

ON NEWS

YOUR ONTARIO NORTHLAND EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER



The Northlander

Ontario Northland is diligently preparing for the Northlander service, making progress on several key areas to ensure a seamless, timely launch. Learn more about the progress of equipment manufacturing, ongoing construction developments, new exterior design, and other essential aspects of this exciting project.





A Message from the CEO

I am pleased to share Ontario Northland's first employee newsletter of 2025. As this update will describe in greater detail, the year ahead is filled with many exciting new and ongoing initiatives. We are continuing major projects that will carry us forward in launching and expanding new services, attracting new freight and remanufacturing business, and modernizing our agency and services. We are committed to ensuring these projects are achieved safely, sustainably and with the reputation for excellence that we have as an organization.

As you read through this newsletter, I encourage you to take note of how our values are reflected in each story. Organizational values are more than guiding principles – they help us make decisions, define and evolve our workplace culture and help to provide a vision for the future.

As we welcome 2025, I want to wish each of you a wonderful year ahead. I am proud of the work we accomplished in 2024, which is now laying the foundation for a productive and rewarding year.

- Chad



Lonnie Little, Director of Rail Mechanical, visiting the Siemens Mobility manufacturing plant in Sacramento where the future Northlander train sets are currently in production.



Exterior Design Reveal

Ontario Northland is proud to present the exterior design of the future Northlander train. This design was shaped by feedback from community members who participated in the 'Community Connection' events that were held across 13 communities along the corridor in fall 2023.

Feedback from the events highlighted that the Northlander should be recognized as:

- Proudly rooted in our northern heritage
- Deeply connected to the people and communities it serves
- Welcoming to all
- Transformative for northeastern Ontario
- Safe during all seasons of travel
- Reliable, ensuring passengers are well cared for from start to finish
- Accessible, both in terms of affordability and physical accessibility
- Comfortable, providing a stress-free and enjoyable ride
- Modern, with brand-new equipment

"The Northlander's new exterior design brings a fresh look to this service. This design captures the essence of our brand – connecting people across Ontario in a way that's safe, accessible and comfortable," says Rebecca McGlynn, Chief Marketing and Communications Officer. "We are excited for the new era of the Northlander to deliver a transportation option that enhances how people move to, from, and across the province."

The new design prominently features the Ontario Northland logo, a familiar icon representing our longstanding service. It also introduces the newly created Northlander icon, that will be associated with this new train service like the popular goose icon for the Polar Bear Express.



Trainset Manufacturing

Ontario Northland is pleased to share three new trainsets are currently being manufactured for the Northlander service. The Charger + Venture trainsets, built by Siemens, will consist of one locomotive and three passenger cars. One of the passenger cars is a cab car which means it can travel bi-directionally.

Passengers can look forward to comfortable seating with integrated power outlets and USB charging ports. The trainsets will also feature wide aisles, large adjustable tray tables, and overhead reading lights.

Recently, Ontario Northland was excited to visit the Siemens manufacturing plant to view the progress being made on the new trainsets. All three sets are progressing through the manufacturing process at varying stages, with an expected delivery date in 2026.





Construction Update

Providing a safe, accessible and reliable service starts the moment our customers step on to the platform.

That is why construction is now underway for Northlander stop locations, north of North Bay. These stops will see enhancements to station platforms, parking areas and pathways to ensure accessibility for all passengers. The construction will also include adding lighting, CCTV and installing new amenities such as bike racks, Wi-Fi and wayfinding signage.

What's Next?

This is the first phase of stop construction along the corridor. In 2025, stops in South River, Gravenhurst, Bracebridge and Huntsville, will receive the same improvements.

Temagami, Temiskaming Shores, Kirkland Lake, Matheson, South River, Gravenhurst, Bracebridge and Huntsville will also see the installation of premanufactured shelters, so passengers have a safe, heated place to wait for the train.

We look forward to sharing more of our progress as we continue to move closer to delivering a transportation option that enhances how people move to, from, and across the province.

Feel free to reach out to pr@ontarionorthland.ca with any questions.



ON VIEWS

Scan this QR code for online photo galleries and more.

Career Progression at Ontario Northland

Ontario Northland prides itself on providing opportunities for professional development and growth for employees. Two examples of career advancement within the company are those of Amanda Gravel and Jori Maxwell, both who started their careers as Production Workers and have advanced to the role of Engine Attendants at the Diesel Shop.

