

COMMUNITY MATTERS

Kudu CEO Ray Mills travelled to Slave Lake to present employees with money raised by the rest of the company. From left are Jesse Potvin, Josh Boissonneault, Joel Blanchette, Ray Mills and Darin Busk. Another Kudu Slave Lake service centre employee, Joseph Mentzelopoulos, is missing from the picture.



KUDOS FOR

KUDU

CALGARY-BASED SERVICES COMPANY STEPS UP FOR A SMALL TOWN AND EMPLOYEES IN NEED

BY MICHELLE LINDSTROM

SLAVE LAKE'S MID-MAY WILDFIRE was an unexpected disaster, but the tragedy brought people and organizations together to support the northern Alberta town's 7,000 residents. Kudu Industries Inc., a progressing cavity pump manufacturer, was one of those supportive organizations that raised money and community spirit, while helping their five Slave Lake-based employees.

Kudu undertook three initiatives. The first was to donate \$5,000 to the Red Cross immediately after news spread of the fires. They urged other companies to donate as well. Alex Damnjanovic, Kudu's COO, says the company's thinking was, "Let's challenge our peers and create a bit of a contest out of this."

Secondly, Kudu created a "donation bucket" in its Calgary office. Employees dropped whatever they could in the bucket for roughly a month and then the company matched the

donations dollar for dollar. The total came just shy of \$27,000. "For the size of the company that we are, it was a very generous donation by everyone," says Damnjanovic. Approximately five weeks after the wildfires, Kudu's CEO Ray Mills presented the money raised to the five Slave Lake service centre employees in their hometown.

Thirdly, Kudu's Slave Lake employees were told not to worry about their paycheques. Many of them are paid hourly and therefore, time missed at work directly affects their income. They were told, "Right now just focus on that you're in a safe place and get some information so you know what's going on," Damnjanovic says. "To take one thing off their minds, it was a small thing that we could do." And it's the small things, especially in times of need, that count. Damnjanovic says, "It was just a combination of all those little things that encouraged people and kept people positive at a time when things were quite bad." 