EXCELLENCE IN ACTION
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MECHANICAL DIVISION WORK SPACE IMPROVEMENTS

JOHN MCHUGH
AC FOREMAN

THE CHALLENGE
Nestled in a small office inside the Mechanical Division of the Facilities Services building, AC Foreman John McHugh and his team are responsible for monitoring and responding to HVAC service requests across SFU’s Burnaby campus. Primarily a central base of operations for the team, years of heavy usage and complacency with clutter had taken their toll on the office space making it somewhat chaotic and cluttered. “It was quite disorganized,” admits John. “Staff didn’t have any space to call their own so people just put things anywhere they wanted. We also had leftovers from previous employees such as paperwork, personal receipts, and old work orders creating a jumbled mess. It certainly needed a re-org”. John McHugh knew there had to be a better way.

THE OBJECTIVE
To reorganize the space in order to provide staff with well-defined work stations. To improve communication and organization by introducing message boards and paper trays.

THE APPROACH
During his spare time over the span of several weeks, John began sifting through and recycling old documents and work orders long ago strewn across the office desk. “I knew that the first thing I had to do was a clean sweep and just get rid of all the old stuff. So that’s where I started.” Next, John removed old wall mounted file holders that had fallen into disuse and repurposed a couple of them as centralized document storages. With much more office desk space now available, John then began carving out defined workstations for each staff member. Featuring a paper tray to the left of the employee to manage daily work orders and important documents, each space has a defined work area and comes with custom sized whiteboards to help improve internal communications amongst team members.

THE RESULT
Although only the first phase of what John sees as a series of potential changes, the Mechanical division’s work space improvements initiative has been well received. Visually, the office is far more welcoming and functionally the improvements have improved work efficiency through better space management and organization. John says that the biggest change he’s seen might be an internal one. “Having a personalized work space, a place really to call your own, makes a difference in how people work and how they feel about work so that’s been a great benefit.”