Gravel's journey with Ontario Northland began in August 2022, when she started as a Production Worker after having worked in the automotive industry where she managed the detail wash bay at a local dealership.

"My previous role equipped me with valuable skills and when I joined Ontario Northland, I found the perfect environment to grow. Within a year, I bid on the position of Engine Attendant and after going through the training process I got the job," says Gravel.

Her daily tasks are diverse, ranging from moving locomotives in the yard, operating a track mobile, using a forklift, to cleaning engine parts with the PROSECO, a specialized machine for cleaning engine components.

"The training process taught me everything I needed to know," she says. "I had one-on-one sessions with experienced trainers for both the track mobile and locomotives. I had comprehensive forklift training, and I had to complete a one-day course on e-rules, which focuses on engine attendant rules and safety regulations."

Maxwell began her career at Ontario Northland in December 2022 and says, "being an Engine Attendant is a role I have grown to cherish."

Maxwell is part of the night shift crew and says, "Transitioning to this

role was both exciting and daunting. Initially, I knew very little about working with locomotives. I was asked to cover a 90-day shift as a Production Worker, which eventually led to my placement on a spare list and then I received subsequent training as an Engine Attendant."



She says despite some initial worry, the unwavering support and encouragement from her colleagues was instrumental in this successful transition.

"Working the night shift presents unique challenges, but the rewards are immense. There is a sense of pride when we see a locomotive we have worked on, out on the tracks. Each locomotive carries a piece of our efforts, and it is gratifying to see them in action."

The stability and opportunities at Ontario Northland have been transformative for both Gravel and Maxwell.

"Ontario Northland's values of safety, focus on the path ahead, and a family-oriented approach resonates with me deeply," says

Gravel. "The company provides all the necessary safety equipment and training, ensuring we can perform our jobs safely. They also offer a supportive environment for families, understanding the importance of work-life balance."

Maxwell echoes that sentiment, "You can see that core value of 'never stop caring' in action. It's in the way supervisors and colleagues interact and support one another. They genuinely care about our well-being, always ready to offer support and guidance."

Gravel and Maxwell's career progress reflects the company's commitment to employee development.

"I'm incredibly proud of how far I've come," says Maxwell. "From a Production Worker to an Engine Attendant, the path has been challenging but rewarding. The camaraderie, opportunities, and the pride of contributing to something significant make every moment worthwhile. I can't imagine doing anything else."



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.



Work Safe Award Winners

Keith Dobbs, Kevin Weiler and Vince Legett, RRC

Keith Dobbs, Kevin Weiler, and Vince Legett have been instrumental in developing two crucial job safety analyses (JSAs): “Testing with Load Bank” and “Battery Cleaning, Filling, Removal, and Inspection.”

This team identified several high-risk tasks within their department and recognized the need for detailed procedures to ensure these tasks are carried out safely. Their diligence in hazard identification and reduction has resulted in comprehensive and effective training documents that enhance safety awareness for all staff members in their area. Their preparation, development, and thorough review of the procedures demonstrate their unwavering commitment to health and safety. Keith, Kevin, and Vince have shown exceptional dedication to hazard reduction and have significantly enhanced communication regarding safety protocols within their department.

Reintroducing ONLearn!

As an organization, Ontario Northland is committed to the growth of our most valuable assets: our employees. As part of our commitment to fostering a culture of continuous learning and professional development, we have been growing our Learning Management System (LMS), ONLearn. This system is home to the training and development programs within our organization that are available to our employees across all divisions, and external users like new hires, contractors and lawyers.

ONLearn houses our ever-growing library of self-paced online courses, in categories like Change Management, DEI, Health and Safety, Leadership, and more. It also highlights different in-person training events like

New Employee Orientation, our annual Leadership Development Program, and traditional Health & Safety trainings.

ONLearn also rewards employees for completing training using the points redemption shop. The more training you complete in the system, the more points you earn. The more points you earn, the more you can redeem for Ontario Northland merchandise!

You can log into ONLearn and continue your learning journey with single sign-on (SSO) here:

<https://onlearn.myontc.ca>

North Bay Motor Coach Maintenance Facility Expansion Nearing Completion

The North Bay Motor Coach Maintenance Facility is on the verge of completing a substantial expansion that has been in progress for nearly a year. This addition marks a new chapter in Ontario Northland's on-going commitment to growth and operational efficiency.

