

William Clark Achievement Award Recipient

2026 William Clark Achievement Award Recipient:
-Rick Berwick

A Career Dedicated to Better Fire Protection in Canada

Rick Berwick's career in the Canadian fire protection industry spans more than five decades and reflects a rare combination of technical mastery, entrepreneurial leadership, and sustained industry service. As a founder of Classic Fire Protection and a long-standing leader within the Canadian Automatic Sprinkler Association (CASA), Rick's influence has helped shape both how fire protection services are delivered and how the industry collaborates nationally.

Building a Foundation Through the Trades

Rick entered the fire protection industry in May 1973, beginning his career as a sprinkler and fire protection apprentice with Automatic Sprinkler Canada in Mississauga. From the outset, his career was grounded in hands-on field experience and formal technical training. He later joined Auto Sentry Systems Ltd., a branch of Automatic Sprinkler Corporation of America, where he continued to broaden his exposure to large-scale fire protection systems.

In 1978, Rick earned his Red Seal Sprinkler Fitter and Fire Protection Installer license, followed by interprovincial certification in 1980. His technical education was completed through George Brown College in Toronto, where all required terms of college training were fulfilled. These early years established a strong technical and regulatory foundation that would later define his leadership approach.

Following the closure of Auto Sentry Systems in 1981, Rick joined Wormald Fire Systems, working extensively on special hazard applications including Halon 1301, CO_2, foam, deluge, and pre-action systems. This experience placed him at the forefront of complex and high-risk fire protection environments.

"*I got into this business because I wanted to learn something real, something that mattered, and from day one I knew fire protection wasn't just about systems, it was about people's lives.*"

Expanding the Scope of Fire Protection Services

In 1983, Rick played a pivotal role in expanding Wormald Fire Systems' service capabilities by establishing an Inspections and Service Division within the Small Contracts Department. This initiative significantly broadened the company's expertise beyond sprinklers to include fire alarms, extinguishers, clean agent systems, kitchen suppression, and wet and dry chemical systems.

Under Rick's leadership, the division began managing full fire protection inspection programs for high-rise office towers and major automotive manufacturing plants, including facilities operated by General Motors, Chrysler, Honda, and American Motors. At the time, this comprehensive, multi-discipline inspection model was largely uncharted territory for sprinkler contractors in Ontario and helped redefine expectations for integrated fire protection services.

Founding Classic Fire Protection

In 1988, Rick left Wormald Fire Systems to co-found Classic Fire Protection Inc. with three industry partners. From its inception, Classic was built on a "one-stop-shop" philosophy, offering sprinkler installations alongside full inspection and service programs. The company quickly attracted some of the GTA's larger clients including office towers, insurance companies, and automotive manufacturers.

A defining element of Classic's early success was Rick's focus on developing inspection reports and procedures that exceeded minimum requirements. These systems incorporated NFPA and ULC standards while fully addressing Ontario and National Fire Code requirements. The resulting documentation and methodologies were widely respected by clients, Authorities Having Jurisdiction, and insurance providers, setting a higher benchmark for industry practice.

By 1995, Rick had assumed the role of President, and by 2004 he became the sole owner of Classic Fire Protection. Under his leadership, the company grew to more than 75 employees and multiple offices, driven by a strong emphasis on apprenticeship training and the recruitment of experienced fire protection professionals.

"*We didn't set out to be big; we set out to be good and to do the job right, every time.*"

Leadership Within CASA and Industry Advocacy

Rick's influence extended well beyond his own organization. Beginning in 1996, he became actively involved with CASA, recognizing the importance of collaboration, advocacy, and consistent standards across the industry.

Elected to the CASA Board of Directors in 2002 as the Ontario Representative, Rick went on to serve in numerous leadership roles, including Treasurer, Executive Committee member, and ultimately Chair of the Board — a position he held from 2010 to 2021. During this period, he represented CASA nationally and internationally, including at the International Fire Sprinkler Association (IFSA) conference in Copenhagen.

Rick also contributed extensively to technical and labour initiatives, serving on NFPA 25 technical committees, provincial and national Joint Training Advisory Committees (JTAC), and acting as Ontario's representative in multiple national collective bargaining agreements for sprinkler fitters, fabrication personnel, and fire alarm technicians. His involvement helped strengthen workforce standards, training consistency, and labour stability across Canada.

"*You don't build a stronger industry alone, you build it together, in conversation, with shared goals and shared responsibility.*"

Strategic Growth and Lasting Legacy

In 2015, Rick led Classic Fire Protection into strategic acquisitions, expanding its capabilities through the purchase of a full-service fire protection company, a licensed engineering firm, and a fire extinguisher and safety company. These acquisitions strengthened service offerings while preserving long-standing client and employee relationships.

In 2020, Rick partnered with McCain Capital Partners, enabling further growth and positioning the company for national expansion. The following year, Classic Fire Protection merged with Forest City Fire Protection and industry partners Apex Fabrication & Supply, Northern Sprinkler Design, and Edge Fire Protection to form **Classic Fire + Life Safety Inc.** Rick's leadership and vision were instrumental in shaping the organization's culture and long-term direction.

