

2020

Neighbour news



Shawn Zettel, Safety, security, health and environment manager



Bluewater Health COVID-19 relief fund executive director Kathy Alexander with previous Imperial refinery manager Rohan Davis



Boilermaker, Fred Haddock



Process operator, Sean Jones

Imperial Sarnia's response to COVID-19

What an unusual year it has been for our site, our community and the world. The emergence of a global pandemic presented unprecedented challenges for seemingly every facet of society, keeping us on heightened alert at Imperial Sarnia.

As an essential service, our manufacturing site has a responsibility to continue to make products that keep the supply chain in Ontario moving. For example, the diesel fuel we produce allows trucks to transport food and medical supplies to the market place, and the motor gas keeps essential-service vehicles on the road and allows essential service workers to get to their jobs at hospitals, grocery stores and pharmacies.

We are grateful to essential workers everywhere for the professionalism and dedication they have shown throughout the pandemic. During the lockdown, the majority of our employees, including process operators, maintenance employees and lab technicians, continued working on site and kept our facility running.

Like other workplaces, things are different at Imperial with COVID-19 (COVID) measures in place. Safety, security, health and environment (SSHE) manager, Shawn Zettel, says the site's employee and contractor Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) has been instrumental in implementing the measures, "Site personnel are wearing face coverings, particularly when physical distancing isn't possible. Portable hand washing stations can be found throughout the field, temperature checks are occurring and online meetings have become the norm. The employee and contractor JHSC has taken a leadership role in helping the workforce adapt to this new mindset and these new behaviours."

This past spring, Imperial Sarnia was set to undergo the largest maintenance turnaround in Imperial's history. As the COVID situation began escalating, Shawn says the difficult, but necessary, decision was made to reduce the scope so that only critical maintenance activity was completed, "This measure was taken to help limit the community spread of COVID. Thanks to our incredible employee and contractor workforce, and an already stellar safety culture, we were able to safely execute the turnaround activity. In fact, our site recently reached a milestone of 20-million hours without a *lost time injury*."

Giving back to the Sarnia-Lambton community continues to be a priority for Imperial. Since the pandemic began, we have supported community organizations in the following ways:

- \$25,000 to the Bluewater Health COVID relief fund
- \$90,000 to community organizations, including Bluewater Health, and Inn of the Good Shepherd, through a company incentive program that double-matched employee donations
- \$10,000 to the Women's Interval Home
- \$15,000 to the Sarnia Humane Society
- Through our local industry association, Imperial was part of a \$40,000 donation for a portable field hospital in Sarnia
- Distributed \$2 million worth of gasoline vouchers to frontline healthcare workers across Canada
- Donated 60 tonnes of isopropyl alcohol (IPA) to support the Government of Canada's critical emergency response efforts. IPA is used in disinfectant products like hand sanitizer, medical wipes and rubbing alcohol. Imperial's donation is the equivalent of 600,000 bottles (350ml) of hand sanitizer.

Imperial is similar to other businesses, in Sarnia and across the country, in that we want to keep all workers and the broader community safe, and we've taken substantive measures to do that. We're closely monitoring the situation and following government guidance as we continue to do our best to prevent community spread of COVID.

Creating safe packaging

Health and safety of food and medical supplies is more important than ever. At our Sarnia chemical plant, we make polyethylene pellets. Manufacturers turn these into items like pill-bottle caps and bulk containers that hold cleaners and food used by restaurants and retirement homes. This packaging is important in ensuring product integrity and safety for consumers.



Employee Lori Nelson displays the polyethylene pellets

New site managers

This year, Imperial Sarnia was pleased to welcome refinery manager, Glenn Hayes and chemical plant manager, Kimberly Haas to our site and to our community. Glenn began his new role in August and Kimberly arrived at site in October. Welcome to the Sarnia team!



