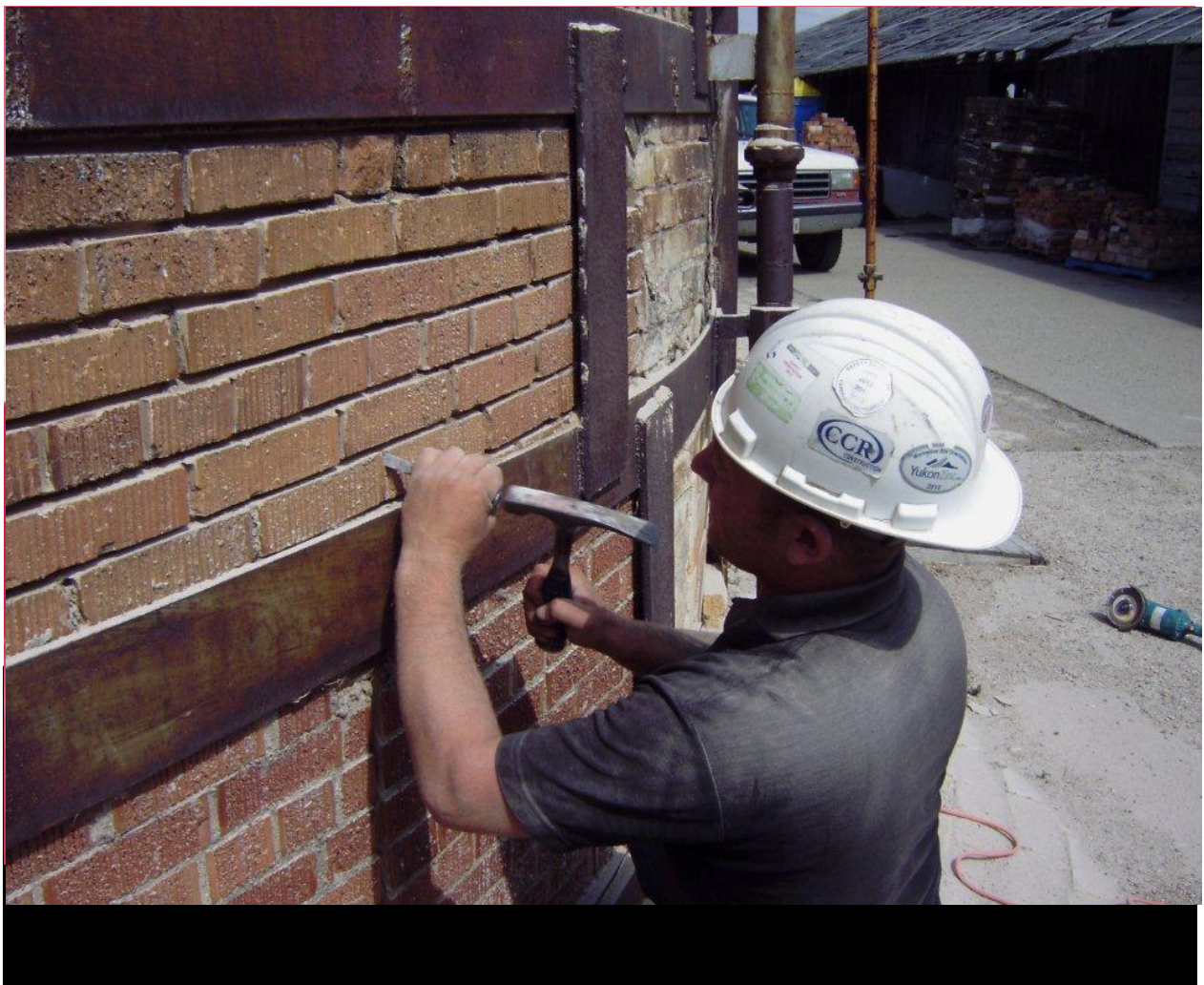


CONSERVATION BULLETIN SERIES

Contractors

in heritage conservation



The Saskatchewan Heritage Foundation (SHF) is an agency of the Crown established by provincial legislation in 1991 to support heritage projects at the provincial and community level that seek to conserve, research, interpret, develop and promote Saskatchewan's diverse heritage resources.

The Heritage Conservation Branch (HCB) of the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport facilitates the protection and conservation of heritage resources in Saskatchewan under *The Heritage Property Act*.