Today, Classic Fire + Life Safety is recognized as one of Canada's leading and fastest growing fire protection companies, with operations spanning five provinces and in the United States — a testament to the foundation Rick helped build.

A Well-Earned Recognition

Rick Berwick's career reflects unwavering dedication to life safety, technical excellence, and the advancement of the fire protection profession. His leadership has influenced not only the growth of Classic Fire + Life Safety, but also the standards, training, and collaborative spirit of the Canadian fire protection industry as a whole.

The Canadian Automatic Sprinkler Association's recognition of Rick Berwick honors a career defined by service, integrity, and a lasting commitment to protecting lives and property across Canada.

"*If we saved one life because we cared enough to do our best work, then every effort was worth it.*"

2025 William Clark Achievement Award Recipient:
-Bryan Callaghan

Bryan was born and raised in Guelph, Ontario. Upon completing high school in 1974, he was hired as an office clerk by the International Malleable Iron Company, a foundry in Guelph that manufactured threaded pipe fittings and custom castings for John Deere, Victaulic and others. Following in the footsteps of his mother and grandfather, he represented the third generation of his family to work at IMICO.

In 1979, he was offered and accepted a position with Taylor Forge Canada, a manufacturer of steel welding fittings and flanges operating out of Hamilton, Ontario. At 22, he was relocated by them from Guelph to their new facility in Edmonton which had been newly created to service the burgeoning oilfield business in Alberta.

After 7 years in the oilfield supply business, he was hired in 1986 by Martin Veltman, owner of Concept Fire Protection Supply to manage their new branch operation based in Edmonton. This marked the beginning of a sales career in the fire sprinkler industry that would continue for the next 36 years.

In 1991, the Victaulic Company of Canada offered Bryan the position of Fire Protection Specialist for the Province of Ontario and moved him from Alberta back home to Guelph. At this time, Victaulic was not yet a manufacturer of fire sprinklers but manufactured many components used in that market. In this capacity, he continued to expand his knowledge of the sprinkler business and began relationships with industry colleagues that would last for decades to come. He received the Victaulic President's Club sales award in 1993.

Central Sprinkler Company of Lansdale, PA offered Bryan a position as Canadian Sales Manager in 1996. He accepted that offer making him the first Canadian based representative of the six US fire sprinkler manufacturers that served the market in Canada at that time. In 1999, Tyco International purchased Central Sprinkler, combined that product line with earlier acquisitions and created Tyco Fire Protection Products. Bryan managed the Canadian sprinkler operations of TFPP for the next 23 years earning three North American Outstanding Sales Achievement awards during that time. Tyco became a brand of Johnson Controls after their merger in 2016.

Bryan has been actively involved with the Canadian Automatic Sprinkler Association since 1996, but his direct involvement began in 2007 when he was elected to the Board of Directors, serving as the Chair of the Associate Manufacturer/Supplier Committee (AMS).

He was subsequently elected by his colleagues to three additional terms, serving as representative of the AMS on the CASA Board of Directors until he resigned the position in 2019 after 12 years of service to the Association. During his board tenure he also served as Chair of the Long Range Planning Committee and as Treasurer from 2010-19. He was inducted into the Canadian Fire Sprinkler Hall of Fame in 2024.

Bryan retired from Johnson Controls in 2022 after a 36-year career in fire protection. He lives with his wife Helen in Wasaga Beach, Ontario pursuing their interest in travel and thoroughly enjoying the retirement lifestyle.

2024 William Clark Achievement Award Recipient:
-Bernie Beliveau

Well for me, it all started in the late 70's with a trip down to the U.A. Local 179 in Regina Saskatchewan. There I enrolled in an apprenticeship program and began work with Vipond Automatic Sprinkler Company (Jean Bonneau) as a Sprinkler Installer working throughout the province of Saskatchewan.

After completing the required man hours and schooling (Red River College - first year intake, George Brown College - second and third intake), I wrote and successfully completed my Interprovincial Red Seal in the province of Ontario in 1984.

I continued my employment in Saskatchewan as a foreman / supervisor on many commercial / industrial mining projects throughout the province until 1987, at which time I relocated to South Western Ontario and began work with Grinnell Fire Protection (Paul Harding), transferring to U.A. Local 853 Sprinkler Fitters of Ontario. After a couple of years, I was promoted to London Branch Manager and continued to work until the Grinnell / Wormald merger. Seeking an opportunity for growth and career advancement in the industrial automotive / petrochemical sector, I went to work with Nichols-Radtke as a manager in Windsor, Ontario reporting to George Phalen in their Hamilton office.

In January 1996, after lengthy conversations with Jack Priest / Dave Rooke at Vipond, Jack convinced me to return to Vipond as a Regional Manager for London, Kitchener, Hamilton and Windsor offices. In 2000, I relocated to the Toronto office, then promoted to Vice President of Fire Group Operations for Canada in 2001 and shortly thereafter Vipond Operations in the U.K. In 2015, I assumed the role of President and CEO for Vipond Inc and all of its subsidiaries.

January 1st, 2022, in preparation for my retirement Mike Farren assumed the role of President and CEO of Vipond Canada. Today, I remain a Senior Advisor.

