



# SARM

## RURAL COUNCILLOR

**VOLUME 55 NUMBER 4**

**WINTER 2022 ISSUE**

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SASKATCHEWAN  
ASSOCIATION OF RURAL MUNICIPALITIES

PUBLICATIONS AGREEMENT #40062693

# The Voice of Rural Saskatchewan

Some Thoughts on Agriculture, Learning Culture, Going Once... Going Twice, Managing Unpaid Oil and Gas Property Taxes, Municipal Governance History, Insurance Program Renewals, Untold History of Municipal Bridges, Controlling Weeds, Prairie Watersheds Climate Program, Revision Training and Certification, Clean Energy Transition, and more.



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# SARM

## RURAL COUNCILLOR

**PUBLISHED BY THE SASKATCHEWAN  
ASSOCIATION OF RURAL MUNICIPALITIES**

Publications Agreement #40062693

Published four times per year by:

### **Benchmark Public Relations**

2260 McIntyre Street  
Regina SK S4P 2R9

**T** (306) 522-9326

**F** (306) 522-0923

**E** info@benchmarkpr.ca

**W** www.benchmarkpr.ca

### **Editor**

Corette Mihalcea (SARM)

### **Layout & Design**

Cindy Mantei (Benchmark Public Relations)

### **Advertising**

Warren Nerby (Benchmark Public Relations)

### **SARM Board**

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Return undelivered copies to:  
Saskatchewan Association  
of Rural Municipalities  
2301 Windsor Park Road  
Regina SK S4V 3A4

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## vision mission

Strong, autonomous municipalities powered by vibrant, diverse economies that build a sustainable future for rural Saskatchewan.

To foster rural development in Saskatchewan and build strong, sustainable communities.



# Some Thoughts On Agriculture

**By Ray Orb**  
SARM President

**GREETINGS EVERYONE.** Reports from the 2022 harvest varied from above normal in some areas, to disappointingly low in other areas. The south-west and some of the west sides of the province remain very dry. Rain and snow are direly needed to replenish moisture levels and make producers more confident about next year.

We all know the world desperately needs more food, and in July, the head of the United Nations, Antonio Guterres, warned that the world faces a “catastrophe” because of the growing shortage of food worldwide. In part, this is due to both the severity of the war in Ukraine and other worldwide production problems. Canada is fortunate, not only to have the capacity of feeding our nation but to be a huge exporter of food (in the neighbourhood of \$60 billion each year). Keep in mind, this is accomplished using approximately 7% of Canada’s total land, the majority of which is in western Canada.

Secretary General Guterres has said that harvests across Asia, Africa, and the Americas will take a hit as farmers around the world struggle to cope with rising fertilizer and energy prices. These increases being faced by farmers are a direct result of inflation, partly brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russian-declared war on Ukraine.

All things considered, it feels like terrible timing for the federal government to impose a target for nitrogen fertilizer emissions. This target (although admittedly voluntary) was determined without proper consultation, it is not based on science and is an arbitrary number. In fact, it must be argued that farmers already have done their part to reduce Green House Gas (GHG) emissions by embracing modern technology, including GPS, variable rate fertilizer applications, and modern equipment that strategically places fertilizer where it is most efficiently used. And let’s not forget the ability to store carbon in the soil by incorporating zero-till seeding techniques which hugely benefit the environment.

So, was the federally imposed target intended to be voluntary, or did it become “voluntary” only after organizations like SARM voiced concerns and sent strongly worded messages to Minister Bibeau that this target was off base and would impede Canadian food production? We can’t be sure what the federal government was thinking but rest assured that SARM took this message to Ottawa in the fall and ensured that it was heard by Agriculture Minister Bibeau and Environment Minister Guilbeault.



National food security was discussed at the recent FCM meetings in Strathcona County, Alberta, and was on the agenda at the meetings of the Western Canadian Municipal Associations hosted by the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) in October. The RMA, the Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM), and SARM all have major concerns with the federal reduction target of nitrogen fertilizer emissions because it was imposed without consultation from the industry. We are concerned it may not remain voluntary for long. A mandatory reduction would put Canadian farmers at an economic disadvantage and create an international food crisis.

Another concern these municipal organizations are grappling with is rural crime. While criminal activity is ever present in rural areas, there are times when it is increased. During harvest, with farmers busy in their fields they are more vulnerable to property thefts (such as pick-up and grain trucks) and break & enters. SARM recently relayed our concerns to the RCMP and is planning to have Assistant Commissioner Blackmore address this topic at our midterm convention.

SARM has also been heavily involved in the re-invigoration of the Rural Crime Watch and the creation of a Provincial Rural Crime watch association.



In an ongoing “Call to Action,” we are encouraging RM councils to step up to the plate and contact their local RCMP detachment to initiate a local RCW program. The more eyes and ears we have in rural areas the better off we are.

Organizations like the RMA, AMM, and SARM are voicing concerns about rural crime, the future of the RCMP as the provincial police force of choice, and the retroactive RCMP pay increases that the federal government appears reluctant to address.

Once again, I’m hoping we have a good turnout at the midterm convention in Saskatoon this November. We’ll debate resolutions, have great workshops, and get back to networking once again. In the meantime, stay safe.

Photos credit: Colin Schulhauser

“A Ducks Unlimited Canada conservation easement hits all cylinders for our beliefs in conservation and for how our operation runs, including soil health and grazing. It was also a huge financial boost for our operation!”

– CHRIS AND JENNA HUBICK, STRASBOURG AREA RANCHERS AND DUC PROGRAM PARTNERS



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## Learning Culture

# Caring and Willing to Learn are a Must

By Jay Meyer

SARM Executive Director

**LEARNING IS SOMETHING** we have done since entering the world, no matter the environment we grew up in. Learning can, at times, be difficult. It will not look the same for everyone and will not look the same for each situation. Learning can come with its lessons of dos and don'ts. It can be rewarding or difficult to handle, depending on the situation. Either way, we grow from every learning opportunity.

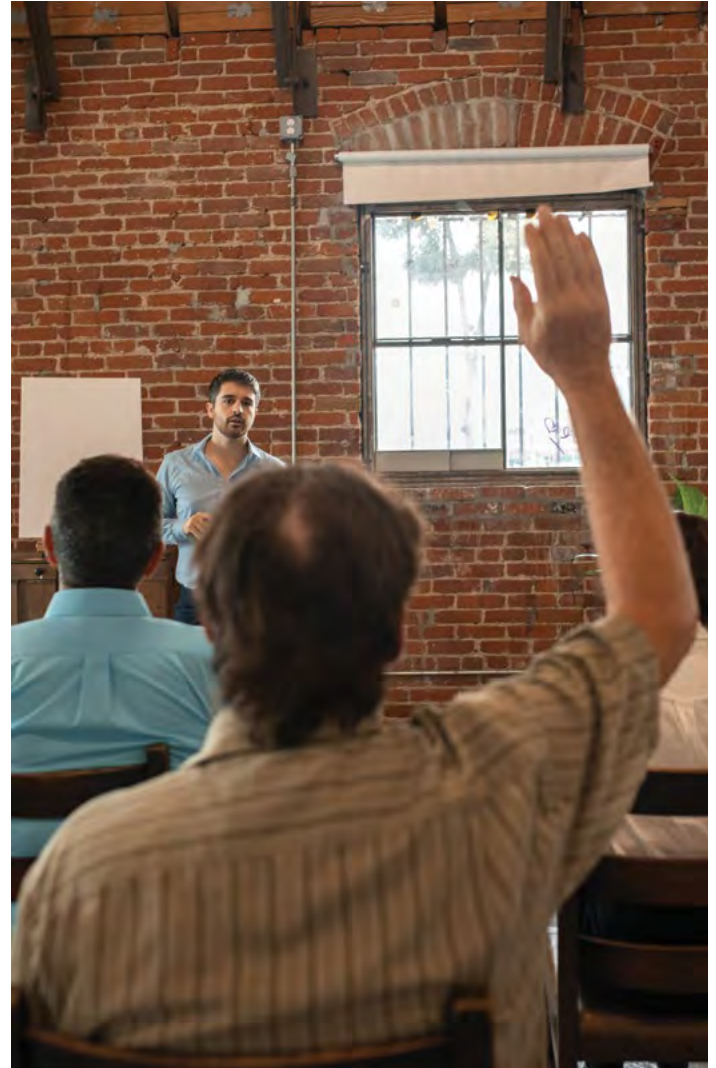
We can learn proactively or reactively because, at times, we have control over when learning happens, and, at times we do not. Proactive learning can be enjoyable and come with quick results. Reactive learning can be very different and can cause adversity. Adversity pushes us to grow or learn, which may come with its own stresses or fears. Some of the most difficult parts of learning are facing that fear, developing confidence, and finding the time to learn. With today's technology, learning has changed. It has evolved, adapted to busy schedules, and has become much more convenient.

Those who are willing to learn are also often willing to do so because they care.

Those who are willing to learn are also often willing to do so because they care. Caring is very important in any role that you are in. Most people are attracted to the roles they are in because they care about the responsibility that is handed to them. We all learn to care at a young age, and as we get older or more experienced it becomes harder and harder to teach.

Two of the most important traits when working with people are whether they care and whether they are willing to learn. Surround yourself with people who care and are willing to learn. Develop a culture with people that are caring and who support learning. Once you develop this culture, you will find it much easier to work with each other and you will find yourself learning from each other.

SARM has a goal to assist our membership with the development of a learning culture. With this development, we want to ensure our membership trusts that learning is not intimidating, can easily be done, and does not need to take up a significant amount of time. This culture will include a learning management system that will as-



sist our members in different ways through small, digestible online modules. These modules will be proactive, easy to navigate, and will focus on skillsets aimed at council and administration. These modules will not only make the experience fun but also convenient. Our goal is to set our membership up for success, to encourage them to keep learning and to keep growing. Stay tuned.



## *Fond Farewell* **What Does the Future Hold?**

**By Harvey Malanowich**  
SARM Director Division 4

**AS I WRITE THIS ARTICLE,** it will be my last as a director of SARM. I will be leaving the SARM board at the March Annual Convention where I'll begin my retirement. It's been a wonderful experience, and time has passed quickly since being elected in 2006. Meeting fellow councillors and reeves, sharing ideas, solving problems, and collaborating on insights into what the future may bring has been very rewarding. For my next venture, I have been appointed by the Ministry of Government Relations to sit as a councillor on the village of Arran council. This will give me insight into how an urban council operates; I'll soon be able to say I have worn both rural and urban hats.

