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RURAL COUNCILLOR

VOLUME 55 number 1
Spring 2022 ISSUE

PUBLISHED BY THE SASKATCHEWAN
ASSOCIATION OF RURAL MUNICIPALITIES

Publications Agreement #40062693

Economy and Infrastructure

Rural Broadband; Powered Mobile Equipment; Municipalities Helping Municipalities;
Infrastructure Renewal Key to Canada's Recovery; Expect a 2022 Federal Flurry; Asset
Management; Revise Your Fire Bylaw; Helium Action Plan; Water Management; Proactive
Approach to Preventing Weed Spread



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our vision

our mission

By being the rural voice, SARM will effectively lead autonomous municipalities in creating a vibrant, diverse economy resulting in a strong, sustainable Saskatchewan.

SARM delivers timely, dependable programs and services to meet the needs of its members while influencing government policy and facilitating municipalities to work together to foster rural development and build strong, sustainable communities.



Minister's Message

By the Honourable Don McMorris
Minister of Government Relations

INFRASTRUCTURE: It's one word but encompasses many key components for communities to thrive.

Roads, bridges, and culverts to support the transportation of people, services, and to get livestock and grain to markets.

Systems to provide clean drinking water and to dispose of wastewater from homes and businesses to help protect the environment.

Under ICIP, the Government of Saskatchewan secured more than \$900 million in federal funding over 10 years, until 2028, to support all types of eligible infrastructure projects in the province.

Facilities to play sports, house service clubs and arts programs, along with community events – bringing neighbours together to build an even greater sense of local pride.

Our provincial government recognizes the importance of ongoing investments in these key areas to help create jobs and to strengthen communities.

Since 2019, the Ministry of Government Relations has announced more than \$275 million in provincial funding under the Investing In Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) to support more than 200 projects across Saskatchewan.

And there's more to come with project application intakes for funding now open under ICIP.

Municipalities and other eligible organizations are reminded that applications will be accepted until May 10, 2022, for the next intake phase for community, culture, and recreation projects. This will be the last opportunity to apply for these types of projects under ICIP in Saskatchewan, allowing future intakes to focus on other types of infrastructure for this long-term program.

Project applications are also still being accepted for the ICIP Landfill Decommissioning intake. They will be accepted until available funding is fully allocated.

To begin the online application process and to read the full eligibility requirements, visit: www.saskatchewan.ca/ICIP.

Under ICIP, the Government of Saskatchewan secured more than \$900 million in federal funding over 10 years, until 2028, to support all types of eligible infrastructure projects in the province.

If you have questions, please contact the Saskatchewan Ministry of Government Relations' Municipal Infrastructure and Finance Branch at infra@gov.sk.ca or 306-787-1262.

Thank you for the opportunity to communicate with SARM members directly, as we all work together to keep Saskatchewan strong.

Build Even Better Communities





Minister's Message

By the Honourable Fred Bradshaw
Minister of Highways and Infrastructure

ON BEHALF OF the Government of Saskatchewan, and Premier Scott Moe, it is my pleasure to serve our province as the Minister of Highways.

Saskatchewan continues to require a safe and reliable transportation system to move its citizens as well as important goods and services. Our government has made significant investments to improve safety, increase capacity and support economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our total transportation investment has exceeded more than \$10.6 billion in highways since 2008, improving more than 17,100 km of Saskatchewan roads. The investments, over the past year alone, allowed us to make safety improvements on 1,000 km of provincial highways.

This includes significant projects like passing lanes. Construction of 30 new sets of passing lanes have been or will be added to Saskatchewan's road network including Highways 2, 3, 5, 7, 12, 14, 16 and 39. The passing lanes are designed to allow vehicles to safely pass slower moving vehicles such as large trucks and semi-trailers. An additional 27 sets have been built in the last four years and the ministry has received extremely positive feedback from first responders, RCMP, and municipal governments.

Park improvements have been another area of focus for our government. About \$85.3 million is being invested into paving and upgrading 11 highways near or leading to provincial parks with an additional \$5.2 million investment into improvements inside eight provincial parks this past year.

We look forward to another busy construction season in 2022-23. In fact, planning is already underway and includes \$135.1 million in new highways projects, which have been

included in the 2021 Fall Tender Plan. This will include more passing lanes, intersection improvements, culvert replacements and other important work.

Meanwhile, the ministry continues to make improvements to existing operations. Many of our provincial bridges and culverts have been replaced in recent years. By replacing them before the end of their life cycle, risks with flooding and gaps in service for our primary weight corridors have been avoided. We have also been enhancing the road information provided to you through the Highway Hotline. This includes 10 new cameras that were recently added. It is a service the public has been asking for. It also helps our own crews, who can monitor troublesome locations. It can save them time and money because they no longer need to spend time travelling to some remote locations, but instead focus on areas that require immediate attention.

The government also committed to a record \$1.5 million to community airport improvements this past year including \$650,000 in stimulus funding. To date, more than \$1.26 million has been allocated to 20 different communities. The Community Airport Partnership or CAP provides matching (50/50) grants to municipal governments to improve community airports by offsetting costs associated with rehabilitation and upgrades to the network of community airports. Since 2007-08, the ministry has invested over \$10 million including this year's funding and a total of 42 different communities and RMs have benefited from the CAP program.

Our government has always valued the relationship we have with SARM and its members. We look forward to working together to build stronger communities across our province of Saskatchewan.





Minister's Message

By the Honourable Jeremy Harrison
Minister of Trade and Export Development

SASKATCHEWAN'S rural municipalities (RMs) play a vital role in helping to provide food, fuel, and fertilizer to the world and supporting our strong economy.

Despite the ongoing challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, Saskatchewan has attracted a significant number of new major projects in 2021 across multiple sectors including uranium, potash, copper, helium, canola crush facilities, manufacturing, and forestry.

Saskatchewan exports 65 per cent of everything it produces, and many of these products come from rural Saskatchewan including agriculture, energy, and mining products.

2020 was a record year for agricultural exports in Saskatchewan, helping the province lead the nation in growth in overall export sales over the previous year. Saskatchewan produced \$16.9 billion in agricultural exports last year, a 31 per cent increase from 2019 and a new high for the province. Leading agriculture exports in 2020 were canola seed, non-durum wheat, lentils, canola oil and durum wheat. While 2021 was a challenging year for producers, our producers are resilient, and agriculture will continue to drive our economy in the future.

This helps bring our province closer to meeting our Growth Plan goals, which include growing agri-food exports to \$20 billion and increasing agriculture value-added revenue to \$10 billion by 2030. These strong export numbers also reinforce Saskatchewan's global reputation as a dependable source of safe, high-quality resources, goods, and products.

Overall merchandise export sales in 2020 were more than \$30 billion, up 2.5 per cent over 2019, the highest percentage increase among the provinces.

Saskatchewan agri-food export destinations are diverse in nature. The top markets for Saskatchewan agri-food exports in 2020 were the United States, China, Japan, India, and Mexico.

With our growing, world-class export base, we have what the world wants and needs, and this demand will continue to drive investment and jobs for communities right across Saskatchewan. To support this growth, we have increased our network of international trade and investment offices, with eight offices now established to better promote the province worldwide.

The four new trade and investment offices are in London, United Kingdom (UK); Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE);

Mexico City, Mexico and Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. This builds on the original four offices in Tokyo, Japan; New Delhi, India; Shanghai, China, and Singapore.

All offices are already developing, maintaining, and strengthening business partnerships in their respective markets through engagement with key in-market and Saskatchewan businesses and stakeholders. They are contributing to building a global network for Saskatchewan with regional coverage across all priority regions including in the UK and Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, Latin America, and Southeast Asia.

Overall merchandise export sales in 2020 were more than \$30 billion, up 2.5 per cent over 2019, the highest percentage increase among the provinces.

Saskatchewan is highly dependent on international trade for our quality of life and the continued growth and vibrancy of our RMs. Virtually every job in our province has a component that is dependent on our international trading relationships.

Our future growth relies on rural Saskatchewan and by prioritizing international engagement, we will be able to further increase our exports as well as attract additional investment to the province.

In 2021, we saw a period of unprecedented investment with over \$10 billion, and we remain focused on working with our partners to continue this momentum. We will continue building a competitive business environment and growing our international presence, which will result in new projects, new facilities, and new jobs right here in Saskatchewan, including in rural Saskatchewan.

I look forward to working together to build strong communities, a strong economy, and a strong Saskatchewan.



Minister's Message

By the Honourable Bronwyn Eyre
Minister of Energy and Resources

ON BEHALF OF Premier Scott Moe and my legislative colleagues, it's my pleasure to include a message in this, the 2022 spring edition of the *Rural Councillor*. Thank you to SARM members for all the work you do, and for your continued, productive interactions and cooperation with the Government of Saskatchewan.

When it comes to Saskatchewan's economy and infrastructure, 2021 was an exciting year. We made several major project announcements across our mining, forestry and energy sectors—including the BHP Jansen potash mine project, the largest investment in Saskatchewan's history.

BHP plans to invest a total of \$12 billion (including \$5 billion already invested) to complete the Jansen Mine. This project is expected to create around 3,500 jobs annually during construction and, once in operation, will support over 600 direct jobs at both the mine site and corporate office in Saskatoon. This is great news for my home city and communities around the Jansen mine, which is expected to produce around 4.4 million tonnes of potash per year once complete in 2027. The BHP project builds on the successes of other major, established Saskatchewan potash companies, including Mosaic, Nutrien and K+S. It also contributes substantially to the Saskatchewan government's Growth Plan targets of achieving \$9 billion in potash sales by 2030.

Our forestry sector also saw a huge boost this past year with the announcement of timber allocations to support four facilities in northern Saskatchewan. This includes One Sky Forest products, set to build a new Oriented Strand Board mill, and the re-opening of the Paper Excellence pulp mill in Prince Albert. Other allocations will support the expansion of the Dunkley Lumber sawmill in Carrot River and increased production at the Carrier Forest Products sawmill in Big River.

It goes without saying that another key driver of our province's economy is our world class oil and gas sector, which accounts for 15.5 per cent of provincial GDP. This past year, as drilling and oil production came back on-line and prices rebounded, we continued to build on our traditional energy strengths while diversifying—where it makes common, fiscal sense—into new and emerging areas.

In September, 2021, our government outlined priorities for Carbon Capture and Storage (CCUS) and, also over the course of last year, announced a number of new, privately-led CO₂ pipeline expansion projects. As a world leader in carbon

capture, particularly with enhanced oil recovery, we want to be the most competitive jurisdiction in Canada to invest in CCUS technology and infrastructure.

We are also supporting other emerging sectors, including lithium. Global demand for lithium is expected to grow five-fold by 2030, and Saskatchewan is well-positioned to make the most of its potential. Prairie Lithium Corporation, a Regina-based lithium technology development company, is already showing strong results in extracting lithium from Saskatchewan oilfield brines.