I must say that during my 43+ years in the industry, I have met a lot of great people. Had the opportunity to sit on: JTAC (two terms), negotiations for the following National Road Sprinkler Fitter Collective Agreement (30+ years), National Fabrication Sprinkler Collective Agreement and participate in associations such as CASA, BASA and NFSA to name a few.

I have also been fortunate to have three sons who are Journeymen Sprinkler Fitters currently working in the Sprinkler trade.

"Bernie has been an integral part of negotiations for several decades as part of the 'National Road Sprinkler Fitter Collective Agreement' and the 'National Sprinkler Fabrication Collective Agreement' between CASA and the U.A. With his many years of diverse experience, he has brought a unique labour and management perspective to bargaining, resulting in one of the best and stable C.B.A.'s in Canada. We can be grateful as an industry for what Bernie has contributed to the healthy growth of our trade right across Canada," says CASA President, John Galt.

2023 William Clark Achievement Award Recipient:
-Jean-Pierre Asselin -

Jean-Pierre began his career in Fire Protection in 1985 with Viking Fire Protection as Project Engineer and then coordinator of the Technical Division. He worked on fire alarm systems, special hazard projects and worked to introduce the use of personal computers in the company's operations, from word processing and spread sheet applications to CAD.

In 1993, he became General Manager and then Vice-President of FireFlex Systems. He was involved in the research and development of new technologies and products: integrated fire protection systems, release control panels, compressed air foam systems (CAF) for fixed piping network and vacuum technology. He also participated in many fire tests with the National Research Council Canada during the research for the CAF technology.

In 2007, he became president of the Polygon Group, which included Polygon Security, Viking Fire Protection and FireFlex systems. His main objective was to develop team work and to improve the operations. He created different committees as his approach for improving the communication and using employees' expertise to take the best decisions.

During his career, Jean-Pierre served on the following organizations:

- Society of Fire Protection Engineers. President of the St-Lawrence Chapter from 1992 to 1994.
- National Fire Protection Association. Member on the Technical committee for the NFPA 11, Standard for Foam systems from 2004 to 2016. Actively participated at the creation of new chapter for Compressed air foam systems.
- CASA director from 2008 to 2017.

He retired in 2022, but still enjoys working a few hours during the year, assisting as needed.

Over the years, he had the chance to work with different aspects of the Fire Protection industry. The highlight was the pleasure of team work and the chance to meet many people in the industry that shared the same passion for Fire protection.

2022 William Clark Achievement Award Recipient:
- Grant R. Neal -

Grant entered the Fire Sprinkler Industry in May 1974 and was extremely proud to be a part of it until his retirement in 2016. Grant joined Vipond Automatic Sprinkler Company Ltd. in Mississauga, Ontario as a draftsman designing fire sprinkler systems. In 1980 he transitioned into learning estimating and project management. Always open to change Grant developed a computerized estimating program that replaced the "pad and pencil" approach to estimating. The program was adopted in Vipond branches across Canada and was instrumental in standardizing contract construction language across the company.

In March 1996 Grant was promoted to Branch General Manager of the Mississauga location. In 2001 he was appointed National Fire Group Manager to oversee all branches coast to coast. Vipond was purchased by API Group Inc in November 1996. Vipond Inc. operated with minimal oversight from their American parent company and expanded significantly adding fire alarm sales and service to their fire protection business. Grant was promoted to Vice President of the Fire Group in 2001. He remained in that role until his retirement following 42 years with the same company.

Grant became involved in C.A.S.A. in 1996. He believed strongly in the role of the Association to promote the Fire Sprinkler Industry. He was more than happy to offer his time and ideas toward this goal. During his time with CASA Grant participated on the Executive Committee, the Long Range Planning Committee, the Ontario Regional Group, the ORG Residential Committee and the CASA National Negotiating Committee. Grant was appointed Chairman of the CASA Board in 2008, a position he held for 3 years. He remained active on the Board until his retirement.

Grant was instrumental in developing a residential sprinkler department within Vipond Mississauga. He believed strongly in CASA's efforts to push for government legislation to require fire sprinklers in residential construction. In 2005 Grant was appointed as a Director of the newly created non-profit Ontario Corporation – Fire Sprinkler Alliance for Everyone (FireSafe) Inc. This Corporation was created to lobby for mandatory residential fire sprinklers in residential construction. As part of the ORG Residential Committee, Grant was on the negotiating committee for Union Workers creating the first National Labour Agreement for the Residential Sprinkler Installers.

Vipond Inc. was active in supporting of the Canadian Construction Association (CCA). Grant became the Vipond representative to CCA in 2001. Grant became an unofficial CASA representative within CCA keeping the CASA Board apprised of CCA initiatives and bringing CASA issues to the table as necessary within CCA. During his years with CCA Grant was active on the Trade Contractor Council becoming Vice-Chair in 2007 and Chairman a few years later. Grant was also a member of the Executive Board of the CCA for several years before he retired.

Upon retiring Grant converted his long time hobbies into a part-time business involving metal fabricating and woodworking. He enjoys time at the cottage with his wife Donna. He is a proud father of two, Sheryl and Scott, and now a proud grandfather to little Cash Neal. He is also proud that his son followed him into the Fire Sprinkler business and is making his own mark within the industry.