So, what does the future have in store for us in rural Saskatchewan? Through my eyes, I see the smaller urban municipalities being taken over by rural municipalities, enabling the provision of additional special service areas for more efficiency... a process that will take time and good governance.

The Ministry of Government Relations can be of great assistance in helping to ensure this process goes smoothly and timely. With the decline of population, and not having qualified administrators to operate in small urban centres, there will be no choice but to go through this process.

As for SARM, the organization is strong and will be there to help member municipalities function well into the future by providing leadership, member services, insurance needs, community planning, engineering, and legal services that help rural municipalities do their business in a simple and well-planned manner. The SARM team, under the current Executive Director, Jay Meyer, and Director of Strategic Engagement & Advocacy, Laurel Felton, as well as the great staff will make it possible for rural municipalities to succeed. It takes teamwork to make this happen.

As for the time we're living in, with all its uncertainty, including the cost of living and inflation running rampant, the war in Ukrainian, and some world leaders on an ego trip, I wonder if things will just get worse for everyone. Federal and provincial governments are going to have to govern with more common sense and put political nonsense aside as this affects the quality of living that everyone deserves.

In closing, I would again like to thank everyone for the time I have spent on this great board of directors, especially with my fellow board members, SARM staff, and all the people I have met over the years... your memories will always be with me. That's not to say that I'm completely done, the future has other things in store for me. And again, I'll see you all at SARM's midterm convention this November for a chat. Thank you, and remember to always get up on the right side of the bed.



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a safe & happy  
holiday season**

From the Board, management  
& staff of Municipal Hail

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unpredictable.  
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# Going once... going twice... Gone!

By **Bob Moulding**  
SARM Director Division 1

**THE AUCTIONEER'S CHANT** and the ring person's yell, large crowds and the smell of freshly barbequed hamburgers are becoming a distant memory. The internet and COVID-19 have changed the age-old tradition of auctions.

The word auction is derived from the Latin "Auges" meaning to increase or to augment, which describes the notion that the highest bidder for an item wins it. The first recorded auctions occurred in Babylon around 500 BC, where it was reported an annual auction of women for marriage was held. Roman soldiers would drive stakes into the ground around the spoils of war, the most common being slaves, with their proceeds going towards the war effort.

Possibly because of the unsavory history, auctions fell from popularity in the Roman Empire until the 17-18th century. In 1641, records from the House of Lords mention an Auction by Candle (Candle Auction), these often took place in pubs and coffee houses. The auction would end abruptly when the candle flame went out. This was intended to ensure that no one could know

exactly when the auction would end and make a last-second bid. This form of auction was very popular; in 1660 it was recorded that the Admiralty sold surplus ships by candle auction.

The next two centuries saw auctions expanding into many fields, such as antiques, farm machinery, livestock, art, land, and household items to name a few. As with much of our history auctions had crude beginnings but have since transformed into a favorable method of transacting the buying and selling of assets.

Modern technology and the internet changed how people participate in auctions. The buyer/bidder can now watch and participate from the comfort of their home. While technology may have added to the accessibility and convenience of auctions, most people still enjoy live auctions the best. They attend for the anticipated great deal, visiting friends, and showing support for the seller. Not forgetting to mention the great food! The smell of fry-

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ing onions on barbequed hamburgers and hotdogs, the homemade pies, and many more delicious menu items. I have found some of the best perogies, cabbage rolls, and homemade cinnamon buns during my auction visits. Typically, all are made by a local charity or non-profit group.

For the seller, it is a day of mixed emotions; joy, sadness, and gratitude to all the people coming to buy, bid, or simply show support. A lot of fun was had at auction sales. Such as watching two friends or neighbours standing behind the other bidding them up, then seeing the reaction when they catch on to what's happening. Or having an acquaintance grab your arm and raise it to bid on something that neither of you want. The auctioneer always has a few funny stories to tell during a lull in the action. I will miss this camaraderie and have many wonderful memories from years of working at auctions.





Since the onset of COVID-19, in-person auction sales are becoming a thing of the past, most are now online only. Auction companies like and want to continue down this new path, but I feel that it has some negative effects. With buying and bidding online, new charges have arisen such as a percentage of your purchase being added on to cover the costs of technology, and the added collection costs. New to the modern auction is also the buyer's fee; charging both the seller his commission and the buyer for their goods purchased at the sale. Most auction companies are now conducting their business this way. Other people affected are the "boots on the ground" auction staff, local charities no longer serving food and raising money for their cause, the community support for the seller, and the age-old Auctioneers chant. All these auction staples are lost with modern technology.

The benefits of the modern auction must far outweigh the old way of doing sales as the prices realized are at an all-time high. The companies now have thousands of bidders from all over the world and these numbers continue to grow.



Timely delivery of maintenance was a major priority for the Agency in 2022, and SAMA delivered maintenance on time to 97.81% of our client municipalities.

For 2022, SAMA is working on 35,027 agricultural property reviews in 23 RMs, as well as 21,874 residential/resort property reviews and 13,566 commercial, industrial, and industrial flowline property reviews in both rural and urban municipalities.

SAMA is on track to meet our major strategic objectives, including our goal to review/inspect 110,000+ properties in 2022. As of October 1st, approximately 78,000 property reviews have been completed.

Looking ahead, municipalities can sign in to MySAMA to submit maintenance requests for 2023 rolls. To sign up for MySAMA, please contact your local SAMA office.

For more information visit our website at [www.sama.sk.ca](http://www.sama.sk.ca).

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# Tools for Managing Unpaid Oil and Gas Property Taxes

**By Darwin Whitfield**  
SARM Director Division 6

**AS SARM'S DIRECTOR FOR DIVISION 6**, I thought I would focus my article on an issue that was highlighted in a resolution carried at the 2021 Midterm Convention regarding the limited ability of municipalities to collect tax arrears from resource companies, especially when it's concerning non-producing and low production wells.

The resolution was born out of members in Division 6 who asked that SARM lobby the provincial government to amend legislation to allow the province to suspend the operating license of a resource company if they do not pay their municipal taxes.

SARM has been working with various ministries on finding a resolution to this issue. The province has told SARM that they continue to enhance their oversight of the oil and gas sector and expect the Financial Security and Site Closure Regulations that are coming into place in 2022 to provide additional financial scrutiny of oil and gas licenses, and they also agreed to look for other ways to further strengthen their obligations.

The Ministry of Government Relations, SARM, and the Rural Municipal Administrators Association (RMAA) are working together to raise awareness about the use of existing authority in municipal legislation to collect arrears of taxes. The focus is to provide more information to rural municipal officials about tax arrears enforcement provisions in municipal legislation and how they might be used more effectively to collect unpaid property taxes, including from oil and gas operators. Rural municipalities are in the best position to address this issue either individually or by working together to use their authority to require operators to pay current and historical property taxes. The municipal legislation provides several tools to collect unpaid taxes. Municipal legislation provides several measures to collect arrears of taxes including specific measures related to oil and gas producers.

The Municipalities Act (the Act) allows municipalities to place liens on property and equipment, sue companies for tax arrears, collect rent, garnish insurance proceeds, seize goods, and obtain an order from a Justice of the Peace authorizing a distress warrant before goods are moved out of the municipality. A municipality may also collect oil and gas well tax arrears from amounts owing to the well operator by the purchaser of the oil and/or gas. The municipality is also permitted to serve notice directly to the purchaser that amounts owing should be paid to the municipality before the well operator is paid.

Rural municipalities (RMs) are encouraged to contact the Ministry of Energy and Resources service desk either by phone at 306-798-9507 or email ([er.servicedesk@gov.sk.ca](mailto:er.servicedesk@gov.sk.ca)) with a request for oil purchaser information.

RMs are asked to submit their requests on letterhead identifying the following:

- Rural municipality and company they are trying to collect from
- Timeframe the company is in arrears
- Well license number(s) and/or detailed land description including the legal subdivision, section, township, range, and meridian

Several RMs are familiar with and have tried the demand letter approach or have found success simply by notifying the company in arrears that they have the authority to contact and collect payment from purchasers. Officials are encouraged to contact their RM colleagues.

The existing municipal authority to license business activity in the municipality and set terms and conditions on licenses could be used to require oil and gas producers to provide a list of purchasers to obtain a local business license.

More information about the collection of oil and gas arrears can be found in this well-written and easy-to-understand article by Saskatoon lawyer Kim Anderson. You can find it on [www.rslaw.com](http://www.rslaw.com) and search for "Non-Title Tax Enforcement by Saskatchewan Municipalities."

I look forward to seeing you at our midterm convention in November where we can once again discuss important issues like these.





# Minister of Government Relations Message

**By the Honourable Don McMorris**  
Minister of Government Relations

**I APPRECIATE** the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM) for continuing to provide an opportunity to reach out directly to its membership.

I also understand the work and dedication of rural council members across this great province, as Saskatchewan's Minister of Government Relations.

After all, it's local government leaders who are on the frontlines of their communities – listening to the needs of the citizens we all serve as elected officials and working hard to address their priorities.

To provide rural decision makers with tools to help do their important work, our provincial government continues to provide funding opportunities to make Saskatchewan communities even better.

One of those opportunities is the Targeted Sector Support Initiative (TSS).

The TSS Initiative provides cost-shared grants – up to 75 per cent on eligible costs – to municipalities partnering on projects focused on regional co-operation, capacity building and good governance.

Since 2020, \$6 million of provincial funds have been made available to Saskatchewan municipalities through the TSS Initiative.

Examples of previously approved projects are:

- Training to enhance the governance skills of municipal officials;
- Developing regional emergency plans;
- Undertaking a municipal district feasibility study; and
- Various other projects aimed at strengthening collaboration and co-operation among municipalities.

The TSS Steering Committee recently opened another intake for municipal grant applications, which will be accepted until Nov. 15, 2022.

Applicants must be a municipal government and partner with at least one other community, such as other municipalities, First Nations and regional committees.

Grant applications are reviewed by the TSS Steering Committee, which consists of representatives from SARM, the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association (SUMA), New North and the

Ministry of Government Relations.

