

WPB Mar 30-Apr 3

This week's information from the Policy Department

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Weekly Policy Bulletin

Question of the Week

Has the Heritage Conservation Branch affected your RMs decision making, causing delays due to inconsistent approval processes?

[Always](#)

[Sometimes](#)

[Never](#)

[Don't Know](#)

Crop Insurance Deadline - Extension

Producers interested in Crop Insurance coverage for the 2020 year now have an additional two weeks to finalize their contracts. The deadline to apply, reinstate, cancel or make changes to Crop Insurance contracts is extended to April 13, 2020.

SCIC staff are available to assist producers by phone at 1-888-935-0000 or email at customer.service@scic.ca.

Current customers can also use SCIC's online application, CropConnect, available at www.scic.ca/cropconnect, to enter insurance selections, add or delete crops, change program options and choose coverage levels.

Landfill Operations - Information

Many workplaces and communities are preparing for potential impacts related to the coronavirus (COVID-19). The Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) has shared the following links regarding landfill operations:

[https://swana.org/initiatives/guidance-on-coronavirus-\(covid-19\)](https://swana.org/initiatives/guidance-on-coronavirus-(covid-19))

https://swana.org/docs/default-source/advocacy-documents/guidance_on_coronavirus-2020_03_06.pdf?sfvrsn=fee6b88a_2

Solid Waste Association of North America Webinar - Update on COVID-19 and the Solid Waste Industry

Thursday, April 2, 2020

1:00 PM - 2:15 PM EDT

The SWANA webinar will be hosted by Dr. Ben Hoffman who will give an update on the Coronavirus, focusing on information that is relevant to employers and those in the waste industry. He will discuss what they need to know as they navigate the current pandemic. There will be a brief presentation followed by a long Q+A to ensure people are able to discuss pressing issues and ask questions.

The webinar is free to SWANA Members and \$49 to non-SWANA Members. Non-members that join SWANA before April 30, 2020, will receive a \$49 credit towards their membership dues. More information [here](#)

Saskatchewan's Water Security Agency Drinking Water

The WSA has shared information with municipalities to as a reminder that safe water is essential to ensure good sanitation and hygienic conditions to help protect people against COVID-19. More information is available [here](#).

Reminder- Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety Webinars: Employment Standards Public Emergency Provisions

The Employment Standards Division of the Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety is hosting webinars on employment standards public emergency provisions.

Wednesday, April 1 1:30 p.m. <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4840080278106219020>

Friday, April 3 1:30 p.m. <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/436163878839580545>

Saskatchewan WCB offers relief measures for employers

The Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) is introducing additional relief measures for employers who are unable to pay their WCB premium payments. Effective April 1 until June 30, 2020, the WCB will waive penalties and interest charges for late premium payments.

The Government of Saskatchewan announced various measures to support provincial business owners during the COVID-19 crisis. To provide further relief for Saskatchewan employers, the WCB is:

- Forgiving interest and penalties for late payments on 2020 premiums applied in the month of March.
- Prioritizing employer payroll revisions to help employers reduce their premiums.
- Suspending payroll audits until further notice except in situations where an employer may be eligible for a refund.

More information available [here](#)

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Weekly Policy Bulletin

Question of the Week Results

Has the Heritage Conservation Branch affected your RMs decision making, causing delays due to inconsistent approval processes?

Always - 4%

Sometimes - 8%

Never - 42%

Don't Know - 36%

ICIP Application Deadline Extended

Detailed project applications will now be accepted until 4:30 p.m., CST, Friday, May 15, 2020. This additional time recognizes adjustments eligible applicants have made to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

Although 45 additional days are now available, you are encouraged to submit applications as quickly as you can to allow project review and approval processes to occur as promptly as possible. Application

processing will begin on March 31, which was the original deadline for submissions. Priority projects will be submitted to the Government of Canada for their review and approval.

All of these efforts will ultimately help approved projects move forward in a timely manner to benefit Saskatchewan communities and to plan future infrastructure investments to help support the economy. Thank you in advance to all eligible applicants for doing their best during this unprecedented situation.