The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada (the “Standards & Guidelines”) represents nationally-adopted guidance on how to best conserve Canada’s irreplaceable heritage resources. The Standards & Guidelines have been adopted by the SHF and the HCB.

Contractors - This Conservation Bulletin is a resource guide for common issues surrounding the execution of conservation work on heritage buildings in Saskatchewan. This Bulletin provides information to anyone planning, designing and/or undertaking any type of work on heritage buildings where a contractor is a member of the team. In addition to identifying common issues, this Bulletin draws upon the circumstances as experienced by contractors on sites throughout Saskatchewan with a view towards raising awareness of the importance of involving contractors early in the planning and design process.



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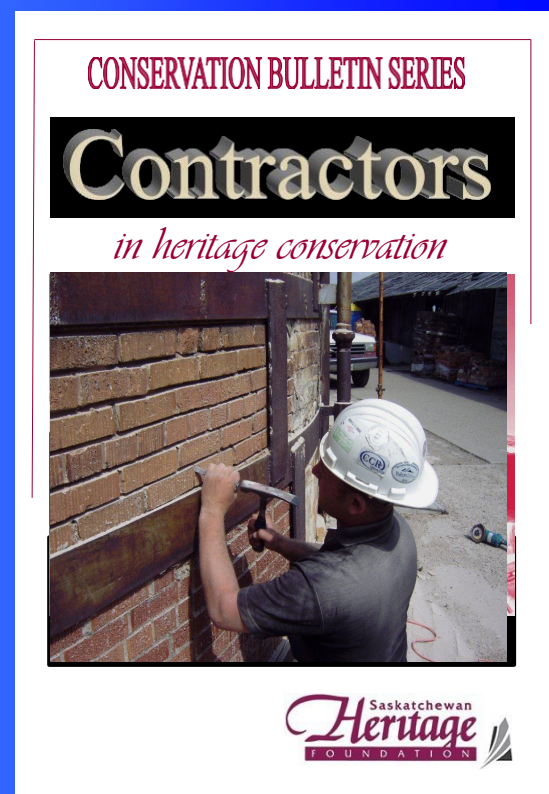
- *Every trade and profession has its challenge; contractors who are involved with heritage properties are not excluded.*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Engaging contractors early in the design process is important and good practice.

In 2012, the Saskatchewan Heritage Foundation (SHF) initiated discussions with a number of general, masonry and roofing contractors, primarily within the province, who may have been involved with heritage properties. The purpose of these enquiries was to identify key issues and challenges. Where a contractor had previous involvement with heritage issues, these properties were typically commercial, civic or institutional.

Whether it is related to building maintenance or budget, the issues discussed in this bulletin incorporate the perspective of the contractor as a critical participant in the conservation of Saskatchewan's built environment. In addition to challenges associated with maintenance, budget, climate, compatibility (of design and materials) and compliance, this bulletin includes factors such as communicating with your contractor and checking their credentials.

As one contractor acknowledged, one of the key challenges in working on heritage properties is the same with any project – the human element. Virtually all of the challenges discussed in this bulletin can be linked in some form to a human element. This could include inadequate information affecting estimates, delays that unexpectedly extend the project schedule into the winter, or misunderstandings between stakeholders and decision-makers on any given project. These challenges can have an impact on any project, but if they affect Saskatchewan's irreplaceable heritage resources, the potential impact is often much higher.



Fig. 1 — The human element is present on all construction sites (Photo: Saskatchewan Heritage Foundation, 2010)

2. SKILLED CONTRACTORS

Are the skills of contractors keeping up with the demands of heritage conservation?

There is agreement amongst the contractors interviewed that finding appropriately skilled trades people continues to be a challenge in Saskatchewan. The lack of a skill set in a particular trade can have many implications for heritage projects.

Contractors who have experience with heritage projects acknowledge that they approach work on a heritage property differently than for a non-heritage project. Other contractors have expressed uncertainty about the difference between how to approach a heritage building versus newer construction.

By exploring this thread further, the interviews suggest that selecting an experienced contractor for your heritage project is not as critical as having a good general contractor working on heritage buildings. This is an important observation that warrants consideration of several examples.

- There are experienced general contractors who have replaced old-growth timber windows with PVC inserts as a means of addressing air infiltration between the sash and frame or its moving components.
- There are experienced masonry contractors who have used Portland cement in re-pointing historic masonry that was constructed using a lime-based mortar.

