

Testcor

Most Mississauga residents likely don't give a thought to how Hydro Mississauga determines how much electricity they use. They probably know there's a meter somewhere outside their home but have no idea how it works or who designed and manufactured it. The bill arrives and they pay it.

If only it were that simple.

Who makes sure every meter is measuring correctly?

Meters are complex pieces of equipment and must be calibrated to within strict tolerances dictated by Measurement Canada. With deregulation of the electrical supply business, more and more companies are competing for business. In order to certify a meter, these companies are required to be government accredited and to have approved meter test equipment. Olameter Inc., for example, has set up business in Mississauga and has six of Testcor's meter test consoles in operation.

The cost of a new console is approximately the same as the price of a small home in Mississauga. It takes about four months to design, build and test before it's delivered to the customer.

Testcor is one of the largest meter test equipment manufacturers in Canada and is currently seeking ISO 9001:2000 certification.

Testcor is also working on a new test console design that will have two powerful new test modes and include real time diagnostics and test analysis. It is being designed to higher levels of safety and accuracy than currently available in the industry.

"The new console will be solid state, hands free and automated," David Lloyd president of Testcor says, "We're hoping to cut the construction phase in half." Lloyd and the employees at Testcor are dedicated to producing a quality product, and it is apparent that this is truly the kind of business where patience is a virtue. Release is expected in the fall of 2001.

Testcor Inc. specializes in the design, manufacture and servicing of meter test equipment and software.



Performing daily accuracy checks and meter verification with Testcor built equipment at Olameter Inc.

Lloyd designs and builds both the console and the software used to operate it. He studied electrical engineering technology and then worked with similar equipment for Consumer and Corporate Affairs Canada (now Measurement Canada). His career path continued on to Etobicoke Hydro and J. K. Johnstone Meters Limited where he merged his company Comptrol Instruments Ltd. From there, the concept of Testcor Inc. became reality.

All test consoles built at Testcor's Mississauga Trader's Boulevard Facility are calibrated and tested for compliance to Measurement Canada's specifications then shipped to the customer's location. Here government inspectors retest the console for an approval that can span up to three years before retesting is required.

Lloyd selected Mississauga as the home of Testcor "because it's appealing from a business perspective. It's booming, and it seemed like a good place to locate a small business. It has strong leadership and a vibrant hydroelectric commission."

Currently, more than 25 Testcor consoles are located at utilities across the country. Lloyd's goal now is to penetrate the lucrative U.S. market. "The U.S. certainly provides excellent growth opportunities for our firm," Lloyd says.

It's likely that if you live or work in Mississauga, your hydro electricity meter is tested using Testcor equipment. ❖

