

Pillar Resource Services Inc.



The story goes that one of the founders of Pillar Resource Services Inc. loved Caterpillar bulldozers so much that he named the company after the world-famous field equipment manufacturer. The association is not as unconnected as it might seem, since like its namesake, Pillar has built its reputation and success on its field expertise. 🍁 “Most of our staff have a strong mechanical and/or technical ability, and they are inspired by self-motivation,” says Joe

Samaska, President. “They relate to people very well and they understand what it takes to keep a customer satisfied. By having a good balance of skills in the company, we are able to focus on the level of service desired by each of our customers.”

Pillar employees, with their commitment to fairness and entrepreneurial drive to succeed, have helped the company weather the ups and downs of the volatile oil and gas industry since the firm first began operations in 1983.

Pillar offers the oil and gas industry a full range of services associated with the installation, modification, and fabrication of con-

ventional oil and gas processing facilities such as gas plants, oil batteries, compressor stations, and well sites. Pillar also works closely with the heavy oil side of the petroleum industry with the installation, modification, and relocation of heavy oil treatment facilities, water treatment facilities, steam injection plants, and generators.

The Fight against Time

All of our staff in the field, the fabrication facility, and our offices have the ability to be flexible—to do what needs to be done, when it needs to be done,” Samaska says. “That’s very im-

portant in this line of work, since we’re often working with tight deadlines that are imposed by our customers, as well as by the environment we are working in. A good example of this type of deadline occurs every spring when the frost leaves the ground in western Canada, and many rural roads and highways face restricted usage. With this in mind, our staff often work longer hours, in conjunction with our customers, in order to get as much done as possible before these restrictions are put into place.”

Another deadline that is taken seriously by Pillar and its customers is the caribou run that occurs every spring in northern Alberta.

IN MANY WAYS, PILLAR RESOURCE SERVICES INC. AND ITS EMPLOYEES REFLECT THE VALUES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COMPANY’S HEAD OFFICE HOME, THE CITY OF CALGARY—BOTH ARE FLEXIBLE, INNOVATIVE, ENTREPRENEURIAL, AND OPEN TO NEW IDEAS.



Here again the company's staff work closely with customers, adjusting Pillar's schedules to ensure the work is completed before the caribou start their journey. Minimizing any impacts to the environment has always been a real concern for the company.

With this kind of commitment, Pillar has developed a reputation as a leader in its field. The complexity and size of projects the company handles has increased dramatically, yet Pillar maintains a professional focus on each project regardless of its size.

One way to gauge a service company's success is to consider the number of its repeat customers. At least 70 percent of Pillar's customers are repeat business. With a new customer, Pillar will usually be awarded a contract on a competitive bid basis. With existing customers, this process is modified

somewhat to enable the company to be involved in a dialogue very early on in the process, to ensure implementation is as efficient as possible. "We believe we can provide value-added expertise to help our customers achieve their goals," notes Samaska.

Continuing to Increase Value

Samaska and his colleagues understand that to continue to grow and prosper, companies must continue to offer more value. "These days our customers, the oil and gas companies, are required to perform for shareholders on a month-to-month basis, not year to year," Samaska says. "To support our customers, we look for leverage to deliver lower-cost, more streamlined implementation processes."

One way to achieve that leverage has been the company's investment in the latest technology for all areas of Pillar's operations; encouraging education and top performance from staff is another. Pillar's management works hard to understand the different groups of employees—office, technical staff, and trades—and what motivates them. Recognition of employees' performance is tied directly to their daily responsibilities and how well they handle these duties.

"Our staff is one of our major competitive advantages," says Samaska. In addition to flexibility, Pillar's employees need to be very well organized. Good communication skills, especially listening skills, are important, as is the need for diplomacy. "Occasionally when time deadlines are tight, emotions can run high, so our staff receive a lot of coaching on identifying issues and how to resolve them with customers," Samaska says.

In many ways, Pillar and its employees reflect the values and characteristics of the company's head office home, the city of Calgary. Like Calgarians, Pillar's employees are flexible, innovative, entrepreneurial, and open to new ideas. With a positive attitude and lots of energy, both Calgary and Pillar can look forward to a bright future in the coming years.

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