed water to deal with and potentially greater wait periods between finishing operations. To the producer this presents an opportunity to work closer with their customers to develop mix design solutions to address these challenges.

Another element of this new rough-in soil depressurization system that presents a challenge for some parts of the province is the requirement for a gas-permeable layer between the air-barrier and the ground using a prescriptive approach of a 100 mm layer of granular material containing not more than 10% passing the 4 mm sieve. The good news is that there is a performance alternative whereby alternate materials such as a dimpled membrane may be used if they provide a gas-permeable layer between the poly and the ground across which the soil gas will migrate to a depressurization outlet pipe.

An excellent link that highlights the changes in the new ABC 2014 can be found on the CHBA Alberta Site at: <http://www.chbaalberta.ca/2014-alberta-codes>



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## JOB POSTINGS

Working within the concrete industry provides a vast range of occupations. From the inception of the mix to the final stage of the product, there are many opportunities for employment. MEMBERS; advertise your job postings on the ARMCA website. Send your postings to [info@armca.ca](mailto:info@armca.ca)

## WHMIS 2015 UPDATE

It sounds like many firms are well into the transition process that we last visited here back in June. As you may recall, WHMIS is in transition as it goes through a merger with the Globally Harmonized System over the next 3 years. The WHMIS we've known to date is taking on a new look with slightly different symbols and revised labels and safety data sheets (SDS). The new system in Canada will be referred to as WHMIS 2015.

Some product suppliers are already well down the road of transition to WHMIS 2015 and our members are seeing that change reflected in the labeling and SDS of the products they receive every day. This signals the need for our member companies to start to develop their WHMIS 2015 Training Toolbox Sessions. Alberta Safety Construction Association has a WHMIS 2015 video update posted on You Tube that gives us a look at a transition process at a worksite. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-m2lpqMpR34>

There are also a number of firms that have tried to capitalize on this transition training opportunity who may not be able to provide the training that your firm needs to be compliant. Please have a look at the following link at Work Safe Alberta for more information on what you will need to do to fulfill WHMIS Training requirements through the transition process to WHMIS 2015. <http://work.alberta.ca/documents/WHS-PUB-AL035.pdf>

As an employer you are obligated to provide training of your employees through the transition process as your firm receives products with the new WHMIS 2015 labels and SDS.

ARMCA Safety Committee



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## **SAFETY TIPS**

It's Monday morning and you hop in your truck to start your work day. You have every intention of driving safely today so that you may return home to your family in one piece. Within minutes of pulling onto the road, however, you've already fiddled with your radio and temperature controls, programmed your GPS, sent a text to your wife, and checked your teeth in the mirror for remnants of that poppy seed muffin you'd had for breakfast. You may not be aware of it, but you are a distracted driver.

An estimated 80% of collisions have some form of driver inattention as a contributing factor. This accounts for over 4 million motor vehicle crashes in North America each year. Cell phones are one of the most common distractions for drivers, rendering a person 23 times more likely to be involved in a crash or a near crash event. However, there are many other types of distractions as well. Passengers or pets in the vehicle, adjusting radio or climate controls, eating, applying makeup, or something outside of the vehicle vying for your attention can all lend themselves to a distracted driving incident. Lack of attention to the road reduces one's ability to react to the ever-changing conditions of traffic, pedestrians, wildlife and seasonal factors.

Here are some tips for avoiding distraction while driving:

### **Create a distraction-free environment.**

Secure any loose items prior to driving. Hard breaks can turn loose items into projectiles. Place cell phones well out of reach to eliminate the temptation to use them. If travelling with pets or children, ensure pets are properly secured and children are prepared with any items they may need on the trip.

### **Plan your trip.**

Allow yourself a cushion of travel time so that you don't feel hurried. Rushing can lead to poor choices. Pre-program your route on GPS and set your radio and climate controls prior to asking.

### **Drive mindfully.**

Keep your eyes and mind on the road. Allow all phone calls to go to voicemail and pull over to make or receive calls. Do not use your phone for texting, surfing the web or checking emails. Eat when you have a break from driving, not while en route. Always keep two hands on the wheel for better control. If you are fatigued, pull over. Never operate a vehicle when you feel that you could fall asleep behind the wheel.