Another dynamic, future-facing sector in Saskatchewan is helium. In November, our government released our *Helium Action Plan*, which outlines how the province aims to become a world leader in helium production and supply ten per cent of global demand by 2030. In April of last year, North American Helium opened its \$30 million Battle Creek Helium Purification Facility, the largest in Canada; and in May, Saskatoon-based Royal Helium announced a significant helium discovery at its Climax project, which has the potential to be one of the largest helium discoveries in Saskatchewan history.

Our government is committed to growing our energy sector, including through incentives such as the *Saskatchewan Petroleum Innovation Incentive* (SPII) and the *Oil and Gas Processing Investment Incentive* (OGPII), which offer transferable royalty and production tax credits for innovative, made-in-Saskatchewan research and infrastructure projects. Under both programs, government investment only follows up-front private investment.

Finally, our very successful Accelerated Site Closure Program (ASCP) is in its third and final phase, with an additional \$55 million in funding now available to eligible companies. In its first 18 months, the ASCP, which has already supported more than 575 Saskatchewan-based oil and gas service companies, has carried out over 5,500 well site reclamation and remediation projects in every oil and gas region of the province. To date, \$316 million in contracts has been issued, and more than \$152 million has been paid for work completed.

In 2021, we took some big steps toward achieving the goals laid out in our *Growth Plan*, which is all about building on our strengths, growing our economy and ensuring a great quality of life for Saskatchewan people. The work in natural resource development continues in 2022!

Have a wonderful year!



Economy & Infrastructure

And the Link Between

By Ray Orb
SARM President

THERE IS A DIRECT LINK between the economy and the infrastructure that serves it.

Of such importance is Saskatchewan's rural infrastructure, with nearly 1400 bridges and more than 170,000 kilometers of gravel roads, making up 92% of our provincial road network. The bridges are infrastructure that have been largely inherited from the province with much of it aged. Past studies have shown an immediate increase in replacement and repair work is necessary. Funding for this must come from sources beyond rural taxation.

We must remember that these are the same bridges and roads that carry the raw products that are destined for export markets. Agricultural products, lumber, resource products, and manufactured goods are all common exports.

Also evident is that more raw products need to be processed within our provincial boundaries, and certainly within our country's borders. This was recently illustrated by the supply chain issues as a result of the latest flooding on British Columbia's mainland. Canada is known as an exporting nation for raw products, but one that depends on far too many other countries for processed and manufactured goods.

That begs the question, why is this happening and what changes can be made, especially in the livestock industry? With an abundance of grain, forages, straw, and other raw products (in normal production years), Saskatchewan has the resources to house more hogs and cattle in hog barns and feedlots. Yet in our province the expansion in these sectors has been historically slow and we need to look at the reasons why.

The climate in this province is certainly conducive to livestock production, and we have the agricultural land to support it, however, we don't have any large meat packing plants, and not enough feedlots to effectively add value to our own home-grown livestock herds. Saskatchewan is home to about 40% of the national beef cow herd yet we export too many calves and feeders out of our province to be fed and processed.

The Saskatchewan Government is critical of this segment of the livestock industry's stagnation and is focusing on the Intensive Livestock Operation (ILO) approval process (mainly the Discretionary Use policy that RMs have at their disposal). The criticism comes when some RMs say no to ILOs without valid reasons. In other cases, RM councils are in favour, but ratepayers are not.

For RMs to thrive they need to be autonomous; tampering with the Discretionary Use policy would be detrimental to our

members. However, there are policy adjustments that would benefit RMs while also attracting, and retaining, value-adding processing and expansion in the livestock industry.

In early 2022 SARM will consult with those in the livestock industry, provincial leaders, and RM members who are interested in helping to resolve development issues, and to increase economic development in rural Saskatchewan.

In early 2022 SARM will consult with those in the livestock industry, provincial leaders, and RM members who are interested in helping to resolve development issues, and to increase economic development in rural Saskatchewan.

Meanwhile, the provincial economy has remained relatively strong throughout the pandemic. I dare say, this is because agriculture production has stayed strong in spite of last year's drought. We should be optimistic now that we have received some meaningful snowfall amounts around the grain belt, however, we are still monitoring areas that have not received much if any snow as there are never guarantees that adequate rain will fall during the growing season.

Canadian Drought Outlook: <https://agriculture.canada.ca/en/agriculture-and-environment/drought-watch-and-agroclimate/canadian-drought-outlook>

It's no secret that the cost of running a farm has increased by exorbitant amounts. It's common to hear that many farm inputs (including fertilizer and chemicals which are already in short supply) have gone up by 300%. Even with higher commodity prices this will cut into the farm's profits. Some of these increased costs can be attributed to inflation, but not the entirety. Some are due to the federal government's taxation policies, including the carbon tax. This direct tax will be increased to \$170/tonne by 2030. The majority of Saskatchewan producers will receive little, or none, of this back. Even the promised rebate on grain drying is not currently in place.

Another cost, which may be passed along to consumers if adopted, is a regulatory one due to the federal government Clean Fuel Standard and the Net Zero GHG emission reduction policy. It would force the Canadian oil & gas industry to fully comply and is already being felt by Canadian consumers at the pumps and grocery stores. All of these factors are playing a role in driving up inflation year over year to 4.8%, which is the highest increase since 1991.

These issues are concerning since they have already driven up costs for agriculture producers and RMs alike. Admittedly, some of the shortages were caused by recent disruptions at the Port of Vancouver, but some blame needs to be directed to the previously mentioned federal government policies.

If the Bank of Canada raises interest rates (to curb inflation) it will hurt agriculture in the sense that producers are large consumers of credit which is needed to purchase expensive farm inputs that typically aren't paid for until after harvest. Even though raising rates may have the desired effect of slowing the economy, the agriculture economy has been strong during the pandemic and has great potential to improve even more... potentially leading the country into economic recovery. Putting a damper on this sector is a mistake.

SARM recently met with the Saskatchewan federal Conservative caucus and had good discussions on several of these issues with the MPs. We plan to continue by raising our concerns to all major political parties in Ottawa. SARM will continue to strategize using Crestview Strategies as our federal lobbyist to help us prepare for the next federal budget consultation which is just around the corner.

In the meantime, stay well and I hope to see you at the March convention in Regina.

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Rural Broadband *Opportunity is Knocking, Now Lets Open the Door*

By Jay Meyer
SARM Executive Director

INFRASTRUCTURE comes in many ways, sizes and forms but when we talk about the deficit in our province, most likely it is around roads, bridges, lagoons or water treatment plants. One thing is certain, infrastructure is all tied together, and one piece is not necessarily more important than the other. In order to have functioning communities, you need the infrastructure to be functioning cohesively. The one piece we all use is the most inconsistent amongst them all. It is a piece of infrastructure we cannot physically feel or see; it is reliable broadband. The pandemic has started many conversations around the opportunities available and opportunities lost as a result of reliable broadband in rural Saskatchewan.

SARM believes the broadband challenges will not be solved by any one individual or organization and has taken a lead in the formation of the Rural Broadband Action Committee. Many stakeholders and broadband providers across the province have sat around the committee table including the Saskatchewan Economic Development Alliance, Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association, Access Communications, Sasktel, Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations, Saskatchewan School Boards Association, Flex Network, Clarence Campeau Development Fund and the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce. The goal of the committee is to bring stakeholders and decision makers to the table to push for real change to internet access in Saskatchewan. The committee members have a vision that by 2024, Saskatchewan's broadband infrastructure would have achieved parity for all Saskatchewan residents regardless of address. There is still much work to be done on this issue, but progress is being made together.

The goal of the committee is to bring stakeholders and decision makers to the table to push for real change.

As the pandemic continues and the virtual world is growing, our economy will be more and more dependent on broadband to power the much-needed technologies in rural Saskatchewan. Technology is getting smarter, this includes the precision agricultural tool farmers and ranchers require. Broadband enables producers to communicate with such technology, which increases productivity and efficiencies. Reliable broadband can assist producers in keeping up with market trends to assist with sustainability.

Reliable rural broadband is also critical for rural areas to recruit younger generations of workers including doctors, nurses, and teachers. Our young people do not want to move back to where they grew up if they feel like they are moving back into a time from 20 years ago. The virtual world is growing as we stick handle through the pandemic. The workforce and the way we work is changing and attracting individuals to our communities will not happen without reliable broadband. Let us start focusing on all the opportunities our communities have while the world changes including the opportunity to work from home with your head office being miles away.

If we continue to lag with investment into rural broadband, we are most certainly giving the wrong impression; that rural Saskatchewan is not open for business. Opportunity is knocking as things are different now, let us open this door before the individual standing at our doorstep walks away.

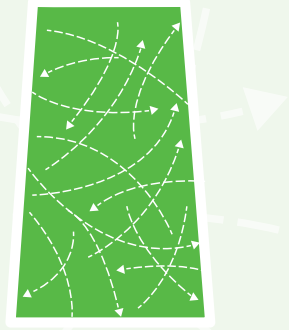
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Clearing the Path (CTP): Supporting Saskatchewan's Rural Economy

Connect and seamlessly move Saskatchewan's vast array of commodities and industry at primary weights.



PROGRAM PURPOSE

The purpose of the Clearing the Path primary weight corridor system is to connect and seamlessly move Saskatchewan's vast array of commodities and industry at primary weights,

beginning in and around RMs, to the provincial primary weight network and to the National Highway System, then finally to ports to export globally.



RECENT PROGRAM CHANGES



Based on the feedback of program users, the CTP program recently underwent a careful review. In response, the Program Management Board approved changes to CTP policies that made the program more effective, while also ensuring that the program is consistent and accountable in fulfilling its purpose to support provincial economic generators.

DYNAMIC FUNDING

Funding for the CTP program is limited.

In order for the program to be sustainable over the long-term, the funding must be reallocated periodically to follow...

the major economic drivers of the whole province...



as well as support the concept of "one-network" — integrating rural roads with provincial highways. This means that CTP funding is always dynamic and not permanent.

INCREMENTAL FUNDING

Rather than construct new roads, incremental funding is a **top up of funding** from the costs of maintenance required for a secondary weight road and the cost of maintenance required for a primary weight road.



ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The eligibility criteria are in place to develop an effective and efficient primary weight network throughout the province. Some criteria gauge the value of the road's current use, whereas others evaluate its strategic value within the network. The eligibility criteria consider the following:

- **truck traffic counts,**
- **the presence of major economic generators,**
- **and the proximity of the roadway to other primary weight roads.**



More information about the specific eligibility criteria can be found in the RIRG Policy Manual on the SARM website.

PROGRAM ORIGIN AND GOVERNANCE

The Clearing the Path program is part of the Rural Integrated Roads for Growth (RIRG) program.

RIRG is a Ministry of Highways municipal funding program that supports economic development in the province. Day-to-day operations of the RIRG program are administered by SARM.