Interested municipalities can learn more and apply at: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/municipal-administration/funding-finances-and-asset-management/funding/targeted-sector-support-initiative> or email [info@targetedsector.ca](mailto:info@targetedsector.ca) for more information.

Another available funding opportunity literally helps build better communities through infrastructure investments.

Since 2019, the province's Ministry of Government Relations has announced more than \$295 million in provincial funding under the Investing In Canada Infrastructure Program – or ICIP for short – to support more than 240 infrastructure projects across Saskatchewan.

These projects include: enhanced water and wastewater systems; better cultural and recreational opportunities; decommissioned landfills for a cleaner environment; and new local

bridges and culverts to enhance the transportation system.

And once again, municipalities and other eligible organizations may start submitting funding applications for proposed water, wastewater and other projects under the last intake in Saskatchewan for ICIP, which opened Sept. 20, 2022.

Water and wastewater projects can include treatment plants, sewage lagoons or similar facilities. Other projects include infrastructure that can adapt, resist or mitigate natural disasters and climate change.

The full eligibility requirements and the online application process are available at [www.saskatchewan.ca/ICIP](http://www.saskatchewan.ca/ICIP).

The Ministry of Government Relations will manage these applications. The provincial government will recommend projects to the Government of Canada for final approval. I encourage everyone to apply before this new intake closes at noon, Tues., Nov. 29, 2022.

Thanks again for your time and your ongoing dedication to the communities you serve and to helping make Saskatchewan an even better place.

**The TSS Initiative provides cost-shared grants – up to 75 per cent on eligible costs – to municipalities partnering on projects focused on regional co-operation, capacity building and good governance.**



# Saskatchewan's History with Municipal Governance

By Cathy Ripplinger  
RMAA Division 2 Director

**GOVERNANCE IS A FAMILIAR** concept to all of us. It is the reason we do the work we do as Administrators and Council Members, alongside a wide range of other participants both in government and in the private sector, and of course our ratepayers. It affects all aspects of our daily lives, both professionally and personally, in ways that frequently escape our notice. Despite this, we rarely take much time to consider what governance is, where it came from, or why it's so important.

Let's start at the beginning with a brief history of the meaning of the word and where it came from. "Governance" has its roots in Latin and ancient Greek words that mean "to steer" or guide, although its usage in connection with organizational structures is not quite as ancient (Wikipedia, n.d.). As societies became more complex and began the shift from individual responsibility to organizational responsibility in the 11th and 12th centuries, the idea of governance was born. This concept solidified as a vital component of structural organizations in the 16th and 17th centuries when major companies such as the East India Company, the Hudson's Bay Company, and the Levant Company were formed (Price, 2013). The process of governance brought forth a new way of thinking about conducting business. The general idea was applied to may levels of operation in all kinds of institutional structures.

Saskatchewan's history with municipal governance began with the establishment of the rural municipalities of Indian Head and South Qu'Appelle, and the towns of Regina and Moose Jaw (SARM, n.d.). The remaining areas of the province were divided into Local Improvement Districts (LIDs) and Statute Labour and Fire (SLF) Districts. The reason for these distinctions and boundaries was entirely practical: to build roads and provide protection against prairie wildfires. These essential components to life on the prairies

are still central to every rural municipality throughout the province. From these humble beginnings in the late 19th century emerges the Saskatchewan Local Improvement Districts Association when Saskatchewan became a province in 1905, and changed its name in 1911 to the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM). The purpose of this organization was to bridge the gap between senior levels of government and the concerns of the public that they serve. The first Rural Municipality Act was developed from the provincial government's efforts to seek advice from the citizens of these early rural municipalities on such issues as what authorities and responsibilities local councils should be granted,

how large rural municipalities should be, and how often elections should be held.

Since then, the creation of The Municipalities Act has provided guidance to municipal councillors and administrators as the legislation we all must follow in serving our ratepayers. We may not agree with all of the rules we must follow, but we can strike a good balance between what must be done and how to achieve the best outcomes for our ratepayers. Cooperation between Councils and Administration is a key component to successful governance. Municipalities are required to act through their Council. Councils have the power to make decisions about municipal services, establish policies, provide direction for the operation of the municipality, as well as make decisions about what services to provide, how these services will be delivered, and at what levels. These acts are established through passing bylaws or resolutions. Administrators are legislated by the Province and our duty requirements are stated within The Municipalities Act, Section 111. An Administrator's responsibilities include advising their Council of their legislative responsibilities and operational matters, ensuring that council meeting minutes are recorded and provided to council for approval at the next meeting, sending

From these humble beginnings in the late 19th century emerges the Saskatchewan Local Improvement Districts Association when Saskatchewan became a province in 1905, and changed its name in 1911 to the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM).

how large rural municipalities should be, and how often elections should be held.

statements, reports or other information to the minister, and day to day administration of the municipality such as financial and human resource management.

Good governance was introduced by the World Bank as a way of providing guidance regarding how public institutions should conduct their affairs and manage public resources. To achieve good governance requires honesty, transparency, and willingness to listen and understand all topics related to rural municipalities. Adhering to these important goals is often more difficult than most people understand; there are rules to follow, how hard can that be? Yet I'm sure we have all found ourselves in situations where respecting the rights and interests of our ratepayers while upholding the legislation that guides us have made for extra hours of work and sleepless nights to try to find the best solution to a given problem.

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# 2023 SARM Insurance *Program Renewals*

**By Colin Wareneck**  
Manager of Risk Management

**WITH THE HARVEST WRAPPING** up and the leaves falling from the trees, it is that time of year when the renewal process for the various insurance programs offered by SARM is in full swing.

2022 has been a very interesting year for the Canadian insurance market, with several weather events that have occurred resulting in increased insurance costs across our great country. This is the case for many municipal organizations going through their renewal process, and being faced with 10-20% rate increases for their insurance programs.

One major advantage of SARM's insurance programs is that we are isolated from the large national weather events that tend to affect the competitive insurance market pricing. For example, we're not exposed to as many wildfires as our municipal friends in British Columbia and Alberta, or hurricanes like those in the Maritime provinces, or large ice storms like those that impact Ontario and Quebec. Our largest weather event that we commonly see in the summer months is hail, wind, and water losses (water losses happen all year round) with the odd fire loss. As such, we can maintain more consistent rating with our programs, which results in less dramatic rate swings, unlike the open competitive market.

I had the opportunity to meet all of our insurance partners at the Canadian Risk Insurance and Management Society convention this September, and they all had the same two themes that were important for them to see their clients working on in the upcoming year.

The first common theme was for clients to ensure they have adequate values associated with their property policies, meaning the amount of insurance that is put on an office building (as an example) is an accurate valuation, especially if the property is insured on a Replacement Cost (RC) basis. As most of you are aware, SARM started an Appraisal Program where we partnered with B.R. Gaffney & Associates to attend all the RMs that participate in SARM's Property Self Insurance Plan. They are completing assessments on the buildings insured under the plan and providing appraisals that detail the construction type of the building, the use of the building, the building's general condition, and an estimate on the value for each building on a Replacement Cost and Actual Cash Value (ACV) basis. This process is in the third year of a six-year plan, as we are approaching this task one division per year.



The second theme for the insurance partners was to talk about what is being done on the Risk Management side with our clients, and what steps have been taken to mitigate any exposure the RMs may have. This is more difficult to quantify to the insurers, as you can't easily measure the success of implementing risk mitigation measures; the most common thought on how to measure success is the absence of claims being brought forward against Rural Municipalities. We have had several seminars over the years on risk mitigation and we are seeing a trend of less claims being presented to the Liability Self-Insurance Plan over the past seven years (in 2017 we had 112 claims presented to the program, in 2021 we had 70 claims that came forward). The insurers were pleased to see a decrease in claim activity over the past few years (some of that was certainly COVID-19 driven) but they still would like to know what processes will be implemented to reduce risk. As a result of this, I am working on a few articles that will be provided in 2023 to address this area for the membership.

This article has been published just after the initial emails for the various insurance program renewals have been sent, as they went out on November 1st. Each program renewal email will have detailed instructions for boards to consider to properly complete the renewal cycle, but I wish to emphasize a few important aspects to consider.

First, for the property insurance, it is extremely important to make sure that mobile equipment values are considered. We are seeing the prices of grader, tractors, and side-arms all increasing dramatically in the ranges of 15-20%. As a result of this, if you have a grader insured for the purchase price of \$375,000 4 or 5 years ago, you can be certain that replacement value is now \$425,000 or more, so please verify the values of your equipment to ensure it is accurate. Also on the property side, please verify the value of your buildings. If you have participated in the recent Appraisal Program your values should be close depending on when the appraisal was completed. If you are unsure, please reach out to Lisa Shordee or me to discuss - we are here to assist you.

Secondly, for the liability insurance, each RM should be carrying a minimum of \$5 million of Commercial General Liability (CGL) coverage. LSIP provides a limit of \$3 million and an additional \$2 million can be purchased on SARM's Excess Liability Program through AON. I encourage each RM to consider the minimum recommended amount of coverage, as most equipment leasing companies do require \$5 million of CGL coverage to lease from them.

Should you have any questions regarding your insurance program or have any general questions, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at [cwarnecke@sarm.ca](mailto:cwarnecke@sarm.ca) or 306.761.3946.

**SASKATCHEWAN CONSERVATION OFFICERS NEED YOUR HELP TO SOLVE THIS CASE. YOU CAN REMAIN ANONYMOUS AND EARN UP TO **\$2000 CASH REWARDS** IF THE INFORMATION YOU PROVIDE LEADS TO A CONVICTION.**




*On June 9, 2022 North Battleford Conservation Officers received a call on the TIPP Line that stated 3 pronghorn antelope had been shot and left approximately 4.5 miles directly North of Luseland, SK, on grid road #675. Officers attended the scene and determined that all 3 antelope had been shot with a small caliber firearm. Along with leaving the animals to waste, there was no open season on at this time for pronghorn. It is believed that these animals were shot between the evenings of June 7 and 8, 2022.*



**HOW YOU CAN HELP**

IF YOU HAVE ANY INFORMATION, CALL THE TOLL-FREE TURN IN POACHERS & POLLUTERS LINE **1-800-667-7561** OR **#5555** FROM A SASKTEL CELL (NO TEXT MESSAGES). CALLS ARE TAKEN 24 HOURS A DAY, 7 DAYS A WEEK. YOU CAN ALSO REPORT ONLINE AT **[www.saskatchewan.ca/tipp](http://www.saskatchewan.ca/tipp)**.



