



# IN THE TRENCHES

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## From the President's Desk

Greetings LICO Members,

The weather so far this winter has been mild enough to allow us to get some spring work done ahead of time.

It's March and I'm now into year 2 of being president of LICO. I appreciate the confidence the Board and the membership have given me.

The 2020 LICO/DSAO convention is over and once again, it was a great event. There were good speakers, good food, good facilities and most of all, great people. Thanks to all our LICO members who attended and also to our DSAO partners in drainage. It's always a highlight reconnecting with long time friends in drainage. Make sure you book your hotel rooms for next year.

The Board has a few things planned for the up coming year:

We want to make improvements to the website. We want to update the content and the look of the website and make it more modern.

We want to investigate making improvements to the registration process; Sharon Cousens-Bond, our new Administrator/Treasurer is already checking into this.

We intend to continue a discussion with OMAFRA about possible updates to the Drainage Guide for Ontario and the licensing process, if possible. This issue too important to let it become redundant. If you get a chance to speak to your MPP, let him or her know about the importance of the Agricultural Tile Drainage Installation Act.

If you have any concerns, please let me know. Also if you have any ideas for topics or tours for the 2021 convention, please send Sid Vander Veen an email or text.

May all your 2021 tile drainage jobs have no stones, long runs and good paying customers.

Jason Van Gorp

## Changes coming to the Drainage Act - Ontario Farmer, February 25, 2020 - Suzanne Armstrong, CFFO

Director of Research and Policy

This past week, OMAFRA closed the consultation period on its Drainage Act Discussion Paper. The paper proposed changes intended to “reduce burden, streamline approvals and address stakeholder concerns while maintaining environmental standards.”

This discussion paper is the first step toward opening up legislation and modernizing the Act, and the CFFO has written in support of the three proposed enabling changes.

The first change would be to introduce new protocols that will reduce project delays. Under the Drainage Act, projects usually require approvals from several agencies, including conservation authorities and government departments.

Under this change, the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs would have the legislative authority to adopt technical protocols that simplify drainage project approvals. One example is the DART Protocol (Drainage Act & Section 28 Regulations Team), developed to help with approvals for drain maintenance and repair. CFFO supports this change, provided the protocols are developed through consultation with stakeholders.

The second proposed change is the introduction of a streamlined process for making minor improvements to the drainage system. Details are still vague at this point, and OMAFRA is seeking recommendations on what should actually constitute a “minor improvement.”

The final proposal is to enable a simple process for recording changes to drain design during the construction process. Currently, there isn’t a way to officially record changes made during construction due to site conditions in the engineer’s report. Drainage superintendents rely on engineer’s reports for maintenance and repairs, so when the drain on the land is different from the drain on paper, problems can arise – including for the landowner. CFFO supports OMAFRA’s efforts to correct this situation.

Earlier last week, CFFO members weighed in on the Drainage Act Discussion Paper during our Provincial Council meeting. Members went beyond OMAFRA’s proposals to offer other recommendations for the Drainage Act, as well. For example, many recommended decreased oversight from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Others suggested that municipalities should not allow drainage superintendent positions to be left vacant. There was also a call for updated drainage mapping.

OMAFRA’s Drainage Act Discussion Paper aims to reduce red tape for farmers, and it’s a great start.

But this week’s CFFO Provincial Council discussion suggests that we could be just scratching the surface.



**Highlights from the 62<sup>nd</sup> LICO Convention, Jan. 21–23, 2020** -Sid Vander Veen,  
Convention Coordinator

Where's the warmest place in Ontario in January? Of course, at the LICO/DSAO convention! And not only because of the great facilities – also because of the awesome people that we connect with. Here's a summary of the 2020 Convention:

**Tuesday January 21:**

- The convention began with the Red Cross course. There were 57 registrants for the course this year and everyone appears to have survived.
- This year's tour to the Hensall Co-op was excellent. Their operation ships products world wide and is world class. A rural agricultural Ontario success story.

**Wednesday, January 22**

- Jim Tait talked about his experiences with installing tile drainage in India, including some of the cultural differences.
- Mel Luymes presented a summary of the tile drainage innovations that were demonstrated at the Huronview Drainage Demo day.
- Merrin Macrae from the University of Waterloo reported on the results of the research she performed that was partially funded by LICO.
- Anne Verhallen from OMAFRA demonstrated the impacts of soil cover and conditions on soil infiltration and runoff.
- Greg Nancekivell from Dietrich Engineering presented on sufficient outlet.
- Chrissy Guthoerl from the Uncommon Ground Inc. presented on marketing strategies and opportunities, focusing on social media.
- Chris Biberhofer from Fisheries and Oceans Canada presented on the application of the Fisheries Act to activities on private ditches.
- At the Contractors Meeting, Peter Johnson (LICO Environmental Advocate) challenged contractors to think about the proper spacing of tile drainage systems and asked for any yield data comparing tile drainage spacing that might be available.

**Thursday, January 23**

- Cody Neath from ADS Canada gave an overview of pipe standards and testing procedures. He demonstrated gave some tips on what determines good pipe.
- Jeremy Meiners from AGREM LLC gave an overview of three types of tile drainage system layout: conventional, interceptor and now contour drainage.
- Alisia Williams, Williams Drainage & Trevor Dunn, Gillier Drainage detailed their approach to implementing their respective company's workplace Health and Safety programs.
- At the LICO Annual meeting, Robert Hall was acclaimed to another 3-year term on the Board. Various staff, committee and partner reports were given.

The following table shows a comparison of the registration number between this year's convention and 2019:

Convention	2020	2019
Banquet	235	273
Companion	34	26
Luncheon	295	261
Registration	256	255
Red Cross	57	42
Tour	18	55

Thank you very much to our donators, exhibitors and volunteers that made the convention a success. Next year's convention begins Tuesday, January 19 and concludes on Thursday, January 21, 2021. Don't forget to book your room.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January 19 - 21, 2021  
LICO Conference  
Best Western Lamplighter Inn  
591 Wellington Rd,  
London, Ontario N6C 4R3



### Who did we see and what did we do at the 2020 Convention??



We toured Hensall Co-op.



Jim Tait of Tait Bros. Contracting spoke on installing drainage tile in India.



LICO President, Jason Van Gorp (left), and Vice President, Robert Hall (centre) presented Jamie Turvey (right) with his Past President's plaque.



Marc Gagne (left) and Tim Dick (right) of DSAO presented the McNeely Taillon Achievement Award to Eric Westerberg (posthumously).