Decisions are made jointly by the Ministry of Highways and SARM and co-managed through a Program Management Board that includes representatives from both SARM and the Ministry of Highways.



APPEAL OF PROGRAM MANAGEMENT BOARD REALLOCATION DECISIONS

In cases of the incorrect application of eligibility criteria or inaccurate data, the CTP policies provide an avenue for appeal of the Program Management Board's decision to reallocate funds.

Appeals must be directed to the Program Management Board

within sixty days from the notice of the reallocation and contain clear evidence that demonstrates how the roadway meets the eligibility criteria.



PROGRAM TRANSPARENCY AND FURTHER INFO

TO ENSURE THE TRANSPARENCY OF HOW THE PROGRAM IS ADMINISTERED, ALL PROGRAM POLICIES ARE

available in the RIRG Policy Manual located on the SARM website.

Contact us via email at info@rirg.ca or www.sarm.ca





Powered Mobile Equipment Training in Saskatchewan

By Dustin Resch
SARM Manager, Programs

CONCERN FOR WORKER SAFETY has come a long way in recent decades. This is due to a wide variety of reasons, including the desire to reduce the risk of liability, increased insurance rates, and most importantly, the desire to reduce harm to workers. Perhaps especially in the context of a rural community, the staff members and workers of a RM are our relatives, our friends, and our neighbours. We care about their well-being and want them to be safe, healthy, and free of injury.

One important area of worker safety that is of special interest to RMs is the training required to operate powered mobile equipment (PME). The Government of Saskatchewan's website defines PME as "a self-propelled machine or a combination of machines, including a prime mover, that is designed to manipulate or move materials or to provide a work platform for workers." The range of PME machines is quite wide. For example, PME can include forklifts, pallet jacks, graders, tractors, and aerial lift platforms, among many other things.

The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations (section 11) requires employers to train any of their staff who operate PME. *The Regulations* specify that PME training must be provided by a competent person, include documented written records, and meet specific, detailed requirements outlined in an appendix (Table 11). Typically, training providers will require those seeking the training to supply the equipment on which they would like to be trained. The training duration is a minimum of 16 hours to meet *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations* standards. The training is often offered on site at the RM and specific to the make and model of the equipment being used.

SARM does not currently employ staff who are qualified to offer training on the wide variety of PME used by RMs. However, there are many great options within the province of Saskatchewan that offer PME training that meet the requirements set out in *The Regulations*. These organizations include post-secondary institutions, non-profit organizations, and PME vendors themselves. Some of these organizations already

have informal partnerships with SARM and provide special rates on training for SARM members.

Saskatchewan has eight regional colleges strategically located throughout the province. RMs looking for PME training are advised to reach out to their local regional college to learn if and how they offer training. For example, Southeast College (<https://www.southeastcollege.org/>) offers hands-on PME training and evaluation on customer-provided equipment. The training courses they offer cover theories of equipment, operation, government regulations and safe operating practices. Training will be custom quoted depending on location, number of pieces of equipment being trained on, and the number of participants.

As well, Saskatchewan is home to non-profit organizations that are devoted to the safety of workers. For example, the Saskatchewan Safety Council (<https://www.sasksafety.org/power-mobile-equipment-pme.html>) offers hands-on PME training and evaluation on customer provided equipment. Each training course covers the theories of equipment, as well as legislation and regulations. Their training will also be custom quoted depending on location, number of pieces of equipment being trained on, and the number of participants. SARM is a member of the Saskatchewan Safety Council so RMs will receive a 15% discount.

Finally, sometimes the vendors of PME themselves offer training directly for customers who purchase their equipment. For this reason, it is often worthwhile reaching out to vendors to discover if PME training is offered on the equipment that the RM has purchased.

Though the use of PME has taken much of the stress of manual work off our bodies and prevented many kinds of repetitive strain injuries, it is critical to use it safely. Seeking qualified PME training is a key factor in both complying with our legal responsibility, but even more importantly, provides an avenue to take care of the people who serve our rural communities.

¹<https://www.saskatchewan.ca/business/safety-in-the-workplace/hazards-and-prevention/powered-mobile-equipment>

²For a summary of the regional colleges in Saskatchewan, as well as the other post-secondary institutions, see <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/education-and-learning/universities-colleges-and-schools/post-secondary-institutions#regional-colleges>



Rural Broadband: **Infrastructure of Agricultural Future**

By Brian Rakochy

SARM Manager, Policy & Research

WHEN PEOPLE TALK about infrastructure, the discussion usually leads to roads, bridges, water, sewer, and buildings. What is often overlooked is the digital infrastructure. A key component of this infrastructure is broadband networks; networks that connect homes, businesses, and farms with the internet.

Rural broadband is a key fundamental pillar in allowing agriculture to achieve its potential, not only in productivity but also in emission reduction and reduction of inputs such as pesticides. Precision agriculture emerged in the mid-1980s to manage fertilizer distribution and has since evolved into an information-based management system that has been successfully applied in crop production, horticulture, livestock production, and pasture and turf management. The widespread development of internet and mobile technologies enabled development of web services resulting in technologies like high resolution imagery and computer-assisted equipment.

This has led to numerous benefits including emissions reductions, reduce waste from fertilizer and pesticide application, and preserve water. These technologies also directly or indirectly play a role in the future of global food security by improving the farm management system. For example, crops nutritional quality can be influenced by precision agriculture since factors like fertilizer application impact quality. In addition, precision agriculture may increase profitability for farmers and improve the quality of their work environment.

The public policy problem with precision agriculture is that it can only be adopted by farmers who have access to broadband due to the technological requirements. Although lack of broadband access is often associated with countries that have developing economies, many rural areas in Canada do not offer access to broadband due to a lack of adequate infrastructure.

This problem has been identified by equipment dealers and they say the lack of high-speed rural broadband is the biggest factor contributing to farmers distrust of the latest technology. The reliability of electronic equipment has greatly improved, but farmers need broadband to get optimal performance out of their new equipment. Working in an area with no high speed robs your equipment of its full potential. You're not in a position to utilize machine learning and artificial intelligence.

If you have machinery that's engineered to be connected to the cloud through a portal, you get no benefit if you can't

connect to that portal. If you have an error code, you can't use the technology to diagnose it in the field unless you can access the portal. Without high speed broadband you're on the outside looking in. Equipment being manufactured now is fully equipped for connectivity, machine learning and artificial intelligence. Lack of broadband is not the manufacturers' fault. It's the fault of government and service providers.

There's amazing technology on modern implements. It can increase a farmer's productivity immensely, but you can't use it without highspeed broadband. If you're concerned about equipment and the long-term future of your family farm, maybe the smartest thing you can do right now is get political and put some pressure on governments.

This is one of the main reasons SARM is doubling down on its stance that rural internet is an essential service. Access to reliable broadband internet remains an issue top of mind in rural Saskatchewan. There is still much work needed on this issue, but progress has occurred in the last year through strong advocacy efforts by SARM and its partners.

SARM led the formation of the Rural Broadband Action Committee. The committee includes:

Representatives from the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce (SCC), Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association (SUMA), the Saskatchewan School Boards Association (SSBA), Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN), the Saskatchewan Indigenous Economic Development Network, Saskatchewan Economic Development Alliance (SEDA), The Clarence Campeau Development Fund (CCDF).

The committee's goals include: Enhancing Awareness, Local Capacity, and Digital Competency, improving Regional and Indigenous Collaboration and Stakeholder Partnerships, elevating community access and infrastructure development, strengthening industry partnerships and market development and above all else achieve broadband parity for all Saskatchewan residents, regardless of address.

SARM also works on rural broadband with leaders at the Western Canadian Municipal Association. This groups continued efforts will be made to lobby the federal government for increased funding and infrastructure development across Canada.

As a priority, rural broadband is and will continue to be a high priority for SARM to ensure prosperity for rural Saskatchewan now and well into the future.



Municipalities

Helping Municipalities

By Raylene Packet
RMAA Division 3 Director

REACH OUT TO your neighbouring municipality. Share your successes and failures. Don't reinvent the wheel. Copy, paste, save time and money, be efficient and do it all respectfully and professionally. Let's learn from one another. One another in my eye is every councillor, administrator, public works employee and ratepayer. That list looks like everybody within each municipality. Yes, everyone is involved and at the local government level many things can be perceived as personal when maybe a person's pride and ego need to be put into check. Everyone is entitled to their point of view and may see things in a different perspective and we can respectfully listen and respond but only when we are communicated to respectfully and tastefully. The choice of how you react and respond is up to you.

Municipalities working together with an open mind and with a well-built collaborative group can be rewarding.

Municipalities working together with an open mind and with a well-built collaborative group can be rewarding. The RM and Village here at Webb are part of a few district groups being the fire, ambulance, care home, recreation board, community safety and currently we are working towards building an economic development cooperation. Most of Saskatchewan is rural and without rural and urban cooperation what services would we have or not have? Some of these districts we are

made up of include three RM's, a town and two villages. With today's cost in infrastructure not only to build but to maintain and operate for the years to come can be a substantial amount on just one municipality's tax base.

Some things to ask: What do we consider a need, a want or an extra? Do we need a pool, rink, playground, ambulance, hall, ball diamond, grocery store, school, restaurant, etc.? Well of course we want it all but what can we afford and do without? In reality what is a community with no services? I would say it's not much of a community at all. Municipalities need to look at what do the surrounding municipalities provide to our ratepayers that help make up the community or look at what can our municipality provide to other municipalities? Sharing resources and infrastructure to provide communities that people call home while maintaining their autonomy is success.

If you are working with a district or have an economic development plan take note of who you are serving and who is paying. Welcome new business but not at the expense of your ratepayers. Part of planning and promoting is being prepared and sometimes we are just never prepared enough. That's where I believe successful municipalities share their experiences and plans for stability and success. This can save others the time and energy spent on a project by utilizing other plans to suit their own community or it starts the conversation of sharing resources and infrastructure.

We work for the ratepayers by managing, organizing, balancing and providing our elected officials with all the information we can resource to make well thought out educated decisions. Set your pride and ego aside because all of us need to be accountable, responsible and take ownership of our successes and failures. I have learnt more from my mistakes and continue to grow as I succeed in reaching goals and milestones.



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Renewing Rural Infrastructure is Key to Canada's Recovery

By Joanne Vanderheyden

President, Federation of Canadian Municipalities

AFTER EVERYTHING Canadians have been through in the last few years, they deserve a recovery they can see and feel in their daily lives. Rural communities have a key role to play in that. With our strong and united municipal voice, FCM is advocating for the tools you need to strengthen your community.

Municipalities own 60 per cent of the core infrastructure in our country. Rural communities know that our infrastructure renewal needs often outstrip the 10 cents of Canada's tax dollar that we receive. SARM has done a great job raising awareness of the need for more support for rural roads and bridges, and beyond that many of you also have responsibilities related to infrastructure for wastewater, solid waste management, broadband connectivity, and local facilities.