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# The Untold History of Rural Municipal Bridges

By Daniel Segal, P. Eng., PMP  
SARM Senior Municipal Bridge Engineer

**EVEN BEFORE** the province of Saskatchewan was established back in 1905 there has been a need for bridges, providing Saskatchewan rural municipal bridges with a considerable history. A great deal of that history has been preserved and its secrets may provide value to your rural municipality.

Saskatchewan currently contains 1320 rural municipal bridges across 196 rural municipalities. The two oldest rural municipal bridges were built back in 1910 and, despite being 112 years old, are still in service today. One of the bridges built in 1910 is located In S.E. 13-19-12 W2M over the Qu'Appelle River between the Rural Municipalities of Indian Head No. 156 and Abernethy No. 186 and consists of a 104 ft. long steel truss provided by McNeil and Company supported on concrete abutments provided by Parsons Construction & Engineering Company. In 1923, 1931, and 1961 the steel truss was repainted. In 1938, 1961, 1992, and 1993 the timber flooring was repaired or replaced. In 1961 the flooring system was strengthened by utilizing additional steel stringers. Also, in 1898 a bridge was built at this location consisting of two 35 ft. wooden truss spans which means this crossing location existed before Saskatchewan did.

Saskatchewan currently contains 1320 rural municipal bridges across 196 rural municipalities.

How could I possibly know all this history?

For a very long time rural municipal bridges were constructed and maintained by various branches of the provincial government: Municipal Road Assistance Authority, Saskatchewan Rural Development, Department of Highways and Transportation, Municipal Affairs. To effectively manage the rural municipal bridge

inventory, hardcopy records were maintained for each bridge in the province; we call these bridge files. Every bridge file begins with a historical summary. This historical summary is where I obtained the information provided about the Qu'Appelle River bridge. For some files where little has happened over the years or the bridge file was poorly maintained, the historical summary might be the only document in the bridge file. Most bridge files, however, contain general correspondence about the structure and



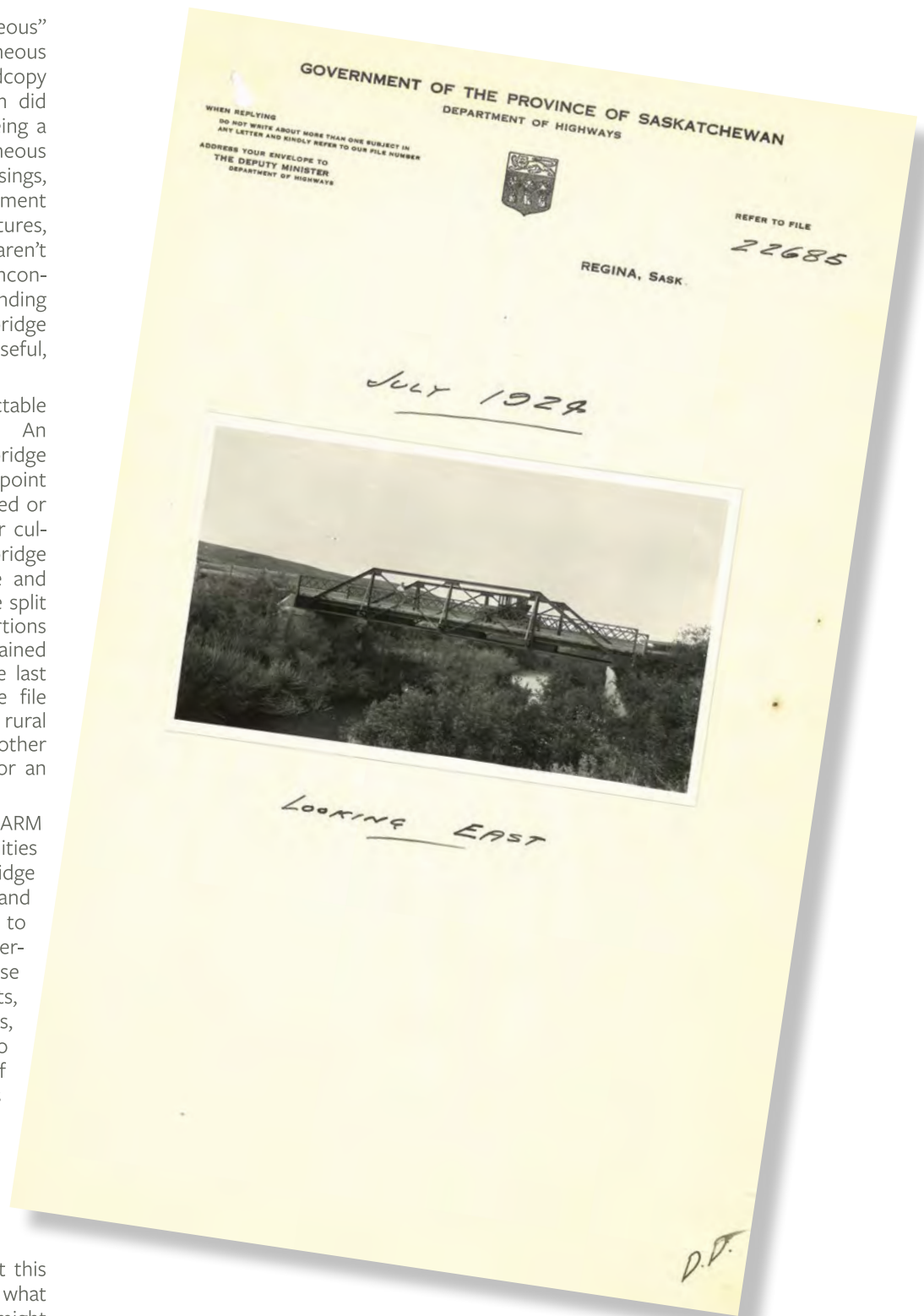


can also contain information from when the bridge was built, inspected, or repaired (such as design calculations, pile driving logs, drawings, permits, inspection reports, photographs, etc.).

SARM also houses “miscellaneous” and “inactive” bridge files. Miscellaneous bridge files mainly consist of hardcopy records of crossing locations which did not fit the standard definition of being a rural municipal bridge. The miscellaneous bridge files contain low-level crossings, culverts, Conservation and Development (C&D) structures, irrigation structures, etc. The miscellaneous bridge files aren’t maintained and have become an inconsistent mixture of information. Finding information in the miscellaneous bridge files, and having that information be useful, is a bit of a gamble.

Inactive bridge files are more predictable than the miscellaneous bridge files. An inactive bridge file indicates that a bridge used to exist at that location at some point in time, but it has since been removed or replaced with a low-level crossing or culvert structure. Over the years some bridge files have become excessively large and awkward to the point that they were split into multiple parts; the oldest portions of these bridge files are also contained within the inactive bridge files. The last opportunity to become an inactive file is whenever the responsibility for a rural municipal bridge is transferred to another party such as a private landowner or an urban municipality.

Bridge files are currently stored at SARM and are available to rural municipalities and their agents. SARM stores the bridge files on behalf of rural municipalities and as such does not freely provide them to anyone. That being said, with the permission of your rural municipality these records can be provided to consultants, contractors, historians, ratepayers, etc. Please feel free to reach out to SARM Municipal Bridge Services if you ever find a need for any of this information or simply want to satisfy a curiosity. There will be a nominal fee associated with the time utilized by SARM Municipal Bridge Services in fulfilling your request. However, if the request is related to a Rural Integrated Roads for Growth project this fee will be waived. You never know what useful or interesting information we might be able to find.





# Controlling Weeds: *It's a Team Effort*

**By Colleen Fennig, PAG**  
Plant Health Officer, SARM Division 6

**WEEDS IN A RURAL MUNICIPALITY (RM)** can be a contentious issue. They can cause stress for everyone involved including ratepayers, the Weed Inspector (WI), the Administrator, and the Councillors. A team approach between all involved and a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each are important. While the WI has the sole authority for enforcing The Weed Control Act (The Act), the RM is liable for the actions (or inactions) of its WI.

Plant Health Officers (PHOs) can also be a part of your weed control team. We can answer questions about weeds, how to control them, and enforcement. Often, the answers we provide come straight from The Act.

To facilitate a good working relationship between all involved parties the following is recommended:

- RMs should sign a contract with their WIs that clearly outlines expectations, duties, deadlines, and remuneration. Consider including the WI's duties and deliverables (reports etc.) in the RM's weed management plan (WMP).
- The WI should be included in all weed management discussions that take place in the RM, including updating of the WMP.
- At minimum, the WI should read The Weed Control Act at the start of every season.
- All weed complaints, whether on private or RM land, should be forwarded to the WI and to the Administrator. The Act states that an annual report, which includes these complaints and all actions taken, must be submitted by the WI by November 1st to the RM Administrator each year, and that report needs to be submitted to the Ministry of Agriculture Crops and Irrigation Branch by December 31st each year.
- The WI should review the WMP when writing the annual report and include all activities completed in the plan. Consider reviewing the previous year's report when updating the WMP.

## **MATTERS THAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED FOR LIABILITY PROTECTION**

If a licensed pesticide applicator is hired to spray weeds, the WI should be consulted before action is taken as it is important that the licensed applicator, RM staff and the WI are all on the same page. It is important to note that the responsibilities of a WI and applicator are not the same even if it is the same person.

A licensed pesticide applicator needs to complete appropriate and accurate records for each time he or she applies a pesticide (as required by Sec 22(1) The Pest Control Products Regulations, 2015). For liability protection, RMs should request these pesticide application records from their licensed applicators, including employees. These records should be complete and filed for an appropriate archiving period. For more details on what information needs to be captured, please reach out to your PHO.



## INVESTIGATING COMPLAINTS

While The Act works best with ongoing monitoring conducted by the weed inspector, the WI must investigate all complaints. Failing to deal with weed complaints could constitute negligence on the part of the WI and leave the RM open to future liability. Section 11 of The Act indicates that the “municipality is responsible for any negligence of their weed inspector...”. To avoid slippage in enforcement, it is important to have all weed control agreements put in writing using approved forms and document all follow-ups.