Grant never viewed his time with Vipond as just a job. He was, and still is, passionate about the company he worked for and about the industry he was part of. Grant was very proud when he learned he would be the 2022 William Clark Achievement Award Recipient. Many people have heard him say "If you are not part of the solution- you are part of the problem!" Grant looks back on his career with pride and feels satisfied that he worked to achieve positive changes within the fire protection industry.

2021 William Clark Achievement Award Recipient:
- Richard M. Allan -

Richard Allan, began his Fire Sprinkler Industry career in Edmonton in 1979 as a Junior Sprinkler Designer with the Automatic Sprinkler Corp. An acquisition by Wormald Fire Systems led to a new work environment in which Rick flourished. He soon accepted a Lead Designer position and not long after his leadership awarded him to the roll of Design Manager in the early 80s. Along the way he gained a Gold Seal Certification in Project Management.

Always seeking a new challenge, Rick accepted the Service Manager position in 1983 and soon blossomed into a natural salesperson and leader. Rick was soon excelling in Special Hazard and Industrial Project sales. Over the next 14 years, he and their Management Team gained the respect of their Tyco Senior Management Team, employees, competitors, suppliers, and customers, alike, not just in Alberta, but across Canada and the US. Coming an unheard of second place to the mighty Grinnell Fire/Tyco of Los Angeles in Tyco's year end North American Districts competition in the early 90s. Achieved Tyco Fire & Security Aquilla Club status for top sales and standard margin performance. He was promoted in 1997 to District General Manager of SimplexGrinnell Edmonton.

The Tyco Leadership Team was constantly looking for talent in their ranks and developing their skillset, knowledge, and ability to lead. He was the recipient of Tyco Fire & Security (Worldwide) Management Excellence Award (200, 2001 & 2002) and Tyco Presidents Award (2004). Rick was promoted to Canadian Sprinkler Operations Manager (2008 – 2014) based in Calgary.

Rick has also served on the following Boards and Committees for many years:

- The Canadian Automatic Sprinkler Association's B.O.D. (2002-2008) as the Alberta Rep., and (2009-2013) as the Tyco National Rep.
- Calgary Construction Association – Director

Rick and his wife Rose are enjoying their retirement! From golfing to RVing, finding that perfect beach and the elusive hot Slot. A better friend, husband and co-worker of his caliber would be hard to find.

2020 William Clark Achievement Award Recipient:
- Tony Spiteri -
After graduating from Humber College in Architectural Design, Tony started his Fire Protection career with Grinnell Fire Protection in 1971 being hired by Orval Long, as a junior estimator assisting the sales department in layouts and material costing.

After spending the next two years as a junior designer for both large and small contracts division, assisting senior designers in the preparation and submittal of drawings to both Insurance companies and Fire Department for their approval as well as preparing shop fabrication lists.

In 1973 moved from design to small contract sales (where he worked under the tutelage of both Fred Ames and Roy Bird) and was involved in all aspects of service and small sprinkler renovations and sprinkler upgrades.

In 1975 opened and managed a sub-branch office in Kitchener -Waterloo serving London, and the Niagara peninsula along with assisting and pricing projects in the Windsor office.

In 1984 returned to Toronto as Chief estimator and in 1985 was promoted District Design Manager, responsible for the supervision, of design and material procurement for all contracts within the Toronto District (which included Kitchener, Windsor, and Winnipeg offices).

In 1991 he left Grinnell Fire protection to become the Contracts Manager at Life Safety Systems and in 1993 returned to Grinnell Fire Protection as a senior sales representative for the Toronto branch and was later involved in International Sales,working on and securing projects in Kyrgyzstan, Peru and Madagascar.

In 2005 he joined Vipond Fire Protection as Toronto Branch General Manager responsible for and overseeing all fire protection operations within the GTA.

In 2013 moved from Branch General Manager to National Business Development Manager (mechanical division) where he enjoyed working on special hazard projects within the Automotive Industries both within Canada and the U.S.

Over the years I have been involved in all aspects of the Sprinkler Industry serving on the Technical Committee for CASA (22 years) and Chairman of the Ontario Regional Committee for over 20 years.

As part of the committee he was involved on several sub-committees dealing with regional sprinkler issues.

Retired from full time work in 2016, but still enjoys working part-time at Vipond assisting as needed on special projects.

When not working part-time Tony and Mary enjoy traveling and spending time with their two daughters Andrea and Lisa, along with their four amazing Grandchildren Marcus, Chloe, Isla and Charlie.

2019 William Clark Achievement Award Recipient:
- René Bélanger -

In 1970 René completed his bachelor degree in Accounting & Administration at Montreal University. He passed his provincial chartered accountant examination during the fall of 1970 on his first attempt. Then he worked for an auditors firm "Touche Ross and Co" for more than 3 years. In 1972, after 2 full years of practice, he obtained his Certificate of Chartered Accountant (CA).

René started his career in fire protection on April 1974 when he was hired by Jacques Paquette (a former CASA Director) as the Viking Fire Protection controller.

In 1976, he became Secretary-Treasurer of the Company and also member of the Executive Committee. In 1979, René was one of the initiators to purchase a company in the anti-hold-up and security field. With the help of the President he was successful in convincing the American owner at that time. This transaction resulted in a diversification and a 25% sales increase.