Investments in core infrastructure have long been recognized as a cornerstone of economic stimulus. Even after projects are built, they have an ongoing benefit to local industries and residents. Rural communities in Saskatchewan have been seeing a growing need for exporting key commodities from the agriculture, energy and manufacturing sectors. Meeting that need requires reliable infrastructure that benefits our local and national economies.

In 2019 and again in 2021 the Federation of Canadian Municipalities welcomed the federal government's one-year doubling of the Canada Community-Building Fund (formerly the federal Gas Tax Fund). These investments were in direct response to our relentless advocacy. They've meant an additional \$62,571,380 for municipal infrastructure in Saskatchewan last year alone.

The fund name was changed to better reflect the program's evolution over time (it has long been delinked from fuel taxes), but the objectives and administration remain the same. The CCBF is the permanent, predictable federal funding tool that empowers municipalities of all sizes to renew core infrastructure. It works because its flexibility leverages the expertise of local leaders like you—the ones closest to people's daily lives.

In Saskatchewan the fund is heavily used for work on rural roads and bridges, but we've also seen communities make good use of the funding to expand and upgrade facilities like the Ormiston Community Hall kitchen (R.M. of Excel No. 71). The RM of Chesterfield No. 261 used it to install water pumping sites for rural residents to obtain clean drinking water. And the R.M. of Willowdale No. 153 put the fund to work retrofitting the municipal office to reduce annual energy usage.

As we look towards economic recovery from the COVID pandemic, FCM, along with our provincial partners like SARM, is calling for the federal government to permanently grow this

tool, increasing the annual transfer in 2022-23 to \$4.6 billion—and boosting its annual growth index from 2.0 to 3.5 percent to reflect construction inflation realities. This will directly empower local leaders to create jobs and build better lives.

We're also calling for targeted new investments to water/wastewater infrastructure and rural and northern infrastructure, recognizing there are significant unmet needs in these areas. Small communities in particular are looking for predictability for infrastructure solutions that can't be fully funded through other federal programs.

There are a couple of things you can do to support this advocacy ahead of the upcoming 2022 federal budget and to raise overall awareness of the importance of predictable funding for core infrastructure renewal. The first thing you can do is reach out to your local MP to let them know that you're looking to see funding for rural infrastructure in Budget 2022. Let them know what you'd be able to do with a bit of extra support and how that work would benefit your mutual constituents. Second, I want to urge you to take time to promote the work you do with the Canada Community-Building Fund (CCBF). Something like resurfacing a stretch of road might seem unremarkable but it's vitally important. Sharing your CCBF success stories with your residents and MPs goes a long way to helping us make the case for more funding in Ottawa.

Let me conclude by thanking the many Saskatchewan members who have already taken these steps. Your voice has real influence.

Joanne Vanderheyden is President of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) and Mayor of Strathroy-Carleton Place, ON. She's also a councillor for Middlesex County, ON. FCM is the national voice of Canada's local governments, with more than 2,000 members representing 90 percent of Canadians.

SARM has done a great job raising awareness of the need for more support for rural roads and bridges, and beyond that many of you also have responsibilities related to infrastructure for wastewater, solid waste management, broadband connectivity, and local facilities.

Expect a 2022 Federal Flurry

By Ashton Arsenault

Vice President at Crestview Strategy

CRESTVIEW STRATEGY is pleased to formally introduce ourselves to the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities and its members.

2022 will be a pivotal year for Government of Canada policy direction on a number of priority policy areas for SARM – including energy, the environment, and broader infrastructure initiatives. While government at all levels continue to grapple with the impacts of COVID-19, make no mistake, the Government of Canada will be ambitious during the two legislative sessions of 2022.

Before going further, we would be remiss to not mention how we fit in to achieving SARM's objectives. Our team of subject matter experts in the Canadian market specializes in leveraging their experience helping international brands, companies, associations, and not-for-profits quickly navigate Canada's legislative and regulatory frameworks. Above all else, we strive to realize the strategic objectives of our clients.

Specifically, Crestview Strategy's mandate on behalf of SARM is to be the association's eyes, ears, and first line of defence and advocacy in Ottawa. Our agency tracks issues and policy areas of interest to the association and distills them in a way which is easy to understand. Additionally, we engage in direct lobbying on the association's behalf – taking SARM's concerns directly to government.

As mentioned above, expect 2022 to be a busy year. The federal government concluded 2021 with many pertinent announcements on the environment front. The Minister of Environment and Climate Change announced that he will table the 2030 Emissions Reduction Plan – as required by the new *Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act* – by the end of 2022. This plan will provide critical perspectives on how Canada intends to meet its emissions targets over the next five years. **Carbon pricing will continue to be a cornerstone of the plan and the government continues to believe it has the support of most Canadians on this issue.**

As well, the federal government will soon introduce important consultations on capping emissions from the oil and gas sector at current levels and requiring that they decline at the pace and scale needed to get to net zero by 2050. This is on top of consultations to reduce methane emissions and to curb the emissions of heavy-duty vehicles to net-zero by 2040.

Towards the end of 2021, the Prime Minister issued his long-awaited mandate letters for his respective ministers. The letters are ambitious and include many commitments that

will be of interest to members. For example, the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-food has been tasked with developing an Agricultural Labour Strategy to address persistent and chronic labour shortages. She has also been tasked with developing the next agricultural policy framework to ensure that sustainable economic growth is top of mind, in addition to working with the Minister of International Trade and Export Promotion to secure supply chains.

We know a lack of broadband access continues to be a top concern for members and there is encouraging news on that front. Most importantly, the Minister of Rural Economic Development has been given authority over the Universal Broadband Fund and has been tasked with accelerating the delivery of broadband service across Canada. As well, the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry has been tasked with implementing a “use it or lose it” approach to require those that have purchase rights to build broadband to meet access milestones or risk losing their spectrum rights. This is an important step towards eliminating inaction on connectivity.

We know a lack of broadband access continues to be a top concern for members and there is encouraging news on that front.

As is always the case with federal government policy, the devil is in the details. What we do know is that the federal Budget 2022 process is well underway. Now is the time to advocate for specific asks in advance of the budget release. We remain hopeful that Budget 2022 will allocate additional resources to tremendously popular programs such as the Universal Broadband Fund.

Beyond that, the legislative agenda for the federal government is robust. Now that the House of Commons is back in session, we have clear insight on what items are being prioritized, and what will need to wait a bit longer.

Building a Saskatchewan Community that **Understands, Appreciates, and Respects** Agriculture

By **Chandra Gusikoski**

Communications Coordinator,
Agriculture in the Classroom Saskatchewan

Agriculture 
in the Classroom
Connecting Kids and Agriculture

YOUNG PEOPLE DESERVE TO KNOW where their food comes from. Our youth today are hyper-connected to vast amounts of information from a very young age. With the click of a button, they can find answers to even their most curious questions. In a world full of false and misleading information, especially when it comes to our food, how can we help young people to find the truth?

Agriculture in the Classroom (Sask) Inc. (AITC-SK) plays a pivotal role in educating Saskatchewan youth about agriculture. We partner with the agriculture and education communities to connect kids and agriculture through innovative, experiential, curriculum-based programs and resources. AITC-SK creates meaningful learning experiences by providing Grades K to 12 teachers with programs and resources that engage students in accurate, balanced, current and science-based information.

At AITC-SK, we believe it is more important than ever to inspire the next generation to care about the food they eat, where it was grown, and the farmers who grew it. But it is crucial that these future consumers get the balanced, fact-based information they need to make informed choices. AITC-SK is committed to developing and delivering high-quality educational resources and programs that build understanding, respect, and support for Saskatchewan food producers. We inspire curiosity and create opportunities for students to build personal connections with food and agriculture.

Our educational offerings at AITC-SK range from storybooks and lesson plans to classroom presentations to farm tours and more. Learning kits are well-received by teachers as they

provide instructions and supplies for activities, that teachers would otherwise have to purchase on their own budget. The activities are hands-on for students, engaging them in the learning process and sparking curiosity.

Virtual offerings have become an important tool in continuing to deliver agriculture education over the past two years. This has provided AITC-SK with an opportunity to reach teachers in more remote and rural communities throughout the province. We provide innovative and engaging virtual programs and resources that captivate students' attention and interest using interactive quizzes, pre-recorded and live video, and more, with a hands-on component often still included. And while our virtual offerings have been highly valued by teachers and students, we all look forward to in-person interactions returning soon.

Many of the rural communities we reach are based on a strong agricultural foundation. The information provided in our programs and resources helps students realize the greater impact that farming and agriculture has in their own community and around the world. Agriculture education inspires students to explore the complexities and interconnectedness of the food production processes and the people involved. We want students to understand the diversity, variety and importance of careers in agriculture. And we want to empower students to consider a career in the industry by encouraging them to explore their personal interests, then connecting them with real career opportunities.

In addition to the student impact, AITC-SK programs and resources are incredibly important for teachers in the community. All our offerings are free to access, and help teachers meet their curriculum outcomes. Our resources range from ready-to-use lesson plans to supplemental activities that help minimize preparation time for teachers. Often also including background information and support materials for teachers who may not have agricultural experience. We are providing free, high-quality, ready-to-use, and engaging offerings while teaching students about where food comes from.

AITC-SK plays a vital role in the future of agriculture. We are inspiring the next generation to care about food and the people producing it and building a future of consumers who understand and appreciate agriculture. To learn more about what we do or to help us share Saskatchewan's incredible food story, please visit www.aitc.sk.ca.



Asset Management

for Small Communities

AM-SK
Asset Management
Saskatchewan

By Wally Wells

on Behalf on Asset
Management Saskatchewan

“ASSET MANAGEMENT” is an awkward term. We have managed assets for decades and understand what that is and what we are doing. Suddenly we took two very simple words, reversed them and went from managing assets to asset management. The result? We confused everyone. For most functions in our communities, we are already doing several activities daily which are part of the asset management process. What we are looking to achieve, technically and financially, is sustainable service delivery at a cost we can afford. This means adjusting many of the processes we already do to account for the life cycle and replacement costs and setting out a strategy to not only get us there but keep us there. There is no deadline

for doing this as it is an ongoing process. The goal is technical and financially sustainable service delivery.

Many communities, particularly our smaller communities because of resources and finances, often say ‘we cannot afford to do asset management.’ The real truth is ‘You cannot afford NOT to do it.’ As a process, it provides both staff and council with a better platform for decision making balancing off the provision of services to the community against affordability and reasonable tax and user fee rates. Council’s responsibility is the provision of services to the residents and visitors. Staff responsibility is to deliver, maintain and monitor those services. Assets only exist to provide those services.



As an Australian associate said, 'a asset without a user has no value' How true! Too much focus is put on the discrete asset. The approach needs to be defining the service than inventory the assets required to provide the service. This ensures all assets are at a level appropriate of operational readiness for the service they are to provide.

