

# Ground Breaking Ceremony for new office complex

April 23, 2007

Saint John Energy, now located at 239 Charlotte St. in the South End, will move in 2008 to a new building to be built on the site of the former Labatt Brewery on Simms Street. The utility's president and CEO, Eric Marr, said the 6,750-square-metre (75,000-square-foot) building is necessary to suit the needs of the growing utility. "We feel it's a strategic location," Marr said, moments after a ground breaking ceremony at the new site Friday. "We've been at our present location for over 40 years and the operation has grown more and more into an industrial type of operation with heavier trucks and equipment," he said. "To be operating out of a heritage area is not quite appropriate."

Construction on the multi-million dollar building will begin immediately, and Marr said he sees Saint John Energy staff moving into their new home this time next year. Not only does the West Side location make more sense for growth, Marr said, the site is also better connected to roads and highways. "It has great access to the transportation system to allow us to have quick response to any trouble we may have and we'll normally dispatch crews out of here on a daily basis."

When the time comes to move into the new abode, Marr said it will likely take several days and happen over a weekend. He said the relocation will not affect staff numbers at Saint John Energy, which employs about 100 people.

Deputy Mayor Michelle Hooton also attended the ground breaking, and topped in a white construction hat, she applauded Saint John Energy for bringing growth to the city's West Side. "I think the fact that we're seeing development on the West Side is tremendously encouraging," she said. "There will be activity again and we'll have an additional, beautiful new development here." It was a three-year process to finally select a design for the building, which will be the third location for Saint John Energy in 85 years. Marr said the project is the largest single investment ever made in the utility's history.