



The Weekly Policy Bulletin

3-2-2021

Question of the Week

Is your RM planning to attend the Bear Pit session at the 2021 SARM Annual Convention?

Yes - 91%

No - 9%

Information

SCIC 2021 Program Announcement

On February 23, 2021, Saskatchewan's Deputy Premier and Minister of Finance, Donna Harpauer and Federal Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Marie-Claude Bibeau announced details of the 2021 Crop Insurance Program.

For 2021, Crop Insurance coverage will reach a record level due to higher commodity prices and increased yield coverage. Crop Insurance coverage will increase to \$273 per acre from \$224 per acre in 2020. This represents a 22 per cent increase in coverage. The average total premium will be higher than in 2020-21, however, due to the increased coverage the average premium cost per dollar of coverage will be lower. The average premium per acre is \$8.59, up from \$7.40 in 2020-21.

[Learn More](#)

SARM's Continued Advocacy for Rural Broadband

We continue to advocate on your behalf for access to adequate, reliable, affordable rural broadband. Reliable and affordable access to broadband is fundamental for the health, safety, and well-being of those living and travelling in rural and remote areas. There are tremendous economic and environmental benefits of reliable fixed and mobile internet connections. COVID-19 has only

highlighted the need for better connectivity in rural Saskatchewan.

On February 25, 2021, SARM sent a letter to the Minister of Rural Economic Development, Maryam Monsef and the Minister Responsible for SaskTel, Don Morgan on behalf of rural municipalities across the province. We asked that all RMs who were interested in supporting our lobbying efforts submit a signature on behalf of their council to include in our correspondence to Minister Monsef and Minister Morgan. We have attached the final document below for your reference.

[Rural Broadband Letter](#)

Resources

COVID-19 Vaccine Information for Citizens

The Ministry of Health created the following fact sheet that you can share with citizens or post in your municipal office:

- [COVID-19 Vaccine Science fact sheet](#)

Health is also encouraging everyone to update their Facebook profile pic with a "Get Vaccinated!" frame to show your support and encourage your family and friends to get their vaccination. To update your profile, follow these simple steps:

1. Log into your Facebook profile
2. Click on Update Profile Picture once there is an option to either upload a new photo or add a frame
3. Choose "Add a Frame"
4. Search for #getvaccinatedSK
5. Choose the 'Get Vaccinated by Government of Sask' frame
6. Click on "Use as Profile Pic"

For the latest information about the Government of Saskatchewan's COVID-19 Response, visit saskatchewan.ca/COVID19.

[COVID-19 Vaccine Fact Sheet](#)

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The Weekly Policy Bulletin

3-16-2021

Question of the Week

Have you received information from the SHA regarding vaccination clinics in your RM?

Yes

Select

No

Select

Reminders

Saskatchewan Municipal Peer Network Survey

The *Saskatchewan Municipal Peer Network* advisory committee would like to hear from you! Whether or not you've heard of the Municipal Peer Network or used its services, you are encouraged to complete this *short survey*.

The purpose of the survey is to determine municipal leaders' awareness and/or the effectiveness of the Municipal Peer Network's dispute advisory service. The results of the survey are confidential and will be used to enhance service delivery, so that administrators and elected officials are better equipped to navigate the diverse challenges they face.

The survey will be open from **March 15 to April 2, 2021**.

The advisory committee thanks you in advance for your participation.

For questions, please call 306-787-4984 or email patrick.chastel2@gov.sk.ca.

[Complete Survey](#)

Information

Road Maintenance Agreements

Section 22 of *The Municipalities Act* provides authority for municipalities to enter into a Road Maintenance Agreement (RMA) with haulers, shippers or receivers of delivered goods. Municipalities often use RMAs in cases where there is concentrated heavy hauling from an identifiable source or there is heavy haul traffic that routes through a municipality where the hauler, shipper or receiver does not have a property tax base. RMAs are intended to address the incremental costs associated with heavy hauling and not the full cost of maintenance, construction and repair of municipal roads. Rates for RMAs and other regulations are set by the province and these can be found starting in section 9 of *The Municipalities Regulations*.

The Government of Saskatchewan amended *The Municipalities Regulations* related to RMAs. The province thanks all stakeholders for their help in developing these changes.