It is advantageous to advise Council of:

- Services the local government legally must provide (prescribed standards often dictate the level of service such as drinking water standards)
- Services the local government provides that are community-related and no one else provides (parks and recreation facilities are a good example}
- Services that the local government chooses to provide to serve the betterment of the community (cultural support, community grants as examples)

The approach needs to be defining the service than inventory the assets required to provide the service. This ensures all assets are at a level appropriate of operational readiness for the service they are to provide.

Some service levels are set by regulation such as potable water quality, pressure in a water system to meet fire flow or standards for facility construction and, in some cases, where hazardous substances are used such as ammonia or chlorine, minimum operating and equipment standards. Other services that are not mandated are a community decision or are provided as there is no one else to do so such as roads. Occupational health and worker safety rules always apply. Certainly, here in Saskatchewan, the heart of many of our communities is our arena and/or community center. However, is it a service we must provide or a service we want to provide? It is important for Councils, in funding decisions to understand what they must do versus what the community says they want. Can we afford all the wants? Usually not. Many local governments now, when bringing forward the capital works budget, for each project identify the increase or decrease, if any, in staffing and operating and maintenance costs as these impact the operating budget, especially when a new facility is brought online. Once the new facility is brought online, the operating budget will be increased. Changes in technologies, with more advanced systems, may also have a major impact on staff skillsets, training and staff time needed to be devoted to such a facility.

Once a service is put into place, there is an expectation of the community that the service will continue at no less than the service level it is today. Enhancing or extending the service has ramifications for both cost of staff and wear and tear on the asset possibly shortening the life of the asset, requiring

increased maintenance and upgrade or replacement earlier than first expected.

In a very unscientific survey, we have asked public works operations and maintenance staff: *How much of your day is spent fixing things that are broken or about to break?* The answer?85 – 90% of work time. In too many cases, Councils, to save money, cut the maintenance budget. Maintenance is predominately reactive with little proactive maintenance. This is counterproductive and causes the risk of compromising or disrupting services and potential early replacement or upgrade of assets at increased capital cost. The saviour of the capital works budget is improving maintenance and deferring, not accelerating, the need for capital costs.

Here is a value-added solution one of our communities has taken. On a call-out for works maintenance in an excavated area, they take a little extra time at the site to take pictures of the works in the ground before and after repair, note the materials and the condition of the various works, and/or other features such as valves or other connections, appurtenances etc and document the reason for the call out, reactive or planned maintenance. After three years of doing this, here are some of the things they have learned that help them make decisions for short and long term operations and financing

- a. Over 40% of call-outs were unnecessary had been proper maintenance been carried out in a timely manner. Not all call-outs would have been avoidable but they estimated a large percentage would have been.
- b. They confirmed, in the field, the assets in the ground, their condition and improved their data reliability on estimating asset life and replacement schedule
- c. One particular type of pipe was estimated to last 50 years whereas the data showed average life was just 36 years allowing planning for replacement earlier than expected.
- d. Information was available for Council to support the maintenance budget. Council stopped cutting the maintenance budget and realized cutting the budget was costing, not saving, money.
- e. Manpower planning was improved and capacity issues for maintenance and operating staff were documented to help justify staffing requirements for optimum maintenance.

There are many stories to prove engaging in the asset management process saves money, increases service reliability, minimizes risks thereby positively affecting insurance rates, and improves attention to proactive vs reactive maintenance. Don't be afraid of asset management. With climate change and our natural assets, we integrate these factors and assets into our planning providing better decisions and investment in our infrastructure providing services.

For information on current and upcoming Asset Management training opportunities please visit www.assetmanagementsk.ca or call 306-500-7868 Ext 1.

Consider Adopting or Revising **Your Fire** **Ban Bylaw** *this Spring*

By Marlo Pritchard

President, Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency

ON AVERAGE, half of all wildfires and prairie fires in Saskatchewan are caused by humans. That means people were responsible for about 300 of them last year.

To help reduce the number of fire starts by humans last summer, the Saskatchewan Public Safety Agency (SPSA) implemented two fire bans.

The first one, issued in July, covered all Crown lands, provincial parks and the Northern Saskatchewan Administration District, and lasted for over two weeks. The second was issued in October, covered most of the east-central area of the province, and lasted just under two weeks. These bans were on top of numerous fire bans issued by rural and urban municipalities.

These bans helped protect Saskatchewan citizens, communities, infrastructure and other values. While a few communities had to evacuate, I'm happy to say that no community experienced loss of major infrastructure or primary dwellings due to fire.

The SPSA recommends that Saskatchewan prepare for a dry wildfire season should we see one again in 2022. Wildfires do occur every year in Saskatchewan and fire bans are implemented periodically most seasons.

Municipalities, regional parks, and national parks have the authority to ban open burning in their areas of responsibility, while the SPSA can restrict open burning in provincial forests, provincial parks and Crown land. Only in the most extreme situations would the SPSA consider restricting burning in rural municipalities.

Since fire risk can change from region to region, local leaders are in the best position to determine when and where burning should be restricted within their municipality.

After reviewing several municipal fire ban bylaws in Saskatchewan in 2020, it became clear that many jurisdictions did not have a fire ban bylaw, which greatly limits their ability to restrict burning.

A fire restriction bylaw is one of the best ways for local leaders to protect their areas.

The good news is that rural municipalities can adopt fire ban bylaws that allow them to ban fires within any part of the RM or the entire RM. This allows moisture conditions within an RM to be factored into where the ban should apply.

To help municipalities determine their risk, the province utilizes a fire weather index rating to rate the risk of fire in



geographically specific areas of the province. This index is updated and posted daily to provide up to date and forecasted information for determining where fire bans should be implemented and when they can be lifted.

Fire ban bylaws can also provide local officials with specific powers once a ban is declared.

A sample rural fire ban bylaw and a sample burn permit are available to rural municipalities at saskpublicsafety.ca, by contacting an SPSA Emergency Services Officer or Protection Officer, or by calling 1-800-667-9660. The SPSA strongly encourages all municipalities to obtain independent legal advice prior to adopting bylaws.

As always, SPSA Emergency Services Officers and Protection Officers are available to meet with municipal officials to discuss all aspects of emergency planning, including fire restriction bylaws.

And in case you're wondering, the other half of wildfires are typically caused by lightning strikes.

Board of Revision Training and Certification Update

SARM CONTINUES TO WORK with the Ministry of Government Relations on the Board of Revision Renewal initiative. In Saskatchewan, a municipality is responsible for property assessment appeals at the first level and is legislatively required to form a board of revision to hear and decide on property appeals. The Board of Revision Renewal initiative has been looking at ways to strengthen and support the property assessment appeal system at the municipal level. SARM has two representatives that serve on the steering committee, which leads this change and has recently achieved significant progress on the project.

Changes to Municipal Regulations

AS PART OF THESE EFFORTS, the Government of Saskatchewan amended *The Municipalities Regulations*, *The Cities Regulations*, and *The Northern Municipalities Regulations* in December 2021. Municipalities and their council need to be aware of the following changes:

- Requirement for all boards of revision to be certified to hear appeals **starting with the 2023 taxation year**.
- All board of revision members and secretaries must complete the online training program before the board can apply for certification.
- The provincial government has established the Office of the Registrar (Registrar), who has the authority to certify all boards of revision in the province. The application process for board certification will open in June 2022.

Changes have not been made to the council's authority to appoint a board of revision. As in the past, municipalities may decide to appoint their own board of revision, establish or join a district board with other municipalities, or contract a private board. In each instance, beginning with the 2023 taxation year, the appointed board must be certified by the Registrar. For a board of revision to be certified, all its members and secretaries must successfully complete the mandatory training.

Mandatory Board of Revision Training

THE BOARD OF REVISION RENEWAL initiative steering committee has partnered with the Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy (JSGS) to offer the online board of revision training program. To register or learn more about the training program, visit the JSGS website at www.schoolofpublicpolicy.sk.ca.

Municipalities and their councils are encouraged to have their current and potential board members and secretaries complete training as soon as possible. This training will provide board of revision members and secretaries with the essential knowledge needed to conduct hearing, ensuring Saskatchewan taxpayers and municipalities receive qualified property appeal services.

For more information, visit the Government of Saskatchewan website at www.saskatchewan.ca.



Helium Action Plan

Represents Great Opportunity for Rural Saskatchewan

THE GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN has set its sights on becoming a world leader in helium production and export.

The *Helium Action Plan: From Exploration to Exports* <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/business/agriculture-natural-resources-and-industry/helium-action-plan>, released in November 2021, outlines how the province plans to develop the helium sector value chain and achieve ten per cent of global helium market share by 2030. This will create significant economic benefits for Saskatchewan communities, including more than 500 anticipated permanent jobs, as well as thousands of construction and service sector jobs. The province aims to increase helium production with up to 150 new dedicated wells, 15 purification and liquefaction facilities, and eventually, annual helium exports worth more than \$500 million.

Currently, southwest Saskatchewan is the hotspot for the province's helium sector. There are more than 500 combined helium leases and permits in place (which have quadrupled since 2018), and exploration and production activities cover over four million hectares of land. The southwest region is also

home to North American Helium's \$30 million Battle Creek Helium Purification Facility, the largest in Canada, while Royal Helium has made significant helium discoveries at its projects around Climax and Ogema.

The Saskatchewan Geological Survey has conducted two comprehensive geological studies (2016 and 2021) that confirm Saskatchewan has world-class helium reserves and significant development opportunities. The studies also demonstrate that the distribution of helium in southern Saskatchewan expands helium potential beyond current producing areas.

Canada has the fifth-largest known helium resources in the world, with considerable reserves located in Saskatchewan. The province's unique geology enables extraction from dedicated wells that yield high concentrations of helium but generate a low greenhouse gas emissions profile. According to sector experts, made-in-Saskatchewan helium is 99 per cent less carbon intensive than in other jurisdictions.

Helium is used in medical research, semiconductor manufacturing, space exploration, fiber optics, nuclear power generation and other advanced technology sectors.

Supporting and developing the helium sector, and the jobs that come with it, is a priority under Saskatchewan's *Growth Plan*. According to market estimates, the global helium market is expected to double by 2030. Helium prices have risen substantially over the past few years due to higher global demand and shortage of supply, and are expected to increase further. The *Helium Action Plan* enables Saskatchewan to capitalize on this window of opportunity and, at the same time, diversify and strengthen our world class energy sector.

There are more than 500 combined helium leases and permits in place (which have quadrupled since 2018), and exploration and production activities cover over four million hectares of land.



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UNSOLVED CASE

On October 8th, 2021, Spiritwood Conservation Officers received a call through the TIPP Line regarding the unlawful dumping of migratory birds near Sunset View Beach, Turtle Lake, SK. Upon investigation, officers determined that a total of 152 birds were dumped, with 140 of those being left to waste. Included were 65 white geese, 41 cackling geese, 22 white-fronted geese, 5 Canada geese and 7 ducks. It is believed the birds were dumped between October 7th, 2021 around 5:30pm and October 8th, 2021 around 9:30am.