Entering into a weed control agreement or issuing an order is unique for every landowner or occupant. It is important that a WI take the time to properly investigate the situation and follow the process outlined in The Act. Unfortunately, this may not be clear cut so the PHOs are also available to help your team understand The Act, so they don't make unreasonable or unlawful demands of their WI or ratepayers.

Sometimes the best defense against weeds is to be proactive. Your WI can prohibit the transport/movement of materials containing prohibited or noxious weeds (for example, salvage/ditch hay), if the materials are going to areas that are not currently infested with the same noxious weed(s). An RM can pass bylaws to help prevent the spread of prohibited, noxious and nuisance weeds. This can include prohibited area bylaws, no-entry bylaws, tarping bylaws, and transport bylaws.

RM staff, Councillors and ratepayers can find more information on the roles and responsibilities of WIs at <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/business/agriculture-natural-resources-and-industry/agribusiness-farmers-and-ranchers/crops-and-irrigation/weeds/weed-inspectors-in-saskatchewan>.

Don't forget to include your Plant Health Officer as part of your team. We are more than happy to assist your Council, staff, and ratepayers with weed ID, your weed management plan and navigating The Act. To find the contact information for your PHO, please visit <https://sarm.ca/programs/plant-health-network/>.

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# Supporting Crime Reduction Initiatives in Saskatchewan

The Saskatchewan Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety is committed to supporting initiatives aimed at reducing violent and organized crime, gangs, drug and property offences in the province.

Over the past ten years, progress has been made to decrease crime rates and severity across the province. However, in the past five years, there has been an increase in organized street gangs, which has led to a growing number of drug, illegal weapon, and human trafficking cases in the province. In particular, violent offences involving firearms have increased in rural communities (175 in 2015 to 258 in 2019) and drug overdoses and deaths continue to rise.

The Saskatchewan Trafficking Response Team (STRT) has been established to tackle these types of offences, with the government dedicating \$6.4 million to its operation this year. Consisting of 30 RCMP officers, six municipal police officers, two criminal analysts and support staff, STRT teams are designed to be mobile and deploy as necessary to support RCMP, municipal police services and other intelligence and enforcement teams in Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba.

Nine Crime Reduction Teams (CRT) are tasked with addressing street gangs and criminal activity surges in rural and urban areas. Six teams – based out of North Battleford, Prince Albert, Lloydminster, Meadow Lake, La Ronge and southern Saskatchewan – are staffed by RCMP officers. While three provincially funded CRTs are operated by municipal police services in Regina, Saskatoon and Prince

Albert. As necessary, CRTs are deployed to support communities and rural municipalities (RMs) across the province.

In 2022-23, the Government of Saskatchewan committed \$1.6 million to the Warrant Enforcement and Suppression Team (WEST). Established in 2021, WEST targets high profile offenders and gang members with outstanding warrants in the province. These specialized teams consist of RCMP officers, who work closely with municipal police services to resolve outstanding case files. Although the teams are based out of Saskatoon and Meadow Lake, they can be quickly mobilized to apprehend dangerous offenders anywhere in the province.

In conjunction with WEST, Saskatchewan has implemented Electronic Monitoring GPS (EM GPS), allowing authorities to monitor numerous high-risk offenders and identify when they have violated their geographical constraints. EM GPS is both a preventative tool and accountability mechanism that has been proven to work in other jurisdictions.

Since 2014, the Community Safety Officer (CSO) program has proven to be effective in addressing high priority, low-risk-to-harm offences in rural and urban areas, including rural municipalities. Bylaw enforcement, traffic and liquor infractions, and crime prevention are just some of the areas that CSOs address, allowing municipal and RCMP police forces to focus on resolving high-risk-to-harm offences in our communities.





First Nations communities have also identified the need for a similar alternative service policing model. As a result, the government announced the First Nations Community Safety Officer (FNCSO) Pilot Project on April 1, 2022, committing more than \$1.1 million to the initiative this year.

Over the next two years, three FNCSOs will operate on each of the Whitecap Dakota and Muskoday First Nations. The program's effectiveness will be evaluated at the end of the two-year period. The pilot will be paid for with existing funds from the First Nations Policing Framework, with the federal government covering 52 per cent and the Province contributing 48 per cent of the total cost.

Reducing property crime in rural Saskatchewan continues to be a priority for the government. BeeSecure is a GPS device that was developed by Rivercity Innovations Ltd. to help track stolen property. Rivercity Innovations received \$20,000 from Innovation Saskatchewan's 2017 Rural Crime Innovation Challenge to develop a prototype, and the technology was successfully trialed by the ministry for 18 months through the RM of Mayfield. The RM continued to use the technology after the pilot, and earlier this year, one of their devices led to the recovery of stolen property and multiple arrests by the Saskatoon Police

Service and the RCMP.

The Saskatchewan Crime Watch Advisory Network is another piece of technology that helps improve the safety and security of rural areas in the province. Through this secure network, RCMP and municipal police services can send text, email and phone alerts through the Everbridge app to notify subscribers about criminal activity in their area.

**The Saskatchewan Crime Watch Advisory Network is another piece of technology that helps improve the safety and security of rural areas in the province.**

The network was originally developed by the government, with the support of SARM, SUMA, the RCMP, and the RM of Edenwold and Lake Country Rural Crime Watch Associations. The network has since expanded with the support of Livestock Services Saskatchewan to include notifications on livestock industry-related investigations

and reports of missing or stolen livestock in the province. As of January 2022, 16,276 Saskatchewan residents were subscribed to the network, and 425 advisories were released by the RCMP in 2021. To sign up for the alerts, visit [www.saskcrimewatch.ca](http://www.saskcrimewatch.ca).

Ensuring the safety and security of everyone in the province is always a top priority. The Government of Saskatchewan looks forward to working with stakeholders, such as SARM, to continue to develop innovative ways to address crime in rural Saskatchewan.

# The Prairie Watersheds Climate Program (PWCP)

**AGRICULTURAL CLIMATE SOLUTIONS** – On-Farm Climate Action Fund (OFCAF) is a \$200 million, 3-year fund (from 2021 to 2024) which funds 12 different programs to support farmers in adopting beneficial management practices (BMPs) that store carbon and reduce greenhouse gases as well as provide other environmental benefits such as improved biodiversity and soil health. Activities such as outreach, education, and training are supported to promote the adoption of the BMPs. The Prairie Watersheds Climate Program (PWCP) is one of the OFCAF programs available in Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

The PWCP is being led by the Manitoba Association of Watersheds (MAW) and delivered in Manitoba by Manitoba's Watershed Districts and in Saskatchewan by the Saskatchewan Association of Watersheds (SAW). This program provides up to \$40 million in financial support, through OFCAF, to producers in Manitoba and Saskatchewan to accelerate their adoption and implementation of on-farm beneficial management practices (BMPs) to reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, support production efficiency, sustainability, and resiliency on their farm operations. To assist producers with their adoption of new BMPs, the program offers producers resources to support BMP implementation and provide BMP design recommendations.

The three BMP streams in the PWCP program are:

1. Improving nitrogen management:
  - for example, agronomic services to develop farm-specific nutrient management plans, equipment modifications for fertilizer application in fields, nitrification and urease inhibitors, and soil sampling and analysis.
2. Increasing adoption of cover cropping:
  - for example, payment-per-acre to cover adoption or related costs such as seeds and equipment. Cover crops are plants, like clover and alfalfa, that are planted to cover the soil rather than for the purpose of being harvested.
3. Expanding the adoption of rotational grazing:
  - for example, agronomic services to develop grazing management plans, interior cross fencing, water system infrastructure, legume and forage seeds. Rotational grazing is the practice of containing and moving livestock through pasture to allow forage plants to recover, deepen their root systems and improve soil health.

In order to be eligible for the PWCP, the BMPs implemented must be a new practice to the producer or on new acres (if it is an existing practice) and it also must be endorsed/recommended by an agronomist, Agrologist, or Certified Crop Advisor. The goal of the program is to see an increase in the number of acres these BMPs are implemented on while ensuring producers are receiving sound agronomic advice.

There is a \$75,000 cap on the PWCP, and this is the maximum amount of funding that a producer can receive from all OFCAF programs. Funding received through PWCP will be considered "farm support payments" as per subsection 234(2) of the Income Tax Act R.S.C 1985. As such, all payments to farmers are to be considered

income for the farm business and are subject to Income Tax. MAW will be preparing and submitting annually to the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) AGR-1 forms for each PWCP payment to producers.

Producers can seek registration and offset credits under voluntary offset credit programs for GHG emissions reductions generated with the support of the PWCP. The ability of producers to participate in these markets will be subject to eligibility requirements set up by the specific voluntary offset program(s). However, producers cannot apply to any regulatory carbon offset program for the GHG emissions reductions in the fiscal year(s) in which they receive PWCP funding. Regulatory carbon markets are mandatory or compliance programs that are created and regulated by government, as opposed to voluntary markets which allow companies to buy and sell carbon offsets for their own purposes or goals.

## PWCP IN SASKATCHEWAN

The Saskatchewan Association of Watersheds (SAW) is the PWCP delivery agent in Saskatchewan. Producers will apply to the PWCP with the support of SAW's program delivery team, located throughout the province. To find your local SAW Coordinator, visit Program Coordinator Contact Person By RM | Saskatchewan Association of Watersheds ([saskwatersheds.ca](http://saskwatersheds.ca)) and search our online database by Rural Municipality.

For more information on the PWCP in Saskatchewan, visit [saskwatersheds.ca](http://saskwatersheds.ca), call 306-541-9902, or email [pwcp@saskwatersheds.ca](mailto:pwcp@saskwatersheds.ca).



# COMMUNITY SAFETY:

## *A Team Effort*

By Sgt. Rob Cozine

**THE TRUTH IS**, crime can make its way to any neighborhood, no matter how “safe” it is. In times of economic distress, people are even more concerned about rising crime in their communities. On the bright side, people can take plenty of preventative measures to protect their homes and neighborhoods. The steps could be as simple as keeping the doors locked or as complex as starting a Citizens on Patrol Program. Even though no place is immune to crime, teamwork with neighbours and family members can make a difference to minimize it.

