

Policy Bulletin

March 2019

March 5, 2019

INFORMATION: Resolutions submitted for Annual Convention 2019

Thank you to everyone who submitted resolutions to be debated and voted on this March. See the full list of submitted resolutions [here](#).

INFORMATION: Carbon Tax – Federal Fuel Charge

The federal fuel charge will apply in Saskatchewan beginning in April 2019. In Saskatchewan, the fuel charge on gasoline will start at 4.42 cents per litre in 2019 and the fuel charge for natural gas used in home heating will be 3.91 cents per cubic metre – these rates will increase over time. [A complete list of fuel charge rates is available on Finance Canada's website.](#)

The federal government plans to return **90 per cent of proceeds** collected from a federal fuel charge back to individuals who live in Saskatchewan, Ontario, Manitoba, and New Brunswick — jurisdictions that have opted out of the federal plan through the annual Climate Action Incentive rebate when they file their taxes for 2018. The payment will vary depending on family size and where someone lives. Those who live in rural and small communities will get an additional 10 per cent supplement. The remaining 10 per cent will go to schools, hospitals, municipalities, non-profits, and Indigenous communities. Little is known about how support will be funneled to municipalities at this time but further details on the program design are expected to be released in the near future.

The *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act (GGPPA)* will provide farmers with relief from the fuel charge for fuels used in tractors, trucks and other farm machinery. The relief is provided upfront through the use of exemption certificates, when certain conditions are met. Specifically, the GGPPA provides that a registered distributor can generally deliver, without the fuel charge applying, gasoline or light fuel oil (e.g., diesel) to a farmer at a farm, if the fuel is for use exclusively in the operation of eligible farming machinery and all or substantially all of the fuel is for use in the course of eligible farming activities. Farmers do not need to be registered for the purposes of this relief. More information on the relief can be found at

https://www.fin.gc.ca/n18/data/18-097_3-eng.asp.

INFORMATION: Meetings with Ministers

The SARM Executive had a busy week last week and met with several provincial cabinet ministers to discuss matters that affect rural Saskatchewan. On February 26th, the SARM Executive met with the Honourable Warren Kaeding, Minister of Government Relations, to discuss tax tools for RMs, municipal road maintenance agreements and investments in rural infrastructure. On February 27th they took a meeting with the Honourable David Marit, Minister of Agriculture, to discuss Intensive Livestock Operations (ILOs), clubroot and crop rotation as well as pest control funding. On February 28th they met with Honourable Tina Beaudry-Mellor, Minister of Advanced Education, responsible for Innovation Saskatchewan and Status of Women to discuss strategic initiatives, innovation and community safety.

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INFORMATION: Compost Council of Canada Conference

Saskatoon is set to host a conference : *Compost matters in Saskatchewan* details:

When: March 14, 2019

Where: Saskatoon, SK, 330 Ontario Avenue, 1st floor conference room

Cost: Free for members, \$75 plus GST for non members

For more information and to register click [here](#)

INFORMATION: CRTC launches comprehensive review of mobile wireless service – Canadians invited to share their views

On February 28th, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) launched a review to examine the state of the mobile wireless market and whether further action is required to improve choice and affordability for Canadians.

The CRTC is also seeking comments on its preliminary view that mobile virtual network operators should have mandated access to the networks of the national wireless providers (Bell Mobility, Rogers and Telus) until they are able to establish themselves in the market.

Finally, the Commission will be looking ahead to the future of mobile wireless services in Canada and in particular at whether regulatory measures are needed to facilitate the deployment of 5G network infrastructure.

Canadians are invited to share their views by **May 15, 2019**. They can do so by:

- filling out the online form that can be found [here](#)
- writing to the Secretary General, CRTC, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0N2, or sending a fax to (819) 994-0218

INFORMATION: Provincial Metis Housing Corporation Call for Proposals

The Saskatchewan Non-Designated Funding Stream administered by PMHC will provide funding for projects that focus on reducing homelessness and specifically Indigenous homelessness throughout the Province. The projects must be off-reserve and outside the designated communities of Regina and Saskatoon. This Request for Proposals will solicit applications that provide social and housing first supports and applications that provide for capital projects that are specific to meet the needs of people who are homeless and who are at the risk of homelessness and specifically people who are the Indigenous homeless in the Province of Saskatchewan.

The total amount of funding available for New Projects for 2019-2020 is approximately \$700,000 under the new Reaching Home Non-Designated Indigenous Homelessness funding stream to fund projects between April 1, 2019 and March 31, 2020 pending funding.