Visit **www.sasktip.com** for all of the latest cases.

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Water Management Supporting a Growing Economy

WATER IS KEY to keeping Saskatchewan's substantial rural population growing and thriving. Every day, the Water Security Agency (WSA) works hard to ensure municipalities, farmers & ranchers, and recreational users have access to safe, reliable, sustainable water supplies that will provide a better quality of life and strengthen our economy.

Saskatchewan's Growth Plan strives to find responsible ways to enhance and expand economic growth, which includes effective uses of our water resources. As a result, WSA is re-framing how water is managed in Saskatchewan to ensure the growth targets are achieved while safeguarding this essential resource.

Irrigation is one of the key ways to support a growing economy, and will play an increasingly important part in Saskatchewan's next decade of growth.

The Lake Diefenbaker Irrigation Projects represents the largest single economic project in the history of the province.

This 10-year project is the continuation of the vision that first created Lake Diefenbaker over fifty years ago. It will provide up to 500,000 new acres of irrigable land in southern and central Saskatchewan.

The projects include the rehabilitation and expansion of the existing Westside Irrigation Project north of Lake Diefenbaker,



adding up to 340,000 new irrigable acres. Work will later transition southeast to a new canal system extending all the way to Buffalo Pound Lake – adding another 120,000 acres of new irrigation.

In addition to its key role in global food security, irrigation plays a substantial role improving climate change resiliency. The Lake Diefenbaker project will ensure our province is adapting to climate change by adding long-term food security through irrigation expansion to manage issues like drought. More value-added crops means we, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food. This not only benefits Saskatchewan but the whole country, which is real climate change adaptation.

Effective water management may be one of the most important factors driving Saskatchewan's growth over the next 20 years. Our continued agricultural and industrial growth, as well as economic development, will be dependent upon effective water management and adaptation.

This past summer Saskatchewan faced record drought that impacted many of our producers and communities. Experts predict these extreme weather events could become more frequent.

We believe there are important opportunities to respond to that challenge by helping farmers plan agricultural water management projects that are adapted and resilient to weather extremes and allow producers to increase productivity.

Over the past year, WSA has been working with stakehold-

ers on a number of coordinated demonstration projects throughout the province testing innovative water management solutions that will enhance productivity while protecting theirs and their neighbours' lands, and the environment.

We believe there are important opportunities to respond to that challenge by helping farmers plan agricultural water management projects that are adapted and resilient to weather extremes and allow producers to increase productivity.

Some of the projects are testing how farmers and ranchers can irrigate with water drained from agricultural fields. Other projects are examining how retaining wetlands may reduce the downstream impacts of flooding on neighbouring farms and RM infrastructure, as well as water quality and habitat. Some are also testing different ways to apply fertilizer that will minimize nutrient runoff.

Through this, we can learn and better understand what works and what doesn't to make more informed decisions on what is the best path forward and develop responsible plans that will strengthen farm and ranch operations.

Many of our rural communities have also felt the economic impact of extreme weather, which can take years to recover from.

To get ahead of that curve, WSA is working with communities at high risk to hydrological drought by developing drought response plans. The intent is to help communities become resilient to drought conditions by enabling them to consider existing hazards and vulnerabilities, and future climate change projections at a community level.

For the wet years, WSA provides support to individuals and communities through the Flood Damage Reduction Program, which provides technical guidance such as client consultations and site visits, and cost-share funding to communities with a history of flood damage. This program will help cities and towns implement proactive mitigation measures, including flood mapping and construction of permanent flood works.

Since 2007, the province has invested hundreds of millions into building, renewing, and maintaining water management infrastructure across Saskatchewan. These investments will ensure our agricultural and rural communities continue to enjoy water security for a strong and growing economy.

If you have questions or would like to learn more about these or other WSA programs, please contact us at 866-727-5420 or visit wsask.ca.



Weed Management Plans

A Proactive Approach to Prevent the Spread of Weeds



WEEDS AND WEED MANAGEMENT are perpetual issues for municipalities, First Nation Bands (FNBs) and landowners. It is important for everyone to know about weeds that aggressively invade and harm agricultural crops and natural resources. Plan early and think about prevention by creating awareness about weeds.

A weed management plan is another tool in your toolbox for the prevention and effective management of invasive plants. Being proactive in weed management and weed control can also be more cost effective than waiting until the weeds become a serious issue or concern. A weed management plan is a great way to start thinking about evaluating and tracking weeds in order to implement proactive management. If you already have a weed management plan, revisit the plan once a year to check whether or not your goals are achieved, and to ensure that the plan remains relevant. Build the plan with your appointed Weed Inspector(s) and licensed pesticide applicators, as they have specialized knowledge about weeds in your area and effective control methods. An ideal plan for weed management consists of objectives/goals, mapping, lists of prioritised weeds, records/history of weeds in the area, control methods and monitoring.

Objectives

First, aim for cost-effective management goals and write the goals down. Identify what weed species are present and which weeds are a concern, and then prioritise the weeds of concern into high, medium and low. Land descriptions and locations should be included to get a clear picture about the weed infestation. Add common goals such as protecting riverbanks, pasture lands, recreational areas and endangered or native plants. Revise the objectives overtime as needed.

Mapping

A map with located weed species is very handy, as it helps to prioritise and make your management goals realistic. iMapInvasives is a great tool to watch for weeds and report any new findings. It is a free, online invasive species mapping tool and database for Saskatchewan, designed to store, share and manage data about prohibited and noxious weeds. Anyone can sign up for an account and the mobile app allows for direct upload from the field. Email alerts help Weed Inspectors, RMs, Land Managers, FNBs and researchers in the early detection and rapid response for new invasive plants. It also includes species maps, treatment efforts/effectiveness, and areas searched.

Keep in mind to mark down where to check for weeds such as the roadsides, high traffic areas, gravel pits, riverbanks and other locations. Discuss these high priority locations with your appointed Weed Inspector, grader operators and licensed pesticide applicators and encourage them to add locations of weeds to the map as they travel the area often.

Prioritise Weeds

Follow The Weed Control Act to categorise weed species present in your area based on whether they are listed as Prohibited, Noxious or Nuisance weeds. Develop a plan to prevent the introduction of new invasive weeds. Give highest priority to eradicate isolated patches of prohibited and noxious weeds and then control established noxious weeds. According to the principles of 'Early Detection and Rapid Response' (EDRR), the highest priority weeds are the ones with the lowest population or occurrence. Weeds covering a larger area are a lower priority. EDRR assumes that resources are typically limited, and controlling rarer weeds is a more efficient use of time and



money. Medium priority weeds can be addressed after high priority weeds are controlled.

Records/History of Weed Management

A weed management plan is a live record, so remember to add reported weed locations and plan to revisit the area for monitoring. Maintaining a record of control methods will provide an idea for follow up in the future. Many invasive plant seeds can survive for several years; when the conditions are favourable, they may germinate and spread again, even when it appears they had been eradicated.

Control Methods

Developing an integrated weed management plan is a more effective method to control weeds than any single weed management approach. Integrated weed management consists of mechanical, biological and chemical weed control methods. Check the Complete Guide to Crop Protection – 2021 (Available at <https://www.saskatchewan.ca>) for herbicide information and follow herbicide labels for any chemical applications. Visit the SARM website (<https://sarm.ca/programs/cap-ipcp>) to learn more about the Canadian Agriculture Partnership - Invasive Plant Control Program (CAP-IPCP) available to RMs, FNBs and other stake-holders, for a potential rebate of up to 50 percent back on eligible herbicides used to control eligible noxious and prohibited weeds. The Plant Health Officers can also be a resource when sourcing and implementing biocontrol insects throughout the province.



Monitoring

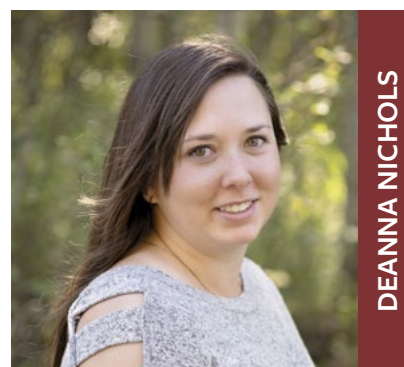
Monitoring is essential for analyzing the overall success and effectiveness of management plans. It also provides valuable information about changes in the weed population over time. The best way to monitor for weeds is to create a list of locations to revisit and check the effectiveness of the control methods used. Sharing the weed management plan will create awareness about Early Detection and Rapid Response among ratepayers. Circulate posters of ‘weeds to watch for’ and encourage everyone to report weeds they see. Visit the SARM website (<https://sarm.ca/programs/cap-ipcp>) to watch informative recorded webinars on weed identification and management.

A yearly update and review on your weed management plan is necessary as the weed populations change and there might be new weeds pop up over time.

Contact your local Plant Health Officer for information about creating or updating your weed management plan, iMapInvasives training, weed identification and the Invasive Plant Control Program (IPCP).

Q&A

Getting to Know SARM's Policy & Research Team



Brian Rakochy

Q What is your role at SARM?

As the Manager of Policy & Research, I'm responsible for the oversight of all resolutions, research, analysis, and the development and preparation of related documents and proposals. My department also evaluates the effectiveness of existing government policies and programs and draft policy related correspondence, as well as attend meetings as required, while supporting the Board and the Executive Director.

Q How long have you worked at SARM?

I've been with SARM since December 2020.

Q What do you like most about your job?

The opportunity to be a part of shaping future policy and advocating on behalf of Rural Municipalities in Saskatchewan is exciting. They say it's important to pursue a passion for your career, in order to feel fulfilled and have a reason to get up in the morning. Rural Saskatchewan is that passion of mine. The values that SARM advocate are of crucial importance to the future of rural Saskatchewan.

Q What is your favourite hidden gem in rural Saskatchewan?

Saskatchewan has so many hidden gems out there that it's hard to pick. I'd have to say the Big Muddy Valley near Bengough is a special place that people should go check out at least once. The wide-open spaces and unique geography never fail to impress. Another is the sand dunes and beaches of Good Spirit lake. White sand beaches as far as you can see and the dunes make you feel like you're in another part of the world. Both would be considered top of my list of hidden gems in rural Sask.

Q Have you picked up any new hobbies during the pandemic?

I haven't picked up any hobbies since the pandemic, but I have bought a cabin at Last Mountain Lake and have been trying to spend as much time there as possible. It's been really good for getting away from all of the stress of living in a pandemic and adding much needed fresh air and outdoors to my family's free time.

Alicia Bay

Q What is your role at SARM?

I am a Policy Analyst. I get to split my time researching the resolutions our members bring forward, representing SARM on various committees and stakeholder engagement opportunities, drafting correspondence, making policy recommendations, and helping the Board of Directors with their committee work. I focus primarily on issues relating to the Municipal Governance Committee and the Infrastructure and Development Committee, but I am always ready to lend a hand wherever.