The new space will house a new stores warehouse and is designed to streamline inventory management by enhancing part storage and retrieval of parts. Staff will have easier access to the parts they need, reducing downtime and increasing productivity.

"We are really looking forward to opening this new addition to our facility," says Ken Grube, Director of Motor Coach Operations. "Having more space will help us catalogue, store and access the parts our staff need for motor coach maintenance. It will also carry us forward on our Enterprise Asset Management journey, enabling a timely delivery of parts to the shop floor when they are required," he adds.

In addition to the stores warehouse, the expansion includes modern office spaces and a dedicated training room. The new office spaces will accommodate customer service and motor coach operational employees, fostering team collaboration. With ample room and technology for both virtual and in-person meetings, the new boardroom will help during staff onboarding, training, as well as daily operations.

As expansion nears completion, there is much to look forward to. The new spaces represent not just physical growth, but also a commitment to continual improvement and excellence. The expanded facility will be equipped to meet the demands of an ever-evolving industry, and workflow will benefit from leveraging these new resources to enhance service delivery.



Together, we better our workplace by demonstrating company values.

Our company values have been scrambled!

Unscramble the words to solve the puzzle and you could win a \$100 gift card for the Ontario Northland Merchandise Shop.

Reminder: You must be logged in to the Dispatch to submit your answers.

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Safety is core to everything we do. We do not settle for less, for our people or our customers—even when operating pressures make it tough to do so.

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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.

Verne Ostp Rangic.

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.

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

Deal Hte Awy.

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



Submit your answers on The Dispatch by scanning the QR code.

<https://dispatch.ontarionorthland.ca/content/form/676989c89728f734b3791f65>



Green Vests are Part of Ontario Northland's Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Policy.

A reminder that green vest requirements came into effect in 2024. This new addition to the PPE Policy was established to promote safe work environments by ensuring employees can quickly identify individuals that are visiting or working in unfamiliar areas.

Trainees, visitors, employees who infrequently work on or near the track, and all employees with less than 12 months of service in any location requiring PPE must wear the green vest.

Note that green vests are a stores item. For more information, please visit MyPolicies and review the Personal Protective Equipment Policy.

Our Team at the Ontario Northland North Bay Battalion Game





Innovative Wheel Impact Load Detector System Enhances Railway Safety

Ontario Northland has made a significant stride toward enhancing safety and efficiency with the implementation of the Wheel Impact Load Detector (WILD) system. This advanced technology is a game-changer in detecting damaged wheels and ensuring the smooth operation of trains while reducing potential track damage.

Director of Training and Regulatory Affairs in Rail Transportation, Michael Rennie, outlined the key features and benefits of this cutting-edge system. The WILD system, primarily sourced from LB Foster, a leading manufacturer in this field, is comprised of an instrumented 200-foot section of track embedded with sensors and strain gauges. These components are meticulously welded and glued into the rail and supported by special concrete ties to ensure stability.

“The sensors are connected by fiber optics to a computer system housed in a nearby bungalow, which measures the force exerted by train wheels on the track,” explains Rennie. “This setup is crucial for weighing the car and measuring the instantaneous force applied by each wheel, with the added benefit of providing the weight of each rail car, which can help identify cars that are overloaded or loaded improperly.”

The fundamental purpose of the WILD system is to identify wheels with flat spots, a common issue that arises when wheels become damaged, fatigued, or have uneven wear. “When a flat spot comes into contact with the rail, it creates a substantial impact that a round wheel would not, leading to potential damage to the track infrastructure,” Rennie noted. The system’s ability to detect these anomalies promptly helps prevent further deterioration and ensures timely maintenance.

“The significance of having this system in place cannot be overstated. It is an invaluable tool for maintaining the safety and integrity of our railway operations,” Rennie adds.

The implementation of the WILD system is an important enhancement to Ontario Northland’s railway infrastructure, further contributing to the longevity and reliability of the railway.



New Voluntary Investment Savings Plans

Ontario Northland employees now have access to the following investment plans through our partnership with Life Long Planning Group and Canada Life:

- Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP)
- Tax-Free Savings Account (TFSA)
- Non-Registered Savings Plan (NRSP)

These services are entirely optional. The decision to enroll should be based on employees personal financial goals.