- There are experienced roofing contractors who have painted the cedar roof on a heritage property, as a measure to protect it from deterioration.

It has been suggested during interviews with contractors that the key individual on a construction site is the superintendent rather than the general contractor, and the most important factor is the quality of the contractor combined with the experience of the superintendent. Some contractors acknowledge that they require additional education to undertake heritage projects.

This may arise in the form of awareness and understanding, of say, the matter of significance. In relation to the matter of the significance of a designated building for example, a contractor confirmed:

“...no one really knew what was historical. Then it was lost.”

This situation, however, may have more to do with communication and consultation than with education.

Some masonry contractors hold Red-Seal Journeyman certificates The Interprovincial Standards Red Seal Program (also known as the Red Seal Program) represents a standard of excellence for industry and provides mobility across Canada for skilled workers

Skilled Contractors (*continued*)

Other contractors have received Jahn Restoration Training at the IMI Center in Maryland and have applied this training to several masonry restoration projects in Saskatchewan.

Heinz Jahn, who, as an engineer in Holland and Germany, gained vast experience in investigating masonry building problems. By testing to establish the masonry's physical properties, he was able to develop a restoration mortar that was truly compatible, ensuring long-lasting repairs. The importance of masonry testing is recognized by the Saskatchewan Heritage Foundation, and is reflected in the conservation bulletin titled Brick Masonry and in requests by the Foundation for such testing in relation to heritage grant applications involving masonry work.

Since heritage buildings can often include specialty construction, some contractors acknowledge that finding the funds to do the work is one challenge – finding the skills required in Saskatchewan is another¹.

While contractors may recognize their own limitations in the area of skills and awareness, they also recognize the important role that architects may play once a project is tendered and construction commences. Property owners should consider this factor well before the design process starts.

Additional expertise and awareness in heritage conservation would also benefit local governments who are responsible for approving building permits. Many municipalities, however, do not have the resources to deal with the types of challenges that can arise on a heritage project. When this occurs, it is important that local authorities consult with those who have the resources and expertise to ensure that decisions are informed by best

practice heritage conservation advice.



Fig. 2 — Re-pointing historic masonry with compatible mortar is an effective conservation measure (Photo: Town of Shaunavon, 2010)

1. Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology's 100-hour Applied Certificate in Architectural Heritage and Building Renovation provides students with the specialized skills required for the assessment, preservation, renovation, and even marketing of older buildings. The Program is meant to appeal primarily to builders, carpenters, contractors, developers, and others involved in the construction and/or renovation industries, as well as realtors and municipal building officials.

3. CHALLENGES

Every trade and profession has its challenges — contractors who are involved with heritage projects are not excluded.

The SHF received feedback from contractors based on the challenges that they continue to encounter when working on projects that involve Saskatchewan’s heritage. The following discussion reflects some of these challenges raised although these may not be applicable to every contractor.

What are some of the key challenges you have experienced in dealing with heritage properties?

3.1 Care

Contractors often identify deferred maintenance issues during their initial visit to the heritage property. The impact of the lack of ongoing maintenance on the rest of the building is not always fully appreciated and/or the resolution of such conditions has been underestimated by the property owner.

The *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* (the “Standards and Guidelines”) makes reference to a wide range of existing conditions. Because materials are often identified as character-defining, they contribute to the heritage value of historic places and should therefore be conserved where practical. The ongoing care of materials, including appropriate maintenance and repair, contributes to the integrity and lifespan of a historic place.

Traditional building materials, such as masonry and wood, are very durable. Over time, they have demonstrated a significant capacity to withstand surface degradation without losing structural capacity as long as basic maintenance is carried out.

In this regard, the Standards and Guidelines recommend the following:

- a) **Protecting** and maintaining elements of the building’s exterior form through cyclical or seasonal maintenance work.
- b) **Carrying out** regular monitoring and inspections of materials to proactively determine the type and frequency of maintenance required.



*Fig. 3 — Inadequate maintenance in the form of deferred re-pointing or the use of incompatible mortars can accelerate deterioration
(Photo: M. G. Miller, 2010)*

Challenges (*continued*)

3.2 Compatibility of Design

Some of the key challenges that contractors experience when working with owners of heritage properties can be considered as *aesthetic* considerations while other challenges are more concrete.

For example, if architects specify *generic* rather than more specific construction details, issues can surface on-site if the details have not been fully considered in their appropriate on-site context.

