

RURAL COUNCILLOR

SARM

**2023
FALL**

VOLUME 56 / #3

RURAL FIBRE

**INVESTMENT
IN THE FUTURE
OF RURAL
SASKATCHEWAN**

FEATURE

**DRONES IN
AGGREGATE**

SPOTLIGHT

**EMPOWERING
RURAL FEMALE
ENTREPRENEURS**

EDUCATION

**PRIORITIZE
AGRICULTURAL
EDUCATION**



Making cyber security simple

Ensure all your business devices and servers are secure with SaskTel Cyber Security Bundles.

sasktel.com/cybersecurity

SaskTel 

| Business Solutions |

RURAL COUNCILLOR

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

Publications Agreement #40062693

Published four times per year by:

McQueen Creative
www.mcqueencreative.com

EDITOR

Corette Mihalcea (SARM)

LAYOUT & DESIGN

Cindy Biglin (McQueen Creative)

ADVERTISING

Carmen Hrynychuk (McQueen Creative)

SARM BOARD

Ray Orb, President,
RM of Cupar No. 218

Bill Huber, Vice President,
RM of Lipton No. 217

Bob Moulding, Division 1 Director,
RM of McLeod No. 185 & RM
of Abernathy No. 186

Cody Jordison, Division 2 Director,
RM of Lumsden No. 189

Larry Grant, Division 3 Director,
RM of Val Marie No. 17

Myron Kopec, Division 4 Director,
RM of Buchanan No. 304

Judy Harwood, Division 5 Director,
RM of Corman Park No. 344

Darwin Whitfield, Division 6 Director,
RM of Oakdale No. 320

Guy Lagrandeur, Ex-Officio Director,
RM of Redburn No. 130

Rural Councillor is online at:
www.sarm.ca

Twitter: @SARM_Voice
Facebook: SARMVoice
LinkedIn: SARM Voice

Views are those of the contributors and
are not necessarily the views of SARM.

Return undelivered copies to:

Saskatchewan Association
of Rural Municipalities
2301 Windsor Park Road
Regina SK S4V 3A4

CONTENTS

- 4 Ray Orb, President**
Drought Threatens Rural
Saskatchewan... Again!
- 6 Jay Meyer, Executive Director**
It's The People
- 7 Bob Moulding, Division 1 Director**
*Green Energy: At What Cost to Our
Agriculture Economy & the Rural
Municipalities*
- 8 Cody Jordison, Division 2 Director**
Give Yourself Some Credit!
- 11 Rose Zimmer, RMAA
Executive-Director**
Convention Report
- 14 The Honourable Donna Harpauer**
Minister of Finance Message
- 18 Message from the Ministry of Health,
Government of Saskatchewan**
- 22 Accountability for Engineers and
Geoscientists in Saskatchewan**
- 24 The Efficiency of Drones in Aggregate**
- 26 Commandeered Equipment
Coverage**
- 28 If Only You Could Give Canada
Parenting Advice, What Would
That Look Like?**
- 30 Clubroot Scout, Prevent & Manage**
- 40 Winning Practices: Saskatchewan
Municipal Award Winners**
- 41 Getting to know SARM**
Strategic Engagement &
Communications (SEC)
- 42 Member News**

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

**Our Mission: To foster rural development
in Saskatchewan and build strong,
sustainable communities.**

FEATURES



16
SaskTel's
Rural Fibre
Initiative

20
Supporting
Growth: The
Subdivision Process
and Targeted Sector
Support Initiative



32
Empowering
Rural Female
Entrepreneurs
in Saskatchewan's
Food Sector

34



Environmental Fate of Pesticides



38

Redberry Lake
Biosphere
Region
reimagines
tourism
possibilities

36

Building the
Future: Why Rural
Communities
Must Prioritize
Agricultural
Education



DROUGHT THREATENS RURAL SASKATCHEWAN... AGAIN!



**BY RAY ORB,
SARM PRESIDENT**

By the time this article is published, the impact of the 2023 drought will have already been felt and understood by many rural residents.

Several times I've heard younger farmers mentioning that they'd like to know what it was like to farm in the 1930s. Fortunately, I wasn't personally farming in the '30s, but my grandparents were. My parents were quite young, but both still had memories of that era.

My grandparents farmed in the Markinch area at the time but were

forced to move back to the northern part of the grain belt, where my grandmother came from. Farming back then, in that area, was very labour intensive, and I'm sure my grandparents yearned for the day when the dust would stop blowing so they could move back to the Markinch area, where my grandfather's parents had their homestead.

Farming was different then, it consisted of plowing, discing, and summer fallowing, which exposed the fragile prairie soil to relentless wind erosion. Since then, farming practices have changed dramatically, farmers now have access to the world's most modern technology in farm equipment and agronomy. Despite this modern technology, and Saskatchewan farmers becoming more adaptive, farming still depends on the weather to provide timely rains, giving crops the moisture needed to produce maximum yields that supply not only Canadians with needed food, but those around the world.

I've lived through a couple of major droughts during my lifetime, a memorable one was in 1961 which was so severe it triggered an emergency debate in parliament to address the extremity.

Although less severe than in 1961, the 1988 drought triggered a request from then-Premier Grant Devine for the federal government to aid Saskatchewan farmers who were facing both drought conditions, and a severe grasshopper infestation.

