



## John M. - Safety Inspector

Position: Director, Fuels Safety Program  
Technical Training and Safety Authority (TSSA)\*

### **What does a typical work day look like for you?**

John indicates that "few are the same." Any day may include, working in the office on operation/administrative issues, working with committees concerned with changes to existing code or safety issues or visiting job and incident sites.

### **What are some of the challenges in your job?**

John indicates the challenge is "balancing the necessity of enforcing regulations with the satisfaction of stakeholders - balancing the needs of industry with the regulations to find the solutions."

### **What are the most important skills in your job?**

- Ability to think strategically - Strategic planning is part of this job (refers to the need to look at where the organization is now and think about the direction for growth in terms of development, policy and resources.)
- Communication skills – Ability to interact with people face-to-face and in written communications.
- Interpersonal skills – Able to work effectively as part of a team + leadership skills.
- Technical knowledge – Technical and industry knowledge are required to understand regulations from both the regulatory and industry perspective.

### **How would you describe your career path?**

By the end of the first year of his first job as an entry level draftsman, John knew he didn't want to sit at a desk doing the same thing every day. This led him to join an HVACR contracting company. Taking courses to obtain his gas license he worked up from installer to gas technician. He eventually joined Consumers Gas (now Enbridge) and for 30 years worked in a number of positions as his career moved through technical sales, promotion of gas to residential and industrial customers and systems operations. John left Enbridge and joined TSSA Fuels Safety sector in 2006.

### **What about education?**

John describes a pattern of 'lifelong-learning'. "I have taken many courses for self-improvement including business and management courses, various technical courses including a designation from the Institute of Gas Technology (Chicago). I completed my BA in the past 10 years. In addition to self-improvement, ongoing education is necessary to stay knowledgeable in this changing industry."

### **Would you change anything about your career path?**

"Not a thing! I like where I am right now and my career is a culmination of all the different industry experience I had along the way. I respect this industry and I still want to contribute: the industry is vibrant and still excites me!"

### **Are you working on anything now that you would like to mention?**

John has two personal causes:

1. The elimination of accidental deaths from carbon monoxide poisoning. One of TSSA's goals and John's is to find ways to better educate the public and work with industry and others to get the message out; "Carbon Monoxide kills and these deaths can be prevented!"
2. Encouraging youth to consider careers in any of the regulated fuel areas (gas, propane, oil). John expresses concern that this area of technical skills will be facing a worker shortage crisis as more baby boomers near retirement.

### **What do you do for fun?**

Besides work - that John says he is still fortunate enough to see as 'enjoyable'- partnered with his wife Diana, he is an avid and committed ballroom dancer (for over 40 years).



\*In Ontario, TSSA carries out a number of regulatory and safety tasks on behalf of the government, business and public, including safety inspections, technical training and certification, public education and outreach.