Glenn Hayes



Kimberly Haas

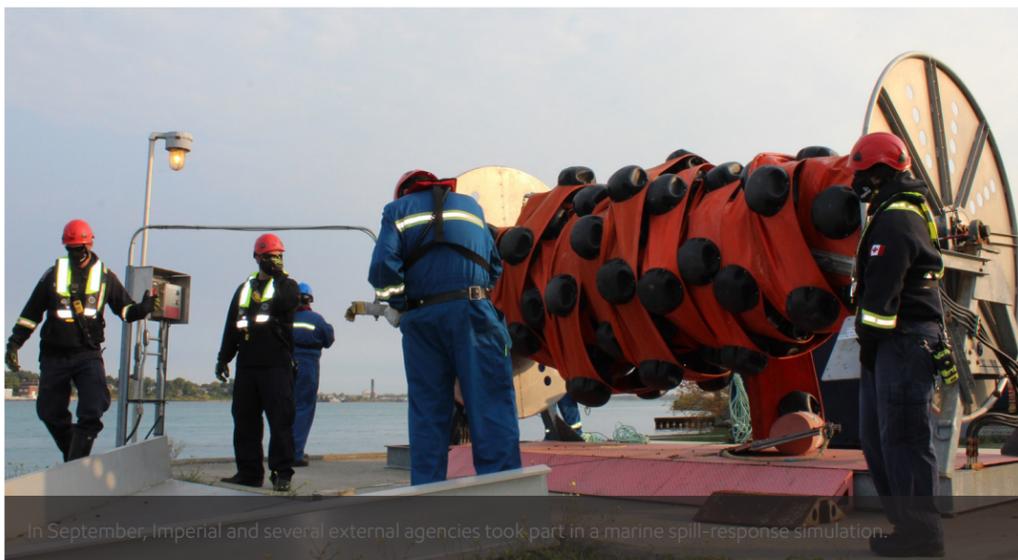
More than half a century of service

A critical piece of equipment, known as a burner head, was lifted at the Imperial Sarnia refinery in May as part of planned maintenance turnaround activity. Spectators lined their vehicles along Vidal and Kenney Streets to catch a glimpse of the big red crane in action. The 130-tonne burner head was put into service 52 years ago. The replacement was safely and successfully installed the following month.



Always ready

Safety leadership and incident prevention are fundamental to our business. In the unlikely event of an emergency, Imperial has well-defined plans, trained personnel, and access to equipment to respond immediately to any incident. Being prepared is critical. We conduct a series of simulated emergencies each year to ensure a constant state of readiness and emergency-response capability; these range from fire drills to equipment and personnel tests at local operating sites, to computer-simulation exercises, to full-scale simulations.



In September, Imperial and several external agencies took part in a marine spill-response simulation.

The Imperial Sarnia fire department is a 24/7 operation led by a fire marshal and deputy fire marshal, four full-time firefighters and 35 volunteer firefighters. Over 60 process operators are direct responders who make up the overall fire crews. These crews train monthly and participate in bi-annual live fire training at the Lambton College fire school and annual training at Texas A&M fire school. Emergency responders take part in on-site simulations several times a year and mutual aid training with Sarnia Fire and other industrial departments. Pump operators, the technical rescue team and the hazmat team also participate in regular training exercises. Every shift at the site has a 'command group' led by a shift supervisor, emergency response leader and process shift leader.

The site's fire department is well equipped with two foam pumpers, a 78-foot ladder truck, 3000-gallon foam tanker, rescue unit, quick attack pumper and a hazmat trailer.



Imperial's leak detection and repair program

In 2018, the Imperial Sarnia site implemented a benzene *leak detection and repair (LDAR) program* as a requirement under the *Ministry of Environment, Conservation & Parks (MECP) Benzene Industry Standards*. Imperial's environmental advisor and LDAR coordinator, Tanya Calver says the overall goal of industry standards is to reduce benzene emissions, "Imperial's benzene LDAR program, similar to several other industries in the area, involves monitoring approximately 10,000 components three times per year within the entire refinery and chemical plant to identify leaking sources and facilitate repairs by operations and mechanical trades." Reports are also generated for the MECP.

Starting in 2020, the industry standards began requiring more-stringent repair timeframes on leaking components. To proactively prepare for this, Tanya has led a number of initiatives to set the site's operations group up to effectively track leaks, execute timely repairs, and ultimately reduce emissions. In addition, the site has designated roles to both plan and execute repairs of all discovered LDAR leaks within the required timeframes.

Did you know the Sarnia region has a real-time air quality monitoring website? It can be found at www.cleanairsarniaandarea.com. The Clean Air Sarnia and Area (CASA) site is part of a collaboration between community members, government and industry.



Joe Szanyi, LDAR maintenance planner and Tanya Calver

A different kind of campaign

The United Way campaign at Imperial looks a lot different due to COVID restrictions. While we are actively avoiding bringing people together in order to prevent workplace spread, Imperial's United Way campaign co-chairs Srdan Vukosavljevic and Nick Bertrand are working hard to ensure the site has a successful campaign. "Last year, we generated over \$450,000. We'd be thrilled to match or exceed that this year, but we also understand the strain the campaign is under due to the cancellation of some of our popular special events," says Srdan.

"We're working on initiatives like curbside pickup lunches with Sarnia businesses and online activities that can replace the events where we traditionally gather. The pandemic is prompting us to do things differently, and we're being positive about it. Sometimes the best ideas come from situations that aren't the most ideal," adds Nick.

For many decades, Imperial Sarnia site employees and retirees have contributed to the United Way of Sarnia-Lambton. In fact, Imperial has prided itself on holding a long-time title of the single-largest donor to the local United Way. This year's goal is \$415,000 which includes a \$150,000 donation from the corporation.



Nick Bertrand (left) and Srdan Vukosavljevic



Jim Olsen at the Burger Rebellion curbside pickup lunch



Manjit Brar from Sitara Indian Cuisine at Imperial's first curbside pickup lunch

Loving what we do!

When you fill up at a local Esso or Mobil station, you can be sure you're getting a high-quality product that's manufactured right here in Sarnia. As a small thank you to customers for their continued support, Imperial activated a surprise 'We love our customers' pop-up promotion on Valentine's Day at the Esso Station on Indian Road. Imperial Sarnia engineers Haley Walker and Warren Young braved the cold temperatures and rewarded several lucky customers with a free tank of quality gasoline.