Contractors also agree that they would benefit from a better understanding of the relationships between new construction and heritage properties.

Most interventions to an historic building have some impact on its overall appearance. This may be particularly apparent when constructing additions or making modifications to the existing heritage property. These changes must be compatible in terms of materials and massing with the exterior form of the historic building and its setting.

The SHF acknowledges that these matters are perhaps more appropriately explored with the architectural community. However, it also recognizes that unresolved matters that occur at the design stage can be made worse during construction, which is often the phase that relies heavily on the contractor.

In addition to matters of design compatibility, many contractors agree that executing work as specified *in order to keep the historic building looking original* is also a challenge. There is a sense that this challenge is further heightened by the “rules” to be followed when working on a heritage property.

The perception and understanding of the implied “rules” varies widely throughout the planning, design and construction process. For example, it is not always desirable that the end result, particularly for new construction, look like the original building. In fact, for new construction, conservation principles specifically discourage the replication of historic detail under certain circumstances.



*Fig. 4 — The single-story addition beyond illustrates key aspects of compatibility in terms of scale, location and design
(Photo: M. G. Miller, 2010)*

Challenges (*continued*)

In certain circumstances, contractors suggest that architects are more conservative than owners of heritage properties when it comes to replication. As one example, the existing plaster of an interior space of one historic property had been painted an unusual colour. The architect indicated that it was a requirement to reinstate the unusual colour. In addition, the finished work had to be constructed using plaster. In this case, there was insufficient information to know whether the project set out to accurately “preserve” an important heritage value (i.e. the unusual colour) or to “restore” it to a particular period in time. More information regarding the significance and condition of the plaster and the paint colour would have contributed to a better understanding of whether reinstating the unusual colour was appropriate. If it were a “rehabilitation” project, it is possible that an interpretation of the Standards and Guidelines was warranted to determine which aspects of compatibility were important to address and with what conservation approach.



Fig. 5 — The installation of aluminum or PVC windows where wood windows existed historically results in material incompatibility (Photo: M. G. Miller, 2010)

3.3 Compatibility (Materials)

Material compatibility that may arise from the need to match existing features such as trim or stonework is equally important.

Obtaining products that are comparable to historic products and then locating the appropriate trades people who are familiar with their application is recognized as a recurring challenge. An important aspect of “comparability” between materials is quality. In some instances, the measure of comparability is limited to general visual matters and not the long-term performance or physical characteristics of those materials.

In relation to material compatibility, the Standards and Guidelines require that careful consideration be given to the approach for repair, limited replacement in kind and replacement. In addition, the Standards recommend against using new materials that have not stood the test of time. This is particularly important in harsh climate conditions. In relation to wood windows for example, the Standards and Guidelines recommend:

- a) **Repairing** parts of windows, doors, or storefronts, by patching, piecing-in, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing, using recognized conservation methods. Repair may also include the limited replacement in kind, or with a compatible substitute material, of those extensively deteriorated or missing parts of windows, doors and storefronts. Repairs should match the existing work as closely as possible, both physically and visually.
- b) **Complying** with energy efficiency objectives in upgrades to character-defining doors, windows and storefronts by

Challenges (*continued*)

installing weather-stripping, storm windows, interior shades and, if historically appropriate, blinds and awnings. The energy efficiency of the building envelope and systems as a whole should be considered.

c) **Replacing** in-kind irreparable windows, doors or storefronts based on physical and documentary evidence. If using the same materials and design details is not technically or economically feasible, then compatible substitute materials or details may be considered.

Windows, doors and storefronts are among the most conspicuous of any building's features. In addition to their function, their arrangement and design is fundamental to the building's appearance and heritage value.

Windows and doors are vulnerable to wear and tear, changing tastes and functional requirements. Their function and operation must be considered as part of their conservation.



Fig. 6 —Repairing and selectively replacing extensively deteriorated component sash parts represents best conservation practice (Photo: M. G. Miller, 2010)

The Standards and Guidelines recognize this and therefore discourage:

a) **Replacing** in-kind extensively deteriorated or missing parts of windows, doors and storefronts, where there are surviving examples.

b) **Removing** or replacing windows, doors and storefronts that can be repaired. Peeling paint, broken glass, stuck sashes, loose hinges or high air infiltration are not indications that these components are beyond repair.

c) **Replacing** repairable windows with new ones, without evaluating the performance and remaining service life of the existing windows.

d) **Using** new materials or new technologies that do not have a proven track record.

e) **Replacing** deteriorated character-defining elements using new materials or technologies to improve durability, when the original material performs adequately.

