

Innovation and Skilled Trades Drive Venshore's Success in Ontario's Northwest Manufacturing Sector

Venshore Mechanical is a leader in the manufacturing sector that has displayed a tremendous ability to support Thunder Bay and its growing talent pool. Venshore Mechanical has been recognized as one of the largest industrial multi-trade contractors in Ontario's Northwest. They provide mechanical and fabrication services for a broad range of industries such as forestry, chemical, grain handling and power generation. We had an opportunity to speak with John Jurick, President of Venshore Mechanical who has been with the company since the very beginning, that's 30 years!

Venshore Mechanical has been able to maintain and deliver quality products to its clients, in part by the highly skilled and competent labour force in Thunder Bay. "Thunder Bay is the nucleus of the fabrication industry trade construction workforce, and it contributes to a level of quality that you'd be hard pressed to find elsewhere." noted John Jurick.

When John took over as President of Venshore Mechanical in 2002, he was confronted with declining returns from work in the pulp and paper industry and made the critical decision to expand his business to service Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta. As the gateway to Ontario's Northwest and close proximity to the US border, Thunder Bay offered a great logistical advantage, so he committed to building a new plant in Thunder Bay to be able to supply Western Canada.

In the last 15 years, Thunder Bay has responded to the changing demands of manufacturing industry, keeping pace with a talented skilled workforce that has allowed Venshore to manage and maintain a high standard of quality control. The goal states John, "is to do most of the work here in Thunder Bay and ship the products to other areas so Venshore can enhance its overall company profile."

The Modular Construction Concept is growing, creating ample opportunities for employment, hence; ensuring that there is a steady stream of trade workers is critical. Since Venshore Mechanical was established, they have collaborated with the local colleges and training services to ensure there is an accessible and available talent pool for the industry. Thunder Bay's diversified multi-sector economy has provided a strong base for the development of a skilled and experienced trade workforce that is difficult to replicate anywhere else.

In the next 10 years, Venshore Mechanical hopes to expand its mining group, as well as the ability to provide modular construction in remote areas. This concept allows Venshore to maximize quality in a controlled environment and minimize the impact on clients for construction camp accommodations and other services required in the field.

Venshore Mechanical prides itself on its commitment to instilling a 'family like culture' in the workplace. Employee turnover is relatively low, as most are life time employees that only leave to retire. "The strength of the company comes from our people," says John Jurick. He's a firm believer in social responsibility and protecting the environment, adding, "this is driven by the nature of Thunder Bay and ensuring a quality of life for future generations."

He says he owes his unique family like culture at Venshore Mechanical to being raised well by his father company founder Michael Jurcik. John's advice to up and coming trades people, "if you are looking to build a long-term career in the trades, you can build a great career in Thunder Bay in the next 10-15 years because the demand is high, and the work is rewarding!"