Wishing a long-time colleague and community champion a fond farewell

When Julie Ferguson began a short-term typing assignment at the Imperial Sarnia site in 1984, she never imagined it would turn into a career that would span nearly four decades and take her across various parts of Canada representing the company. At the start of her Imperial tenure, Julie was fresh out of high school.

A few months earlier, she had completed a co-op placement at the site. Her supervisor was so impressed with her work ethic that Julie says she was contacted about a temporary job as a typist, "I was 18 years old and I thought it was a good opportunity to develop my office skills, and be able to add work experience to my resume. It was initially a short-term assignment to backfill someone but in the end, I never left!"

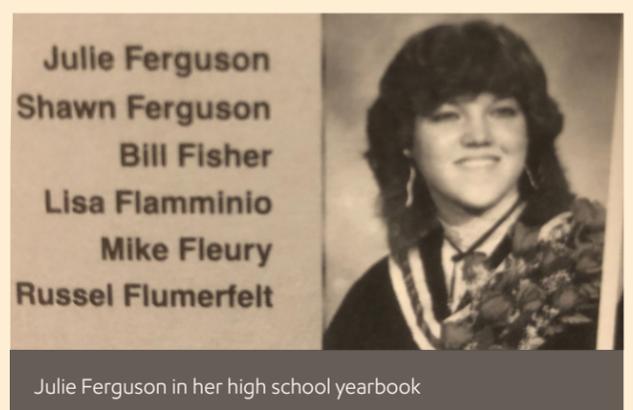
When a colleague of Julie's was transferred to Cold Lake, Alberta in 1990, she went along as part of the transfer and worked there until 1994. While in Cold Lake, she was part of a team that was working on a new computer application system for the company, "This required me to travel to Imperial's head office in Calgary every two weeks, on and off, for about four months, and then to Grande Prairie to implement the system. Later on, from 2006 to 2012, I took on the Sarnia community affairs role and was fortunate enough to see other parts of Canada. I went to Fort McKay, a First Nation very near to the Imperial Kearl site and met with community members and ate traditional food prepared for our team by the Nation's members. I had a tour of the Syncrude plant and was in absolute awe of that operation." Julie also travelled to Imperial's sites in Nanticoke and Strathcona, in Ontario and Alberta respectively, and to Halifax, Dartmouth and Ottawa.

While Julie has had many roles during her 37 years at Imperial, it's the community affairs role that stands out most for her, "I'm a people person and this was an opportunity to regularly collaborate with Imperial's community partners and stakeholders including various non-profit organizations. I got to know a lot of people outside of the site, and I developed a real passion for being involved in the community and giving back."

Julie has been an active volunteer with Rebound and hopes to dedicate even more time to the organization after she retires. She's also looking forward to spending more time with her husband and their 17-month-old dog as well as family and friends. Thank you Julie for your 37 years of dedicated service to Imperial, and we wish you all the best in your retirement!



Julie Ferguson



Julie Ferguson in her high school yearbook

Employee spotlight: Blake Wright, Imperial Sarnia pipefitter

"My job at Imperial and my life as a farmer intersect. We own 150 acres in Plympton-Wyoming and grow corn, soybeans and wheat. My family has been farming here since 1836. They worked with horses, and now we work with tractors. We go through a lot of diesel for the tractors and combine, gasoline for the vehicles, small tractors, ATVs and chainsaws. We use propane and natural gas for grain drying and heating the shop. We also use oils and grease to maintain the equipment. Fuel plays a major role in food security and getting what we produce from the farm to the table."



Blake Wright



Refinery manager Glenn Hayes with Principal Eryn Smit and Vice principal Adam Carswell

An outdoor learning space at P.E. McGibbon

Imperial Sarnia is fortunate to have a successful community partnership with P.E. McGibbon. In addition to volunteering at the school's breakfast program, we recently collaborated to develop a large outdoor play space. Students and staff now have a beautiful play and learning area that everyone is proud of. Grassroots partnerships like this are one of the many things that make Sarnia such an incredible community to live and work in.



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Taking care of our furry friends

Imperial recently contributed \$15,000 to the Sarnia Humane Society with the funds going to upgrade the outdoor dog-play area and to purchase two cat 'pawds.' The pawds are designed especially for cats that do not get along well with other kitties. As part of this donation, Imperial ran a social media series highlighting employees who have adopted a pet, including Ben Caswill from our site's human resources department.



Ben Caswill and Blossom

"I'm on the Board of Directors for MotorCity Greyhound Rescue. We rescue sighthounds from around the world and facilitate adoptions in Michigan, Ohio, and Ontario. We recently brought in six Irish greyhounds and they're all being adopted in Southern Ontario. Blossom is my dog, and she's a rescue from China. Some of you may recognize Blossom. She loves going for walks, and her and I are a common sight along Front Street."



How to reach us

Emergency contact

Please contact us immediately if you notice any unusual odours, sights or sounds. The local number is **519-339-5666**.

General inquiries

Please contact Kristina Zimmer, public and government affairs manager at: **519-339-4015** or kristina.zimmer@esso.ca



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