**Consider removing your home from Google Maps:** Thieves love to case houses on Google Maps so they can get a good idea of how easy it is to access the property and what the yard is like. To get your home removed, find your address on Google Maps. Click on the smaller picture of your home to enlarge it. Choose the “Report a Problem” link. It’s tiny and at the bottom right of the picture alongside terms, copy-right year, and the image capture date. You have the option to blur your home, any faces, car license plates, or something else. Adjust the view of the image so it’s on the portion you want to blur.

**Use smart lights and other devices to create the impression you are home:** Running late or having fun on vacation? No problem. Smart home devices include light bulbs, window blinds, TVs, and radios. Turn them on and off remotely to create the impression your home. You can also set them to work at certain times or if motion sensors detect movement. Devices such as the Ring doorbell cameras even let you talk to someone who is at your door. You can make potential thieves think your home and still be 3,000 miles away.

**Get to know the people in your neighborhood so you can recognize suspicious people:** Be aware of your neighbour’s habits. When are they at work, and do they have small children or teenagers? Are they elderly and in need of extra assistance on occasion? This awareness will make the neighbourhood a much tighter community with less crime.

**Keep your vacation dates and photos off social media:** Many folks share news of upcoming vacations on social media. However, if you do that, you essentially set yourself up as a target for thieves. Criminals rely on public social media profiles like Facebook and Instagram to stalk and intrude homes while residents are away.

Make use of Light Timers / Lock all doors and windows / Install Motion-Sensor Lights outside of your home; on outbuildings, sheds, Quonsets / Keep your trusted neighbours informed when your away / Keep your yard well maintained / Never leave anything out in plain sight inside your car and remove your garage door openers when parked outside / Get a reliable Security System installed.

While it’s impossible to ward off crime 100%, just one person can set an excellent example for an entire neighborhood. Educate yourself on the measures you can take to encourage safety in your area. Your neighbours should follow suit and work with you to make the community a better place. Many of these measures are simple but go a long way.

Saskatchewan Crime Stoppers wants to thank all our rural and municipal donors as the program would not exist without the support and financial contribution of its sponsors and community partners. Please consider an annual donation of \$200.00 to the program when reviewing your budget. This year to date, Crime Stoppers has received 1,371 Tips, 8,319 Calls, laid 79 Charges, and

Recovered \$281,787 in Drugs & Property. Together we can reduce crime and make our communities safer.

Saskatchewan Crime Stoppers will pay up to \$2,000.00 for information which leads to an arrest or charge of person(s) responsible for this offence or any other serious crime. Saskatchewan Crime Stoppers is 100% anonymous and does not subscribe to call display nor are your calls traced or recorded. Web Tips are encrypted. Call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477), or you can submit a tip online at <https://www.p3tips.com/206> or [www.saskcrimestoppers.com](http://www.saskcrimestoppers.com) where you can also view other unsolved crimes.

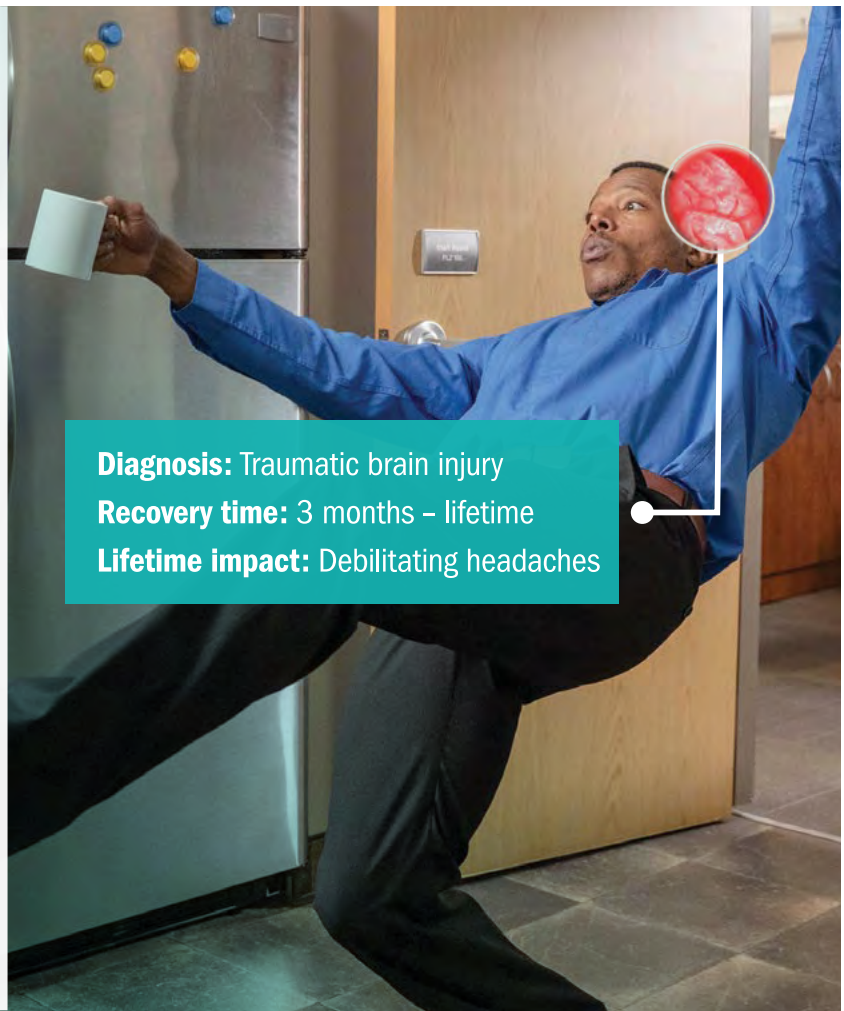
**Saskatchewan Crime Stoppers wants to thank all our rural and municipal donors as the program would not exist without the support and financial contribution of its sponsors and community partners.**



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Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities

## **2022 Midterm Convention** November 16-17, 2022

### Wednesday, November 16

- AM 9:00 Opening Ceremonies
- 9:30 Addresses
- 9:45 Educational Breakout Sessions (Gallery Rooms A-D)
- 11:00 Educational Breakout Sessions (Gallery Rooms A-D)
- PM 12:00 Lunch (served in Grand Salon – Main Convention Hall)
- 1:00 Fireside Chat
- 1:30 RM Single Window Platform Presentation
- 1:45 Educational Breakout Sessions (Gallery Rooms A-D)
- 3:00 Resolutions

### Thursday, November 17

- AM 9:00 Welcome & Announcements
- 9:15 Rural Crime Panel
- 9:45 Educational Breakout Sessions (Gallery Rooms A-D)
- 11:00 Educational Breakout Sessions (Gallery Rooms A-D)
- PM 12:00 Lunch (served in Grand Salon – Main Convention Hall)
- 1:00 SARM Plant Health Officer Presentation
- 1:15 Saskatchewan Firearms Initiatives
- 1:30 Home Support Initiative Presentation
- 1:45 STARS Presentation & 50/50 Draw
- 2:00 Educational Breakout Sessions (Gallery Rooms A-D)





# Home Supports

*Real options. Better outcomes. Lower Costs.*

**“I DON’T KNOW WHAT WE** are going to do. Ralph had a terrible fall off a ladder two years ago. His foot and ankle are not healing properly and he needs surgery,” lamented Jennifer, as she explained how life had changed. His surgery has been postponed or cancelled four times in the past year. The pain is affecting his physical and mental health.

Jennifer (aged 74) and Ralph (aged 75) live in a small town in a 35-year-old bungalow with a large yard.

Jennifer explained that Ralph loved yard maintenance and household repair but now when he thinks about it, he gets depressed. A friend from the next town helped for several months, but now he is moving away to another province. She asked, “All we want is some regular help, but where can we get that? I can’t do the work and we don’t know when Ralph might be able. We do not want to leave our home!”

Jennifer and Ralph are examples of the challenges older adults face as they age. Their health changes and the world changes around them. They may be living in the home and community of their choice but feel their independent living is being threatened. The last thing they want is to “end up in an old folks’ home.” Why should they?

What could change in Saskatchewan? What could make for healthier, happier older people and stronger, active communities?

There are models that work in other places. They prove that providing organized practical supports that match the specific needs of older adults means they

can live independently at home as they age. Although their capabilities may change over time, maintaining control over what is meaningful in their lives preserves their dignity and well-being.

Currently, Home Care in Saskatchewan is focused on mainly medical needs – a model that provides some home-based care largely for acute health needs. Even those services are difficult to access and provide only minimal care.

Home Supports is a new and better model – an approach that invests in practical home supports for older adults who are relatively healthy but may require mostly non-medical services, such as those Jennifer and Ralph need. These services can be accessible for everyone if government collaborates with municipalities and older adults in order to provide a provincial framework and standards. Costs to individuals could be subsidized according to income, with many paying full price for dependable services and some paying on a sliding scale.



But doesn’t that cost way too much? The data from other places proves that the costs of investing in Home Supports and helping seniors age in the home of their choice is about one-third the cost of paying to keep older adults in residential long term care!

The older adult population is increasing rapidly. Is this an emergency or an opportunity? Many older people in their 80s, 90s and 100s can still be contributing to families and communities. They are volunteers, mentors, paid workers, taxpayers and solid citizens of their town or village.

Municipalities are essential. Communities will benefit from the creation of jobs for service providers. Some services may be provided by volunteers who receive the rewards of seeing their skills being used and appreciated. Communities can keep their population base and be attractive places to live.

Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism (SSM) is compiling a list of persons who are committed to the Home Supports Initiative. You can join the movement! More names will lend more power to advocacy efforts. SSM will communicate with members of the group via email, the SSM website and Facebook.

Visit the SSM website [www.skseiors-mechanism.ca](http://www.skseiors-mechanism.ca) to learn more and to join the movement.



# Your Input on the Clean Energy Transition

**Rupen Pandya**  
President And Chief Executive Officer SaskPower

**SASKPOWER CUSTOMERS' EXPECTATIONS** are changing. More and more, they want their power to come from sustainable sources, without sacrificing affordability or reliability. These expectations – coupled with a rising demand for power from a growing province – are key drivers of a clean energy transition that has been underway for some time.

We're not alone in this transition, either. Jurisdictions and industries all over the world have begun finding new and sustainable ways to do business.

