



# Board of Education

## Media Information

May 22, 2008

### **New Utility Arborist Apprenticeship Signing and Launch on May 26**

**Kelowna, BC:** For the first time, a school district in British Columbia has created a training partnership with a private institution establishing the first dual-credit Utility Arborist Apprenticeship program in Canada. Secondary school students will receive specialized training from Electrical Industry Training Institute (EITI) instructors as well as the School District No. 23's Forest Resources teachers. This unique partnership will be recognized with a signing ceremony on May 26, the first day of the Utility Arborist Apprenticeship program. The signing will take place at 3:15pm at the training wood lot at Bata Road and Framers Road in Ellison. Instructors will demonstrate the tools of their trade such as lifts and chippers.

“We feel this apprenticeship program will expand the number of viable and rewarding career paths available to students,” says Dale Popp, BCIT Liason/Career Transitions Coordinator. “Rick Oliver (the former principal) and I researched the possibility of integrating this trade into our current forestry program. Utility arborists are consistently in demand.”

“The partnership between EITI and School District No. 23 provides an exciting new avenue for young people to enter this very technically demanding trade”, says Phil Davis, Executive Director of the Electrical Industry Training Institute.

Half of the Utility Arborist course content will be taught by an EITI journeyman trainer and the other half by Rutland Senior School's Forest Resources teachers. The Forest Resources program runs full-time for one semester in Grade 11 and another full semester in Grade 12. The program can accommodate up to 18 students.

This newest partnership allows Forest Resources students to earn their Utility Arborist Level One certification. The Utility Arborist program has been given approval by the Industry Training Authority (ITA), which will provide funding to the EITI for the program. The students will be enrolled in the ACE-IT program for secondary school students, also sponsored by the ITA. Once students complete Level One training, their teachers will help them prepare for a written course and exam. Successful completion of the course, exam and a requisite number of work hours allows students to continue to Level Two to attain their journeyman status.

The EITI was established by Local 258 IBEW in partnership with BC Hydro to provide training and upgrading of skills for utility workers in 1991. For details visit: [www.eiti.bc.ca/](http://www.eiti.bc.ca/)

Utility Arborists prune or clear vegetation such as fallen trees in proximity to electrical equipment, structures, conductors or power lines. Essential in every community across Canada, utility arborists put themselves in challenging situations to maintain power to community hospitals, schools, residents, and businesses.

### **Media Opportunity on May 26 at 3:15pm**

1. Greeting: Dale Popp, BCIT Liason/Career Transitions Coordinator, Rutland Senior Secondary

2. Comments: Phil Davis, Executive Director of the Electrical Industry Training Institute
3. Comments: Moyra Baxter, Chairperson of the Board of Education
4. Comments: Mike Roberts, Superintendent of Schools
5. Comments: Curtis Schreiber, Principal, Rutland Senior Secondary
6. Comments: Student

**Directions**

Take Hwy 97 North past Airport. Turn right at Old Vernon Rd. Turn left on Posthill Rd. Follow Posthill Rd. 3km - turn right on Farmers Drive. Follow Farmers Drive for 5-6km turn left on Bata (will be marked by RSS Forestry). The class will be near the sign on Bata Rd. If you get lost, call Wayne Price on his cell phone (801-7734).

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For comments, please contact:

Moyra Baxter, Chairperson of the Board (250) 767-6153

Mike Roberts, Superintendent of Schools (250) 860-8888

Dale Popp, BCIT Liason/Career Transitions Coordinator, 765-1407 ext. 7558

For background information, please contact: Lisa Harrison [lharriso@sd23.bc.ca](mailto:lharriso@sd23.bc.ca) or 470-3284

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