How to Get Started

Contact Amy Oliveira, our Life Long Planning Group plan administrator to go through the application process and discuss your options.

Amy Oliveira,
Plan Administrator
705-707-5574, ext. 211
amy@llpg.ca

Enterprise Asset Management in 2025

Since 2021, Ontario Northland has been undertaking important work on the Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) program.

As we prepare to introduce this program within Rail Infrastructure, Rail Mechanical, RRC Equipment, Diesel, Fab, Wheel and Paint, Facilities, Non-Revenue Fleet and Supply Chain Management, the EAM team wanted to take a moment to remind employees what this program is and how it will improve our day-to-day work.

What is Enterprise Asset Management (EAM)?

At its core, EAM is about using technology to help manage and maintain the things that keep our organization running – our assets. An asset is any resource owned or operated by Ontario Northland that is expected to provide future economic benefits.

For Example:

- Equipment (e.g., freight cars, locomotives, machinery, tools)
- Facilities and infrastructure (e.g., buildings, tracks, signals, bridges, culverts)
- Fleet (e.g., motorcoaches, passenger rail, and non-revenue fleet vehicles)

The EAM program is designed to enhance how we track and manage assets across Ontario Northland. By working closely with each department, the team will identify and digitize all assets, enabling divisions to utilize EAM software for asset management, maintenance tracking; and repair activities through work orders. This process follows the Guiding Principles for Work Execution Management, with Supply Chain Management (SCM) providing support for inventory planning and management.

The goal is to optimize asset usage, minimize downtime, and ensure proactive maintenance. By planning and scheduling maintenance in advance, we can extend asset life, reduce costs, and provide safe, reliable transportation to customers.

Why this Matters?

- **Regulatory compliance:** The Ministry of Transportation has mandated that Ontario Northland digitize our asset management processes.
- **Improved organization:** Centralized asset data will enhance decision-making, identify trends, and improve operational efficiency.
- **Greater efficiency:** Proactive maintenance planning will reduce unplanned repairs and downtime.
- **Modernization:** EAM is an industry standard, ensuring Ontario Northland remains equipped for long-term success.

While we recognize that adapting to this change may bring challenges, the EAM team is committed to supporting this transition. Ultimately, these improvements will positively impact daily operations and the overall performance of our organization.

We look forward to sharing project progress throughout 2025.





Meet our Pension and Benefits Advisor: Chantal Sabo

As part of Ontario Northland’s commitment to ensuring a comprehensive approach to compensation and rewards, the organization has introduced a dedicated Compensation Team led by Nicole Filiatrault, in her new role as Total Rewards Manager. Reporting to Nicole are two new roles including Total Rewards Specialist, Breanne Boileau and Pension and Benefits Advisor, Chantal Sabo.

Chantal started with Ontario Northland in the summer of 2024. As part of her new role, Chantal is available to help employees make the most of their pension and benefits.

What are your key priorities in this role?

Chantal: As the Benefits and Pension Advisor, I work closely with ClaimSecure and Ontario Pension Board (OPB) to provide support to employees and retirees. My key priorities for this year will be completing the pension audit and improving Ontario Northland’s retirement process.

Why are pensions and benefits important for employees?

Chantal: Good pension and benefits aren’t just perks – they provide employees with more financial security for the future, the ability to plan for life’s uncertainties and savings on out-of-pocket mental and physical health expenses.

How will you support our employees?

Chantal: Employees are welcome to contact me directly for assistance with their pension and benefits. Some reasons you may want to reach out to me include:

- To inform us you’re planning on retiring.
- To confirm when your benefits will be active.
- To update your Life Insurance and AD&D beneficiaries.
- If you have questions about what types of benefits you might have or why a claim may have been denied.
- For information about travel benefits or life insurance.

When should employees contact providers directly?

Chantal: There are times when employees should contact our providers directly. ClaimSecure can assist with any questions about specific coverage or remaining balances. For example, if you’d like to know how much you will be covered on a new pair of glasses. OPB can confirm the date you are eligible for retirement and how much you will receive.