Here at home, Canada's ever-changing regulatory landscape, rising carbon tax and increasing electrification have made it clear that the way we power Saskatchewan needs to change.

To meet this challenge, SaskPower is already taking action. We're exploring all emissions-free generation options available to Saskatchewan today, including a significant increase in wind and solar generation, utility-scale energy storage, and expanded imports from our neighbours.

Two new utility-scale solar facilities – Highfield Solar Facility near Swift Current and Pesâkâstêw Solar Facility near Weyburn – have recently come online. The Awasis and Foxtail Grove Solar facilities near Regina are also in development.

Southeast Saskatchewan is home to some of the best solar potential in North America, making it an ideal location for what will be the province's largest solar facility to date. We're currently holding

a competition to build this new 100-MW solar facility near Estevan.

In April 2022, Saskatchewan's two largest wind facilities began providing emissions-free power to the grid: Golden South near Assiniboia and Blue Hill near Herbert.

In the coming years, SaskPower plans to add more than 3,000 MW of renewable generation, continue investigating the potential for geothermal, and evaluating enhanced interconnection options.

Solar and wind, while abundant in Saskatchewan, are intermittent options, requiring ideal conditions to generate, and to support this increase in renewable options, SaskPower is also investing in new, cleaner burning natural gas generation. A diverse mix of intermittent and baseload options are necessary for reliability 24/7.

Recently, SaskPower announced an expansion of transmission capacity with the Southwest Power Pool of 650 megawatts (MW) of sustainable power, expected to be available by 2027. We've also increased our import agreements with Manitoba Hydro by 190 MW, bringing the total to 290 MW.

Looking beyond 2030, we're evaluating a wide range of new and emerging options such as hydrogen generation, carbon capture technology on natural gas-fired generation, increased Saskatchewan hydro, and nuclear power from small modular reactors (SMRs).

We recently reached an important milestone on our path to potentially deploy SMRs in Saskatchewan: the announcement of

**In the coming years, SaskPower plans to add more than 3,000 MW of renewable generation, continue investigating the potential for geothermal, and evaluating enhanced interconnection options.**

the Estevan and Elbow study areas for potential SMR siting, based on several technical criteria including proximity to a suitable water body, population centre, existing transmission infrastructure, and critical infrastructure like roads and emergency services. The final decision whether to proceed with SMRs won't happen until 2029, but we need to start working now on multiple fronts to make that decision possible.

For SaskPower to make our 2029 decision, we need to obtain several federal licences. To apply for these licences, SaskPower must identify a site for the first SMR, conduct extensive engagement and consultations with residents in these areas, and complete several detailed impact assessments.

SaskPower understands that, for many people, announcing these study areas makes the potential for nuclear power in Saskatchewan seem much more real – which is one of the reasons we've begun extensive and ongoing engagement with Indigenous communities, rural and urban municipalities, businesses, and the public in these regions and across the province.

This fall, we started asking our customers, "What matters to you about how your power is generated?" because we want to know. Through online information sessions, phone calls, in-person meetings, and over our engagement portal on [saskpower.com](http://saskpower.com), we've begun understanding perspectives, hearing concerns, providing information, and answering questions about Saskatchewan's power future.

We're committed to an ongoing dialogue around how Saskatchewan is powered, and we want to hear from our customers. There will be no shortage of opportunities to engage with us, and SaskPower looks forward to having these conversations.



Gaining local perspective and engaging with customers are critical as we plan for the future. Rural Saskatchewan has an incredibly important role in this. We have made it a priority to meet with elected officials, community leaders, businesses, organizations, and the public to gain local perspective and insight. My hope is that anyone who has questions, concerns, or feedback reaches out to SaskPower and starts that conversation.

Visit [saskpower.com/engage](http://saskpower.com/engage) to give feedback or to take a closer look at the options we're considering for the future.

# Congratulations

## To the 2022 Municipal Hail Scholarship Recipients



**KOLTON WILLIS**

Hometown: Shaunavon, SK  
**Saskatchewan Polytechnic**  
 Heavy Equipment & Truck & Transport  
 Technician



**SHELTON ZIOLA**

Hometown: Kelvington, SK  
**University of Saskatchewan**  
 Biomedical Sciences



**CHRISTINA FRANKS**

Hometown: Scout Lake, SK  
**University of Saskatchewan**  
 Agronomy



**CARTER MCLEAN**

Hometown: Foam Lake, SK  
**University of Saskatchewan**  
 Agronomy



**DEXTER ERMEL**

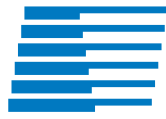
Hometown: Cupar, SK  
**Saskatchewan Polytechnic**  
 Electrician

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# SaskTel



| Business Solutions |

## Smart Communities



Photo credit: Town of Kindersley

**A SMART COMMUNITY** is an ecosystem of people, organizations, and businesses that work together to develop an integrated set of policies, laws, and processes to create desired outcomes for its citizens. Typically, these involve improving quality of life for residents, building a dynamic and vibrant economy, and creating long-term sustainability. A Smart Community is adaptive, responsive, and impactful to all who reside, work, and visit the community.

To become a Smart Community, this ecosystem needs access to timely, relevant, and accurate data. This data is then used to improve service delivery for citizens, drive down operating costs, improve quality of life, and stimulate the local economy through access to new capabilities and investment attraction.

### COMMON CHALLENGES INCLUDE:

- Technical skills gap
- Capacity and staff turnover
- Underutilized data and analytics
- Data ownership and privacy
- Complexity and anxiety of transformation

SaskTel has been actively working with communities of all sizes and types (urban, rural, Indigenous) across Saskatchewan and has gained a deep understanding of their priorities, challenges, and levels of maturity.

Additionally, we have been working with the local tech and startup community to identify and help scale solutions that can help communities achieve their desired outcomes and objectives.

Finally, SaskTel actively looks to coordinate solution development and securing funding with Government Ministries, Crowns, and community advocacy organizations.

SaskTel uses a 4-step approach to help communities become Smart Communities:

### STEP 1: DISCOVER

Before figuring out what to do, a community needs to figure out where they want to go. To help communities work through their transformation journey, SaskTel's Innovation and Collaboration team will set up a series of meetings and workshops, tailored to their level of digital maturity, to collaborate with the community to figure out their objectives, desired outcomes, constraints, and challenges.

### STEP 2: DESIGN

Once objectives, outcomes, constraints, and challenges are identified, SaskTel works with the community to develop solutions and an action plan. SaskTel uses a "DNA" framework to simplify the conversation:

- Devices
- Networks
- Applications/Analytics

Within this framework, SaskTel has a (mostly local) ecosystem of partners that can deploy technology to achieve a wide array of objectives:

- Devices: Asset tracking, smart water meters, smart parking, soil monitoring, smart irrigation, people counting etc.



- **Networks:** SaskTel can provide traditional and Internet of Things optimized cellular connectivity, a low-cost wireless sensor network, and internet to meet the bandwidth requirements for any data collection volume.
- **Applications/Analytics:** In addition to our local Tier 3 data centre, SaskTel works with local data integration, ingestion, presentation, and analytics experts to ensure the data collected delivers the intended insight and value to the community.

To address uncertainty and reduce risk, SaskTel will run small scale experiments and trials with the community to ensure proposed solutions not only perform as intended, but also demonstrate clear value.

### **STEP 3: DEPLOY**

Prior to deployment, SaskTel and its partners will work with the community to help identify the budget needed not only to deploy the solution, but to operate it on a long-term basis. SaskTel and its partners work in a coordinated fashion to ensure successful solution implementation. This is often a partner led exercise, allowing mostly local Saskatchewan tech companies to take a lead role in enabling Smarter Communities across the province.

### **STEP 4: MANAGE**

With the initial use case(s) in place and stable, SaskTel and its partners work with the community to deliver ongoing support. This support not only includes support for the deployed technology, but ongoing dialog with the community about future objectives and priorities.

### **SMART COMMUNITY BENEFITS**

While communities have different priorities and objectives, this playbook delivers common benefits to all communities, notably:

- Allowing communities to make better decisions that drive operational efficiency, citizen engagement, satisfaction, and improved quality of life
- Improving short and long-term planning and budgeting.
- Population and business attraction – Making the community a better place to live, work, and invest. Makes the community more competitive.
- Reducing the cost of becoming a Smart Community. Several smart community solutions rely on proprietary technology (e.g. smart water meters) that restrict access to networks and data. The infrastructure deployed by SaskTel and its partner ecosystem is open, meaning it can be built upon and used for multiple use cases.
  - There are opportunities to take a more regional approach to drive costs down further. This playbook works well for an individual community however if a regional model is used (e.g. entire rural municipality, tribal council, area of the province etc.) infrastructure can be deployed and shared more efficiently, and achieve additional cost savings for all communities involved.



# Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan

His Honour the Honourable Russ Mirasty

## LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR'S AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO RURAL SASKATCHEWAN

The Lieutenant Governor's Award for Outstanding Service to Rural Saskatchewan, is awarded to a Reeve, Councillor, or Administrator for his or her lifetime contribution to rural Saskatchewan (both retired and/or actively working individuals).

The award is presented to the successful candidate at the Opening Ceremonies of the SARM Annual Convention. This forum provides an excellent opportunity to publicly recognize the recipient of this prestigious award.

The selection committee reviews all nominations and selects one individual who has not yet been formally recognized for his or her exemplary contributions in making rural Saskatchewan a better place to live. The committee includes representatives from the following organizations: The Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan's Office, Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, the Ministry of Government Relations, and the Rural Municipal Administrators' Association.

**Rural Municipalities may nominate a Reeve, Councillor, or Administrator for this award.** Nominations should be sent to the SARM office by **January 31st, 2023**.

To obtain a nomination form and guidelines, please reach out to Committee Secretary, Kathleen Israel directly at [executivecoordinator@sarm.ca](mailto:executivecoordinator@sarm.ca) or (306) 761-3731.

# REQUEST A LINE LOCATE

Contacting an underground utility line can be costly and dangerous. Plan ahead and stay safe.





## Saskatchewan Agricultural Hall of Fame 50th Anniversary & 2022 Induction Ceremony

The Saskatchewan Agricultural Hall of Fame honours agriculture leaders in the province who have made significant contributions to the welfare and improvement of Saskatchewan Agriculture and the life of the farm family.