Please note: Due to nature of the 2019-2024 contract roll out PMHC is releasing this request on a Pending Funding basis. The closing date for receiving applications is **Monday, March 18, 2019 by 4:00 PM.**

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[Call for Proposal](#)
[RFP Q and A](#)
[PMHC Application form](#)
[Sustainability checklist guidelines](#)
[PMHC Guide](#)

For an application package or for more information please contact:
Program Coordinator Marcia Wolinski or Program Coordinator Shane Pelletier
Email: metishousing@sasktel.net
Phone: 1 (306) 343-8240 or Toll free 1 (844) 396-7933

INFORMATION: Asset Management Awareness Workshop

Due to the popularity and demand for CNAM's AM Awareness Workshop they are taking the session online! These sessions will be delivered virtually in an online classroom to allow people to attend the course without having to travel. You will be posted a hard copy of the learning materials in advance of the sessions, and to make the session as interactive as possible attendees will be encouraged to use their webcams and take part in discussions just as if it was a face to face session.

Spaces will be limited to make sure it's an effective learning environment so register soon to secure your place! The regular 1-day course will be split into two half day sessions on different days - your registration covers you for both sessions.

Session A - Intro to AM and Benefits
Tuesday, March 26, 2019
9am to 12.30pm PST / 12noon to 3.30pm EST

Session B - How to get started
Tuesday, April 2, 2019
9am to 12.30pm PST / 12noon to 3.30pm EST

Register

INFORMATION: FCM Webinar: New online tool for municipalities to assess clean energy projects

Register for FCM's *Introduction to RETScreen Expert for municipalities* webinar to learn more about how this software can empower professionals and decision-makers to rapidly identify, assess and optimize clean energy projects. FCM and CanmetENERGY Varennes (Natural Resources Canada) will showcase how municipalities can use this software to:

- Track energy performance of their facilities
- Identify opportunities for energy and cost savings
- Assess the technical and financial viability of clean energy projects

Want to attend? Register here:

English webinar (March 6, 1:00 p.m. ET)

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French webinar (March 6, 10:30 a.m. ET)

*Municipal staff can obtain a **free one-year subscription to RETScreen Expert** (offer valid until **March 31, 2019**).*

ACTION REQUIRED: MREP Survey

SARM and MHI have undertaken a complete review of the Municipal Roads for the Economy Program (MREP) program to understand what SARM members want to see in an infrastructure funding program, determine what is working well and not well, and to make changes to maximize the value of the program. This survey is intended to get feedback from all of SARM's Members on RM transportation infrastructure priorities, RM guidance on MREP changes and additional feedback on key issues. The survey will be open until April 15. We encourage RMs to engage both administration and Council members when completing the survey. It is expected that the survey will take 15 - 30 minutes depending on the amount of discussion.

Take Survey

PDF version of survey to take to council

**PLEASE NOTE: Only electronic versions of the survey will be counted

March 19, 2019

INFORMATION: Resolutions Passed at the 2019 Annual Convention now posted

The resolutions that were passed at last week's Annual Convention are now posted on the **website's resolution database**. This is also where responses will be posted when received.

INFORMATION: Resolution Responses

SARM has received a response from the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, Honourable Francois-Phillipe Champagne to midterm resolution POP 1-18M Asset Management Funding.

View resolution and response.

INFORMATION: 2019 Crop Insurance Program

Late February, Agriculture Minister David Marit announced details of the 2019 Crop Insurance Program, some changes and highlights include:

- On average coverage levels are increasing to \$230 per acre;
- Premium per acre slightly increasing to an average of \$8.61 per acre (Coverage is based on each producer's own yields rather than area average);
- insured values on tame and native grazing;
- introduction of Corn Rainfall Program;
- 55 new weather stations added throughout the province and;
- SCIC extends fall seeding deadline to September 30.

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More information about the changes and enhancements for 2019 can be found at www.saskcropinsurance.com

[View letter from SCIC President and CEO, Shawn Jaques](#)

INFORMATION: Municipal Peer Network Survey

The Municipal Peer Network was launched in the fall of 2018. The Network connects elected municipal officials and administrators with highly experienced peer mentors who have proven successful in resolving inter-municipal disputes.

In order to evaluate the Network's effectiveness and continually improve please fill out this [survey](#) on the Municipal Peer Network.

INFORMATION: Submit your Community's Priority Infrastructure Projects

While delivering the Premier's address at the SARM Annual Convention, Premier Scott Moe announced Saskatchewan municipalities will be able to submit potential infrastructure projects for initial consideration under the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program. **The intake period runs from March 15 to April 30, 2019.**

Initially, municipalities will need to submit "expressions of interest" for their potential projects. This will help the provincial government better understand overall infrastructure priorities and funding demands across Saskatchewan.

