

## SPOTLIGHT ON BUSINESS



Kettleby Ontario, Canada

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*As a 12-year old, Vic Priestly started a grass-cutting business, encouraged by his father, an immigrant from Ireland who served on the Toronto Police Force for 40 years. Priestly Demolition Inc. is a family-owned company and, with over 40 years in operation, is the longest operating demolition company in Ontario.*

### The People

Vic Priestly founded Vic Priestly Contracting Limited in 1971 as a site works, excavation and landscaping company and worked out of a small yard in Aurora, Ontario. His dedication and hard work in the construction industry led him to incorporate a second company, Priestly Demolition Inc. (PDI) in 1993. PDI was incorporated as a unionized demolition company in order to work on larger projects in the Ontario market, initially focusing on the Toronto area.

Over 40 years later, under the leadership of the second generation and mentorship from Vic, the companies continue to successfully grow and compete in the Ontario construction market. Proudly, Priestly Demolition Inc. has become one of the largest demolition and ancillary service companies not only in Ontario but in Canada as well, due to the confidence and vision of President Ryan Priestly.

Ryan, Vic's son, oversees the operation of PDI. He is involved with the estimating and sales, the equipment and manpower, and overall site operations. Ryan has always been fascinated with the business. At the young age of 4 years, he set out on his tricycle along Wellington Street in Aurora, determined to go to work with his father. Throughout public school and high school Ryan took every opportunity he could to work with his father, and in the business. When most kids were playing on weekends, Ryan was at the yard sweeping floors, washing trucks and machines. Ryan attended Fanshawe College in a construction engineering technology course, completed his co-op positions and officially joined the company in 1996.

Robin, Vic's daughter and Executive-Vice President at PDI, oversees the financial, administrative, and marketing areas of the company.

As a child Robin had no interest in the business, but enjoyed working hard. She worked all through high school and graduated from Cambrian College from the Child and Youth Worker program, and, like Ryan, completed various co-op positions. During that time, Robin also worked part time at the Priestly salvage yard, and it was there that her interest in the business took root. Over the years, Robin managed to work in various businesses related to PDI, she completed many small business courses, got her DZ license, and ended up at the head office in 2003.

All of the employees participate in keeping up to date with new technology, and are committed to building good relationships with the customers. The company fosters an atmosphere of respect and support among the staff and management, with the Priestly's setting the examples by supporting each other.



Ryan, Robin and Vic Priestly

*Prosperous, innovative businesses that adapt to change from generation to generation contribute to a sustainable King.*

## Priestly Demolition Inc.

### The Product

The company works in demolition, abatement, and remediation, concrete crushing, salvage, and emergency services. The focus is on quality and safety, with regular safety training programs for employees and weekly equipment inspections.

PDI has the most extensive fleet of specialized equipment in the industry, including; high reach excavators, specialized attachments, loaders, bull dozers, skid steers, trucks and cranes. Recently PDI invested in the largest long reach excavator, a Kobelco SK 1000, with an operating high reach of over 120 ft. and weighing in at 100 tons.

When taking on a project, a comprehensive analysis of the site is completed to determine potential hazards and environmental challenges. These challenges vary from the detail of heritage buildings, to the dangers of tall-building work, to the traffic interruptions involved in bridge work.

There are 25 to 30 active projects on a daily basis across the province. On average, projects have 8 people on a site crew for 4 to 8 weeks, although projects may take 1 day with others taking up to 7 years. There are 25 to 40 workers on large sites like Marathon Pulp and Paper, Union Station, and General Motors. Most sites are in Ontario, with the occasional bid on out-of-province projects. The size of jobs varies from small residential sites to the demolition of Toronto's Pearson International Airport, the largest demolition and abatement project in Canadian history. In 2010, PDI had the job of gutting one of Toronto's most famous landmarks, Maple Leaf Gardens. Current projects include Women's College Hospital, Bridgepoint Health Hospital, the Four Seasons Hotel, and Toronto's Union Station. Mechanics are on site and workers are hired locally whenever possible.

The company is known for its 'green' solutions, salvaging almost everything from a demolition site.

*"My father has been recycling and salvaging for a long time, before it became mandatory, so we are good at it!"*

(Robin Priestly)

One employee is dedicated to finding a buyer to salvage material, and removing it directly from the job site. The intentional integration of specialized equipment and skilled employees enables PDI to process its own demolition materials.



*Priestly Demolition Inc. - Various Project Sites*

### The Performance

The Priestly's moved their operations from the small yard in Aurora to King Township in 2009 to accommodate their amazing growth. The new building and yard at 3200 Aurora-Lloydtown Road provided much needed space for their people, materials and equipment. The goal of the company is to become the first choice of potential clients and the best in Canada. The growth of the company has been one project at a time, and one piece of machinery at a time, now the largest demolition fleet in the country.

The company is very supportive of their local and surrounding communities, offering sponsorship to: King Chamber of Commerce, York Regional Police, Southlake Hospital, Big Brothers and Sisters, Road Hockey to Conquer Cancer, Royal Winter Fair, local golf tournaments for various charities, and a variety of local sports teams.

Employee and client health and safety are non-negotiable priorities. The company continues to build strong relationships with employees, clients, suppliers and contractors. Most important for the second-generation family company is that it remains a family business with strong family values and solid roots.

Happy people create success, and that is very evident with the owners, management and staff at Priestly Demolition Inc.



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