

ON NEWS

YOUR ONTARIO NORTHLAND EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER



Infrastructure Season

Every summer Ontario Northland undertakes critical rail infrastructure work along the railway to ensure we operate safely and reliably.

To do so, our rail infrastructure team undertakes extensive projects to upgrade tracks, bridges, signals and culverts and perform required maintenance to existing rail infrastructure.

This is done while exploring the use of innovative technologies and partnerships to advance rail safety, maximize operational efficiencies and extend the lifecycle of vital rail infrastructure.



A few highlights from work undertaken this year include:

- Safely collecting and disposing of approximately 300,000 legacy ties from the right of way to clean the environment and remove potential fire hazards. This is part of a five-year plan to collect approximately one million legacy ties across the rail network.
- Approximately 27.85 track miles of rail replaced, across the rail network.
- Replacement of over 61,500 rail ties.
- Ongoing rehabilitation work for two bridges within the Kapuskasing subdivision.
- Rehabilitation of one bridge north of Cochrane.
- Eight crossing signal upgrades

“This year our crews have made great progress across our entire network,” says Paul-Andre Lajeunesse, Director of Rail Infrastructure. “Our teams play a vital role in our organization’s operations. We are not only ensuring services remain safe and on time for today, but we are also preparing for the future with projects related to the Northlander and customer growth. It is important to note, the success of these projects would not be possible without the assistance of our Earth and Environment and Work Equipment groups within Rail Infrastructure.”

Lajeunesse says that the changing climate throughout the year as well as the large geographic service territory can make work unpredictable and challenging at times. He insists that the team at Ontario Northland continues to rise to challenges with professionalism. “Thanks to the hard work and dedication of our crews and managers, I can say with confidence that once again we are going to be able to achieve the objectives, we set out for ourselves. We have a team that truly looks out for one another while ensuring that we meet the highest standards.”





A Message from Chad Evans

The past few weeks have been difficult as we reflect on the loss of one of our colleagues, Luke Lumley. I want to emphasize that we all still need to support each other as we move forward together. Counseling supports are still available for staff. If you are struggling and have not yet used the Employee and Family Assistance Program, I encourage you to do so.

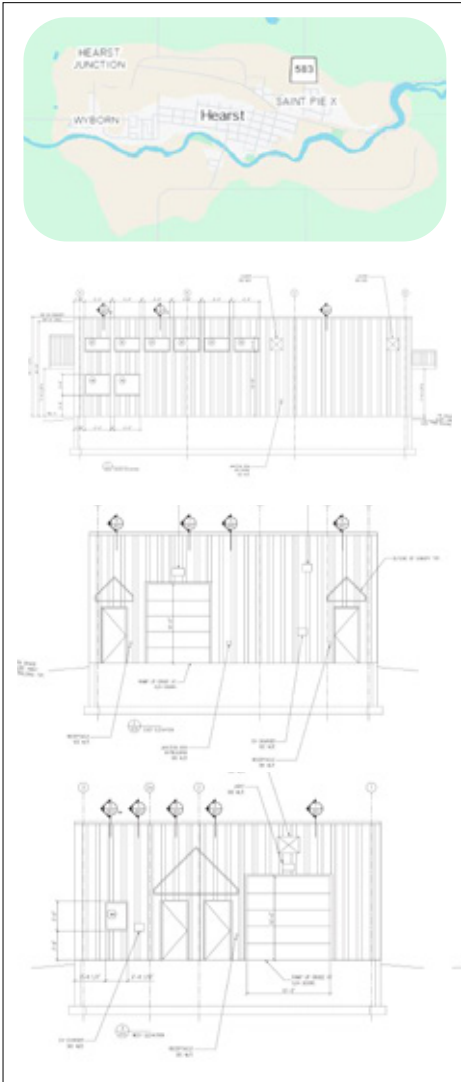
These past few weeks have emphasized the importance of working together as a team. It is worth noting that since last year we have welcomed 160 new employees to our organization. As we continue to grow, we expect more new roles to be introduced across the organization in the coming year. With so many new colleagues, I encourage everyone to take the time to welcome new employees, share your knowledge, and mentor where possible. Also take the time to ensure new employees are working safely. Each of us has a role in shaping a safe workplace.

With fall now upon us, I want to take a moment to recognize the hard work and dedication of each and every employee. Together, we are a team that relies on one another to fulfill our commitment to providing safe, reliable transportation services to the communities we serve.