Under the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program, the Government of Saskatchewan secured more than \$896 million in federal funding over 10 years.

[Read more](#)

[Learn more and begin intake process](#)

INFORMATION: Innovation Challenge: Find Private Property Access Solutions

Premier Scott Moe also announced last week an Innovation Challenge to find creative solutions in connecting would-be land users with rural private property owners to access land.

SARM with support from Innovation Saskatchewan, is leading the challenge and asking local technology start ups and entrepreneurs to find a solution.

Prior to the April 30th deadline for applications, there will be information sessions held in Regina, Saskatoon and online. Application forms and details can be found at www.innovationsask.ca

[Read more](#)

INFORMATION: Changes to Service Delivery for Environment Offices

Beginning this spring, the Ministry of Environment will no longer be offering walk-in service to the public in 19 ministry field offices. Front counter services will be discontinued at the following locations: Assiniboia, Big River, Buffalo Narrows, Estevan, Humboldt, Île-à-la-Crosse, Kindersley,

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Leader, Lloydminster, Maple Creek, Moose Jaw, Outlook, Pinehouse, Preeceville, Shaunavon, Southend, Spiritwood, Wadena and Weyburn.

Clients formerly served in these locations will be encouraged to use electronic self-serve options such as the online Hunting, Angling and Trapping Licence (HAL) system, private licence vendors or one of the ministry's 13 offices with front counter services.

[Read more](#)

INFORMATION: Mandatory Minimum Standardized Training Requirements for Commercial Semi Drivers

New mandatory standardized training requirements for those wanting a Class 1 commercial license in Saskatchewan took effect Friday, March 15.

The changes were announced in December by Minister Responsible for SGI Joe Hargrave, after consultation with those in the trucking industry, training schools, additional stakeholders and other jurisdictions. Changes were the culmination of work SGI began in 2017 to improve standards for training of commercial semi drivers.

Existing Class 1 drivers are grandfathered in as of the implementation date.

Under the new requirements, anyone wishing to drive a semi used in farming operations as of March 15, 2019 will need to pass the same more rigorous tests, to get an "F" endorsement on their existing driver's licence. They will be restricted to operating within Saskatchewan's borders and will be subjected to the same 12-month monitoring program as Class 1 drivers.

[Read more](#)

INFORMATION: Oil and Gas Development – Micro Refineries

The Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Government Relations developed an advisory bulletin to provide background information and guidelines for the regulation of micro-refineries. Micro-refineries are a new form of development that may occur in Saskatchewan as the oil and gas industry finds new ways to fill local needs. Municipalities have some authority to manage micro-refinery developments. The bulletin is now live and can be accessed through the following links:

<https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/municipal-administration/community-planning-land-use-and-development/residential-development-and-oil-wells>

<http://www.publications.gov.sk.ca/details.cfm?p=93088>

For more information, please contact:

Ministry of Environment

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Phone (800) 567-4224

Email centre.inquiry@gov.sk.ca

Ministry of Government Relations

Community Planning branch – Regina

Phone (306) 787-2725

Fax (306) 798-0194

Community Planning branch – Saskatoon

Phone (306) 933-6937

Fax (306) 933-7720

www.saskatchewan.ca

INFORMATION: No Invasive Mussels Detected in Saskatchewan Waters in 2018

The Government of Saskatchewan concluded its 2018 invasive mussel monitoring program with no confirmed findings of invasive mussels in 121 waterbodies sampled throughout the province.

These invasive mussels have the potential to severely impact aquatic habitat, fisheries, valuable recreational resources and water-related infrastructure, such as irrigation, power generation and municipal water supplies.

Invasive mussels are currently found in Ontario, Manitoba, Quebec and 34 states, including Minnesota, Montana and North Dakota.

[Read more](#)

March 25, 2019

INFORMATION: Advocacy Update

A delegation of SARM officials will be in Ottawa April 1-4, 2019 for SARM's annual federal advocacy days. Typically, the advocacy trip would occur in October, however, due to this year's impending election and to ensure that SARM priorities are included in this fall's electoral platforms, SARM's delegation will be meeting with federal officials next week.

INFORMATION: Meetings with Ministers

Members of the SARM Board met with the Honourable Bernadette Jordan, Minister of Rural Economic Development on March 10th to discuss municipalities and the importance of sustainable rural infrastructure.