In 1987, together with the Company's Chairman and President, René took part in purchasing the Viking Fire Protection Ltd Company from the Americans. The group met with bankers and insurers and offered to 25 key employees the opportunity to become Shareholders of the new Viking Fire Protection Inc. This was a high-risk Management Buy-Out transaction because of high Debt/Equity ratio. The group was negotiating a price with the Seller while, at the same time, having the responsibility of managing the operations of the company. This period was critical for the outcome of the Company and René worked days and nights and Saturdays to make sure everything was running smoothly.

In 1992, he became Executive Vice-President. In February 1994, at the Shareholders Annual Meeting, René became President of Viking Fire Protection Inc. In the meantime, from 1991 to 1993, a reorganisation of the operations created 3 other companies:
Fireflex Systems Inc, Polygon Security Inc and Polygon Fire Protection Inc.

In 1997, 10 years after the Company purchase from the Americans, René reviewed the Shareholders Agreement and modernized its terms and conditions and repurchased from the shareholders 35% of the Capital-Stock of the Group. Then the Group was ready for the next step, its growth.

In December 1998 and January 1999, with the help of one of the Vice-Presidents, René purchased two companies. The first one was located in Vancouver and had a second office in Calgary. The second was located in Edmonton. Beginning of 1999, the group had 3 offices in western provinces and 7 offices in Ontario, Québec and Atlantic provinces. With these acquisitions, the Group became the only Canadian company in fire protection owned at 100% by its employees with operations from coast to coast.

After several years of growth and few minor acquisitions, René stepped down as President of the Group on January 2007 after 13 years of service as President. He continued to work and support the new Management in place until his retirement in December 2012. Under René's leadership, business turnover has increased from $22M in 1994 to close to $100M at the end of his term as President, in 2007. The number of employees also increased dramatically, going from 350 in 1994 to more than 650 employees in 2007.

Among other tasks René has served on other Boards and Committees over the years such as:

- CASA Directors from 2001 to 2011.
- Trustee Member for the Canadian Sprinkler Pension Plan from 2001 to 2013.
- Member of the Pension Plan and the Health Insurance Plan of the Polygon Group from 1991 to 2007.
- Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Polygon Group from 1996 to 2016.

2018 William Clark Achievement Award Recipient:
- Chief Alan Speed -

Alan Speed began his chosen career in March 1962 at age 18, when he joined the Nottingham Fire Service in the U.K. He came to Canada in 1969 and became a North York Fire Fighter in January 1970. He was promoted to Captain in 1979, then in 1983 was promoted to District Chief and became the Chief Fire Prevention Officer, promoted again in 1986 to Platoon Chief. He spent 6 fulfilling years leading the progressive fire prevention programs and learned firsthand the importance of Fire Sprinkler Systems. Al was promoted to Chief of Administration 1988, Deputy Fire Chief 1989 and North York Fire Chief 1992. He was appointed by the Ontario Government Transition Team, November 1997, to become the Fire Chief for the Amalgamating City of Toronto, accepting responsibility for bringing together 6 Fire Departments and forming the largest full time Professional Fire Service Organization in Canada.

During his career he served in numerous organizations, including:

- Co-Chair of the Ontario Fire Marshals Public Fire Safety Council.
- Chair of the Ontario Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition.
- Chair of FireSAFE Ontario.
- President of the Canadian Fire Safety Association.
- President of the Institution of Fire Engineers. Ontario Branch.
- Member of Board of Directors, Habitat for Humanity, Toronto.
- Member of Toronto United Way Allocations Committee.
- Member of ULC Fire Council.
- Member of ULC Steering Comm. Research for the Fire Service.
- Member of CSA Tech. Comm. Fire Protection for CANDU Nuclear Power Plants.
- Member of International NFPA Fire Forum, Boston.
- Member of Bldg and Fire Code Committees.
- Advisory Board, Canadian Centre for Emergency Preparedness.
- Board of Directors, Canadian Fallen Firefighters Foundation.
- Honorary Chair, Salvation Army Red Shield Appeal in 1997 and 2002.
- Salvation Army International Disaster Management Training for NGO's.

Chief Speed was honoured by his peers in 1997 when he was the first recipient of the Fire Chief of the year award in Ontario, for his support of Fire Safety and Fire Prevention Programs.
He was also the recipient of the Fire Marshals Award of Excellence in Fire Safety, 1998.

He has authored numerous Fire Safety articles in local, national and international publications.

He is a Graduate of numerous Institutions of Learning, including:
The Ontario Fire College; York University Professional Management Institute; Humber College Business Communications and Employee Benefits; Institution of Fire Engineers.
He is also a Certified Municipal Manager in Ontario and an Officer of the Order of St. John.

Chief Speed retired from his lengthy fire service career on April 30, 2003.

In his retirement he has retained his enthusiasm as a Fire and Life Safety advocate and has a passion for fire prevention. He maintains a fervent belief that Fire Sprinklers are the missing piece of the puzzle in many incidents involving the loss of life in a fire environment.

He has worked closely with CASA to pursue Compulsory Trade requirements for Fire Sprinkler Fitters in Ontario. Also, he has lobbied, along with others, for changes to the OBC to require the installation of Fire Sprinkler Systems in occupancies under construction.

