



**Contacts:** Alex Oltmanns, Pipitone Group  
**Phone:** 412.321.0879  
**Email:** [aoltmanns@pipitongroup.com](mailto:aoltmanns@pipitongroup.com)

Dave Capezzuto, Birdair  
716.633.9500  
[dcapezzuto@birdair.com](mailto:dcapezzuto@birdair.com)

## For Immediate Release

### Iconic Birdair Canopy Inspired by the Northern Lights

International stars, national heroes and local talent will soon grace the Nexen Energy (a CNOOC Limited Company) Stage at SMS Equipment Stadium at Shell Place, filling the air with the shouts of frenzied fans under the vast northern lights. The stadium is part of a major expansion project, which will allow Shell Place to host a variety of large-scale events at the outdoor performance center. It will feature an iconic tensile membrane canopy by Birdair.

Operated by the Regional Recreation Corporation of Wood Buffalo, a not-for-profit company, MacDonald Island Park, *in Fort McMurray, Alberta*, is Canada's largest community recreation, leisure and social centre. In addition to the Nexen Energy Stage and SMS Equipment Stadium, [Shell Place](#) will include a baseball/softball tournament center, field house, conference center and community park. The project is scheduled to be completed in 2015.

The approximately 30,000-square-foot PTFE Birdair canopy structure, which overlooks the Nexen Energy Stage and Molson Outdoor Rink, has become a feature widely identified with the Shell Place project. Designed to mimic the undulating northern lights, the canopy feature creates a strong point of visual interest and will become a focal point for community events and celebration.

#### Out of this World Collaboration

Architecture: ATB, 360 Architecture, and [Clark Builders](#) worked to complete this project. But, they needed something special to make Nexen Energy Stage beautiful, unique and weather-resistant, so they turned to Birdair, the expert on custom tensile structures, to design and construct the iconic canopy. The northern lights inspired structure is made of PTFE fiberglass membrane, with a steel supporting structure. [PTFE, or polytetrafluoroethylene](#), is known by the brand name Teflon®\*, which coats the woven fiberglass to form a membrane that is extremely durable and weather resistant. PTFE fiberglass membranes can be installed in climates ranging from the frigid arctic to the scorching desert heat with a product life in some cases exceeding 30 years, so it's perfect for the cold and snowy Canadian weather.

#### Look To the Sky

The beautiful PTFE structure creates an open, inviting space that will come to life in the evenings with glowing lights and cheering fans. PTFE membrane can be used to construct roofs, façades, free-standing buildings, skylights or accent enclosures.

“PTFE fiberglass membrane is used to create beautiful, iconic structures that are also durable and functional. PTFE is a versatile, energy efficient product that saves money in the long run,” said

Birdair Project Manager Michael Grant. “It’s a great product, and it was perfect for the Nexen Energy Stage at Shell Place.”

Completely different from other building materials both aesthetically and functionally, it is the combination of uncommon physical and geometric characteristics that make tensile membrane structures iconic. Fabric roof forms are curved between supporting elements in a manner reflective of the flow of tension forces within the membrane. With the exception of air-supported structures, these curvatures are anticlastic in nature. The curving forms of fabric roofs have dramatic appeal. Another attractive feature of tensioned fabric structures is their enormous range of spanning capability. The inherent visual drama and the long span ability of fabric are particularly appropriate for entertainment venues such as Nexen Stage. They transform an average music venue into a stunning work of architecture that reflects the energy-filled atmosphere of the concerts.

### **An Eye Towards the Environment and Budgets**

Fabric structures are not only visually appealing but also environmentally sensitive and economically competitive. PTFE fiberglass is Energy Star and Cool Roof Rating Council certified. PTFE fiberglass membranes reflect as much as 73 percent of the sun’s energy, and certain grades of PTFE fiberglass can absorb 14 percent of the sun’s energy while allowing 13 percent of natural daylight and 7 percent of re-radiated energy (solar heat) to transmit through the membrane.

The lightweight membrane also provides a cost-effective solution requiring less structural steel to support the roof or façade, enabling long spans of column-free space. In addition, membrane offers building owners reduced construction costs and maintenance costs compared to traditional building materials.

\*Teflon® is a registered trademark of E. I. Du Pont De Nemours and Company, Delaware.

***About Birdair:** Birdair, Inc. is the leading specialty design build contractor of custom tensile structures throughout the world. In addition to pre-construction services such as design assistance, budgeting, construction methodologies and project scheduling, Birdair provides design-build solutions in all aspects of project design, fabrication, installation and maintenance. The company offers a selection of architectural fabric membranes, including PTFE fiberglass, ETFE film, PVC and Tensotherm™, an insulated tensioned membrane system. Birdair, based in Buffalo, NY, is a member of the Taiyo Kogyo Group, with operations serving North and South America and other international locations. For more information about Birdair, [like us on Facebook](#), call 1-800-622-2246 or visit [www.birdair.com](http://www.birdair.com).*

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