Chad



New Building Plans in Hearst



The future is bright at Ontario Northland. In recent years, there has been a renewed focus on improving buildings and infrastructure across the company. Another example comes from Hearst, where construction is now underway on a new mechanical building for our technicians and maintenance of way crews in the area. The new building will replace five smaller buildings, enhancing efficiencies and simplifying work processes.

The new structure will include a brand-new mechanical shop, maintenance of way area, a tool house and gas shed. “Combining everything into one building will help us work more efficiently,” says Lonnie Little, Director of Rail Mechanical. “The work of our technicians is dynamic and can be unpredictable at times. Ensuring our staff have what they need on hand to complete the task is crucial to our success.” The new building will also provide other benefits for staff, including modern employee break rooms, washrooms and change rooms.

“This new facility will not only help employees complete their day-to-day tasks, but it will also ensure our staff have a welcoming place to take their breaks and lunches,” says Little.

Alain Tremblay, Project Manager with Corporate Facilities, has been managing the scope of this \$2 million project from concept and now into construction. He noted he is excited to share that production has already begun. “Two buildings have been demolished and foundation work started in late August,” he says. “It is great to see this idea transitioning from concept to reality,” he adds.

Tremblay notes the improvements will also help Ontario Northland prepare for the future. Installing new data and networking cables as well as working with a local company to bring in Fiber internet will ensure the facility has the modern amenities it requires going forward, including a better connection to the rail network. The new building will also see an increase in energy efficiencies, reducing maintenance and utility costs.



New Employees Travel on the Polar Bear Express

Marketing and Communications team members - James Stamler, Andrew Robinson, Corporate Service Centre Representative and Webmaster Karan Shama travelled on the Polar Bear Express this summer to become more familiar with the service. The facilities team also took a trip to Moosonee in June.

“I believe its essential for employees to experience our services firsthand and engage with passengers. I encourage everyone to take the bus or train to become better ambassadors for the company. It’s also an opportunity to gain a deeper appreciation for the hard work of our operational colleagues. Personally, I learned a lot from a short trip and look forward to being able to do it again in the near future,” says James Stamler, Marketing Specialist.



Hear what Andrew and Karan had to say about their journey by scanning the QR code.

Northlander Update

The Northlander team had the opportunity to come together as a group on September 5, 2024 to celebrate milestones achieved, discuss the path ahead and identify collaborative behaviours. As part of this work, a mantra was unveiled, which will act as the program's guiding philosophy going forward. The team also recognized important contributions from employees, which have been instrumental in the program's success to date.

To date, over 104 kms of track has been rehabilitated along the Northlander corridor, several crossings are being updated to meet new requirements for passenger rail and platform construction at stop locations north of North Bay has commenced. Looking ahead, Ontario Northland will be completing the environmental assessment process for the Timmins-Porcupine Station, continuing work on a bypass track in North Bay, and unveiling the exterior design for the new train sets.



Congratulations to: Erin Hillis, Manager, Realty Services, Justin Haight, Project Manager, Matthew Ryan, Project Manager Michael Rennie, Director of Training and Regulatory Affairs, Donna Jaques, Chief Legal Officer, Saxon Yanta, Document Control Specialist, Paul-Andre Lajeunesse, Director of Rail Infrastructure, Esmail Zougari, Manager, Capital Projects



Long-Term Service Awards

Congratulations to the employees below, who reached their 25-year and 35-year milestones during 2023! They were recently recognized at the employee barbeques, completed during August and September.

25
YEARS

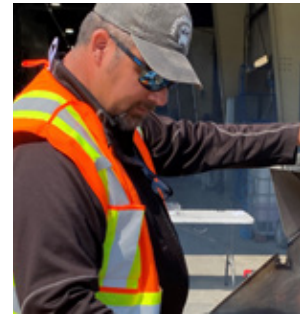
25-Year Milestones

- Ken Smith
- Christopher Sasseville
- Jay Jensen
- John Walsh
- Michael Rennie
- Calvin Mills
- Scott Wylie

35
YEARS

35-Year Milestones

- David Hueston
- David Beadman
- Luc Cadrin
- Floyd Job
- Darren Thomas



ON VIEWS

Scan this QR code for online photo galleries and more.





Delinda Troch Named IHSA Northern Chapter Driver of the Year!

