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For Immediate Release
June 26, 2006

LAHTI CONSTRUCTION AND DESIGN INC. FINED \$80,000 FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY VIOLATION

THUNDER BAY, Ont. – Lahti Construction and Design Inc., a Thunder Bay, Ont.-based construction contractor, was fined \$80,000 on June 19, 2006 for a violation of the Occupational Health and Safety Act that resulted in injuries to five employees at Lac Des Iles Mine, an open pit mine near Thunder Bay.

On November 9, 2004, workers were using an excavator to pull a bundle of pipes and cables down two “bench levels” (levels of different heights within the open pit mine) of Lac Des Iles Mine and under a road through an existing “conduit pipe” (a large pipe that protects underground pipes and cables) when the bundle got stuck on a kink in the conduit pipe. More power was applied and the bundle broke free sending some nearby workers flying into the air while others were struck by cable spools. A total of five workers were injured, one of whom received serious spinal injuries after falling over the edge of an embankment to a lower level. The injured workers were employed by Lahti Construction and Design Inc., which had been contracted by Lac Des Iles Mine to work on the mine’s underground water system. Lac Des Iles Mine is owned by North American Palladium about 102 kilometres (63 miles) northwest of Thunder Bay.

Lahti Construction and Design Inc. pleaded guilty, as an employer, to failing to instruct and supervise the workers involved in the pulling operation on the dangers of that operation. This was contrary to Section 25(2)(a) of the act.

The fine was imposed by Justice Dino Di Giuseppe of the Ontario Court of Justice in Thunder Bay. In addition, the court imposed a 25-per-cent victim fine surcharge, as required by the Provincial Offences Act. The surcharge is credited to a special provincial government fund to assist victims of crime.

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Court Information at a Glance

Location: Ontario Court of Justice
1805 Arthur Street, Courtroom 3
Thunder Bay, Ontario

Judge: Justice Dino Di Giuseppe

Date / Time: June 19, 2006, 10 a.m.

Defendant: Lahti Construction and Design Inc.

Matter: Occupational Health & Safety

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