

Media Release

For Immediate Release

A legacy of innovation: How RDP instructor Chris McCloskey has transformed Sprinkler Systems Training

Red Deer, November 26, 2025 – Red Deer Polytechnic (RDP) has long been recognized for its skilled trades education, but thanks to the tireless efforts of instructor [Chris McCloskey](#), the reputation of its [Sprinkler Systems Installer Apprenticeship program](#) has continued to grow, establishing it as a leader in Alberta fire protection training.

“Through his deep industry connections and relentless pursuit of innovation, Chris has transformed RDP’s sprinkler lab into a cutting-edge training ground for the next generation of fire protection professionals,” says [Steve Walker-Duncan](#), Associate Dean, School of Trades and Technology. “Chris and all our skilled trades instructors help prepare apprentices to succeed in the workforce while strengthening Alberta’s productivity.”

McCloskey has cultivated strong relationships with leading fire protection companies across Alberta, Canada and beyond, resulting in an impressive array of equipment donations that keep RDP’s lab at the forefront of the industry.

Recent contributions include:

- A new fire alarm control from **Steamline Fire Protection Ltd.**, which will also help RDP set up a clean agent system.
- A new dry pipe valve from Reliable Fire Protection
- Four new auto vent set-ups, a fire alarm control panel and additional electrical devices from **Potter Electric Signal Company**.
- Two DV-5A valves from **Johnson Controls International plc**.
- A new dry pipe valve from **Viking Fire Protection Inc.**
- Several sizes of couplings from **Venus Fire Protection Ltd.** in Quebec
- A nitrogen generator, Dry Pak air compressor and industrial air compressor from **General Air**.
- Inbal valves from **Tennacor**, who also helped RDP secure a pre-action valve from **BERMAD**.
- Various shop parts from **Victaulic**.

Many of these donations were secured through McCloskey’s direct outreach, with some assistance from RDP alum Kevin Mozak.

For McCloskey, the value of these donations lies in advancing the skills of RDP apprentices and preparing them for the complexities of fieldwork. From valves to alarm panels, the equipment allows learners to experiment in a safe and innovative environment while building confidence with the same tools they’ll encounter on job sites.

His ingenuity has also led to unique teaching innovations, such as the “Frankenstein demo valve setup”—a hands-on system that integrates control valve operation with fire alarm panels, spraying into a booth to simulate real-world conditions. Students also benefit from a fire extinguisher simulator, which uses compressed air and water to replicate extinguishing a blaze on an LED screen.

Guided by McCloskey’s instruction and leadership, the program has continued to flourish.

“Bob Caputo, President of the American Fire Sprinkler Association and former senior instructor with the National Fire Protection Association, has praised our lab as the best sprinkler training facility in North America,” says McCloskey.

Red Deer Polytechnic is the only institution in Alberta, the Northwest Territories and Yukon offering apprenticeship training for sprinkler system installers, making it a vital hub for the trade in western Canada.

McCloskey, who recently celebrated his 20th work anniversary at the Polytechnic, holds both the Red Seal certification in Canada and the Star Fire Sprinklerfitting Mastery certification in the United States, so he is qualified to work anywhere in North America. His credentials, combined with his passion for teaching, ensure that RDP apprentices graduate with world-class training and industry-ready skills.

McCloskey’s determination to secure the latest equipment, foster industry partnerships and innovate in the classroom not only elevate the program but also strengthen the entire industry by preparing highly skilled professionals who are ready to protect lives and property across the province and nation.

For more information about RDP’s 17 apprenticeships, please visit: rdpolytech.ca/trades.

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About Red Deer Polytechnic: Focused on advancing the economic and social priorities of Alberta, Red Deer Polytechnic (RDP) provides more than 80 industry-relevant credit and non-credit programs to approximately 11,000 credit, non-credit and apprenticeship students. With modern teaching and learning spaces, and state-of-the-art research and innovation centres, RDP provides education and applied research opportunities in partnership with industry and communities.

Red Deer Polytechnic’s main campus is located on Treaty 7, Treaty 6 and Métis ancestral lands. This is where we will strive to honour and transform our relationships with one another.

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