

Chair's Greetings

Thank you Andrew and good morning everyone! – Welcome to the virtual AGM portion of the conference ... our theme this year is SHIFT. When the conference theme was created last fall the organizing committee could not have known just how appropriate it would be to what is happening in our world, our industry, and our lives right now. Not to mention the fact that we're all sitting in front of our computers rather than gathering in beautiful Mont Tremblant, Quebec ... if this isn't a shift, I don't know what is!!

<<Merci Andrew, et bonjour à tous ! – Je vous souhaite la bienvenue à notre AGA virtuelle ... dans le cadre de notre conférence dont le thème, cette année, c'est le CHANGEMENT. Lorsque le thème de la conférence a été choisi à l'automne dernier, le comité d'organisation ne pouvait pas savoir qu'il allait être aussi pertinent, étant donné ce qui se passe aujourd'hui sur notre planète, dans notre industrie et dans nos vies. Sans compter que nous sommes tous assis en face de nos ordinateurs, au lieu d'être réunis dans la magnifique région de Mont Tremblant, au Québec... si ce n'est pas un changement, je ne sais pas ce que c'est !!>>

I want to thank you for joining us today. We typically have around 300 attendees at our annual meeting and to have almost that many with us today, under these circumstances, is really great. Thank you all for making the SHIFT. It's not Mont Tremblant, but we're making the best of it.

<<Bien sûr, nous ne sommes pas à Mont Tremblant, mais essayons d'en tirer le meilleur parti possible.>>

It is my absolute honour and privilege to assume the role of CIPH Chair for the 2020 and 2021 term.

This has been a long time in the making and I've come to appreciate that there's a good reason that it takes this long ... there's a lot to learn about what happens inside this association.

It was in the fall of 2012 that Keith VanderVennet, then president of Wolseley Canada, pulled me aside at an off-site meeting and informed me he intended to put my name

forward to take his place on the board as he was returning to the US business. He thought it was a great opportunity for me to make a positive contribution as well as for my own professional growth. At that point I had served on the CMPX planning committee for about 3 terms but that was about the only exposure to CIPH I had at the time. And, actually, if I'm to be completely honest my impression was that CIPH was maybe a bit of a boy's club?? In any event, my appointment needed to be voted on by the Board so I wasn't even sure it would happen. And then it did, and I'm so glad. I was warmly welcomed at the first event that I attended as a new Director which happened to be a long-range planning session. I don't think there could have been a better jumping in point than that because we basically look at the entire scope of what CIPH does. And I have to tell you it was a bit overwhelming and apparent that I had a whole lot to learn. It may not always be obvious but the scope and volume of work that goes into supporting our industry every day is substantial and Ralph Suppa and his team do an amazing job at keeping focus and managing multiple priorities so well.

And what I said about that boy's club thing ... well, that's never been my experience. The board is made up of a group of first-rate professionals who are open, engage in respectful debate and have a sense of both responsibility and accountability for the decisions that are taken on behalf of members. I feel fortunate to be counted among them.

I think this has got to be one of the most challenging and interesting times ever to be in business. We're all well-acquainted with the disruptive forces that our industry is facing ... in fact, disruption has been an ongoing topic at our ABC's over the years as well as the subject of numerous webinars. Including today, when immediately following this session we'll be hearing from Ian Heller on Distribution Will Shift Again but Not Back To Normal.

And if we didn't already have a heightened sense of awareness and urgency around change ... the events of COVID-19 have forced it on us regardless of our state of readiness.

I think about how extremely fortunate we all are to work in an industry that's been deemed "essential". By and large our businesses have been able to continue, because of the critical role we play in the delivery of safe and fresh water and heating and cooling systems that are integral to the well-being and comfort of all Canadians.

However, how we deliver these products and services has changed quite dramatically, at least for now, and to some extent forever. If someone had of told me in February that at Wolseley, we'd be locking our branches and servicing our customers exclusively through curbside service, I would have found that hard to believe. But that's what we've been doing ... and here's the thing ... some amazing insights have emerged ... it turns out that many customers are really liking this way of doing business. I don't recall anyone ever expressly asking for this, but now they want it to continue. And we see examples of this everywhere ... well-established brands like Starbucks making massive changes in their network... for example where they used to focus on the in-store experience they are quickly shifting to On-the-Go experiences doubling down on mobile, curbside and drive-through.

This is a defining moment in time for our industry. A time to not just weather the storm but to come out in an even better position. A time to SHIFT.

When I think about what this means for CIPH and what I'd like to focus on during the course of my term ... there are three areas:

- This this is an association that thrives on networking, and in fact, one the top three reasons that people cite on their membership application for joining is networking. We need to continue to provide opportunities for our members to engage with one another as well as delivering resources and thought leadership on how to navigate the new normal considering the longer-term impacts of Covid-19.
- There are also financial considerations, of course. As you know, our biggest networking events happen in the form of tradeshow which also comprise a significant portion of revenue which helps fund critical activities like government

relations, industry economic and benchmarking data and training, to name a few. We need to think about how to continue to add value with these events while transforming them at the same time.

- In January the CIPH Women's Network held a very successful panel event, a new format for us. One of the factors, among many, that made it so successful was the cross-section of attendees ... women, men, both established in their careers and still in the early stages. This demonstrated that by casting a wider net we have a great opportunity to engage a broader audience and reinforce that this is an attractive industry to build a career. We're going to look at how we can do at least one of these this year.

I look forward to the challenge that I'm sure the next 12 months will bring and do my best to make a positive impact. Ralph and I had already been working out the schedules to ensure that I could visit all 9 regions during my term. It's now uncertain when we can pick that up but I do look forward to visiting as many as possible and as soon as possible.

In closing, I would like to thank my boss Kevin Fancey, President of Wolseley Canada, for his support that makes it possible for me to take on this role and to my great Wolseley team and colleagues for their support along this entire journey.

Thank you for your time this morning and I look forward to working with all of you over the next year.

<<Merci de prendre le temps de participer à cette AGA. Je me réjouis d'avance de travailler avec vous tous au cours des prochains mois.>>

Thank you.

Gail Kaufman
Vice-President of Marketing and eBusiness
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