Congratulations to Motor Coach Operator, Delinda Troch who was selected as the 2024 Infrastructure Health and Safety Award (IHSA) Northern Chapter Driver of the Year!

This award is offered by the Northern Chapter of the Fleet Safety Council to recognize a Professional Driver who demonstrates a commitment to safety and excellent customer service.

Delinda was nominated by Director of Motor Coach Operations, Ken Grube. She is a long-term employee who recently celebrated 20 years of service and represents the transportation industry with passion and professionalism. "This award recognizes a driver that is credit to themselves, their employer and the industry and Delinda has that in spades" says Grube.

As a Motor Coach Operator, Troch plays a significant role in shaping the passenger experience. Over the years she has provided exceptional customer service and managed unforeseen situations all while operating the motor coach safely and getting our passengers where they need to be.

In one instance, Troch took special care to get to know a young passenger travelling with her grandmother and arranged for a souvenir to mark the girl's first trip. "I always try and give our passengers "the pickle" and go that extra mile." says Troch, referencing the Ontario Northland Orientation video, "Customers remember that!" says Troch. "I aim to treat every passenger the same and show them respect. It can be challenging but I love my job. This has been the most rewarding career I could possibly have."

At Ontario Northland, we take pride in serving our customers and communities and our value "Go Beyond" is about seizing unique opportunities like these to exceed expectations.

"Delinda is passionate about her job, and it shows when she is dealing with customers. We can see it reflected in the numerous compliments we get about her from passengers." says Grube.

As the Northern Chapter winner, Troch is now in the running for the Provincial Driver of the Year award that takes place later this October. We wish her the best of luck!

What is the PSPP and its benefits?

Ontario Northland is a part of The Public Service Pension Plan. The PSPP is a contributory defined benefit (DB) plan managed by the Ontario Pension Board (OPB). This means that when you retire, you will receive a pension that is payable for your lifetime. You do not need to worry about outliving your money because you will receive a guaranteed monthly income during retirement. The Public Service Pension Plan is an important part of employee's overall financial and retirement plan. Some of the benefits to having a pension through the PSPP include:

- **Security** – Your pension is based on a pre-set formula, so you'll know with a fair degree of accuracy what your monthly pension will be.
- **Peace of mind** – Your pension is payable for life and is 100% secured.
- **Investment expertise** – One of the greatest benefits of being a member of the PSPP is that the investing is done on your behalf. The PSPP is managed by a team of investment specialists who make strategic investment decisions to help generate the returns needed to fund your pension.
- **Inflation protection** – Your PSPP pension is indexed to annual inflation to make sure you maintain your purchasing power throughout retirement.

For more information on your pension plan, retirement eligibility, and updating information, employees can contact the Ontario Pension Board (OPB) at 1-800-668-6203 or clientservice@opb.ca. Additional information about your pension can be found on the Ontario Pension Board website: <https://www.opb.ca/>



Promoting our Services to Municipalities

Ontario Northland had a booth at the 2024 AMO Conference in Ottawa in August. This popular conference attracted mayors and municipal staff from across the province allowing our team to provide updates and answer inquiries about our services. Many provincial leaders stopped in to the booth including Minister of Transportation Prabmeet Sarkaria.

“The conference provided an excellent opportunity to connect with mayors from across the province. We received numerous inquiries and felt a strong sense of enthusiasm about the return of the Northlander. It was also encouraging to see such a high level of awareness and interest in Ontario Northland,” stated Rebecca McGlynn, Chief Marketing and Communications Officer.



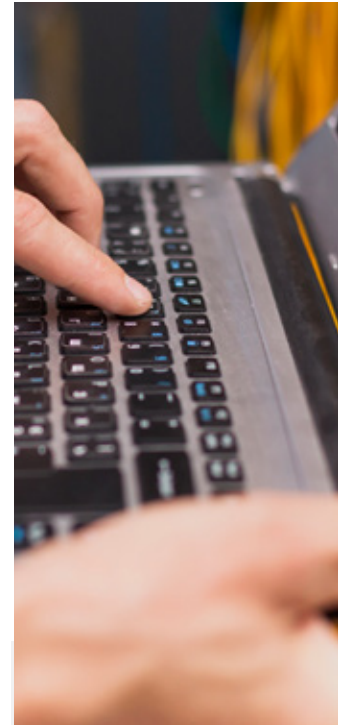
Online Nomination Form



If you know someone who has gone above and beyond for safety, nominate them for a Work Safe Award on the Junction.