Additional project application intakes under ICIP investment streams will occur later.

Please read the [ICIP Program Guide](#) before starting your applications.

FCM – Tax Deferral Resource for Municipalities

FCM has produced a [resource](#) to assist municipalities considering property tax deferrals.

[Designing property tax deferrals](#), a resource developed by FCM and the Institute on Municipal Finance and Governance, answers 10 questions that municipalities should consider when designing property tax deferral programs, highlighting some considerations and implications. They include:

- How much of the taxes/payments should be deferred?
- Which payments should be deferred?
- Who should pay for the deferral?

Roadside Development Permits - New application system

The Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure launched a new online Roadside Development Permit application system. A permit is required for any work within 90 metres (approximately 300 feet) of the property line of a provincial highway.

For more information and to access the application system, visit saskatchewan.ca.

Government of Saskatchewan – Building Standards COVID-19 Best Practices

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Government Relations is advising of a vigilant approach to the process of administration and enforcement of *The Uniform Building and Accessibility Standards Act*, Regulations, the National Building Code and the National Energy Code for Buildings. This approach is focused on the health and safety of everyone. In particular, front line support staff such as Administrators, Building Officials and others who are tasked with the responsibility of construction regulation within their jurisdiction.

[COVID-19 Best Practices for Inspections](#) is a guide primarily about health and safety in order to minimize the contracting or spread of COVID-19.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we recommend local authorities adopt measures outlined in the guide, as minimum recommendations, and expand upon them as the local authority feels is necessary. If you have any questions, please call the Building Standards and Licensing Branch at 306-787-4113 or email to: building_standards@gov.sk.ca

COVID-19 Information for Municipalities

The Ministry of Government Relations is sharing key information related to COVID-19 with Saskatchewan municipalities.

For the most up-to-date information, visit www.saskatchewan.ca/COVID-19

FCM Green Municipal Fund – Community Efficiency Financing

GMF's Community Efficiency Financing initiative has opened the first of two calls for applications to help municipalities deliver energy efficient financing programs for low-rise residential properties, including Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) models and utility on-bill financing.

Apply by June 30, 2020 to access funding to capitalize new programs and scale-up existing ones.

[Learn more about eligibility.](#)

Information for Municipalities – Solid Waste Management

The Government of Saskatchewan has a new site for information for Solid Waste Management during the pandemic. If you visit the main provincial COVID page and click on [Information for Businesses](#), you'll now see a new page called [Information for Municipalities: Solid Waste Management](#).

SCIC Crop Insurance Information

SCIC is sharing [information](#) on insurance options for livestock producers – including Crop Insurance, AgriStability, and the Western Livestock Price Insurance Program (WLPIP).

The Wildlife Damage Program is also available to all Saskatchewan producers to provide compensation for wildlife damage to your crop in the field, hay in the yard, or attacks on your livestock.

Crop Insurance provides coverage on forage for seed, sale or feed. Insurable forage acres include tame hay, dehydrated alfalfa, sweetclover and greenfeed. Producers can select options such as establishment and diversification coverage.

For more information visit SCIC's [website](#)

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Weekly Policy Bulletin

Question of the Week

In light of the circumstances surrounding COVID-19, how is your RM conducting meetings?

[Videoconference](#)

[Teleconference](#)

[In-person](#)

[Not meeting](#)

SARM Meetings

As you heard at the SARM 2020 Annual Convention, our annual Advocacy Days trip to Ottawa could not take place as planned. Over the past few weeks, SARM board members and staff have been meeting on a daily and weekly basis with provincial and federal officials to not only discuss the impacts of COVID-19 but also to advance existing advocacy efforts.

