



# Town of Gambo Operator of the Year Award March 2011

## Tony Skiffington

It is our pleasure to nominate *Tony Skiffington for the Operator of the Year Award*. We believe that Tony exemplifies all the fine attributes of an outstanding operator and Town employee and is most deserving of this prestigious award.

Tony is a certified Level I Operator and has worked with the Town of Gambo for 14 years. In his capacity as Operator, he is also the Town Foreman, Occupational Health and Safety Designate, Water and Waste Water Operator. Over the years he has participated in a myriad of training programs as it relates to his position as Town Operator.

### **Rising to the Challenge**

During the past couple of years, the Town of Gambo has been through some challenging times. On July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2008, the Town of Gambo was hit with a FLASH FLOOD as a result of extremely heavy rains, high winds, high tides. Some residents had to be removed from their homes in boat. Never before in the history of our Town did we see so much devastation. A State of Emergency was declared. Two weeks later on August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008, our Town was hit with another major rain storm that caused severe flooding and again we were forced to declare another State of Emergency. Again, homes were flooded, damages done to our lift stations and treatment plants, culverts plugged, roads in disrepair, major problems with Joey's Lookout and the fear that the highway directly above our community would collapse and travel right in the path of a residential area directly underneath. Some residents in the path of this destruction had to be evacuated.

### **Leadership Qualities**

On Sept 21<sup>st</sup>, 2010 the Town of Gambo was hit with a fierce tropical storm called IGOR. Again, another State of Emergency and people were forced to move from their homes and some never to return again. Again, the Town was faced with insurmountable damage to residential homes, streets, parks, trails and other town infrastructure. These storms presented major problems and challenges to our council but in particular, major challenges to our Town Operator. He was the one who kept things going. He directed his staff under extreme and demanding conditions. In addition to giving directions to his staff, he provided information on behalf of the Town to government officials, engineers, consulting firms, emergency services and other community organizations that were willing to offer their services in way of emergency response. He assessed all damages as it related to town infrastructure, water systems, roads, culverts, etc. Many times, where possible, he did the necessary repairs himself to keep things in operation under extreme conditions.

### **Exceptional Work Ethics**

During the three State of Emergencies, Tony worked tirelessly for days with minimal sleep and many times worked all night long. Because of his keen knowledge of all town infrastructure and operating systems, he was the one individual that everyone depended on for direction and advice.

### **Clean Drinking Water**

Part of Tony's duties is to ensure the town's supply of water is clean and safe for consumption. He inspects our chlorine station on a regular basis and he is responsible for the chlorination of all town drinking water. In his capacity as Municipal Water and Wastewater Operator, he is very active and dedicated to recognizing the importance of public health through clean safe drinking water. Tony is working closely with the Laval University in Quebec on a pilot project to determine the safety of our drinking water. Tony is responsible for collecting and sending our town water samples to Laval University for testing. At the end of the year, the university will submit to the town the result of our water testing. This is a great advantage to our town as it gives us the opportunity to have our water thoroughly tested and furthermore, it is at no cost to our municipality. The town of Gambo will work very closely with Tony and allow him the opportunity to partake in all education and training opportunities for municipal water and wastewater system operators. This municipality recognizes that trained and qualified operating personnel are vital to the protection of public health through clean safe drinking water.

### **Education and Training**

Tony attends all workshops and training sessions as it relates to his position and holds several certificates. Workshops and training sessions include:

Operator Training Course, FLYGT	Fire Hydrant Maintenance and Assembly	Occupation Health and Safety Course
Clean Drinking Water Workshop	EMO Course	Water & Sewer Seminar
St. John's Ambulance Course	WHMIS Course	Transportation of Dangerous Goods
Water Distribution System Course	Confined Space Awareness Course	Proper Handling of Chlorine and Chlorine Containers
Shop Steward, CUPE Local 2768		

### **Committed and Dedicated**

Tony works closely with and is highly respected by his peers, Town Manager and Council. Moreover, he is equally held in the highest regard by the residents of his community and the one that everyone calls on when something needs to be done. Tony not only offers his help and expertise to community residents during working hours but many times offers help and assistance during non working hours. Sometimes things can be a little overwhelming for Tony because everyone looks to him for direction and to avail of his knowledge and expertise. He is called upon for a multitude of tasks, day and night, 7 days a week and because of his kind nature, he so willingly and gladly offers his assistance and works tirelessly on behalf of his town and residents alike.

### **Going the Extra Mile**

Many times he starts his day long before he is required to do so. In particular, our school is built on a hill. During adverse weather conditions, Tony is out early in the morning long before his scheduled work day even starts, sanding the bus routes so that our children, teachers and staff can travel over a safe road.

### *Town's Festivals and Events*

Tony, on many occasions volunteers his time during our Town Summer Festivals. He is called upon many times by town staff and volunteers alike who look to him for help, Sometimes it can just be to repair a structure or just simply to avail of his knowledge and expertise. He does this willingly and gladly on a voluntary basis.

### *Non Profit Community Organizations*

Tony is a first class carpenter and is called upon by many groups to help assist in small projects. This he also does both willingly and gladly..

### **Personal Attributes**

Tony is a dedicated and knowledgeable employee with many fine attributes. He is an exceptional problem solver with an analytical mind. In the midst of adversity, he always remains steadfast and focused on the task at hand and remains composed and calm, even in very challenging situations. Moreover, he has the ability to reassure others who depend on him for many things.

Because of his many fine talents, he has the ability to wear many hats and fill just about any position that comes under the umbrella of this municipality. He is an exceptional employee with outstanding abilities. We realize the valuable contribution he makes everyday to ensure that our Town is operating effectively and efficiently, thus providing an adequate and acceptable standard of service to our citizens. We can think of no one who is more deserving of this Operator of the Year Award than our Town Foreman. We acknowledge and recognize the contribution he makes everyday while performing his duties as Town Foreman and Operator I. We are proud to recommend him for this most deserving award.