Chief Speed has been a frequent Keynote speaker at numerous functions, both in Canada and internationally. He was honoured to speak at a Fire Sprinkler Conference in Lisbon, Portugal, and also Lake Louise. He has been the keynote speaker at numerous Fire Chief Conferences in the U.K., U.S.A. and Canada.

He has been an active lifelong member of The Salvation Army and receives a great sense of fulfilment from this avenue of service.

He is married to wife Hazel and together they have 2 children and 8 grandchildren. Daughter Andrea is a registered nurse in the Addictions Recovery field and son Dave is the Fire Chief in Whitby, Ontario. Also, grandson, Ryan is a Fire Inspector in Richmond Hill.

In their retirement, Hazel and Al enjoy spending time with their family, when not travelling.

2017 William Clark Achievement Award Recipient:
- Mr. William Skromeda -

In 1964, Bill Skromeda started working for Grinnell of Canada Limited in Winnipeg, Manitoba. He was initiated into UA Local 379 on November 30, 1965. His apprenticeship studies started in 1966 by correspondence courses followed by the achievement of the Journeyman's Certificate in 1971. Further, Bill completed the necessary courses and achieved his Interprovincial Red Seal Certificate.

Bill's employment with Grinnell was very rewarding. Although it was challenging to work on remote sites for long periods of time away from home, Bill was privileged to work and supervise many high profile projects. Bill was never one to shy away from an opportunity, whether that meant installing underground piping, fire pumps or specialty systems like the protomatic systems used in many aircraft hangars across Canada.

On December 7, 1985 Bill left Grinnell and started his own company, BDR Services Ltd. Over the years, Bill gained the respect of many people in the construction industry due to his honesty and hard work ethic. Bill was not one to work and manage from the office…he liked to work alongside the men, leading by example. Bill's passion for the industry was self-evident through his instincts and ingenuity to make installations more efficient and cost effective. One of Bill's greatest achievements came when Manitoba Hydro requested a design-build system for their outdoor transformers. The challenge was to support the system from the transformer itself rather than free-standing pipe stands. Bill's design was embraced by the head Fire Protection Engineer of Manitoba Hydro and continues to be utilized today.

Bill's involvement with CASA has spanned over many years and he has earned the respect of his peers while serving on CASA. Bill always appreciated what this industry stood for and always looked for ways to improve the industry.

Bill has served on many Boards and Committees over the years such as:

- Manitoba/Saskatchewan CASA Regional Director – 1999 to 2014
- CASA – Collective Bargaining Committee
- CASA – Long Range Planning Committee
- CASA – JTAC – Compulsory Certification for Manitoba
- Mechanical Contractors Association of Manitoba – CASA Representative
- UA Local 254 – 50 year member
- President – Catholic Church in Winnipeg

Bill and Linda were married in 1965 and were blessed with three children, David, Randy and Debbie, followed by six grandchildren. BDR stood for Bill, David and Randy. In March 2016 David purchased BDR and Bill is now enjoying retirement with his life partner Linda. Bill continues to serve as President of his Church community and spends his days alongside Linda volunteering and spending time at their lakeside cottage.

2016 William Clark Achievement Award Recipient:
- Mr. David Heaps -

David Ian Heaps, began his Sprinkler apprenticeship in 1967 with Viking Sprinklers. In 1971, David won the Top Canadian Sprinkler Apprentice Award and went on to compete in the Purdue University competition, where he placed 2nd. In 1976, with Alex Logan, he started Upper Valley Fire Protection Ltd. in Chilliwack BC, and remained in the position of President and General Manager until it was sold to SPX/ Edwards in 2002.

Following the sale, David became the National Fire Suppression Manager. In 2005, the company was purchased by GE and David continued in a management role. Along with a number of employees, he became a shareholder in what is now Troy LFS Ltd., acting as VP and General Fire Suppression Manager. David continues to work part-time with the company in an advisory capacity.

During his tenure in the Sprinkler Industry, David has worked as a Sprinkler Fitter and Foreman, Sprinkler Designer and Estimator, Sprinkler Sales and Promotion, and as Management.

David has also served on the following Boards and Committees for many years:

- BC Automatic Sprinkler Association – Director
- CASA – Director
- CASA – Collective Bargaining Committee and Pension Committee - still active
- Mechanical Contractors Association – Director
- Rotarian for 30 years
- Chilliwack Foundation

David and his wife Ferne have three children and 7 grandchildren. Their sons, Greg and Aaron, are both Sprinkler Fitters.

Along with a love of sailing and fishing, David is an avid pilot continuing to log many hours in his aerobatic airplane.

2015 William Clark Achievement Award Recipient:
- Mr. Carl L. Height -

Carl L. Height President of Vipond, assumed the reins of CASA's Presidency (President now Chair of the Board) in April 1970 after joining the CASA Board in 1959. During that single year, the industry in Canada entered into one of the most crucial chains of events to confront it since CASA was formed in 1916 (Dominion Charter in 1961).

Carl Height, in addition to his role as President was the Chairman of CASA's Labour Relations Committee (today negotiating committee) and served in this capacity for fifteen years.