The updated regulations create a more consistent, transparent and clear process for all involved. Key changes include:

- Clarifying the definition of a bulk haul and who RMAs are to be applied to;
- Establishing a new rate structure based on verifiable data to replace the minimum and maximum rate ranges with a single per tonne per KM rate;
- Applying the new rate structure to regions based on Area Transportation Planning Committees;
- Determining that RMA rates are updated with refreshed data every two years; and
- Outlining the process for cancellation and suspension of agreements.

These changes will come into effect January 1, 2022.

The new RMA rates to be implemented in 2022 can be found here: [**2022 Road Maintenance Agreement Rates**](#).

Please reference the rates below for summer and winter rates:

Regional Rates Per Tonne Per Kilometre:

	Summer	Winter
Current Rate	\$0.0399	\$0.01995
2022 Rate	Summer	Winter
North Central	\$0.0588	\$0.0294
West Central	\$0.0568	\$0.0284
South West	\$0.0464	\$0.0232
Central	\$0.0536	\$0.0268
North East	\$0.0533	\$0.0267
East Central	\$0.0558	\$0.0279
South East	\$0.0546	\$0.0273
South Central	\$0.0522	\$0.0261

In order to get information out to users as soon as possible, the published RMA

rates are based on data for 2021 and therefore the rates will be refreshed in 2023 to maintain a two-year update period.

If you have any questions about these regulatory changes, please email property.tax@gov.sk.ca.

Green and Inclusive Community Buildings Program Questionnaire

Infrastructure Canada is seeking to learn more about potential projects to prepare for the eventual launch of the program while ensuring that this program meets the needs of communities across Canada. *Please note, that this proposed program is still in development and not accepting funding applications at this time, but by filling out this questionnaire you will be expressing your interest in the program, and we will be in a position to reach out to you when the program is launched.*

Infrastructure Canada will be providing up to \$1.5 billion in federal funding for community buildings that are more energy efficient, usable and accessible to Canadians. The funding will support retrofits, repairs or upgrades of existing public buildings and the construction of new public buildings that serve communities across Canada. This includes a 10 per cent set aside for projects supporting First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities, including urban Indigenous peoples.

Those who complete the questionnaire and provide their contact information will be notified directly when additional information is available about the program.

Should you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact the team at Infrastructure Canada, at the following email address: infc.gicbp-pbcvi.infccanada.ca

[Learn More](#)

[Complete Questionnaire](#)

Resources

Upcoming Asset Management Offerings

The Learning Path to Asset Management Readiness

Launched on March 15, 2021, this course was developed and tailored to municipal staff of small urban and rural municipalities in Saskatchewan with a population of less than 1000. The content is aimed for a new learner, and the measurement of success used is to have learners progress to reach a Level 2 on the FCM Asset Management Readiness Scale.

[View Promo Video](#)

[Learn More & Register](#)

NAMS+ Asset Management Training Workshop

Asset Management Saskatchewan will also be offering the NAMS+ Asset Management Training Workshop starting April 13, 2021. This course is six live, online, and interactive sessions over a six week period delivered by NAMS Canada AM experts. NAMS is a proven training program designed specifically for municipal government employees to integrate the efforts of the disciplines of public works, finance, administration and political leaders.

[Learn More & Register](#)

CIRA Launches \$1M+ Granting Call

On March 2, 2021, the Canadian Internet Registration Authority (CIRA) launched **a call for applications** for projects to improve internet access in Canada. Over \$1 million in grants will be awarded to community groups and researchers working on infrastructure, cybersecurity, digital literacy, and community leadership projects across the country – with preference given to those that benefit students, as well as northern, rural, and Indigenous communities.

CIRA Grants

CIRA Grants focus on **internet-related projects** in Canada and awards grants of up to \$100,000, including one grant of up to \$250,000.

The program is looking to fund projects in these four areas:

1. Infrastructure research or projects that improve internet speed, access, and affordability.
2. Digital literacy tools, research, and training programs to develop digital skills.
3. Cybersecurity projects or research that promote users' safety online.
4. Community leadership initiatives including events or research that engage Canadians in domestic internet policy issues

Since 2014, CIRA has provided \$7.95 million in funding for 171 projects across Canada. Learn more about eligibility and how to apply for **CIRA Grants** below.

