

# DAILY COMMERCIAL NEWS

## AND CONSTRUCTION RECORD

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Cabinet shuffle

Ontario creates stand-alone infrastructure ministry

Bob Chiarelli named new infrastructure minister; tasked with driving stimulus efforts

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Construction now has a stand-alone infrastructure ministry to deal with in Ontario following an August 18 Queen's Park shuffle by Premier Dalton McGuinty. McGuinty has separated the former "super ministry" of infrastructure and energy into two separate entities.

Newcomer to cabinet, Bob Chiarelli, is now infrastructure minister and Brad Duguid, former infrastructure and energy minister, now is responsible just for the energy portfolio.

The premier said Chiarelli will continue to drive Ontario's stimulus efforts as the province "continues to improve our roads, schools, sewers and bridges, supporting hundreds of thousands of jobs in the short-term, and building a strong backbone for Ontario's economy in the long-term."

The Council of Ontario Construction Associations, the Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario (RCCAO) and the Ontario General Contractors Association (OGCA) are among the industry stakeholders that have lobbied the province recently calling for a sole ministry responsible for infrastructure. The need for focused attention on the province's infrastructure needs is vital, from infrastructure deficits to long term planning, they argued.

With the remaining stimulus spending and catching up on ongoing infrastructure priorities, a dedicated infrastructure minister would be better suited to oversee both, RCCAO said earlier this year.

The OGCA said in January that the division of attention between energy and infrastructure "was inevitable" because energy and infrastructure, though somewhat similar, are both "complex and different industries." Also, with the combined ministry, the province's construction advisory council was also eliminated, reducing chances for industry consultation and feedback.

McGuinty created the combined infrastructure and energy ministry in June 2008 and placed George Smitherman at its helm. Smitherman resigned from this post in to run for mayor of Toronto in the 2010 municipal elections.

Other notable results from the cabinet shuffle for the construction industry include:

- John Wilkinson is the new environment minister. Wilkinson is expected to focus on the ministry's effort to help build a clean economy in Ontario.
- Glen Murray is now Minister of Research and Innovation tasked with driving forward the government's plan to create jobs by developing clean water technology.
- John Milloy, Minister of Training Colleges and Universities (MTCU) had been responsible for research and innovation in addition to his MTCU minister duties.

- Rick Bartolucci is now Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, helping to ensure affordable housing continues to be available for those who need it.
- Sophia Aggelonitis was appointed to the roles of Minister of Revenue and Minister Responsible for Seniors. As revenue minister, she is expected to continue rolling out Ontario's tax reform package, which economists estimate will help create 600,000 new jobs over the next 10 years.