Since windows and doors usually require considerable maintenance, there is a temptation to replace them with newer lower maintenance units, sometimes in the name of energy efficiency. Unfortunately, this strategy can have a negative impact on their heritage value. As well, although historic windows and doors can be repaired many times, modern replacement units can often not be repaired and need to be replaced in their entirety, even for only a small problem.

Challenges (*continued*)

Without a full assessment of the condition of historic material, it is difficult to know whether replacement is the appropriate approach. Certainly, there is ample evidence that a blanket replacement approach is not appropriate from a conservation perspective.

On one particular heritage project, for example, the contractor confirmed that windows were an issue. When you upgrade a building it requires addressing efficiency issues – thermally, older windows are much harder to make air-tight. In this instance, fiberglass units were used, making them materially incompatible with the character of the place. However, there is a larger issue here. It is necessary to identify the actual problem, assess the alternatives and determine the appropriate intervention in accordance with the Standards and Guidelines. The matter of thermal efficiency can be addressed through rehabilitation while air tightness can be addressed through appropriate weather-stripping.

With the important objective of making historic wood windows thermally efficient, the compatible approach is either to rehabilitate (repair) the historic timber windows or construct new windows in-kind. Both types of work can be undertaken within Saskatchewan.

Some masonry contractors admit that it is difficult to make new construction look like the original. This may happen, for example, when new mortar is deemed materially compatible with historic mortar, but because it has not weathered, selective re-pointing may not look exactly the same as the weathered historic mortar.

While contractors may find it difficult to match existing materials, they need to recognize that conservation is selective – one should only seek to repair or selectively replace that which needs to be repaired.

Some contractors admit that finding materials to match historic conditions can be a challenge.

We've looked at using snow fences or an old barn to get the weathered look, because once you do a repair it is noticeable.



Fig. 7 —In-kind splicing of new wood to match existing represents best conservation practice with regard to extensively deteriorated sash components (Photo: M. G. Miller, 2010)

Challenges (*continued*)

In discussing issues with contractors, it is evident that some of the challenges arise from their interpretation of conservation. The objective of installing materials so that they look weathered is not a conservation principle. New materials, as long as they are in kind, will weather over time. However, they may never truly match the original, and therefore every effort should be made to match the repair as closely as possible to the original material.

When undertaking repairs, it is important, where necessary, to replace timber for timber and brick for brick, rather than brick for steel, for example. That is the simplistic conservation objective of *in kind* construction.

In kind does not mean that it is necessary to import materials from Europe, especially if those materials will be concealed from view. In such cases, it may be appropriate to consider the work as rehabilitation, where new work can be compatible with the old rather than being an accurate reconstruction of the old.



Fig. 8 — New materials, so long as they are in kind, will weather over time. Where new materials are required to correct constructional deficiencies, they should be compatible with the character of the place in terms of design and materiality
(Photo: Village of Mortlach, 2009)



Fig. 9 — The retention of original fabric to the greatest extent practical represents recommended best conservation practice (Photo: M. G. Miller, 2010)



Fig. 10 — Simulated textures may not be appropriate where the original textures were less pronounced
(Photo: M. G. Miller, 2010)

Challenges (*continued*)

3.4 Compliance

Contractors and others within the planning and development industry have various interpretations for best conservation practice. Some consider these to be firm “rules” rather than guidelines. At one extreme, contractors may consider that the façade of a heritage property should not be touched. The other extreme is that historic material can be replaced with incompatible PVC units. The latter approach cannot be interpreted as compliance with conservation guidance.

Compliance with the Standards and Guidelines is rarely limited to just the façade, unless the heritage values associated with a particular heritage property lie exclusively within its façade. This may apply where properties front onto a traditional main street. More often than not, however, compliance with the Standards and Guidelines involves properties which show evidence of having a range of character-defining elements, including both exterior and interior features and spaces. When such aspects contribute to the heritage value of the place, it will be necessary to consider the entire property rather than focusing on one particular aspect, such as the front elevation.

Many contractors view compliance with the Standards and Guidelines as part of the role of the architect with this aspect being addressed prior to the commencement of work. However, unexpected circumstances can and do arise on a construction site. This is likely to become more of an issue when a heritage property is involved.