**November 12, 2022**  
**4:00 to 9:00 pm**

The World Trade Centre  
**PrairieLand Park**

503 Ruth Street West, Saskatoon, SK

The November 12th Ceremony will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Saskatchewan Agricultural Hall of Fame and honour the 2022 inductees.

### 2022 INDUCTEES

Jim Bessel ● Margaret Crowle (posthumous) ● Jack Dawes  
Leslie Hill ● Jeffrey Schoenau ● Mark Silzer

**DRESS: Semi-formal**

**TICKETS: Adults \$65 | 10 & under \$32.50**



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or scan this code

To pay by cheque contact Pamela Warren:  
[pamela.warren@agwest.sk.ca](mailto:pamela.warren@agwest.sk.ca) or 306-975-1939

Cancellations on or before  
October 31, 2022 will receive a  
refund minus a \$10 admin fee.

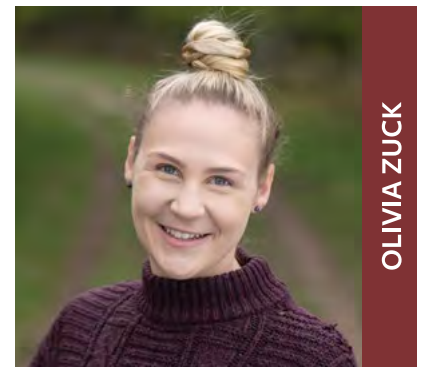
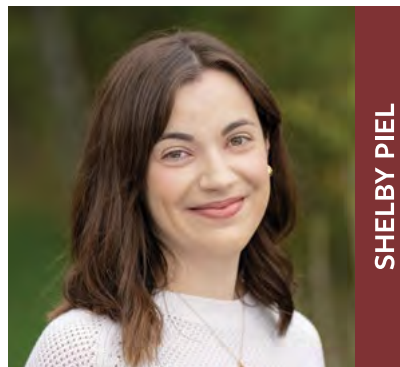
Registration is being  
managed by Ag-West Bio



# Q&A

## Getting to Know

### *The SARM Team*



## Kathleen Israel

### **Q Where did you grow up?**

My parents immigrated from the Philippines to Regina, Saskatchewan in the 80's. I was born and raised in Regina, Saskatchewan and grew up in the south end of the city (SOD a.k.a. South of Dewdney).

### **Q What is your role at SARM? ?**

My role at SARM is the Executive Coordinator. In this position, I work closely with the Executive Director and provide high-level support to the Executive Director, Senior Leadership Team (SLT), Board of Directors, staff, and oversee the day-to-day operations such as general reception duties and office administration procedures.

### **Q How long have you worked at SARM?**

I have been with SARM since November of 2015.

### **Q What is your favourite part about working for SARM?**

My favourite part about working for SARM is when I can travel for conventions to meet our members, and travel for the July SARM Board of Directors Meeting since I did not grow up in rural Saskatchewan. It gives me an opportunity to see what rural Saskatchewan is like and find out how there are so many hidden gems in this beautiful province.

### **Q What keeps you busy when you're not at the office?**

When I'm not at the office, I love to spend time with my family, especially with my daughter who is 3 and a half years old, and I will be expecting my second one in November 2022! The gender of my second baby is unknown as we are keeping it a surprise. I also enjoy travelling, food, and music!

### **Q What advice would you give to new people moving to Saskatchewan?**

Advice I would give to people moving to Saskatchewan is to enjoy the short summer months and attend a Roughriders game a couple of times and pack on the layers for the winter. Also, I would say to have an open mind and don't be afraid to travel to other parts of the province, even though our province is flat, Saskatchewan has many hidden gems to offer.



## Shelby Piel

### Q Where did you grow up?

I have lived in a lot of Saskatchewan's towns – Weyburn, Semans, Leask, Melville, and I went to High School in Swift Current.

### Q What is your role at SARM?

I work for the RIRG Team providing administrative support.

### Q How long have you worked at SARM?

About 8 months.

### Q What is your favourite part about working for SARM?

I've loved meeting new people and learning more about Rural Saskatchewan. .

### Q What keeps you busy when you're not at the office?

My toddler, mostly! We love playing outside, going for hikes, and reading together.

### Q What advice would you give to new people moving to Saskatchewan?

Day trips! There are a lot of fun places to visit right in Saskatchewan, and good food to be eaten.

## Olivia Zuck

### Q Where did you grow up?

I was born and raised in Regina, Saskatchewan.

### Q What is your role at SARM?

I am the Receptionist at SARM. I'm the first point of contact for anyone calling, emailing, or coming into the SARM office. My duties include reception, administrative tasks, managing the SARM Classifieds weekly e-blast and Classifieds webpage, and processing and shipping RCP orders.

### Q How long have you worked at SARM?

I have been working at SARM since February 2022.

### Q What is your favourite part about working for SARM?

My favourite part about working at SARM is all the SARM staff! SARM has a healthy work environment - all the staff are kind, efficient, and helpful.

### Q What keeps you busy when you're not at the office?

When I'm not at the office I love spending time with my boyfriend, being with my family and guinea pig, and I absolutely love doing all things beauty-related- hair, makeup, and fashion!

### Q What advice would you give to new people moving to Saskatchewan?

Living in Saskatchewan is living a 'winter lifestyle'. Summers are hot and short, and winters are long and Arctic style, often -25 C and -35 C with lots of snow. My best advice is to make sure you are always warm enough so that you feel comfortable enough to still live everyday life without feeling cold and restricted. How do you do this? By buying the proper gear. Make sure your dwelling is always warm and properly heated, buy a large vehicle with command start, good heating, and 4-wheel drive, have an outdoor plugin for your vehicle, buy a long heavy parka, buy heavy-duty warm winter gloves, buy a thick warm scarf, buy a thick warm toque, and buy tall warm and waterproof boots..

# Member News



Richard Randal Biensch  
R.M. of MIRY CREEK No. 229  
In Memoriam

Richard (Rick) Biensch who served as the RM's Councillor for Division 5 for 6 years, passed away at the age of 40 on June 9, 2022. He leaves behind his wife Jenn and children Brooklyn and Caden.

Rick was born January 4, 1982 in Lloydminster SK. After completing University, he went to work in the oil patch but farming and ranching were his true passion. He registered his grandfather's Rocking "R" brand and moved to Abbey in 2015. He continued working in the oil field while farming and ranching until his passing.

Rick's passion for his community was evident in his involvement in the Legion, coaching hockey, playing hockey, curling and most notably his service to the RM. Rick's no-nonsense attitude guided him well in the decision-making process at the table. He could always be counted on to express his opinion without hesitation and to accept and respect decisions made contrary to his preference. His intelligence, sense of humour, vision and genuine concern for the community earned him the respect of fellow councillors, employees and the public in general.

Rick was a hard worker who knew how to have fun. His love of family and community was a source of inspiration to us all. He was taken too young, and he will truly be missed.



Ronald Clark Stevens  
R.M. of VANSCOY No. 345  
In Memoriam

Ronald Clark Stevens, 81, of Saskatoon Saskatchewan, passed away Aug 7, 2022.

Ron was born in Kindersley, Aug 16, 1940, eldest son of Don and Babe Stevens. Married Marjorie Jan 7, 1961, completing his family with Carol, Douglas, Donald, Gary, Glen, and Debra.

Dad farmed in Hoosier until his semi retirement in 2002, moving to Grandora until 2019 and then onto Saskatoon.

He was very involved in his communities. Serving many years on the RM's of Antelope Park and Vanscoy, SARM and Delisle & District Fire Commission. Involved with the Coronary Artery Rehabilitation Group (CARG) in Saskatoon, serving as director and past president.

Active member of Alcohol Anonymous, meeting numerous friends of Dr Bob S. and Bill W. in his 49+ years of sobriety.

Survived by his wife Marjorie. His daughters: Carol; Debra (David) Marshall; his son Glen (Lee). his grand children: Mikayla (Brad) Long; Ty Stevens; Tori (Cody) Becker. His great grand children: Stetson and Laramie Long.

His brothers: Larry (Laurel) Stevens, Keith (Pat) Stevens. His in-laws: Eva (Archie) Szabo, Richard (Brenda) Ward, Sharon (Dale) Graham, Kim Ward, Claire Ward, as well as several nieces and nephews.

Predeceased by his sons Donald, Douglas and Gary, his parents Don and Babe Stevens; his in-laws: Art and Gladys Ward; Raymond, Roy, Robert Ward, and Evelyn Henderson and her children Beverly and David.

Arrangement entrusted to Saskatoon Funeral Home Celebration of life at Hoosier Community Cemetery on August 16, 2022, at 2:00 p.m. To plant a tree in memory of Ronald Clark Stevens, please visit Tribute Store.



**Keith Herzog**  
**R.M. of SHELLBROOK No. 493**  
In Memoriam

In 1992 Keith came on as Division 6 Councillor with the RM of Shellbrook No. 493. Keith served on several committees. Some of the committees Keith served on include District 33 ADD Board, Road Committee, Gravel & Clay Committee and Sturgeon Lake Regional Park.

Keith took great pride in his division and had a special connection with his ratepayers and council. Keith left his seat as Division 6 Councillor with the RM of Shellbrook No. 493 in December 2001.

The RM of Shellbrook No. 493 Council and Staff were saddened to hear of Keith's passing on April 4, 2022. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family.

Member News submission tips:

- Photos: JPG, PNG, TIFF or PDF files at 300 dpi resolution. Check the file size. If it is <100 KB, it may not print properly.
  - Try to send original photos not ones that have been scanned from printed documents or taken off of a website.
  - Write-up length maximum: 250 words.
  - Email submissions to [sarm@sarm.ca](mailto:sarm@sarm.ca).
- Member News items can be submitted free of charge by RMs. Thank you for sharing your stories with us!



**SARM Board of Directors** (pictured left to right above): Ray Orb, President; William Huber, Vice President; Bob Moulding, Division 1 Director; Norm Nordgulen, Division 2 Director; Larry Grant, Division 3 Director; Harvey Malanowich, Division 4 Director; Judy Harwood, Division 5 Director; Darwin Whitfield, Division 6; Director; Guy Lagrandeur, Ex-Officio Director





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