Chantal Sabo	General HR Inquiries	OPB	ClaimSecure
Chantal.sabo@ontarionorthland.ca 705-472-4500 ext. 277	If you have general inquiries about HR topics you can always reach out to your division’s HR Business Partner.	416-364-5035 or 1-800-668-6203 clientservices@opb.ca www.opb.ca	1-888-363-7512 service@ClaimSecure.com www.claimsecure.com

What are total rewards?

Total rewards considers both monetary and non-monetary incentives that a company offers to its employees. This includes salary, health and well-being benefits, retirement savings, paid time off, work-life balance, career development opportunities and other benefits.



Empowering Rural Businesses Across the Northeast

Ontario Northland's freight services play a crucial role in supporting businesses across the northeast. The 675-mile rail network spans from Moosonee to North Bay and from Calstock to Rouyn-Noranda. This extensive network enables the shipment of a diverse range of goods, including metals, minerals, forest products, agricultural products, chemicals, petroleum, and more.

Offering transportation solutions that are both affordable and responsive to the needs of customers, Ontario Northland provides premium service to lower volume customers, at competitive rates. In turn, boosting economic development for businesses in the northeast and offering seamless connections to global markets.

"One example of our ability to cater to customer need is a lumber mill customer located along the rail network," says Steve Loranger, Director of Rail Transportation. "Due to its proximity to the rail network, this company can tag on carloads to existing freight schedules. By maximizing these schedules, this customer simplifies the logistics involved in reaching markets across North America and leverages affordable opportunities for growth simply by adding carloads when required," says Loranger. "We are able to stop the freight along our corridor when required, which is a service not all rail companies can provide customers," he adds.

Ontario Northland also caters to customer needs by further developing transload sites across the corridor. Adding transload sites simplifies access to the rail network for customers by reducing the logistics of planning for the 'first and last mile'. Currently, Ontario

Northland is working to enhance its capacity for lumber transloading by expanding the transload site in Englehart from a four-car lumber terminal to a facility that can accommodate up to 12-16 cars.

Other ways Ontario Northland contributes to economic development through tailored customer solutions is by offering flexible service windows so products can reach their destination in a timely manner and providing ancillary services, like storing customers' unused boxcars, when they require it.

"Another example of a tailored business solution is the service we provide to propane suppliers in the northeast. Englehart, Porquis and Halnor are home to propane transload sites, which allows companies to provide rural and northern communities with a cheaper solution for household heating," says Loranger.

By working together with our customers, Ontario Northland continues to play a crucial role in rural business development in the northeast. Affordability, convenience, dependable service during inclement weather and access to larger markets continue to help businesses plan and grow in the region.

"We are excited to continue to contribute to the economic development of the region," says Loranger. "We look forward to continuing to work with our customers to provide transportation solutions that ensure businesses continue to have the opportunity to grow and prosper."



Stay Informed With the Weekly Update

For the past six months, the Marketing and Communications Department has been distributing the Weekly Update, a company-wide email that provides employees with everything they need to stay up to date on what's happening at Ontario Northland that week.

The update includes new employees, retirement notices, job opportunities, company updates and news, important events and dates, employee kudos and more.

Log in to your Ontario Northland email each Monday to find the latest edition of Ontario Northland's Weekly Update.

"We have received positive feedback on the recognition section from employees," says Julia Cole, Internal Communications Specialist. "It is a great way to highlight our accomplishments and acknowledge our collective efforts as a team."

Kudos

A recent passenger submitted positive feedback after a trip to North Bay with Motor Coach Operator, George Hughes. He was complimented on his great sense of humor, excellent customer service and kindness, specifically the extra care he gave to a group of senior passengers. Great work demonstrating our value, Never Stop Caring, George!

"During a recent fire alarm and station evacuation in Cochrane, Vanessa Ouellet and Samantha Whitelock did an amazing job keeping everyone safe, calm and informed. Afterwards, Vanessa and Samantha presented valuable feedback to help us improve our processes. Kudos to Vanessa and Samantha on their commitment to safety."

**Angela Girard,
Passenger Services**

"The Signals and Communications team consistently demonstrates exceptional dedication by managing emergencies, performing routine maintenance, and supporting additional projects simultaneously. Their ability to prioritize tasks and deliver results under pressure ensures our operations remain safe and reliable. Their efforts are essential to our continued success"

**Kevin Dube, Manager,
Signals & Communications**

Do you have news that you want to share? Email news@ontarionorthland.ca