



NEWS RELEASE

City of Abbotsford receives Innovative Safety Solution Award

ABBOTSFORD, BC – October 7, 2026 – The City of Abbotsford has received an Innovative Safety Solution Award from the BC Municipal Safety Association (BCMSA).

The award was presented at the BCMSA/ Public Works Association of British Columbia Joint Conference Awards Reception in Penticton on October 6 and is intended to encourage the sharing of forward-thinking ideas that are implemented to create a safer, healthier work environment.

This year's award recognizes the City of Abbotsford's innovative approach to remove the risk of asbestos exposure while cutting asbestos cement pipes, commonly installed in many municipalities between the 1930s and 1980s. The new design involves a purpose-built water suppression attachment created to continuously blanket a cutting area with water, reducing dust generation at the source and supporting a safer, controlled cutting process.

"The health and safety of our employees remains one of our highest priorities, and innovation plays an important role in achieving that goal," said Mayor Ross Siemens. "This work demonstrates how frontline operational knowledge, creativity, and a commitment to continuous improvement can come together to solve a long-standing workplace safety challenge. This project reflects the City's dedication to protecting our workforce while continuing to deliver essential services to our community."

The project advanced from concept through prototype fabrication, field demonstrations, safe work procedure development, occupational hygiene review, environmental control improvements, air monitoring, and consultation with WorkSafeBC. Third-party monitoring conducted during demonstrations reported no detectable asbestos fibres in monitored occupational and ambient air samples. Following review of the project, WorkSafeBC permitted the use of the modified cutting tool and associated procedure.

"The purpose of this award is to encourage the sharing of forward-thinking ideas which have been implemented to create a safer, healthier work environment and practices which go beyond what is considered routine in the industry," said BCMSA CEO Mike Roberts.

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