On March 21st the SARM Executive met with the Honourable Bronwyn Eyre, Minister of Energy and Resources to discuss the proposed amendments to Bill C-69 and the effect they could have on rural municipalities in Saskatchewan.

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INFORMATION: Rural Property Access Innovation Challenge

The Innovation Challenge, led by Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM), with support from Innovation Saskatchewan, was launched to address concerns over the ability to get in contact with rural landowners in order to access their land for recreations activities, such as hunting. With the new legislation requiring permission before entering rural private property, SARM is asking Saskatchewan technology startups, entrepreneurs, researchers, and students to find tech solutions to the following question: "How can tech be used as a tool to obtain permission from rural property owners before accessing their land?".

If you or anyone in your network is interested and wants an opportunity to learn more, we have three information sessions taking place over the next couple of weeks. Find event details below:

- Thursday, March 28th from 2:00 – 3:00pm @ the **SARM office in Regina**: [register here!](#)
- Tuesday, April 2nd from 2:00 – 3:00pm @ **Innovation Place in Saskatoon**: [register here!](#)
- Wednesday, April 3rd from 2:00 – 3:00pm through a **Zoom Webinar**: [register here!](#)

If you or anyone you know is interested in participating, please visit <https://innovationsask.ca/initiatives/innovation-challenge>. Expressions of interest are due April, 30th, 2019.

INFORMATION: Agricultural Crown Land Lease Allocation Auction Pilot

The Ministry of Agriculture recently announced that in 2019 they will be piloting an allocation of agricultural Crown leases by auction. For the pilot, interested applicants will be able to bid in an online auction hosted by Ritchie Bros. Auctioneers. The highest eligible bidder will secure the opportunity to lease the Crown land for up to 33 years. The auction will close April 15, 2019. For more information you can visit www.saskatchewan.ca/crownlands or contact Megan Schaefer at 306-787-5154 or megan.schaefer@gov.sk.ca.

More info

INFORMATION: Saskatchewan Crime Watch Advisory Network

To help make our communities safer the RCMP and its partner agencies have invested some government dollars into a provincial mass notification system for community crime advisories. The system gives RCMP detachments the ability to communicate directly with the public on matters of crime prevention and community safety. Citizens can sign up to receive crime watch advisories from their local RCMP detachments by text message, email, or phone. You choose the best method to be contacted.

Signing up to be a part of the network is free and only takes a few minutes. Initially, only those living in the southern part of the province will receive advisories, but everyone is encouraged to sign up in anticipation of expansion of the advisory network.

Sign up here

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ACTION REQUIRED: Government Relations Survey

The Ministry of Government Relations, Public Safety Division, worked with other Government of Saskatchewan ministries, Crowns and agencies on the Climate Resilience Measurement Framework.

This framework titled, ***Prairie Resilience: A Made-in-Saskatchewan Climate Change Strategy***, is part of our provincial climate change strategy. The framework is a system-wide approach that focuses on the province's readiness and resilience to emerging climate conditions.

The Framework contains a broad and balanced set of measures across five key areas with a focus on strengthening adaptive and transformative capacities for the Province of Saskatchewan. These five areas of measure are:

1. Natural Systems
2. Physical Infrastructure
3. Economic Suitability
4. Community Preparedness
5. Human Well-Being

Under the Community Preparedness measure, the framework suggests emergency preparedness plans helps communities respond to emergencies in a timely, efficient and coordinated manner.

This six-question survey will help us determine how many municipalities in Saskatchewan have ratified emergency plans.

Please click on the link below to take you to the survey; it will take less than five minutes to complete.

<https://ca.surveygizmo.com/s3/50040349/Prairie-Resilience-Climate-Change>

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact [Tamie Vandeven](#).

INFORMATION: Planning and Development Near Pipelines

Did you know that federal and provincial regulations set requirements that govern planning and development activities in proximity of pipeline rights-of-way? TransCanada Corporation (TransCanada) is reaching out to all municipalities with pipeline infrastructure within their boundaries to provide information about these requirements.

Please refer all planning and development projects near pipelines and facilities to TransCanada, including:

- All new and updated long-range planning documents such as regional plans, inter-municipal plans, municipal plans, area structure plans, neighbourhood plans, and local area plans.
- All site development plans such as rezonings, subdivisions, and development permits.
- All infrastructure and transportation projects.