Q How long have you worked at SARM?

I am still a very new to SARM, I started mid-November of 2021.

Q What do you like most about your job?

Being new in my role here, I like that there is a real opportunity for professional growth, as there is always something new to explore and no day is ever the same. I also appreciate that SARM works hard to bring people and rural municipalities together. There is real emphasis on collaboration and providing the best service to our members. I love that I have an opportunity to support SARM in advocating for the needs of our membership and can actively contribute to ensuring that rural Sask. remains a great place to work, play, and raise a family. There is nothing better than that!

Q What is your favourite hidden gem in rural Saskatchewan?

After much consideration, I think Saskatchewan sunsets are my favourite hidden gem. Now, I know they may not seem so "hidden," but if you're not careful, I think it's possible to take them for granted sometimes. Of all the sunsets I have seen in various places, I truly don't think you can beat the beauty of a sunset in rural Saskatchewan!

Q Have you picked up any new hobbies during the pandemic?

I started dabbling in painting with alcohol inks. I find the medium is very forgiving, easy to work with and it's a great creative outlet.

Deanna Nichols

Q What is your role at SARM?

As the Policy Administrator for the Policy and Research department, I work alongside Brian Rakochy, Manager of Policy and Research and Alicia Bay, Policy Analyst. My primary responsibilities are to ensure the department is organized, databases/records are kept current and to provide support services to the Policy and Research department and the SARM Committees. I also conduct research, analyze and report on municipal and agriculture related policy, attend various stakeholder meetings on behalf of SARM and attend to communication with ratepayers.

Q How long have you worked at SARM?

My career at SARM started back on July 26, 2021. I have been part of the SARM Policy and Research department for approximately 6 months now.

Q What do you like most about your job?

The part that I like most about my job is the unique balance of continuously learning about the ever-changing issues relating to our three SARM committees and working the issues as they relate to active resolutions and in response to the needs of rural Saskatchewan.

Q What is your favourite hidden gem in rural Saskatchewan?

Originating from Northern Ontario, my knowledge of hidden gems in rural Saskatchewan is, unfortunately, minimal at best. Moving to Saskatchewan a few years ago allowed me to see past the heavily present bias that surrounds the prairie provinces and I found myself falling in love with the endless skies, realizing that there is a bit of everything in Saskatchewan and wanting to explore every inch of the province. Some of the more rural areas of Saskatchewan that I have visited so far include: Waskesiu Lake area, Big Muddy Bad Lands, Last Mountain Lake, Pasqua Lake, and hiking and exploring large areas surrounding Penzance, Buchanan and Canora, SK, just to name a few.

Q Have you picked up any new hobbies during the pandemic?

New pandemic hobby? All things JORING. If you are not familiar with the term joring, it is essentially any human-dog pulling activity. With the onset of the pandemic, my spouse and I rescued our 'pandemic-pup', Nala, from Paws and Claws Animal Rescue located in Yorkton, SK. With my love of the outdoors and Nala being an extremely high energy dog, we decided to take up bikejoring, rollerjoring and skijoring.

Member News



Lloyd Sulz
RM of Big Stick No. 141
In Memoriam

Lloyd Harold Sulz passed away on May 17, 2021, at the age of 88 years.

Lloyd was born January 20, 1933, in

the Golden Prairie area where he was raised and received education at Keller-ville, Medicine Hat and Golden Prairie schools.

After his education he worked at N.M. Paterson and Sons Ltd. as a Grain Manager in 1957 in Gascoigne, SK. That is where he met his wife Marlene Moser and were married on June 13, 1958. In 1960 they moved to Mendham and Lloyd worked for the same company. Lloyd became very involved in community affairs such as Town Councillor and then Mayor, Fire Chief, served on the Hospital Board, Rec. Board, Curling Club, and was president of the Mendham Community Hall.

After 19 years as a Grain Manager in 1976, Lloyd, with his wife and their 4 children, moved to a farm in the Golden Prairie district. Lloyd continued to be involved in community affairs such as being a Councillor for the R.M of Big Stick from 1978-1997 in Div. 6, was Deputy Reeve, on the Cypress Lodge Board, McLaren Lake Board and road committee, President of the Golden Prairie Sr. Club and worked for Crop Insurance.

Lloyd enjoyed curling, playing cribbage and horseshoes, and of course spending time with his grandchildren and all his family.

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Richard John Hordos
RM of Touchwood No. 248
In Memoriam

Richard passed away unexpectedly in the presence of his loving family on July 23, 2021, at the age of 65 years.

Richard was elected as Councillor for Division 5 with the RM of Touchwood No. 248 in 2009 and held this position until his passing.

From a young age Richard's passion and heart was in the farm. Growing up Richard enjoyed socializing, playing cards, pitching for the Quinton Cardinals, and playing goal for the Hungarian Nationals.

Richard enjoyed spending his time with friends and family, especially the grandkids. He loved crop touring, checking his Hereford cattle, and having a beer in his shop.

His memories will live on through his loving wife Lorraine, daughters Rena (Jordan) Leier, Lisa (Catlin) Sich, Kayla (Drew) Hoehn). Grandchildren: Leah, Hope, Lacey, Hudson, and Nash. Mother: Victoria Hordos and sisters Rita (Frank) Sich, Rhonda (Jim) Millar, Lana (Brent) Breti, and brother Steve (Fran) Hordos and all the extended family.

He will be dearly missed by all who knew and loved him.



Lorelei Yvonne Paulsen
RM of Touchwood No. 248
In Memoriam

Lorelei passed away suddenly and unexpectedly on September 16, 2021, at the young age of 55

Lorelei began her Municipal Administration career in 2001 when she became the Administrator for the Village of Pun-nichy. In 2003, she was hired as the Administrator with the RM of Touchwood No. 248 and held this position until her passing. Lorelei was beyond dedicated to her job as the Administrator for the RM of Touchwood No. 248. You would often see her working at the office on her days off or staying late at the office to make sure she was up to date on everything and had everything completed.

Lorelei was truly a one-of-a-kind woman. Everyone who knew her, knew how good of a conversationalist she was. Lorelei had a gift of making everyone feel special and welcome. She brought smiles and laughter to everyone she talked to. Even though she hated to be the center of attention, her beautiful personality naturally made her to be just that. Lorelei's children and grandchildren were her pride and joy. Lorelei was selfless and always there to help her family with anything they needed. Her love, support and guidance will be deeply missed.

Her memories will live on through her loving husband of 32 years, Bradley, their children Chelsey (Mitch Fazakas), Brit-tany (Brandon) Purdue, Breanne (Tan-ner Schachtel), Dalton (Jamie Brown); and grandchildren Piper, Sawyer, and Lennon Fazakas. Father, Rodney Haus, and Sister Wanda (Roger) Digney; sister-in-laws Wanda (Garth) Dunville, Brenda (Randy) Thomas, Darla Yonkman (Mike); brother-in-law Chad (Carrie) Paulsen; and numerous aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

Lorelei will be dearly missed by all who knew and loved her.



Edward Ceslak
RM of Kelvington No. 366
In Memoriam

Edward Ceslak of Kelvington, SK passed away July 30, 2021, at the Kelvington and Area Hospital at the age of 75 years.

Edward served as Division 6 Council-lor for the RM of Kelvington No. 366 from 1996 to 2006.

Edward is remembered by his lov-ing wife of 47 years, Sharen; children Charles (Maryna) Ceslak, graddaughter Taisya of Kelvington, SK; Stephen (Shauna) Ceslak, grandchildren Jeter and Kinsley of La Salle, MB; his siblings Marven (Gloria) Ceslak of Pike Lake, SK; Dolores (Cecil) Gooliaff of Star City, SK; Sharon Ceslak of Saskatoon, SK; Dean (Gail) Ceslak of Kelvington, SK and Anne (Stan) MacNeil of New Glasgow, NS; as well as numerous nieces and nephews. Edward was predeceased by his parents Peter and Jean Ceslak, grandparents Leon and Anastasia Ceslak and John and Annie Tokarchuk, and his son, Michael David Ceslak.



Joseph Frank Beckman
RM of Battle River No. 439
In Memoriam

Joseph Frank Beckman was born on April 7th, 1927, in Fulda/Humboldt, Sas-katchewan where he also went to school until grader 8, in those days that was an achievement because it was believed that there was a lot more that needed to be done on the farm than in school. Joe moved to the Battlefords in 1943, he married Tilly Soroka and established a family farm. Together they had 5 chil-dren, 2 girls and 3 boys, all 3 boys are still actively farming in the Battleford area as well as a few of his grandchildren.

RM Service History: Joe was elected as Reeve in 1965, a position which he held until 2020. In all those years there had never been an election for Reeve in the RM of Battle River and Joe had only ever missed 2 council meetings. Joe participated on many community boards and organizations over his lifetime, too many to mention and was always able to contribute so much knowledge.

The RM of Battle River have designat-ed a road in Honor of Joe's long-term commitment to Rural Saskatchewan, his contributions will forever be remem-

bered. Joe passed away after a brief hospital stay peacefully on July 10th, 2021, at the age of 94 with his family by his side.



James Victor Eischen
RM of Meota No. 468
In Memoriam

It is with heavy hearts the family of Mr. James Eischen announce his passing with family by his side at the Battlefords Union Hospital on Sunday, November 28, 2021, at the age of 72 years.

Jim's memory will forever be cherished by his loving wife, Laurette Eischen; children and grandchildren: Loralie (Shaun) Raiche – Joel & Abbey; Angelie (Dale) Halewich – Jesse (Haley Beatch) & Tylan; Roxanne; Gregory

(Michelle) – Everley & Axton; Bradley (Ashley) – Adelyn & Bohden; sisters: Veronica (Brett Padget) and Bernadette (Pat Beynon); sister-in-law, Jeanne (Francis Nadeau); numerous nieces and nephews. Jim was predeceased by his parents: Victor and Helen Eischen and his brother, Lawrence (Larry) Eischen.

Jim served as a Division 2 Councillor for the RM of Meota No. 468 from 2007 – 2018. In addition to being a passionate division councillor, advocating for his division's roads and ratepayers, Jim sat on a number of municipal committees and boards, including the Jackfish Lake Watershed Board. He was also a strong supporter of rural potable water and saw the implementation of a municipal Water Distribution Committee to bring potable water to areas lacking it. Jim did not shy away from controversial topics and expressed strong opinions on matters aimed at the betterment of the municipality. His vibrant personality will be remembered by all.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations in memory of Mr. James Eischen can be directed to Parkinson Canada or the Meota ADRA.



Douglas H. Eaton
RM of Frenchman Butte No. 501
In Memoriam

Douglas Eaton was born in Lloydminster in 1938 and passed away there on May 23, 2021. Aside from that, he grew up and lived in the rural district of Harlan, Sk. This is where he slept every night of his life, except when on holiday and municipal convention. This fact didn't limit his experiences as he travelled and saw things that Gulliver would have found incredible.

