

**September, 2007**

## **BACK TO SCHOOL – BACK TO BUSINESS**

While September is back-to-school for educational institutions, it is not quite the same for those of us in training. The construction season is far from over – won't be for a few months, and then it won't be *over*, just slightly less active. So, we don't expect apprentices and other members of Local 506 to come in for many training programs that involve more than a day.

On the other hand, most of the summer maintenance at the Training Centre is complete. Staff vacation time is almost complete for the year. We are conducting training programs: things like equipment re-certification, hoisting & rigging, and all of our regular Saturday safety programs. We're also preparing for a Construction Craft Worker Basic in-school course beginning in October. And then there is the big push for this fall – the Asbestos Type III removal course.

Much of this training will involve Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking workers. (And we're aware of speakers other languages, including Turkish, who work in asbestos.) These people have to be prepared to pass a test in English. (French would be an option, but probably will have limited use.) We have always conducted training for speakers of other languages. When, possible we try to have an instructor who speaks the language, but much depends on the fact instructors have experience working in construction at multi-lingual sites.

In addition to the training programs, we are preparing for the acquisition of a number of pieces of equipment over the next several months – preparing both for accommodating the equipment and developing or adapting training programs to utilize the equipment.

While both construction and training activities are year round, our busiest time for training is January to April, when there is at least a moderate downturn in construction activity. The major limitation to our level of training activity during those months is space. We cannot use the outdoors to any extent for hands-on training, and we have limited indoor space for usable for training in concrete forming and finishing, scaffolding, and other units of the CCW program. This, and the need to house all the added equipment, makes expansion of the Training Centre a priority need.