The CASA was formed in 1916 primarily for the conduct of labour relation negotiations. In 1959, CASA and Local 379 established a Joint Apprenticeship Training Program. In 1972 the National Joint Training & Apprenticeship Committee (JTAC) was formally established under a trust document with the UA. A highly skilled cadre of young apprentices have been trained under this program, and today Canada has some of the most highly trained journeymen Sprinkler fitters in North America.

During Height's tenure, the CASA took the first steps toward the preservation of the identity of the trade in cooperation with the Provincial Government of Ontario. In 1974 -1976 the Fire Sprinkler Trade was recognized as a "**designated**" trade in all Provinces. It was in 1975 that the Ontario Ministry of Labour recognized the sprinkler trade as a separate identity and agreed to take over the delivery of Apprenticeship Training in conjunction with CASA and the UA. This was followed by most other Provinces over the following few years.

It is fitting that this year 2015, the 41st Anniversary of Ontario 1st assigning the sprinkler trade as a "**designated**" trade, that on February 2nd the Ontario Government announced approval to reassign our trade as a "**compulsory**" trade, joining Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, and Manitoba (Alberta and Newfoundland under review). Today we are all proud that the TRADE of Fire Sprinkler Fitter is recognized as key to virtually all ICI buildings and a growing number of residential dwellings too.

Carl and his wife Jessie have 3 generations of sprinkler fitters in the family. Their son Gordon and Gordon's son Jonathan are in the sprinkler industry today. Carl after having retired in 1984 is still a passionate advocate of fire sprinklers. He also is perhaps one of our industry's best living historians and will always welcome a call to talk about the trade.

2014 William Clark Achievement Award Recipient:
- Mr. Tim Voronoff -

Tim Voronoff's career in the fire protection industry started in 1962, working for Adam Clark Co. Ltd. in the fire protection division. After completing his apprenticeship in 1966 he moved directly into the office, learning design, installation, special hazards, service aspects of the business and he became NICET IV certified.

In 1971, Tim left Adam Clark and started with a new firm in the industry, Verhey Sprinkler. In the seven years there, he helped to build Verhey into a successful independent fire protection company. Due to a disagreement on which direction the company should follow, he left Verhey in 1978.

Through a lot of coaxing from friends, engineers and general contractors, he started his own business, and on April 1st, 1978, Troy Sprinkler Limited was launched. The company was named in memory of Tim's son Troy, who passed away just before Christmas in 1975 at the age of 10.

In 1990 Tim met Denise, who would later become his wife. Together they successfully rebuilt the company to become one of the best independent contractors in the business.

In 2004, they sold Troy to a U.S. corporation, that already owned Edwards, Upper Valley and Barley Sprinkler. They were all companies with great reputations and excellent success stories. About a year later, the U.S. corporation sold all their Canadian interests to G.E. Security. G.E. grew the business to become one of the largest companies in the industry and a National CASA member.

In 2008, a group made up of original owners and managers of Troy, Edwards, Upper Valley and Barley, bought back the installation and service portions of the business from G.E. Security, and now operate as Troy Life and Fire Safety Ltd. Shortly after the acquisition, Tim retired from the day-to-day operation of the business.

Working closely with CASA, and a strong proponent for independent contractors at the Ontario Regional Group level for many years, Tim was elected to the CASA Board of Directors in June of 1993 and served until 2012! Tim was the longest successive standing member of the CASA Board of Directors ever, willingly giving his time and sharing the wealth of experience he has with the team of professionals that made up the Board.
From 1996 to 2000 Tim served as the CASA Treasurer, he then served as Chair of the Board of Directors from 2001 to 2006 and then as Past Chair until 2010. He remained on the CASA Board as a National Appointee of the new National member, Troy Life & Fire Safety in 2007 and continued to serve on the Board until June 2012.
Overlapping with his successive terms of service on the Board of Directors, Tim also served as a trustee on the National JTAC from 2001 until present. In addition, Tim was active in the following industry positions:

- Ontario JTAC committee
- CASA Board of Directors
- Served as Chairman on the CASA Board of Directors
- Fire Safe Ontario Board of Directors
- CASA's Compulsory Certification Review Committee
- Joint CASA/NFSA committee for the Fire Sprinkler Best Practices
- Represent CASA on the National Sprinkler Industry JTAC

Tim consistently demonstrated leadership with his commitment to helping to improve the sprinkler industry. His untiring willingness to assist whenever called upon is held in high regard by his fellow board members and his former fellow employees.
Tim stated:
"It is an honour to receive this year's award. Over my career, I have been fortunate to meet some wonderful people, many of whom are considered dear friends. I wish continued success to CASA and it's members, in the advancement to enhance the level of life safety and property conservation from the effects of fire through the use of fire sprinklers".

2013 William Clark Achievement Award Recipient:
- Mr. Dan Solonynko-
Upon completion of a three year stint with the Royal Canadian Navy, Dan commenced a Sprinkler Systems Installer apprenticeship in Winnipeg, Manitoba with Automatic Sprinkler Company in 1966.

During his apprenticeship, Dan worked on numerous projects primarily in the Provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

Alberta became home for Dan where he resided from 1968 to 2002, married his lovely wife Luba in 1970 and was blessed with her presence for thirty-eight years. They raised three wonderful children and Dan worked for Automatic Sprinkler Company, Wormald Fire Systems and Grinnell Fire Protection. Today they are one company – SimplexGrinnell.

