

PWABC Manager of the Year Award – Nominee **Ray Kerr**

Career Summary:

Ray Kerr started his career at the City of Surrey in 1991 in the roads and drainage crew as a skilled labourer. In this tenure, Ray worked in every utility related to Public Works and was promoted through the ranks to Division Manager of Engineering Operations. Ray is the City's first operations division manager that began their career as a labourer.

Staff and Infrastructure Under Direct Administration:

Full Time: Over 350

Temporary: Over 100

Roads, Water, Drainage and Sanitary: Approximately 2000 KM

Households Served (Solid Waste): 100,000

Pump Stations: 82

Fleet: 500+ Vehicles

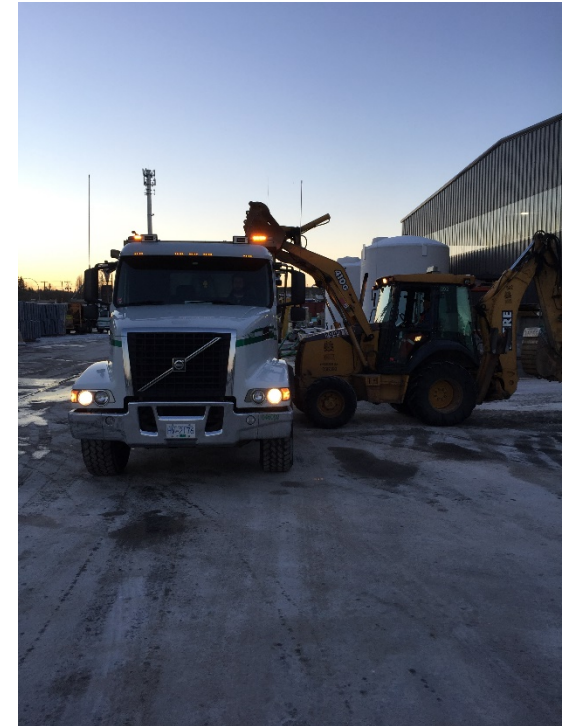
Annual Budget: \$ 108 Million

As the staff of the Engineering Operations Division at the City of Surrey, we are proudly nominating Ray Kerr, our Engineering Operations Manager, for the PWABC Manager of the Year Award.

Ray is a quick study and hard worker. With these attributes, Ray started his progression through the ranks. Ray is a natural leader of our division as he brings a practical element to all interactions. He has worked in every utility of public works, creating a well-rounded manager.

At a technical level Ray is very competent. This is demonstrated by his adeptness to respond to all situations, from storm events to large capital projects. Recent examples include being the City's lead on our \$65 million design and construction project for our state-of-

the-art Operations and Fleet Centre. This project was large scale in terms of civil improvements and required extensive stakeholder engagement from the Union, contractors, architects and multiple City departments. Ray demonstrated leadership, determination and innovation from start to finish. At a storm level, the winter of 2016/2017 exposed the region of Metro Vancouver to a winter anomaly unlike any other dating as far back as the mid 1980's. Between November 2016 and February 2017, the City of Surrey used more than 17,000 tonnes of road salt to maintain 2,700 lane kms of road in our city. This is a stark contrast to the average winter season where the city would use approximately 6,000 tonnes of salt. This extraordinary winter event led to a regional salt shortage. Fortunately, largely due to Ray's foresight and leadership, the City of Surrey never ran out of salt and maintained a high level of service, ensuring public safety.



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Ray's achievements have led him to be well respected in the public works community. At a local level Ray chairs the Lower Mainland Municipal Operations Manager group and co-chairs the Translink Operations, Maintenance and Rehabilitation committee. Ray has also routinely presented on various public works related programs since the mid 2000's. He has been a member of PWABC since the mid 2000's and attended most annual conferences since then, including numerous snow and ice conferences hosted by the American Public Works Association (APWA). Most recently, Ray was the City's lead in preparing our successful application for the APWA Excellence in Snow and Ice Award, being one of three City's in Canada to receive this prestigious recognition.

Ray has been a vigorous supporter of public works education. For the past 13 years, Ray has supported the annual "Take Your Kids to Work Day" and the "Door's Open" events. As an innovation to increase awareness, two of Ray's proudest achievements are our annual "Paint the Snow Plow" (serving 13 schools every year) and "School Tour" (reaching over 1000 students every year) events with City of Surrey elementary schools. These events help promote public works as a career option and serve to raise public awareness of the many facets of public works related services. Outside of

these venues, and on an ongoing basis, Ray has mentored and trained hundreds of staff on leadership fundamentals and the importance of public works role within the community.

Perhaps Ray's greatest contributions have been the development of staff, through his supportive and caring nature. Early in Ray's career, he was an active member in the Union, which led him to develop unique competencies and understanding when building and maintaining strong relationships. This has led to Ray always being an advocate for safety and employee wellness, ensuring everyone goes home safely to their family. An example of this was further demonstrated over the past year, with Ray's division experiencing a 48 % reduction in preventable lost time injuries. This achievement led to Ray being personally recognised with awards from BC Municipal Safety Association (BCMSA) and the North American Occupational Safety and Health (NAOSH) Week, for his leadership in safety. Ray was also successful in preparing the City's application for the APWA Exceptional Performance in Safety. Achievements and efforts are more important but have not been professionally recognised is Ray's dedication to employee wellness. Ray is an ambassador of the City's Pink Shirt Day and the Not Myself Campaign that supports staff mental health and a respectful workplace.

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On a personal level, Ray is a beloved father, husband, son and an altruistic individual. Community service is near to Ray's heart, with him participating in the annual United Way and Heart and Stroke campaign.



The above summary is a small snapshot of Ray's impact on the City of Surrey's though his contributions towards delivering public works services and the community. We hope that Ray is awarded the PWABC Manager of the Year Award as we know it will be a personal highlight of his career.

Staff Testimonials:

Being Operations Manager is a difficult job that involves a variety of skillsets to be successful. As a labourer/Supervisor for the City of Surrey I have been very lucky to have Ray Kerr as my Operations Manager. In all my experiences with Ray he has been friendly and welcoming. He has an open-door policy and is willing to listen to his staffs concerns. Ray has always been fair and attentive when dealing with any issues that may arise. I think he is excelling as the current city operations manager and enjoy working for him.

Armand Rashid, Labourer with Solid Waste

To have an operations manager that started where he started as a labourer, allows us all to have a mentor that has been where we have been and shows us where we can go.

Dave Mumm, Field Supervisor II with Traffic Operations

I met Ray recently during an interview with the City of Surrey, for my current position, Manager of Water Operations. It was Ray's genuine nature and progressive leadership qualities along with his obvious breadth of experience that ultimately made the decision "easy" for me to join the City of Surrey.

Tara Macrae, Manager, Water Operations