



## MEDIA RELEASE

### 2016 Ontario Electrical Safety Awards Celebrate Leaders in Electrical Safety

*Collaborative safety partnerships lead to greater safety impact*

**MISSISSAUGA, ON (Sept. 30, 2016)** – How do you exit a vehicle safely if a powerline hits it? Are the wires in your home safe? How do you spot hazards when installing electrical work? These questions and more were tackled by this year’s winners of the Ontario Electrical Safety Awards, held yesterday at the Living Arts Centre by the Electrical Safety Authority (ESA). The Awards recognize those organizations that have invested in helping keep Ontarians safe from electrical harm.

The Awards were presented by Brian Bentz, Chair, Electrical Safety Authority Board of Directors, and the Honourable Marie-France Lalonde, Minister of Government and Consumer Services. This year Scott Saint, ESA’s Chief Public Safety Officer, gave special recognition to the contributors of the Ontario Electrical Safety Report for their commitment to electrical safety through the sharing of important electrical safety data and health information.

The 2016 award recipients are:

**Worker Safety: Eaton Electrical Services & Systems** – for their dedication to worker safety through the development of the “I Choose Zero” program to achieve a goal of zero lost time injuries, and improve overall worker safety in their workplace and in their homes. The program includes mentor training programs for new hires and ongoing health and safety education to foster a strong safety culture. Eaton Electrical Services & Systems achieved one million hours without a lost time injury from August 2015 to January 2016.

**Consumer and Home Safety: Birnie Electric** – for their ongoing efforts to educate consumers on electrical safety issues in the home with their CurrentSAFE program. Since 2010, the CurrentSAFE program has been educating homeowners about the dangers of degraded electrical systems and providing solutions to address electrical hazards. Through this program, Birnie Electric has demonstrated a strong commitment to safety, reaching hundreds of homeowners across the province by working with community safety partners to deliver public seminars on electrical safety and fire prevention.

**Powerline Safety: Toronto Hydro** – for their media event to educate consumers on what to do if a powerline falls on your car. Toronto Hydro partnered with Toronto Fire Services (TFS) to create a mock accident scene using a practice car and a hydro pole complete with wires placed on the hood of the car. The scene provided a realistic and compelling image of what TFS and utility crews respond to when a vehicle collides with a hydro pole. The media was educated about the proper steps to take, including staying in the car and calling 911. The demonstration also addressed how to safely evacuate in the event that the downed wires cause a fire and it’s no longer safe to stay in the vehicle.

**Chief Public Safety Officer’s Special Recognition Award: Contributors to the Ontario Electrical Safety Report (OESR)** – for their ongoing commitment to

sharing integral safety and incident data. Contributors include: the Office of the Chief Coroner; Ministry of Labour; Office of the Ontario Fire Marshal and Emergency Management; Canadian Institute for Health Information; Association of Workers' Compensation Boards of Canada; and the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board. The OESR is the only report of its kind that provides a comprehensive overview of electrical safety in Ontario. The data provided by its contributors enables ESA and others to develop evidence-based strategies and programs to target areas of highest risk.

New this year, ESA also presented Honourable Mention distinctions to two well-deserving safety partners: Electro-Federation Canada (EFC) Joint Task Force for their efforts to ensure the amendment for the expansion of Arc Fault Circuit Interrupters in the Canadian Electrical Code; and Fermar Paving Ltd. for the development and implementation of a safety program that requires a box buzzer system to be installed on all dump trucks entering their work sites.

“The Electrical Safety Authority plays an essential role in informing, supporting, and advancing electrical safety in Ontario. I am pleased to help celebrate another successful year of keeping Ontarians safe,” said Marie-France Lalonde, Minister of Government and Consumer Services.

“The collaborative effort of this year’s winners and their dedication to the cause of electrical safety are to be commended,” said Scott Saint, Chief Public Safety Officer, Electrical Safety Authority. “ESA’s mission to improve electrical safety for Ontarians is a significant one. It is clear our safety partners know that in order to achieve a safer Ontario, it takes collaboration, dedication and commitment, and ESA thanks them for their contribution to our mission. ”

The awards were established seven years ago to formally recognize the important contributions of individuals and organizations toward achieving ESA’s vision of an Ontario where people can live, work and play safe from electrical harm.

### **Quick Facts**

- 2016 marks the seventh annual Ontario Electrical Safety Awards
- The awards are given out in three categories: Worker Safety, Consumer and Home Safety and Powerline Safety
- The Chief Public Safety Officer’s Special Recognition Award recognizes individuals or organizations that have made outstanding contributions to electrical safety.

### **About the Electrical Safety Authority**

The Electrical Safety Authority’s (ESA’s) role is to enhance public electrical safety in Ontario. As an administrative authority acting on behalf of the Government of Ontario, ESA is responsible for administering specific regulations related to the Ontario Electrical Safety Code, the licensing of Electrical Contractors and Master Electricians, electricity distribution system safety, and electrical product safety. ESA works extensively with stakeholders throughout the province on education, training and promotion to foster electrical safety across the province. More information on the Electrical Safety Authority can be found at [www.esasafe.com](http://www.esasafe.com), through <https://twitter.com/homeandsafety> and on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/ElectricalSafetyAuthority](http://www.facebook.com/ElectricalSafetyAuthority).

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The 2016 Ontario Electrical Safety Awards celebrated safety leaders with a strong commitment to electrical safety in Ontario. Award winners are pictured above with the Hon. Marie-France Lalonde, Minister of Government and Consumer Services (centre, right) and the Electrical Safety Authority's Scott Saint, Chief Public Safety Officer (back, left).