

The LEADING Edge

A Lydale newsletter for insurance and restoration professionals

Fall 2004 Edition

When it rains it pours: Lydale meets the challenge of a busy storm season.



Widely circulated shots of Edmonton's Whitemud Freeway after a severe summer storm. A series of summer storms across Alberta and Saskatchewan tested the limits of all six Lydale locations.

No matter where you were this past July, chances are you either lived through or heard about the severe weather that took its toll on western Canada. Pictures from the Edmonton storms were widely circulated on the Internet, shots of partially submerged autos trapped on freeways that had suddenly turned into ice-jammed rivers.

In and around Regina, heavy rain resulted in closed highways and soaked basements. In the Calgary region, multiple hail storms wreaked havoc with property. Central Saskatchewan also saw its share of severe weather.

Lydale teams across both provinces were scrambling to respond quickly and efficiently while still maintaining the levels of service and satisfaction that our customers have come to expect.

Lydale's ability to mobilize for large-scale remediation was tested most this summer in Edmonton. "It was quite a challenge, especially since there were two big storms fairly close together," says Edmonton Cleaning/Emergency Services Manager Jason Durward. "Within about a week, our

file load had increased ten-fold. We mobilized every technician and every piece of equipment, and started going in shifts seven days a week. We brought in people and equipment from our other locations, too."

When the second storm surge resulted in even more claims, Lydale decided to limit the number of new claims briefly until extra staff and resources could be brought in.

"We decided that it was important to be able to do a good job on the claims that we already had before taking on a bunch more work," explains Managing Partner Blaine Jackson. "We wanted to be sure to continue delivering the best service in town. So we called our insurance company contacts and adjusters and explained. I think they respected us for being up front with them. When we were able to take more work, we went back to them and they were happy to send us more because they knew things would get done in a timely manner."

The decision to focus on quality rather than quantity has paid off. Lydale Edmonton had the opportunity to work with, and become

recognized restoration contractors for, some new insurers.

"When there's a catastrophic loss, it can be tempting for a restoration contractor to just keep taking more claims. Certainly we took on a lot of claims and tested our limits," says Jackson. "But if you get short-sighted and take on too much, you run the risk of lowering your service standards and violating the trust that the insureds and the insurers have in you."

"To us, trust is our biggest business asset."

The Leading Edge is published and distributed by Lydale Construction, specialists in disaster clean-up, restoration and construction services.

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Operating since 1978, Lydale is one of western Canada's most trusted disaster clean-up, restoration and reconstruction specialists. Lydale's success has been built on the principles of honesty, integrity, open communication, and continual training and education. Our team members are committed to excellence in all of these areas and hold themselves to the highest professional and ethical standards.



LYDALE

HOT TOPICS

Watch this section for hot industry topics or for highlights about new training and/or equipment we've acquired.

Emergency electronics cleaning: Your data is backed up. How will you get your computers back up after disaster?

You don't know what you've got 'til it's gone. That's certainly true when you consider how much today's homes and businesses rely on computers and other electronic equipment.

Imagine arriving at the office one morning to find that disaster has struck, and you've got a murky layer of water-soaked soot over everything. You do regular back-ups and your data is safe, but how will you get back up and running without computers and other office equipment? Even if office equipment hasn't been directly touched by soot or smoke, the high humidity that can result from fire and flood conditions can trigger corrosion on internal electronic parts.

According to Jason Lee, Emergency Response Supervisor, Lydale's portable electronics cleaning station makes it possible to get smoke-, water- and soot-damaged electronics back in service quicker than ever before.

"Until recently, cleaning and testing of electronics equipment was carried out off-site," says Lee. "We had to transport it to our own facility or to an electronics cleaning

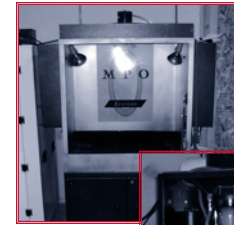
shop to be cleaned and tested. This is still the approach most restoration contractors will take, but we feel that in many situations it's better for the equipment and better for our customers if we can do the cleaning and testing on-site."

Transporting electronic equipment off-site adds time to the restoration process, and might add to the corrosion of delicate internal circuits. On-site cleaning allows the customer to maintain greater control over who has access to the data stored on computers. For some companies, off-site electronics cleaning could present privacy and competition concerns. But on-site cleaning can be carried out under the watchful eye of IT managers, who can also identify which machines are most vital and should be done first.

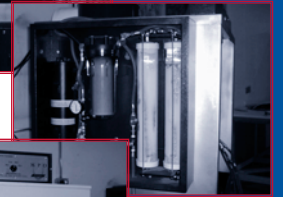
To recover from disaster, just add water?

It's not quite that simple, but once on-site and set up, Lydale's electronics cleaning system has four stages: disassemble; wash; dry; and reassemble.

"Some find it alarming that we actually wash electronic parts," says Lee. "The washer uses de-ionized water. De-ionizing



Electronics washer (top), has its own water deionizing system (centre).



Dryer unit (left) dries electronic parts and papers.

removes the mineral content from the water, neutralizing corrosive elements and releasing the electromagnetic charge of the carbon molecules in smoke and soot. The dryer is temperature-controlled and has good air movement, so it actually dehumidifies and dries the equipment very quickly. It's the perfect drying environment."

The portable electronics cleaning station is most effective in instances of soot or smoke damage. Effectiveness with water-logged machines depends upon how quickly the equipment is treated and whether or not the water has caused electrical damage. Lee says he can usually disassemble, clean, dry, and reassemble up to four computers in a typical 8-hour shift. That can go a long way to getting vital equipment up and running after a disaster.

Lydale has SK brokers seeing stars.

It may have been cloudy outside, but the stars were definitely shining October 14th inside the Delta Regina Hotel as the Insurance Brokers Association of Saskatchewan (IBAS) kicked off its annual convention. Lydale was proud to be a major sponsor and host of the opening reception.

In keeping with the evening's "Hollywood" theme, Lydale marketing duo Jaimie Peters and Gord Hawker organized "An Evening of Stars". From the glowing star necklaces handed out at the door, to the decorations and the Hollywood movie characters placed around the room, it was a star-studded evening. "Paparazzi" snapped pictures as IBAS members and other invited guests posed with Hollywood icons Marilyn Monroe

and Humphrey Bogart. The party was lively and the fun continued into the wee hours.

"It was great for Lydale to be able to host this event," said Hawker. "Saskatchewan brokers have been very supportive of our company. This was a chance to say thank you."

Hollywood disaster DVD's were awarded during the evening. The Grand Prize was a new portable DVD player with 3 movies. Frank Buck of Regina also won a DVD player at Lydale's tradeshow booth.



Top: Lydale's Vern Lange with Grand Prize Winner, Leona Bevan of Gainsborough, SK.



Middle: Ken Conn of Lydale Saskatoon welcomes special guests.



Bottom: IBAS delegates danced 'til the wee hours.