Browse the Latest Products in the merch shop.
merch.ontarionorthland.ca



Let Us Reintroduce Ourselves: Ontario Northland's Information Technology Services

Information Technology Services (ITS) is responsible for introducing and integrating new devices, software and solutions that best align with the values and strategic objectives of our organization. ITS designs, establishes, monitors, maintains, and supports all of Ontario Northland's information technology systems and services.

ITS is composed of 4 groups

Support Services:

Your initial first point of contact. When you have a need, reach out as soon as possible to get your request into our intake system. Employees can reach out to extension 500 or servicedesk@ontarionorthland.ca

IT Operations:

This team is responsible for all hardware and software deployments. They perform updates and upgrades to existing systems, our backup infrastructure, and our Passenger Services' Point of Sale solution.

IT Development:

This team is responsible for software development, configuration, data, and reporting. They support existing systems and new deployments of technologies.

Cybersecurity and Network:

This team is responsible for responding to security alerts, video surveillance requests, and updating or creating new policies.

Our customers

ITS supports over **1,000** employees across Ontario Northland, ensuring all technology and software across the organization is running smoothly.

FUN FACT:

Did you know, ITS supports **550** mobile devices (smartphones and tablets), **550** Computers (laptops and desktops), and over **200+** client-side applications.

Projections show ITS will respond to over **8,800** standard day-to-day requests this year, in addition to working on major projects.

Thank you for all that you do, ITS!



Polar Bear Express Community Consultations

This fall, Transport Canada (TC) is introducing new rail regulations that impact employee scheduling and rest periods. To be compliant with these requirements, Ontario Northland is required to adjust The Polar Bear Express and freight train schedules.

A crucial component of planning for this project included ensuring the updated schedule accurately reflects the needs of employees and communities along the James Bay Coast.

Throughout the summer, staff attended Rock the River in Timmins, Creefest in Cochrane, the Gathering of our People in Moose Factory and hosted events at the Moosonee station and in Attawapiskat. During these events the team collected feedback on travel preferences and transportation needs. Community members were invited to vote on three potential train schedule options. Earlier this month employees directly impacted by the changes were also invited to share their feedback. Information from customers, community members and staff will all be considered as the final schedule is determined.

Ontario Northland will be announcing the new schedule in October. Keep an eye on The Dispatch for more information.



Airplane Pull

In a show of strength, teamwork, and community spirit, Ontario Northland's team, "The Railroaders," took part in the annual "Pull for United Way" event in June. The challenge, pits community teams against one another to pull an airplane across the runway in the fastest time, all in support of United Way programs that aid local individuals and families.

Leading "The Railroaders" was Captain Matt Ryan, whose leadership and dedication were evident from the start. Ryan, who meticulously crafted the team's strategy, ensured that every member was well-prepared. His focus on safety, combined with tips to optimize performance, set the stage for a strong showing.

With Ozzy Osbourne's "Crazy Train" pumping through the speakers, Ryan led his team—comprising Andre Boileau, Tammie Richard, Desmond Rich, AK Sterling, Karan Sharma, Josh Dale, Justin Haight, Brooks Tuckett, and Matt Sookram—onto the runway. The Railroaders pulled the plane across the finish line in an impressive 19.90 seconds, just shy of the previous year's winning time of 19.70 seconds.

Though "The Railroaders" didn't take home the title of fastest team, they exceeded expectations and set a new standard for Ontario Northland's participation in the event.





The paint shop team, including Greg Hilton, Mike Greco, Ed Milton, Andrew Belanger, Roger Houle, and Stephane Carswell.

Safety.Full Stop. New Paint Shop PPE enhances workplace safety

Workplace safety reached a new milestone at Ontario Northland with the implementation of new supplied air hoods and Tiger Vacuums for employees performing sandblasting work in the Paint Shop.

The supplied air hoods are helmets that are air-fed to reduce the risk of breathing in dust from sandblasting railcars. The supplied air hoods provide positive air pressure and deliver clean, fresh air to the crew while they work in the Paint Shop.

The sandblasting process is essential for removing corrosion and ensuring a high-quality finish for the customer.

Remanufacturing and Repair Supervisor Rob Francis provided insight into the scale of the work, saying, “We work on a car for about

two to three weeks, spending three straight days blasting with six people involved. We go through 500 bags of sand weighing 550 lbs in three days.” In addition to the supplied air hoods, new Tiger Vacuums were installed in a designated “Dirty Room” at the side of the Paint Shop. This facility allows employees to decontaminate their PPE, removing any potentially harmful chemicals or residue.