Doug farmed and ranched in the Harlan district from a very young age, he supported his family, helping his siblings and his mom get by in some very hard times. His love for his family was a theme through his life. He had a very

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efficient manner that was not forced or aggressive but made work a light thing to be shared and enjoyed.

Doug married Lanora Baldwin Feb. 1, 1964. Together they raised three children, all of whom have carried on in cattle and agriculture. The Eaton table welcomed all and was often the site of many solution producing discussions that followed a good branding or day long preg check.

Farming was where Doug started but he came to develop a large commercial cow herd that spent a good portion of each year grazing in the Bronson Forest. His years of experience grazing cows in the provincial forest made him a perfect representative for producers on the Forest Fringe Grazing Task Force. That task force developed governmental policy on grazing provincial forest land.

He was energetic and enthusiastic through his entire life.

Doug was a leader in a way few can lead anymore. He didn't push or steamroll, he led or stood beside or when he thought it better, he would allow others to go in front. His guidance was knowledgeable and calm and never judgmental. He was directed by a solid set of morals that put the public and the community's welfare above his own interests on occasion.

Some believe that one's life can be measured by a list of their accomplishments. The biggest accomplishments in Doug's life don't necessarily show up in the successes he had in his professional or even public service life. His successes show up in the relationships he had. The story he told was about helping improve people's lives using his skills to propel positive change in those lives and in his community.

Doug's family and friends are proud to have lent him to public service in the community. Doug served ten years as councillor for division 6 and two terms as Reeve of the RM of Frenchman Butte. He stayed involved in the municipality on many committees and advisory boards over the years. Doug believed that being involved with local council was a fine way to help maintain the strength of his community and enhance the lives of his neighbours, friends, and family.

He found his two terms as Reeve challenging but also invigorating. His leadership was appreciated by most (who can please everybody?). A positive attitude and the ability to see simple solutions to

complex problems were real talents he had. His energy and resolve were always a pleasure to be around.

For 83 years to go by in the blink of an eye, seems hard to believe.

If you knew Doug, you wouldn't be surprised. It was because time was not dragging along, but it wouldn't be because there was a huge whirlwind that pulled the breath out of you either. It was more like a nice day that was filled with fun things to do.

His friends, family, neighbours, and larger community will sorely miss him. Well, done Douglas.



Lloyd Potter
RM of the District
of Lakeland No. 521
In Memoriam

It is with sadness we announce the passing of Lloyd Potter July 19, 2021, on his birthday, in Prince Albert, SK.

He leaves to mourn his wife Evelyn (Orleski), daughter Dianna (Terry) Korol, granddaughters Larissa and Alicia Korol, brother Tom (Sylvia) Potter, sister-in-law Liz Orleski, nieces Brenda (Jeff) Mathieson, Tracey and Jamie Orleski, Darcy (Kent) Arpin, Connie (Chris) MacAuley and nephew Bob (Bryna) Potter.

He was predeceased by his parents David and Doris Potter, an infant brother Willy, brothers-in law Bob and Ronald Orleski, and niece Rhonda Allard.

He left us his way, on his terms and is at peace.

He enjoyed hunting, fishing and visits with his many friends and family over the years.

Thank you to the many agencies who have assisted our palliative care journey including the staff of the Victoria hospital with a special mention for Levels 5 and 6 for their compassion and support, Dr. Oleksinski for the years of care and Dr. Royeppen, RCMP, PAPS Alumni, home care palliative team, Saskatoon Cancer Centre, Parkland Ambulance Services, Nelson Care Home staff and

the many other family and agency supports made available to us.

At his request no service will be held, a celebration of life will be held at a later date.

Donations may be made to the Rose Garden Hospice Society, 450 - 1403 Central Avenue, Prince Albert, SK S6V 6J4. Our wish is the hospice can provide care for families in the future.

Condolences may be sent to the family at www.grays.ca. Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to Gray's Funeral Chapel, (306) 922-4729.

Lloyd served as Councillor from 1988-1994 and then Reeve from 1995-1996 for the District of Lakeland No. 521.



Henry Ronald Romanovitch
RM of Invermay No. 305
In Memoriam

Henry Ronald Romanovitch passed away November 11, 2021, at the Yorkton Health Centre at the age of 88 years.

Henry Ronald was born to William and Mary (Stopera) Romanovitch, on April 14, 1933, in the Dunrobin district of Saskatchewan. Henry attended Dunrobin School.

As a young man Henry worked in the lumber industry in B.C. for 2 years with his brother Leonard, and then returned to Sheho to begin farming. On November 6, 1960, Henry married his soul mate Mary Zubody. Together they farmed north of Sheho for 54 years.

Henry and Mary worked side by side for the years they lived on the farm. Henry loved and was always proud of his cattle. They always welcomed company for a cup of coffee and a visit. No one left their place hungry.

Henry was a councillor for Invermay RM for 43 years. He also was on the Jubilee Nursing Home Board for many years.

Upon leaving the farm Henry and Mary moved into an apartment in Yorkton until Mary's death. After Mary's

death Henry was unable to live alone and lived at the Bentley for 3 years. With his declining health he then moved to the Invermay Health Centre where he received better care.

Henry was predeceased by; his wife Mary, parents William and Mary, his brothers, Edward (Daisy), Stanley (Mae), Victor (Myrtle), and Leonard; sisters Leonora (Gerald), Ann (Mike), Julia (Art), and Patricia.

Henry was survived by his sister Jessica (Jim), sister-in-law Ellie and brother-in-law Matt, as well as many nieces, nephews, and friends.



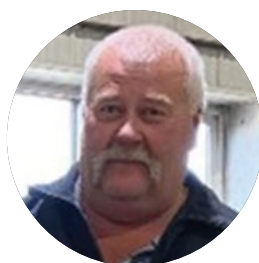
Glenn Blakely
RM of Spy Hill No. 152
Retirement

The Rural Municipality of Spy Hill No. 152 Council would like to take this opportunity to recognize and thank Glenn Blakely for his 23 years of service, dedication, knowledge, and loyalty as Division 2 Councillor. Council and staff are grateful for the knowledge that Glenn provided throughout his service, and we wish him the best in the future.



Fred Butuk
RM of Insinger No. 275
Retirement

Fred Butuk pictured on the right served as councillor for Division 5 in the RM of Insinger No. 275 from December 2012 to November 2020. Reeve Willy Zuchkan presents Fred with a gift from the RM. The RM wants to thank Fred for his years of service to the Municipality and wish him all the best!



Glen Miller
RM of Buffalo No. 409
Retirement

Glen Miller is a full-time farmer and served on the council for twelve years. He served as councillor for a four-year term from 1999 to 2002 and then again for eight years from 2012 to 2020. Unfortunately, the year he retired was the start of the pandemic. The RM was unable to hold a celebration until it was safe. Finally, after almost a year of waiting on October 29th, 2021, council members and employees gathered to commemorate Glen's years of service to the RM. The day was full of laughter and joy. Everybody was having a great time and most importantly everyone had the opportunity to give thanks to Glen for his dedication and the hard work he contributed over the years to the RM. Reeve Les Kroschinski (left) presented Glen with a framed art print as a symbol of how grateful the RM of Buffalo was to have him as a representative. Glen will be missed by the council, staff, and ratepayers. He has touched many lives and has been an inspiration for all of us.



Allen Taylor
RM of Buffalo No. 409
Retirement

Allen Taylor served the RM of Buffalo No. 409 as councillor for Division 1 for eight years. His full-time job was in Battleford as a teacher. Allen resides in Division 4 but stepped up and represented Division 1 as Councillor. Allen would always ask for feedback from the ratepayers and tried his best to assist them. He would inform all the council

members and staff about the feedback he received and work together to obtain a solution that worked for the ratepayers and the RM. At the retirement party, Allen said a few words and commented on how far the RM has come and how proud he is to be part of the RM. Allen has continually seen progress through the years and the RM is always striving to be better. He hopes that this will continue in the years to come. Reeve Les Kroschinski (left) presented Allen with a framed art print in appreciation of his efforts and dedication to the RM of Buffalo. On behalf of the ratepayers, the council, and employees we wish Allen the very best in his retirement.

Member News submission tips:

- Send photos as separate JPG, PNG, TIFF or PDF files (in a Word document).
- Try to send original photos not ones that have been scanned from printed documents or taken off of websites.
- Photos must be 300 dpi resolution. Tip: check the file size. If the file is less than 100 kb, it may not print properly.
- Check your camera phone's resolution before taking photos. Ensure that the camera's settings are for High, Highest Quality or Maximum resolution.
- Write-up length maximum: 250 words.
- Email submissions to sarm@sarm.ca.

Thanks for sharing your stories with us!

Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities

2022 Annual Convention & Trade Show March 15-17, 2022

Tuesday, March 15

- AM 8:00 Registration\Trade Show
10:00 Opening Ceremonies
10:45 Addresses
11:15 Award Presentations
- PM 1:30 Fireside Chat with Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan
2:15 SaskLander Presentation
3:00 Resolutions

TRADE SHOW  HOUR

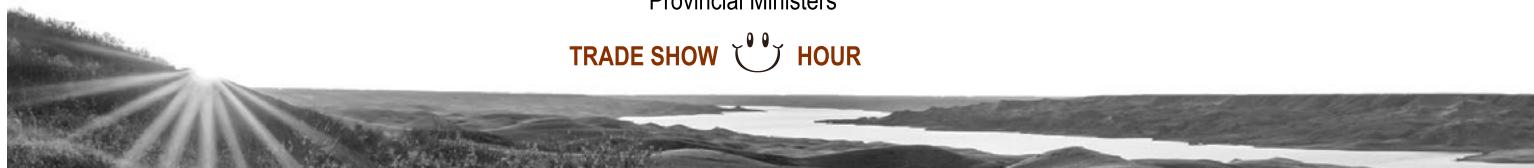
Wednesday, March 16

- AM 8:00 Registration\Trade Show
10:00 Premier's Address
10:30 Bear Pit Session with Provincial Cabinet
- PM 1:30 Municipal Hail Insurance Presentation
1:40 Rural Crime Watch Presentation
1:50 SARM AGM & Financial Report
2:15 Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization Presentation
2:27 RMAA Curling Awards Announcement
3:00 **Session 1** - Dialogues with Provincial Ministers
4:00 **Session 2** - Dialogues with Provincial Ministers

TRADE SHOW  HOUR

Thursday, March 17

- AM 8:00 Registration
9:00 Leader of the Opposition Address
9:13 Clearing the Path Information Video
9:15 Broadband Panel
10:15 Governance Town Hall
11:15 STARS Presentation & 50/50 Draw
11:30 Bitter End Raffle Draw
Adjournment / Division Meetings



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