According to some contractors, making sure that due process is followed after permits have been issued remains a challenge.

In many cases, compliance with regulations extends well-beyond the Standards and Guidelines. For example, a building owner may decide to replace all of the windows in a building based on the fact that it is less costly to rebuild new windows rather than to remove the lead-based paint. Unfortunately, this argument is based on short-term objectives rather than by sustainability or life-cycle costing. The Standards and Guidelines address this specific issue.

As with any regulations, rules or best practices, the Standards and Guidelines have been devised for a particular reason, often in the public interest. In relation to heritage, they ensure that the essential heritage values of the place are conserved for future generations. The application of best conservation practices underpins the Standards and Guidelines, which have been adopted by the Saskatchewan Heritage Foundation.

Challenges (*continued*)

3.5 Construction

The Foundation has learned that some contractors have experienced difficulty in obtaining good-quality products such as dimensional lumber, counter-weighted windows, and cedar roofing shingles. The importance of finding visually and physically compatible substitute materials cannot be overstated. This is because the replacement of original materials with incompatible materials can diminish the heritage value of a property.

Less visible original material that is now recognized as being a health hazard includes lead-based paint and impregnated asbestos. The presence of asbestos in plaster, for example, has been recognized as a challenge for contractors. In this regard the Standards and Guidelines recommend:

Removing or encapsulating hazardous materials, such as lead-based paint, using the least-invasive abatement methods possible, and only after thorough testing has been conducted.

A common thread in the dialogue with contractors includes the inherent design and material characteristics of different construction techniques that may have been used historically versus today. This may be more prevalent in “restoration” and “preservation” with an expectation that it would be less of an issue in “rehabilitation”, which accounts for most of the work taking place on heritage properties.

Contractors were therefore asked:

Do you have any concerns about the quality of new materials? Which materials? What is the nature of concern?

A majority of contractors who responded expressed no overall concern about the quality of new materials, citing availability, variety and consistency as reasons for the positive experience. Exceptions included timber, sheet metal and asphalt. Timber can be obtained, but often at a high price; sheet metal is definitely of a lesser quality due to metal mixtures; and the use of galvalume and asphalt is considered to be of lesser quality today than twenty years ago.

Reinstating a 2x12 twenty-foot fir beam, for example, is no longer feasible without a healthy budget. Instead, contractors have been using Laminated Veneer Lumber. There is consensus that, while good quality timber can be obtained, the quality of timber in lumber yards today is often of lesser quality than it was years ago.

Some contractors advise that dealing with transition points from old to new construction can be a challenge since building practices may be completely different (i.e. transitioning wall assemblies from those that have no air or vapour barrier to an air and vapour tight assembly).

Challenges (*continued*)

Some masonry contractors are very pleased with the quality of new construction materials, however, there is agreement that building practices ought to be improved.

There is a sense that the masonry industry is promoting the use of hydraulic lime mortar. In eastern Canada, for example, hydraulic lime and Portland is often used. Hydraulic lime mortar has not been in common use in Saskatchewan so it is too early to know how well it will perform here.

The experience of some roofing contractors is that the Peel & Stick Membrane has not been a particularly successful product for use on flat roofs in Saskatchewan. There appears to be a preference for rubber roofing membranes and/or PVC products.

With a torched-on roofing membrane, there is always the risk of fire. There is the suggestion that efforts should be made to fire-proof roofs before applying a torched-on membrane.



Fig.11 — Contractors believe that the timber stocked in lumber yards today is of a lesser quality than it was thirty years ago
(M. G. Miller, 2011)

3.6 Climate

During the course of construction, contractors have to deal with unpredictability as well as with aspects outside of their control. If projects are delayed until late into the fall, for example, this can mean having to deal with cold weather issues that usually result in added costs.

Conditions affecting contractors can also arise during or as a result of spring floods. A cold spring in which the snowpack is not reduced by evaporation, sublimation or previous melting, can mean that flooding might occur. A rapid warming trend can result in exceptional runoff from the snowpack causing wide-spread flooding.

The extent to which the water table may become saturated remains a perennial unknown, as well.

