

Ont. construction association launches campaign to battle racism

By Plumbing & HVAC Staff on September 11, 2020



Construction Against Racism Everywhere (CARE).

Vaughan, ON — The construction industry in Ontario is doing their part in addressing racism in the workplace. The Residential Construction Council of Ontario ([RESCON](#)) has launched a campaign to bring employers, unions and government together to combat racism.

“We have always taken a leadership role in fighting racism and discrimination in the construction industry,” says RESCON president Richard Lyall. “We are very proud of the fact that we have a multi-racial, multi-cultural and incredibly diverse workforce in Ontario’s construction industry and racist behaviour of any kind or in any form will not be tolerated by any of our employers.”

RESCON's new campaign will be called Construction Against Racism Everywhere (CARE). Stickers are being distributed to construction employers and the industry for workers to post on their hard hats and around construction sites.

Meanwhile, the association along with its board of directors are also spearheading formation of a coalition of employers, unions and sub-trades from all sectors of the industry. The group will come up with ideas on how to deal with racism and change the culture of the industry. Members will also figure out a strategy to educate workers and engage construction stakeholders through conversations and meetings with the Ontario Residential Council of Construction Associations, Infrastructure Health and Safety Association, Construction Employers Coalition and Construction and Design Alliance of Ontario.

This follows after nooses were discovered at construction sites during the summer

Additionally, RESON held a webinar that featured a legal discussion on employers' obligations when dealing with racism and discrimination incidents and a separate panel discussion on anti-racism and diversity efforts by builders and labour.

"Our industry responded quickly and was the first to condemn racist acts that occurred recently on Toronto construction sites," says Lyall. "The webinar brought together employer, union and government voices needed to make meaningful change."

Last week, RESCON participated in a virtual meeting with Toronto Mayor John Tory to discuss the issue and options for addressing racism. They agreed that action must be taken to educate the industry.