CSA GROUP™

2020

John Jenkins

Award Recipient

Richard McGrath

P. Eng., FCSCE, FACI

In recognition of exemplary leadership, masterful stakeholder engagement, and significant contributions to the development of standards for cement and concrete materials and structures, and nuclear power plants

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Over nearly four decades, Richard McGrath has personified the very essence of the John Jenkins award. As a leader through personal involvement in the development and application of CSA standards, Richard has helped to substantially advance the role and impact of standards nationally and internationally, all with a focus on building a culture of collaboration and continuous improvement. Representing the Cement Association of Canada, Richard has made significant contributions as a member, Chair, and Vice-Chair on numerous Strategic Steering Committees, Technical Committees and Technical Subcommittees, resulting in the advancement of CSA's cement, concrete and nuclear programs.

Since the very beginning of his involvement in CSA committees, Richard has led by example. With his natural gift of communicating, liaising and promoting continuous improvement initiatives, he has easily developed into a key member bringing forward great collaboration amongst members and stakeholders for the benefit of users' needs. He has fostered collaboration among different sectors and key stakeholders, often serving as the primary link between the cement and concrete industry and nuclear industry.

To say Richard's contributions have been significant would be an understatement. He has been an innovator on new and progressive standard development areas, such as the inclusion of ultra-high performance concrete in CSA A23.1/A23.2. He has advocated for research and championed environmental awareness and sustainability, including the development of the Sustainability Annex in CSA A3000. As a result of his drive for research to establish the sulphate resistance of the more environmentally friendly Portland-Limestone cements (with 10% less embodied CO_2 than Portland cement), these cements can be used in concrete across Canada.

A persistent advocate for the adoption of CSA standards, Richard has worked to highlight how the impact of valuable standards development work had the potential to be limited if not followed by the timely adoption in national and provincial codes. Because of Richard's determination, and with the support of CSA leadership and other stakeholders, significant progress was made to successfully implement timely adoption at both the federal and provincial level.

Richard has consistently played an instrumental role in disseminating CSA standards. One of his critical contributions was authoring the Cement Association of Canada's Concrete Design Handbook on CSA A23.3 standard, seen as the premier guide for concrete design in Canada. He subsequently trained end users throughout Canada on the usage of this guide. Impressively, Richard has led the development of five editions of the CSA A23.3 standard on design of concrete structures, engaging key technical experts to develop a quality standard in a timely manner. His work has had an invaluable impact on CSA's visibility, and the value of its standards for structural design, in Canada and internationally.

A keen proponent of the development and advancement of CSA standards internationally, Richard has helped promote consistency between CSA and ACI standards since joining ACI in 1993. The efforts Richard has put into this work have led to numerous benefits for the industry in Canada and the US in terms of cutting red tape, preventing technical barriers to trade, and easing the use of standards.

The nomination of Richard for this award was supported by a large number of CSA members, extensively depicting the length and breadth of his qualities, impact and contributions. They noted his ability to act as a voice of reason in committee deliberations, successfully bringing the focus of standards development into areas where practical results can be achieved. As one member aptly commented, "he has always provided a stable foundation for the standards with respect to cement and concrete technology."

Until his retirement in May of 2019, Richard was the Director of Codes & Standards, Engineered Structures, for the Cement Association of Canada. He is past recipient of the CSA Award of Merit and a Fellow of both the Canadian Society for Civil Engineering, and the American Concrete Institute.