With proper education and increased awareness, distracted driving can be significantly reduced, making for a safer commute.

### **Near Miss Incidents**

Report: I was driving South on 8A St, my speed was about 60 km/hr when a car cut me off. I stepped on my brakes and slowed my truck down to avoid an accident. It is important to always be aware of what other drivers are doing.

Report: I was in the centre lane when I noticed that the right lane was closed ahead. Close to the barrier were two cars, so I signaled and moved over too far left, since that lane was empty. As I drove by, the car at the rear moved into the lane I had left. Because she was so close to the car ahead, she veered toward me, nearly running into the midsection of my truck. I used my defensive driving training to avoid an accident. Always be extra diligent around traffic changes.

Report: After pouring a slab, I lifted my chute up and away from the slab to make some room for the workers. Worker must've forgotten it was there and he bumped his head on it. I had been waiting to move while other crew washed wheelbarrow. I should have pulled the truck away from the slab.

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### Humor

Reaching the end of a job interview, the Human Resources Officer asks a young engineer fresh out of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, "And what starting salary are you looking for?"

The engineer replies, "In the region of \$125,000 a year, depending on the benefits package." The interviewer inquires, "Well, what would you say to a package of five weeks' vacation, 14 paid holidays, full medical and dental, company matching retirement fund to 50% of salary, and a company car leased every two years, say, a red Corvette?" The engineer sits up straight and says, "Wow! Are you kidding?" The interviewer replies, "Yeah, but you started it."



### 1) Practice safe food handling



- Thoroughly wash fruits and vegetables before serving them.
- Avoid cross-contamination of prepared food with raw food. There's no need to rinse poultry before cooking (that just splashes germs everywhere). Blot dry your bird with a paper towel.
- Use a meat thermometer to ensure you're cooking meat to the right temperature.

### 2) Prevent falls



- Ensure walks are promptly cleared of snow and ice. Purchase and use plenty of sand/salt for the task.
- Mind the ladder while you decorate and move items to and from storage. Use ladders on dry, sturdy, flat surfaces and maintain your centre of balance. Avoid storing bulky, heavy items up high.
- Keep hallways and stairs well-lit and free of clutter.

### 3) Don't get burned in the kitchen

- Don't leave grilling, frying or broiling unattended. Keep cooking surfaces clutter-free.
- Order in if intoxicated.



### 4) Mind the kids



- Keep guests' purses and bags are out of reach.
- Ensure clear communication about who's supervising and when.
- If you have very small children, avoid decorating with glass ornaments and tiny ornaments that could present choking hazards.
- Buy gifts that are age appropriate.

### 5) Socialize responsibly

- Hosting? Have a good selection of non-alcoholic beverages on hand.
- Make sure everyone have a safe route home.

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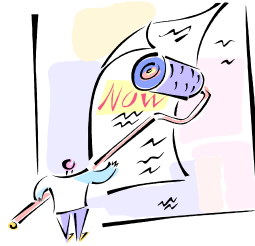
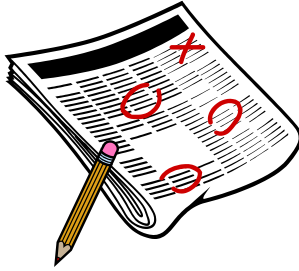
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## ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITY FOR ARMCA MEMBERS

### THE MIXER

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Alberta Ready-Mixed Concrete Association



Make sure your advertising dollars hit the target. If concrete is your target market, then there isn't a better bang for your advertising buck than to advertise in the Alberta Ready-Mixed Concrete Associations' "The Mixer." In addition to reaching our membership and various stakeholders, the newsletter with your advertisement is accessed by over 1,500 people per month on the website and will remain on-line for at least two years so your advertisement will still be viewed long after the publication has been sent.

Full page	6¼" wide x 8¼" high	\$300 + GST
Half Page	6¼" wide x 4¼" high	\$200 + GST
Quarter Page	3½" wide x 4¼" high	\$150 + GST
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If you would like to place an advertisement in the "The Mixer", please forward your high resolution PDF advertisement to the Alberta Ready-Mixed Concrete Association (ARMCA) Office.

**Alberta Ready-Mixed Concrete Association**

**9653 – 45 Avenue**

**Edmonton, AB T6E 5Z8**

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