

# That's My Line



## Don McNee Job Centre Manager

Don McNee has been with the Department of Employment and Immigration for 20 years. Before entering the civil service he served 10 years as a pilot in the Canadian Armed Forces. He has been the manager of the Midland Canada Employment Centre for five years.

This office deals with people, all different, but all with the same purpose for coming here, to seek assistance in finding suitable employment.

Some people are job-ready, others lack skills. Some are mobile, and willing to move to a job elsewhere if nothing is open locally. Others want training that will improve their employability.

The centre tries to match a person's skills with the requirements of employers. We also may suggest alternatives to people if the jobs for which they are qualified or want are unavailable. We may suggest a similar line of work.

People wanting a job should keep their job search going by exploring all possibilities: knocking on doors, checking the newspapers, checking

with friends and relatives, perhaps placing an ad in a newspaper.

The centre doesn't have a monopoly on the hirings in any community. Many jobs are filled through the above methods.

In this area the manufacturing and service sectors offer the greatest opportunity for employment. But you also have the largest number of people seeking jobs in these sectors, and so competition for each job is tough.

Where workers are needed is in the skilled trades. People such as machinists, tool and die makers, automobile mechanics, most of the occupations where a journeyman's certificate is required.

The job market is no different here. The shortages are standard across the country.

The situation is improving, but it's a slow process. Employers have been reluctant to take on apprentices, but they have had to deal with the shortage for two years.

For many years workers from Europe came to Canada and satisfied the demand, but that source has

dried up. Employers are now faced with the necessity of training apprentices. The training period varies between three and four years, so it will be a while before we get caught up.

**Programs**  
I manage an office of 13 people that administers the administrative programs of the Department of Employment and Immigration in this area.

Three of our staff are bilingual so we are able to provide all services in English or French if requested.

A job search technique course every week explains to people how to dress, how to write a resume, and handle other basic job-hunting details.

The centre provides information on training courses, government jobs, and carries a list of local jobs on a job board.

A job information centre in the office provides information about jobs available in other areas. We have access to a national job bank via printout that lists jobs open across the country, and we can check on those jobs within minutes.

# Hydro rustlers

by Ken Regan

A recent report published by Ontario Hydro shows that a very small percentage of its customers is stealing Hydro, but the amount stolen still adds up to \$1,839,600. worth of power.

The figure represents only .036 percent of Hydro's total rural revenue for the year of \$511 million.

Ross Fitchett, Media Relations manager for Hydro said recently the study of Hydro's rural customers and the subsequent report were prompted by accounts from other utilities, particularly in the U.S. that power theft was very high.

Hydro officials feel the low percentage figures found in their study indicate the problem is not a serious one here, but they still advocate that a policy of discouraging theft be "vigorously pursued."

### Theft

According to Fitchett, power theft can occur in various ways, and is often inadvertent. For example, many rural customers have flat rate water heaters and if the elements are changed, the customer could be using more hydro without realizing it.

Fitchett added that Hydro prefers to give the customer the benefit of the doubt in all possible instances, but explains that in cases of obvious theft, prosecution can and does result.

He gave figures showing that in 1977, 17 charges were laid and nine convictions obtained. In 1978, there were 32 charges and 21 convictions and in 1979, 25 charges were laid and 20 convictions followed.

If convicted of power theft, a person can be fined up to \$300. plus double the estimated value of power stolen plus repayment of the power value.

If convicted of bypassing a meter, a person may be fined up to \$500. and can face charges under the criminal code for theft.

Fitchett said Hydro has several ways of detecting power theft. Records are kept of meter readings, he stated, and if a reader detects a sudden drastic drop in the amount of power being used, he might investigate the cause.

### Seal

All meters are equipped with a type of seal, some of plastic, others of metal and if these seals are broken, it indicates tampering of some sort, and again an investigation may follow.

Emphasizing that the customer always is given the benefit of the doubt, Fitchett explained that Hydro looks at the possibility of defective meters or vandalism before taking any legal action.

But the laws relating to power theft and meter tampering are clear says Fitchett, and suggests that people be aware that besides being illegal, tampering with any Hydro equipment can often be a very dangerous exercise due to the presence of live current.

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