Apprentice, Journeyman, Foreman, Superintendent, Construction Manager, Branch Manager, District Manager and Regional Manager were all undertaken by Dan and in 2002 he was transferred to Toronto, Ontario as Vice President of Canadian Operations.

Dan's participation in Provincial and National Sprinkler Apprentice education and Fire Protection efforts were very gratifying as were the many years he served on the Board of Directors at CASA. Dan's positive contributions to the Apprenticeship program across Canada will be felt by a new generation of skilled trade workers.

Dan's tenure at CASA was from 2005 to 2010 at which time he chose to retire. His initial duties were that of Ontario Regional Manager and in 2008 he took up the task of Western Regional Manager. Dan was also responsible for the Regional JTACs on CASA's behalf and as the Employer Coordinator, dealt with training related issues. Never afraid to speak his mind, Dan always thought of what was best for the Trade and the integrity of our profession. Even in difficult times Dan was a true supporter of Casa and a guy you would want with you in the trenches.

Dan currently resides in Oakville, Ontario and is very much enjoying his retirement.

2012 William Clark Achievement Award Recipient:
- Mr. Larry Fronczak -
Larry first entered the Fire Sprinkler Industry in 1957 with Grinnell. He held several positions with Grinnell and also with CASA, serving on the CASA Board of Directors from 1980 to 1991 and served as Chairman in 1990-1991 after which he joined CASA staff as Vice President. A full biography of Larry will be featured in the CASAnotes summer issue.

2011 William Clark Achievement Award Recipient:
- Mr. Mel Farren -
In 1947, Mel immigrated to Montreal with his parents and two brothers from Lancashire, England and then moved to Toronto in 1953. He attended Northern Tech High School then joined Bennett & Wright in 1958. He spent 6 months as an apprentice learning the trade and then moved into the office as a draftsman. Mel went from there to Estimating, then Office Manager and eventually to Vice President. Mel worked with Bennett & Wright and then with Vipond until he retired in 2000.

During his years in the industry, Mel served on several boards including the Labor Negotiating Committee, the JTAC, the Health and Welfare Committee as well as being active with NFSA.

Mel also served many years on the Board of Directors of CASA, where he also served as the Chair for several years.

In 1961, the sprinkler industry held a contest to design a logo for CASA. Mel won the contest and the $25.00 award.

That logo has been in use for 50 years and will be fittingly retired in the same year as this recognition.

Mel was known as a people person who built relationships easily. He became close friends with several industry leaders through the years and contributed to the success of many young industry leaders we see today.

Mel and his wife Pat currently reside in Midland, Ontario and have been married over 50 years. They have three children, eight grandchildren and are expecting their first great grandchild in November.

2010 William Clark Achievement Award Recipient:
- Mr. Art Jurisson -
Art, started in 1947 as a junior draftsman with "Automatic" Sprinkler Co. of Canada in Saint John, NB, under the tutelage of James "Jimmy" Lewell. - the original premises and fabrication shop located in the building on Water Street, shared by "Automatic" employees and wharf rats.

Art has had brief stints with the Nova Scotia Board of Insurance Underwriters in Halifax, and the Canadian Pacific Railway in Montreal as an insurance and fire protection inspector.From 1952 until retirement in 1995, Art worked within the numerous mergers and amalgamations of "Automatic" Active in local and provincial construction associations. He has been active in provincial and national Sprinkler Apprentice education and recognition efforts and a trustee of the Canadian Sprinkler Industry Pension Fund until retirement.

His new job includes spending time with his family with his wife, Linda, Daughters Stephanie & Danielle, Grandchildren Alexander & Danny, Griffin & Mason.

2009 William Clark Achievement Award Recipient:
- Mr. Paul Harding -
Paul has spent 50 years in the sprinkler industry. He began his career with Bennett and Wright, moved to SimplexGrinnell and then began Harding Fire Protection Systems Co. Ltd. Harding Fire Protection Systems Co. Ltd. enters 20 years. He is a member of a number of Associations, Boards and Committees. As a member on two advisory task forces of the National Building Code, he watched as mandatory sprinkler requirements finally started to become reality.

2008 William Clark Achievement Award Recipient:
- Mr. Kenneth W. Graham -
Ken has been involved in the fire sprinkler industry for over 50 years (since 1957). He has been with Viking Fire Protection Inc. for the last 25 years. During this time he has served as Chairman of CASA as well as a Director. Ken has been part of CASA Labour Negotiating Committee for 30 plus years and also served on the Apprenticeship Committee in Atlantic Canada.

2007 William Clark Achievement Award Recipient:
- Mr. Jack Priest -
An outstanding new feature of the 2007 Annual General Meeting, was to award the first ever "William Clark Achievement Award". Mr. Jack Priest is the deserving recipient. Amongst his many decades of service to the industry as a C.A.S.A. representative, Mr. Priest was instrumental in obtaining the Dominion Charter for C.A.S.A. in 1961 and the establishment of the Sprinkler Industry Pension Plan in 1965.

Congratulations, from your peers!