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The Weekly Policy Bulletin

3-23-2021

Question of the Week Results

Have you received information from the SHA regarding vaccination clinics in your RM?

Yes - 31%

No - 69%

Reminders

Traffic Safety Fund Deadline

A reminder that rural municipalities and Indigenous lands/territories can apply for the Provincial Traffic Safety Fund Grant. Grants of up to \$100,000 per location are available for traffic safety initiatives in their respective communities. For more information about the grant program visit SGI's website at <https://www.sgi.sk.ca/community-grants-programs> and consider applying for this grant to help improve traffic safety in your community. Deadline to apply for the current application intake is **March 31, 2021**.

[Additional Funding & Resources](#)

Information

2021 Annual Convention Resolutions Update

On March 18, 2021, SARM issued formal letters to each of the responsible provincial and federal departments/agencies requesting responses to the resolutions that were passed at the 2021 annual convention. This is SARM's first step in lobbying, on behalf of the membership, for key issues affecting RMs across rural Saskatchewan. Any responses that are received will be posted on the SARM website under the applicable resolution. Please click the link below to access the SARM Resolutions Database.

Alert: Zebra Mussels Found in Aquarium Moss Ball Products

Zebra mussels have been found in moss/algal ball products for aquariums or water gardens sold in western Canada, including in Saskatchewan, after January 1, 2021. These products are often sold as Marimo Moss Balls and are a popular ornamental plant kept with betta fish. Zebra mussels pose a serious threat to Saskatchewan waterways, so it's critical to properly dispose of any of these products you have in your possession.

The zebra mussels found on moss balls in Saskatchewan have been tiny, about the size of grain of sand, and often found inside the moss ball itself, so it's nearly impossible to detect them by a simple visual inspection. Because moss balls sold here all come from the same source, its best to be safe, assume that zebra mussels are present, and dispose of the products safely.

Proper Disposal

Follow these three steps to treat and properly dispose of moss/algal balls:

Treat the moss/algal balls, by placing into a plastic bag, seal and freeze (preferably in a deep freezer) for at least 24 hours OR placing in boiling water for at least one minute and then let cool.

Dispose of moss/algal balls by placing it and any of its packaging in a sealed plastic bag, and disposing of it in your household garbage.

IMPORTANT: DO NOT dispose of the moss/algal ball or any aquarium/water-garden contents (e.g. substrate, plants, etc.) by flushing it down the toilet, or putting it down a drain or in a compost.

If you have questions or concerns about zebra mussels or any other aquatic invasive species, please contact the Ministry of Environment Inquiry Centre, toll free, 1-800-567-4224, Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., or email centre.inquiry@gov.sk.ca.

[Learn More](#)

Federal Carbon Offset System: News release asking that it recognize and reward farmers

SARM was part of a joint press release on March 19th, 2021 that was lead by the Saskatchewan Soil Conservation Association. Please see link to release below.

[View Full News Release](#)

The release is encouraging farmers to participate in the 60 day review of the federal government's Greenhouse Gas Offset Credit System regulations.

Make sure you weigh in and tell them how the approximately \$900 million tonnes of new carbon dioxide sequestered each year by Saskatchewan farmers is a critical asset to help governments meet their climate change goals. Ensuring that the offset protocol for carbon sequestration in agricultural soils developed is based on science and recognizes and rewards farmers for all of their sequestration efforts not for those that go above and beyond common practices like no-till.

To get involved in the federal consultations visit:

[Get Involved](#)

For more information on the positioning of the SSCA Carbon Advisory Committee and Support Group Members see: <https://www.ssca.ca/carbon-initiative>

Announcement: Forest Capital of Canada - Call for Proposals 2021

The Canadian Institute of Forestry (CIF-IFC), are pleased to inform you that the call for proposals for the Forest Capital of Canada designation is now open!

About the Forest Capital of Canada:

Established in 1979, the Forest Capital of Canada program focuses on the valuable role forests play in the socio-economic and environmental health of our communities – past, present and future. Originally delivered by the Canadian Forestry Association, the CIF-IFC now administers the legacy program through its National Awards Program. Each year the CIF-IFC designates a community or region to host a celebration of its forest resources.