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Specifically, the Canadian Standards Association **Z663-18** "Land use planning in the vicinity of pipeline systems" provides recommendations for land use near pipelines for developers, operators, and governing authorities. All planning and development activities including but not limited to subdivisions, development permits, landscaping, road and utility design should be referred to TransCanada for review and input. Activities include but are not limited to:

- Any activity that results in a disturbance of soil
- Vehicle and equipment crossings over pipeline rights-of-way
- Agricultural activities
- Population increases

If you have any questions about planning and development activities near TransCanada infrastructure, please reach out to David Wyatt at **403-692-5229**. All land planning and development documents can be sent to transcanada@bapg.ca for review.

INFORMATION: Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program

The SARM Policy Update of March 19, 2019 included information on a new bilateral agreement for Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP). The bilateral agreement for the ICIP was signed by Canada and Saskatchewan on October 3, 2018. The ICIP will be the next opportunity through the Ministry of Government Relations for federal-provincial-municipal infrastructure funding.

The Ministry of Government Relations has provided SARM with additional information to assist RMs in their consideration of applying. For the purpose of the recently announced ICIP Expression of Interest, please consider applying with road or bridge infrastructure projects by **April 30, 2019**.

The ICIP is a cost shared grant funding program under the integrated bilateral agreements:

- The Ministry of Government Relations advises SARM that rural Canadian Communities with road and bridge infrastructure are eligible under the ICIP. This includes local roads, bridges, and ferry replacement. Highway and trade corridor infrastructure and resource development infrastructure such as industrial resource development access roads are not eligible.
- For projects under the **Rural** (Improved and/or more reliable road, air or marine infrastructure) and Northern Communities stream, Canada will invest up to 50% for provincial, municipal and not-for-profit projects, and up to 60% for municipal projects in the provinces where the municipalities have a population of **less than 5,000**.
- Communities with fewer than 5,000 residents will be eligible to receive a higher proportion of federal funding to address their unique infrastructure needs. Indigenous communities in the provinces will be eligible for a federal cost share of up to 75 per cent.
- All season roads could be eligible if it can be demonstrated that they directly contribute to the outcomes of the stream of funding (i.e., they improve food security, energy security, or transportation access for a rural or northern community) and are not also

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otherwise excluded. Resource development roads, highways, and trade corridors are specifically excluded.

- Bridges could be eligible to receive ICIP funding, as long as the road falls within an eligible community and demonstrates a contribution to at least one of the stream-specific project outcomes.
- Included below are the links to the Ministry of Government Relations for submissions of Expressions of Interests and a link to Infrastructure Canada website.

[Infrastructure Canada website](https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/municipal-administration/funding-finances-and-asset-management/funding/investing-in-canada-infrastructure-program)

<https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/municipal-administration/funding-finances-and-asset-management/funding/investing-in-canada-infrastructure-program>

INFORMATION: Federal and Provincial Budgets

Saskatchewan's 2019-2020 budget was announced on March 20, 2019. The budget is increasing dollars committed to initiatives and programs that benefit rural Saskatchewan including municipal revenue sharing increased to \$251.6 million, \$10 million more than the previous year. Pest Biosecurity Programs will see an increase in funding with rat control funding increased by \$350,000, resulting in \$3.2 million allocated to the agricultural programs administered by SARM. The Municipal Roads for the Economy Program (MREP) maintains funding at \$14 million to invest in Saskatchewan's infrastructure. More information about SARM's reaction to this year's provincial budget can be found [here](#).

The Federal Budget was announced on March 19, 2019. Some of the highlights include:

Supporting innovation in the oil and gas sector, increased funding for Regional Development Agencies and funding in response to Intercity Bus Service Disruptions in Western Canada. Budget 2019 also announced investments in rural and remote communities to address the unique set of challenges they face including lack of connectivity, lack of employment diversity, population decline, out-migration of youth, lower availability and quality of services (e.g., health care), declining infrastructure and lower educational attainment. The federal government announced its commitment to set a national target, in which 95 per cent of Canadian homes and businesses will have access to internet speeds of at least 50/10 Mbps by 2026 and 100 per cent by 2030, no matter where they are located in the country. This is in keeping with the broadband internet speed objective set by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) for Canadian households and businesses across Canada.

Budget 2019 proposes to invest \$1.01 billion in 2018-19 to increase energy efficiency in residential, commercial and multi-unit buildings. These investments will be delivered by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) through the Green Municipal Fund. More information about this year's federal budget can be found [here](#).



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ACTION REQUIRED: Policy Department Feedback Survey

SARM's Policy Department is looking for your feedback on the services that we provide your RM to help inform our 2019-2020 work plan. We would appreciate your RM's feedback on the topic via the survey linked below by the end of day on April 21, 2019.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/36TBXLB>