Challenges *(continued)*



*Fig. 12 —Ice-damming in areas that are not easily accessible can present a challenge
(M. G. Miller, 2011)*



*Fig. 13 —High water tables that are further exacerbated by heavy spring run-off can present significant challenges
(M. G. Miller, 2011)*

Challenges (*continued*)

3.7 Costs

The most common challenge reported by many contractors is inadequate budgets. Without appropriate funding it can be a challenge to complete projects successfully. This can be particularly true for heritage properties and can result in reliance on short-term fixes. This situation is well-known to the SHF.

Whether at the pre-design, design development or construction stage, getting accurate information to those who need it is essential for good decision-making. The ability to obtain accurate information can be complicated by cost, time or the appropriate trade skill.

In some instances, arranging financing can be an issue because of the premium that is charged in relation to the degree of risk or unknowns. The degree of risk can be partially reduced by rigorous estimating, but, estimating can only be as accurate as the defined scope of work.

Contractors were therefore asked:

Have you experienced difficulty in obtaining estimates from sub-contractors or in providing estimates to property owners? What is the nature of these difficulties? How would you overcome these difficulties?

While it might be expected that a contractor would not normally experience difficulty in providing reliable cost estimates, the construction industry in Saskatchewan can be too busy for some contractors to take the time to do estimates in a timely and thorough manner.

In some instances, contractors acknowledge a degree of reluctance to bid on certain projects due to a lack of information. A certain amount of this information might only be obtained by sourcing-out materials and skills that are not readily available in the province.

Another complicating factor is the very real recognition that highly skilled heritage conservation trades are not always available within the region. Under these conditions, contractors need to devote more time to budgets to produce bids that are competitive. This uncertainty can be addressed by budgets that make provision for time and materials.

However, owners often prefer lump sums and a lump sum based on uncertainty is more likely to be generous than lean. On large projects for example, contractors affirm that owners recognize that if there isn't a clear scope there will likely be a premium. To overcome this, some contractors have recommended that cash allowances be allocated for high-risk areas.

Other challenges for contractors can arise when owners undertake construction work themselves in order to keep costs manageable.

Challenges (*continued*)



Fig.14 — High-quality communication both on and off site is essential to minimizing risks and potential cost over-runs (Saskatchewan Heritage Foundation 2011)

3.8 Communication

Not surprisingly, many contractors believe that the most important recommendation that they can offer a design team is the need to sit down with trades at an early stage in the design process. While early communication will enhance project delivery, this often does not occur to the extent desired.

An interesting observation noted by contractors was that architects tend to look at things through their eyes rather than what might be realistic. Contractors acknowledge that communication is an issue, and much can get lost in translation, interpretation or understanding. This applies to any process that is multi-disciplinary or involves multiple stakeholders. As one contractor described it, “*there are a lot more meetings [in dealing with a heritage project] and [as a result] a lot more people involved.*”

A communication gap can arise, for example, when a property owner unknowingly uses different terminology to describe a particular scope of work with a contractor than was originally intended. The result might include completing portions of the work using materials and/or methods that were inappropriate or incorrect.

When budgets are limited, which is clearly a common occurrence, it is of exceptional importance that communication be clear. Cost overruns can occur if incorrect work needs to be re-done. Also, further costs can occur from unforeseen circumstances or from lack of clarity in the scope of work. Many extra costs can be avoided with proper care and effective communication.

Having raised the matter of communication, it is important to note that some contractors confirm that most owners have a reasonably good level of understanding of construction practices. Contractors might suggest that there is a need for architects to better understand the risks in what they are asking the contractor to undertake.

Challenges (continued)

Contractors will often be expected to ‘push the envelope’ since architecture is often by its very nature, a creative expression. To this end, one contractor acknowledged:

“...often we are handed a photograph and are expected to construct a finished product that looks like the photograph.”

3.9 Conflict

“There are too many white hats – everyone wants it done their way.”

Conflict can develop when multiple objectives and jurisdictional interests overlap. This can be minimized if a contractor foresees potential conflict and has the ability and authority to address it before it materializes. In the case of a heritage school, for example, conflict may be inevitable between a Board of Education (which desires a maintenance-free solution), a city (the neutral local authority), and a municipal Heritage Board (who wants to maintain the historic fabric), since each party has philosophically different approaches.

In such instances, while it is important to assess the strengths and weaknesses of each approach, decision-makers should review the Standards and Guidelines. While these cannot guarantee that such conflicts will be resolved, they do provide the context and the rationale for best practice heritage conservation.