“This setup keeps the workplace cleaner and more hygienic,” notes Health and Safety Incident Specialist Jason Burnett. “A lot of progress has been made demonstrating Ontario Northland’s ongoing commitment to workplace health and safety within the scope of this project. Assistance from HR to start the training program was crucial, so our crews can properly use the equipment and understand any

hazards.” Along with Francis, Burnett says support from senior management was also crucial to the success of the project.

“The efforts of the Workplace Health and Safety Committee, represented by Chris Lafleur, and the contributions of student Lauren Lacelle in developing the training slides were key to the project’s success,” says Burnett. “Remanufacturing and Repair Centre Supervisor Chris Contant was instrumental in implementing these changes.”

This collaborative project marks a critical step forward in enhancing employee safety.

A Closer Look at Homewood Health and What it Offers Employees

In today's fast-paced world, maintaining a balance between work, health, and family life can be challenging. That is why Ontario Northland provides extensive support to its employees and their families through valuable resources and benefits.

One such resource is Homewood Health, an innovative online service tailored to meet the individual needs of every Ontario Northland employee. Through their Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP), individuals can access professional support for a range of personal challenges, including relationship concerns, anxiety, depression, addiction, and work-related stressors. Key features of this program include confidentiality and flexible counseling services, available through face-to-face sessions, phone consultations, video calls, or online therapy.

Homewood Health also offers practical tools and resources for wellness:

Pathfinder: This personalized approach to employee assistance and mental health services helps individuals navigate their wellness journey. By answering a series of questions, users receive customized recommendations and gain access

to resources tailored to their specific needs and preferences. From stress management techniques to coping strategies for anxiety, Pathfinder provides valuable support at every step.

Nutrition and Fitness Guidance:

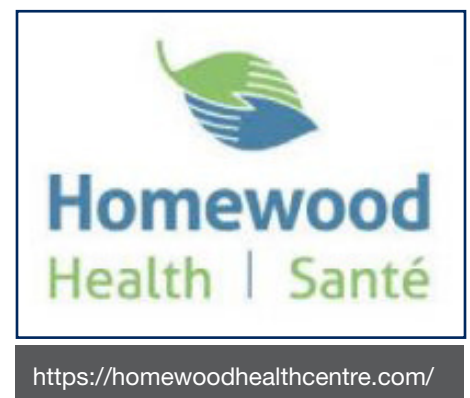
Homewood Health recognizes the importance of a comprehensive approach to well-being, which includes promoting healthy eating habits and regular physical activity. Their resources offer practical advice on building a healthy relationship with food, understanding nutritional needs, and making informed choices for optimal health. Additionally, individuals receive guidance on incorporating physical activity into their daily routines, with emphasis on proper nutrition before, during, and after exercise to support energy levels and muscle function.

Family Support Services:

Recognizing that family well-being is integral to overall wellness, Homewood Health provides expanded support services through EFAP. This includes access to childcare and eldercare resource locators, specialized services for children and teens, and expert advice on various family-related topics. Whether individuals are seeking daycare options for young children or

exploring long-term care facilities for aging loved ones, Homewood Health offers comprehensive assistance to help families make informed decisions and navigate life's transitions with confidence.

To access these resources, Ontario Northland employees can log in to their Homewood Health member services area. From there, they can explore the various tools and resources available to support their well-being journey. Whether it is scheduling a counseling session, using the Pathfinder feature for personalized recommendations, or accessing nutrition and fitness guidance, individuals have convenient access to the support they need, whenever they need it.



1

Safety. Full Stop.

Safety is core to everything we do. We do not settle for less, for our people or our customers.

2

Go Beyond

We take pride in serving our customers and communities. We seize every opportunity to exceed their expectations and to challenge the status quo, to meet their evolving needs.

3

Never Stop Caring

We care about each other, our customers, the work we do, and how we do it. We create a respectful environment where we can be ourselves, feel valued, and perform at our best.

4

Focus on the Path Ahead

We grow and innovate with intention. We align with government and MTO priorities and fulfil our commitments.

5

Lead the Way

We can all be leaders. We take responsibility, trust each other to do the right thing, and speak up to make things better.

Do you have our values statements memorized? Stay tuned, this might be 'valuable' information to have in the near future!