Some recent meetings that we'd like to highlight are:

March 26, 2020 – Members of the Conservative Party of Canada Saskatchewan caucus

April 9, 2020 – Mr. Francis Drouin, Liberal MP Liberal Party Caucus Chair and member of the House of Commons Agriculture Committee

April 9, 2020 – Mr. Marty Morantz, Conservative MP and member of the House of Commons Finance Committee

April 9, 2020 – Mr. Alistair MacGregor, NDP MP, NDP Agriculture Critic and member of the House of Commons Agriculture Committee

SARM's Board of Directors and Standing Committees have adjusted to working remotely and continue to meet virtually as well.

FCM - COVID-19 Resources for Municipalities

The COVID-19 pandemic is an unprecedented public health and economic challenge, and local leaders are on the front lines. To support your local responses, we've assembled a list of **[COVID-19 tools and resources for municipalities](#)**—in consultation with FCM members, the Public Health Agency of Canada, and other federal agencies and departments. We'll update this list as new information becomes available, so be sure to check it regularly.

TC Energy Scholarships

TC Energy will be accepting applications to the 2020 TC Energy Scholarship Program until May 15, 2020.

- **TC Energy Community Leaders Scholarship** - awarded to students annually who demonstrate a strong commitment to their communities through volunteerism and leadership.
- **TC Energy Indigenous Legacy Scholarship** - awarded to Indigenous students (First Nation, Métis, Inuit, Canadian Non-status) annually who are pursuing any full-time, post-secondary program at a registered education institute.
- **TC Energy Trades Scholarship** - awarded to students annually who are studying trades relevant to the energy industry.

For more information **www.TCScholarships.com**

WSA Report – Spring Runoff

Snowmelt runoff is nearing completion in much of the southern half of Saskatchewan, while the rest of province is expected to experience a below normal to normal spring runoff, according to the updated spring runoff report issued by the Water Security Agency (WSA) on April 3.

The full report can be found at <https://www.wsask.ca/Lakes-and-Rivers/Provincial-Forecast/>.

Water Management Trends in Canadian Municipalities

FCM surveyed senior water managers from urban, suburban and rural settings across Canada about the [emerging trends, primary issues and best practices](#) for municipalities. One insight from their responses: municipalities from all over the country are identifying infrastructure vulnerabilities to climate change and see proactive asset management as a top priority.

From wastewater treatment to data collection the report provides an important snapshot of where the sector is and where it might be headed.

[Read the report.](#)

Ministry of Environment – Temporary Enforcement Policy During COVID-19

The Ministry of Environment has released a temporary enforcement policy effective during the COVID-19 pandemic. If there are any questions or concerns stakeholders can contact the client service office at 1-800-567-4224.

[Ministry of Environment Temporary Enforcement Policy during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

For more COVID-19 related information please see <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/health-care-administration-and-provider-resources/treatment-procedures-and-guidelines/emerging-public-health-issues/2019-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-information-for-businesses-and-workers>

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Weekly Policy Bulletin

AgriStability Deadline Extended

The AgriStability enrollment deadline for the 2020 program year has been extended without penalty to July 3, 2020.

To assist with cash flow and financial stability, participants in the AgriStability Program can apply for an interim benefit. Through an interim benefit, producers receive a portion of their AgriStability benefit early to help support losses and cover costs before completing their fiscal year.

The contact form is available at www.scic.ca/agristability/how-to-apply. SCIC AgriStability staff are available to assist producers over the phone at 1-866-270-8450 or through email at agristability@scic.ca, Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency - PPE

The Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency (SPSA) has been in contact with local police and fire agencies regarding the allocation of non-health personal protective equipment (PPE) and is keeping SARM up-to-date.

More information can be found [here](#).

SHA Response Plan

The Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) has provided an update on their pandemic response and expanding capacity to deal with COVID-19.

More Information can be found [here](#).

GR – Minister’s Orders

The Ministry of Government Relations has sent two Minister’s Orders by email regarding Assessment Appeals and Deferral of Municipal By-Elections.

If you have not received these orders by email please contact Municipal Relations at 306-787-2680. The orders will also be included in the May edition of Municipalities Today.

FCM – Case Studies Asset Management

Are you interested in learning how communities across Canada are benefiting from strengthening their asset management practices? Is your community considering an initiative to improve its asset management approach?