Interpreting the Standards and Guidelines appropriately, however, does require heritage conservation expertise. It is acknowledged that small communities or rural municipalities are unlikely to have this expertise in-house, however, having access to this knowledge base is considered very important.

Contractors also note that conflicts can arise between historic conditions and new construction, where grandfathering certain conditions that may have been permitted by previous codes would not be permitted in a new building under the existing codes. This, combined with a very litigious environment, has emphasized the importance of reducing or avoiding conflict.

USE THIS SPACE FOR YOUR NOTES

Challenges *(continued)*



Fig. 15 — Hand-scraping and the selective repair of historic siding is an appropriate conservation approach (M. G. Miller, 2011)



Fig.16 — The completed works demonstrate a high-degree of retention of the historic fabric (M. G. Miller, 2011)



4. CONSERVATION OF HISTORIC PLACES IN CANADA

In relation to the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, would you consider your company to be a) not familiar with the Standards; b) somewhat familiar; c) familiar; d) very familiar with the Standards?

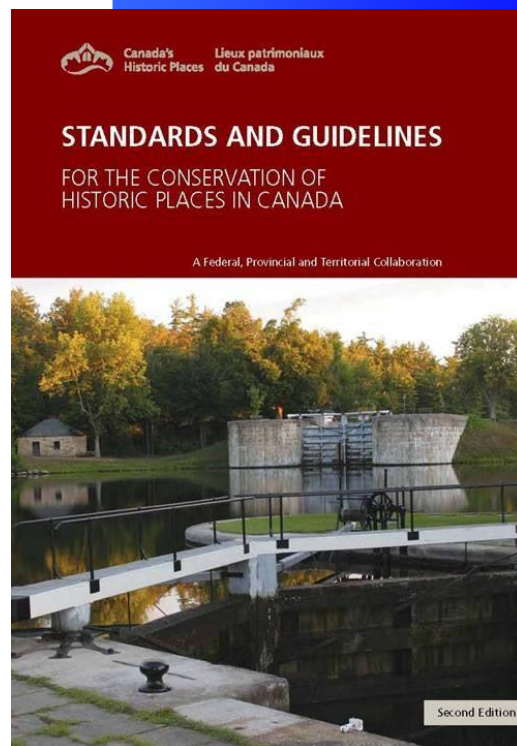
As expected, the range in familiarity that contractors have with the Standards and Guidelines is highly variable. Those who have participated in a course with Parks Canada, for example, may consider themselves to be very familiar with the concepts. Of particular note is the consensus amongst contractors that it is the architects who are more likely to have the interaction with the Standards and Guidelines.

Conservation activities can be seen as a sequence of actions, from **understanding** the historic place, to **planning** for its conservation and **intervening** through projects or maintenance. Since conservation is an ongoing and cyclical process, those who have a firm understanding about the significance and condition of an historic place can better contribute to the planning process. Planning will involve the careful consideration of all project goals, regulations, guidelines, user requirements and the interaction between members of the multi-disciplinary team.

When proposed changes to a heritage property could have impacts on character-defining elements, these impacts should be properly assessed before any potential interventions are initiated.

It is important that people who undertake the project work have the necessary knowledge and skills for the proper conservation of a heritage property.

Conservation is the overarching term for protecting historic places. It consists of all actions or processes aimed at safeguarding the heritage values of an historic place while extending its physical life. In this bulletin, while there are examples of *preservation* and *restoration*, the majority of the interventions appear to be a response to deferred maintenance, design, product limitations or change of use. This emphasis is best described as the conservation treatment known as *rehabilitation*.



5. ADVICE

If we consider the *Standards & Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*, we can turn to Standard 8, which is as follows:

Standard 8 — Maintain character-defining elements on an ongoing basis.

This standard introduces the basic sequence of interventions. Maintain first, then repair rather than replace the deteriorated parts of character-defining elements. This Standard promotes the ongoing maintenance of an historic place, an essential but often undervalued aspect of conservation. If this aspect of conservation is well-managed, it will also assist contractors once they become involved in your project.

Regular maintenance is an important aspect of maintaining the integrity of a historic place. The cost differential, between undertaking an intervention that meets the Standards and Guidelines versus an unnecessary or inappropriate intervention is worth considering carefully. This is partly because the effort to “un-do” certain interventions in the future may be impractical given the other ongoing requirements of maintaining your heritage property.

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Fig.17 — Repair and selective replacement (SHF digital files, 2011)



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