

## **BCP Story #2 - Disaster Hits Manitoba and Northern Ontario**

### **Lightning and hail hits North Western Ontario causing severe damage!**

#### **Pizza and Beer? - Tuesday October 21<sup>st</sup>, 6:00 pm**

Ted flipped the light switch on and threw his keys down onto the table. He was on his own tonight and pretty tired.

"Boy, I could sure use a few days off", he thought. He decided he would treat himself and order in. What exactly? He wasn't sure.

He grabbed the remote and turned on the TV. It was the local news channel.

"A lighting storm with strong winds is currently moving through the Victoria Beach/Great Falls region", the weather man exclaimed as he thrust his arms across his body indicating the direction of the storm and the intensity of which it was moving. It looks like it might be a real nasty one. "

#### **Severe Weather Warning in Effect - Tuesday October 21<sup>st</sup>, 6:00 pm**

"We are expecting the storm to hit us around 11:30 tonight bringing with it hail and winds of approximately 50 kilometres an hour. We are advising people to stay off the roads if possible."

"The fund raising concert tonight has been cancelled. To all my fans, you'll just have to wait until next time to see me in my tux", laughed Jules the weather man.

"Jeez", thought Ted. Good thing he declined the invitation to hang out with the guys tonight after all.

He hopes his wife doesn't have stay too late at work. He decides to call her and gives her a heads up about the storm.

#### **Hail the Size of Marbles - Wednesday October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1:00 am (Day 1)**

Ted jumped up with a start from the bed. What was that noise? It sounded like popcorn popping and it was getting louder. Why was it so dark?

Once his head cleared he realised that it was hail, the size of marbles, pounding against the window. His wife was just waking up now too. Hmmm, better get up, he thought, seems the power out has gone out...

...it turns out that the storm raced through Vermillion Bay, knocking out the main power line that serves Dryden. Seven transmission towers had collapsed leaving 21, 000 residents of Dryden completely without power.

### **At the Mill - Thursday October 23<sup>nd</sup>, 4:00 pm (Day 2)**

Fred Jones, owner of the Jones Pulp Mill, was out doing an inspection on the grounds. He had been busy since the storm hit early Wednesday morning. Power had not been restored yet and he was dealing with the aftermath of wind and hail damage.

He rounded the bank that skirted the edge of the sludge pond.

“That is odd”, he thought as he peered at the pond. The water level has dropped considerably. This could only mean one thing – the dyke was breached. He grabbed his cell phone from his pocket.

“Peter, I need you to start bringing of loads of gravel from the quarry at Oak Lake to the sludge pond. The dyke is leaking and we need to fill it. Pronto! ”. Good thing he caught it in time, or so he thought.....

### **At the Pumping Station - Thursday October 23<sup>nd</sup>, 4:15 pm (Day 2)**

Hector was having his own troubles at the Quibell Pumping Station. It was just his luck that this would happen while he was looking after things. Martin Levesque, the Head Engineer, was on disability leave and he was left in charge. His first priority to get some temporary power set up.

“Sure, Mr. Levesque, didn’t know he was going to fracture leg but it would have been nice if he had left me a ‘Plan B’ for situations like this”, grumbled Hector to himself.

As stressed as he was he decided this could work to his advantage. Once the Head Engineer hears how well he handled the situation – all by himself – he was sure to be granted the fulltime hours he sought.

### **Under Control - Friday October 24<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 pm (Day 3)**

Feeling good, Hector poured a cup of coffee for himself. The first one he has had at the plant since the power went out. But now, with temporary power finally on, he could relax a bit.

He noticed that the water from the plant had a slightly odd colour but was pretty sure that now that the plant was fully operational everything would return back to normal.

“Ontario Hydro is on it and I am sure that they will have power back anytime now”, Hector assured himself.

“Good, and now I won’t have to bother Mr. Levesque. I am sure that he needs all his strength to get around at home with his cast and all. I think he was being released from the hospital this morning.”

#### **Still No Power - Saturday October 25<sup>th</sup>, noon (Day 4)**

Peter was in his truck, looking for a store that still had generators in stock. He had been working straight since Thursday afternoon dumping gravel into the breached dyke. It was only now that he could concentrate on his own problems caused by the storm. He wasn’t really all that hopeful that he would find a generator but he had to try.

The radio was on but he wasn’t really paying attention to it. He had other things on his mind, like what other supplies he needed. He wasn’t really prepared for emergencies. He had never experienced being without power for this long.

If he had been listening to the radio he would have heard about the unusually high incidence of stomach and intestinal illness being reported at the Dryden Hospital. It seems that young and old were affected the most.

#### **Everything is Under Control, or is it? - Sunday October 26<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 (Day 5)**

Hector flipped through the newspaper on his kitchen table as he waited for his toast to be ready. A headline catches his eye.

*“Mysterious Stomach Illness Strikes Senior Citizen Care Facility Leaving a Woman in Critical Care”.*

Beth’s great aunt was in a senior citizen’s care facility...for a second he wondered if it could be her. He then quickly realised that they would have heard by now if that was the case. You see, they were luckier than most of the residents of Dryden. They had power again in their home. So many others were still without power – no phone, no food, no water!

Then another thought crossed his mind...he dropped the newspaper, grabbed his coat and rushed out the door. It slammed shut just as the toaster bell rang. He was headed for the plant.

#### **Boil Water Advisories Issued - Sunday October 26<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 (Day 5)**

“Hi, this is Hector Fergusson. Can I speak with Martin Levesque please?” As he waited for the Head Engineer to come onto the phone, he grew increasingly anxious. His palms were sweaty and he didn’t feel very good.

He was really dreading this call. If you could turn back the clock he would. After checking the water again he saw that its odd colour had not changed. He was fearful now that it may be responsible for the recent stomach illnesses that had

been reported.

“Just how much contaminated water had been allowed to go through the system over the last 4 days?” he wondered.

15 minutes later health officials received a call from Martin “officially” reporting the breach, which in turn set in motion a number of investigations, health advisories, and drinking water advisories. The difficult part was going to be in how to reach all the residents of Dryden, especially those still without power.

### **Forced Vacation - Wednesday October 29<sup>th</sup>, 3:30 pm (Day 8)**

Ted and his wife have just returned home from their in laws house in Thunder Bay. It has been a long 7 days. He never expected it to take so long for the power to be restored at their place.

He likes his in laws and all but a whole a week sleeping on the couch was not his idea of a good time. He has missed 5 days of work due to the storm too. That was pay that he really needed.

He thought back to that fateful Wednesday night when he was feeling tired and ready for a vacation – NOW he really needed a vacation!