Get inspired by our asset management case studies:

- [Partnership produces results for five Ontario communities](#)
- [Raising the bar on asset management](#)
- [Better planning for Cowichan Valley Regional District](#)
- [Collaboration breeds success](#)
- [Building asset management capacity in northern communities](#)
- [Making the case for asset management: Village of Ryley](#)
- [The road ahead: Rural Municipality of Frenchman Butte No. 501, SK](#)

REMINDER - ICIP Application Deadline Extended

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Additional project application intakes under ICIP investment streams will occur later.

Please read the [ICIP Program Guide](#) before starting your applications.

Question of the Week - Results

In light of the circumstances surrounding COVID-19, how is your RM conducting meetings?

Videoconference **39%**

Teleconference **36%**

In-person **19%**

WPB Apr 27 - May 1

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Weekly Policy Bulletin

Question of the Week

Has your RM experienced any challenges in obtaining Personal Protective Equipment?

[Yes](#)

[No](#)

[Not Sure](#)

AgriStability Interim Payments Increased

The federal and provincial governments have agreed to increase the 2020 AgriStability interim benefit payment percentage from 50 per cent to 75 per cent for Saskatchewan producers.

Interim benefits can provide producers with a portion of their final AgriStability benefit early to help support losses and cover costs. With this increase,

Saskatchewan producers can apply for an interim benefit to receive 75 per cent of their estimated final 2020 benefit before completing their program year. Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation (SCIC) is also waiving the six months farming and one production cycle criteria for participants applying for 2020 interim benefits.

Interim benefits are calculated based on the farm's estimated program year margin, relative to its estimated reference margin. The estimated program year margin must show a decline of 30 per cent or more compared to the estimated reference margin. If a producer receives an interim benefit payment, they must still file all final program year forms and meet program requirements by the assigned deadlines. The Governments of Canada and Saskatchewan understand the challenges facing producers during the unprecedented times created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency – Fire Safety

The SPSA is urging residents, farmers and landowners to take extra precaution to prevent wildfire and grassfire during the COVID-19 pandemic. Producers around the province are also being reminded to practice safe burning, obey all fire bans and fireproof their property.

More information can be found [here](#).

AAFC – Online Employment Portal

Agriculture and Agri-food Canada has launched an [online employment portal](#) to provide links to resources for job seekers who are interested in working on farms, in distribution, food processing, and other related occupations. Resources will include national and regional employment websites, and information on skills and training.

Canada Post – Mail Forwarding Service

If you are unable to continue to collect your mail as you would normally, Canada Post has made some changes to our [**Hold Mail and Forwarding Mail**](#) programs that will allow businesses to hold their mail or forward their mail at no cost. Businesses will have to create an account and pay for how much and what kind of service they want and then, when the service expires or is cancelled, the customer's account will be refunded and their account credited.

[**Hold Mail and Mail Forwarding for business customers**](#)

Road Ban Exemption - Reminder

The province and SARM have worked together to lift spring road bans for priority goods. Providing higher weight limits will require close monitoring by highway and municipal officials to ensure that if conditions change or if road damage occurs, weight restrictions can be re-applied to ensure road safety – and minimize the need for costly repairs.

Shippers are reminded to check in to ensure they understand what restrictions are in place on provincial roads at:

[**https://www.saskatchewan.ca/business/transportation-and-road-construction/information-for-truckers-and-commercial-trucking-companies/regulations-and-road-restrictions/increased-weights-and-road-restrictions**](https://www.saskatchewan.ca/business/transportation-and-road-construction/information-for-truckers-and-commercial-trucking-companies/regulations-and-road-restrictions/increased-weights-and-road-restrictions).

Official spring restriction orders are issued every Tuesday and Friday by 12:30 p.m. (CST) during the ban period.

Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities – Note of Thanks

The NSFM has expressed their thanks for the support they received from across the country in the days after the tragic events that took place in Nova Scotia on April 18th.

[**Letter from NSFM**](#)