Eligibility Criteria

Communities or regions interested in being designated the next Forest Capital of Canada must build a business case in the form of a proposal that illustrates their capacity to host a 12- to 24-month celebration of forest resources.

Application Procedure

- Communities or regions interested in being designated the next Forest Capital of Canada must provide a complete submission which includes an application form, proposal and letters of support.
 - Access the English application form [here](#)
- **Only complete submissions received by the deadline will be considered by the Awards Committee.**
- Submissions from previous years can be resubmitted if it is still considered relevant.

Proposals must be received before **June 15, 2021** and can be submitted by email (in PDF format) to: media@cif-ifc.org

For more information on the Award and to see a list of previous Forest Capital of Canada recipients, please click [here](#).

[Application Form](#)

[Learn More](#)

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(306) 757-3577 | sarm@sarm.ca | www.sarm.ca





The Weekly Policy Bulletin

3-30-2021

Question of the Week

Does your RM Office know where the nearest COVID-19 vaccine clinics are located in your area of the province?

Yes

Select

No

Select

If not, please refer to the documents below for more information on vaccine clinic locations and hours of operation as well as Saskatchewan's COVID-19 Immunization Delivery Plan.

[Vaccine Clinic Locations](#)

[Immunization Delivery Plan](#)

Information

Building Standards and Licensing Branch Name Change

Effective Thursday, April 1, 2021, the Building Standards and Licensing Branch in the Saskatchewan Ministry of Government Relations will change its name to the **Building and Technical Standards Branch (BTS)**. Please update your records to reflect our new contact information:

Building and Technical Standards Branch
Saskatchewan Ministry of Government Relations
1430 – 1855 Victoria Avenue
REGINA SK S4P 3T2
Phone: 306-787-4113
Web: www.saskatchewan.ca/btstandards

Email: btstandards@gov.sk.ca

Our new name better reflects the role our branch plays in promoting growth and safety in the construction, maintenance and operation of buildings and facilities. Our name change also reflects recent changes to the following provincial license, permit and inspection services:

- Transfer of gas and electrical licensing from the Ministry of Government Relations to the Technical Safety Authority of Saskatchewan (TSASK).
- SaskPower transferring its gas and electrical permit and inspection services to TSASK.
- The transfer of plumbing inspection services from the Saskatchewan Health Authority to TSASK.

Although our branch's name may have changed, BTS continues to be responsible for:

- the development, adoption and implementation of construction codes; and
- the legislative, regulatory and policy oversight of all technical safety programs assigned to TSASK and the Ministry of Government Relations.

Health Canada Asks for Support from Canadian Farmers

On March 25, 2021, Health Canada launched a public consultation on new guidelines for plant breeding innovation. This will determine the speed at which Canadian farmers gain access to new crop innovations, the amount of crop R&D activity that will happen in our country, and ultimately Canada's competitiveness in the global marketplace.

Over the last three years exciting new plant breeding techniques have been advancing throughout the world, but the Canadian regulatory guidance has not kept pace. Health Canada's proposal is a very positive step forward to show Canada can be both a centre of crop innovation and a leader in food safety.

Canada's grain associations have come together to provide a straightforward way for farmers and anyone else who works in the grain value chain to send their own letter to Health Canada in support of the government using these new guidelines. It's one simple **click** away.

Write now! **Click here** and send your own letter to Health Canada in support of fair and reasonable rules for plant breeding innovation in Canada.

[View Full News Release](#)

Resources

AgH2Onward Workshops

Are you interested in increasing your knowledge about implementing adaptive agricultural water management practices in Saskatchewan? WSA and Saskatchewan Association of Watersheds are offering free two-day online workshops (approx. two hours per day) throughout 2021 called AgH2Onward. These workshops were developed with support from Natural Resources Canada through the BRACE Program and in partnership with Agriculture stakeholders. The AgH2Onward workshop will introduce producers to the Agricultural Water Management Strategy and provide innovative water management solutions that will strengthen farming operations in the face of a changing climate.

We know agricultural drainage is an important topic for many farmers. These workshops primarily focus on agricultural drainage regulations, and solutions, tools and techniques that producers should consider when beginning a drainage project.

For more information and to register, please see the fact sheet below or visit www.agh2onward.ca.

[AgH2Onward Fact Sheet](#)

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