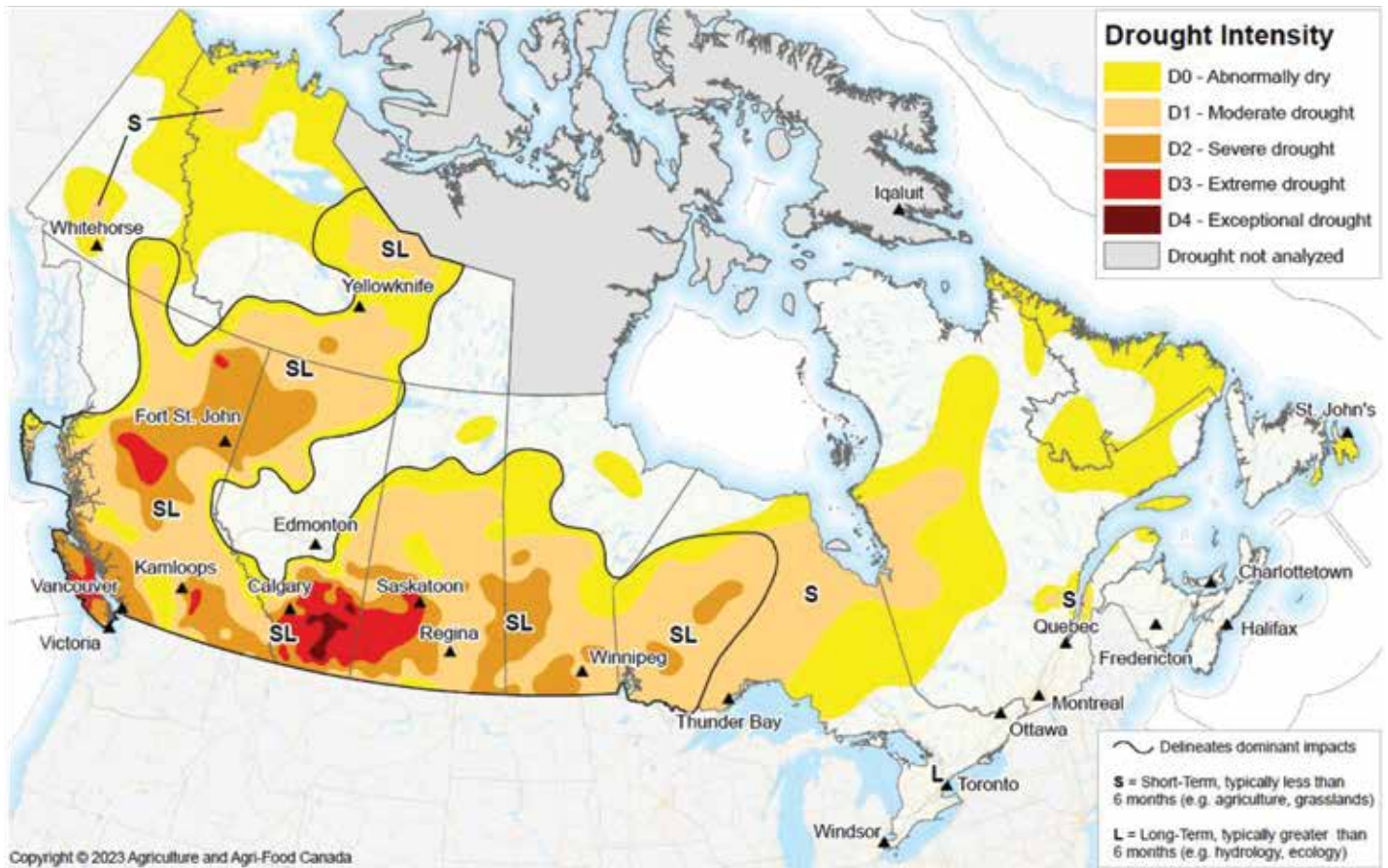
As of August 21, there have been 67 Saskatchewan rural municipalities that have claimed an agricultural disaster due to drought. Some are especially asking for help for livestock producers. As time goes by, there will likely be more that have proclaimed disaster situations.

Even more disconcerting is that there are producers who are in their seventh or eighth year of a drought cycle! So, if these droughts are indeed part of a cycle, what have we done to drought-proof our province, or is this unattainable? I believe we haven't done nearly enough, and it's evident if we don't do more, both the prairie economy and our way of life will be even more at risk than it is currently.

According to several reports, approximately 70% of the water that flows through Saskatchewan is untouched. Graham Parsons, a well-known development economist

CANADIAN DROUGHT MONITOR

Conditions as of July 31, 2023



with in-depth knowledge of this province, has studied this for years. He wrote several papers and has previously worked on a plan that would make Saskatchewan even more resistant to drought. In fact, in 2012 Parsons, and a well-established Civil Engineer by the name of Wayne Clifton, presented a plan to the Saskatchewan government termed *Drought-Proofing Saskatchewan*.

The plan was created through Agrivision Saskatchewan and entailed building more than 15 dams on Saskatchewan rivers and streams. It also involved creating future irrigation expansion on Lake Diefenbaker, which was already in place. Drought Proofing, as it was called, would mean that ranchers and farmers would have more access to the water provided through pipelines and irrigation.

Why aren't we holding back and utilizing more of this valuable commodity?

There have been attempts in recent years to build additional dams, but this has not progressed as one would have hoped. The Meridian and High Gate Dam projects did not proceed and were met with either opposition or apathy from special interest groups.

Personally, I feel we need to re-evaluate each of these projects in order to have a better look at their viability and to come up with concrete plans to be better prepared for any future droughts.

One of SARM's most immediate concerns is the Lake Diefenbaker Irrigation Expansion project; it's extremely disappointing to see the provincial government not moving ahead at a more rapid pace. SARM has recently issued news releases on this and is looking to talk to provincial officials again. Soon.

SARM is of the opinion that the expansion project must proceed as soon as possible. SARM also believes that smaller irrigation projects must also receive funding from both federal and provincial governments. By working with both the province and the Water Security Agency, surely the federal funding (which has already been announced) can be secured.

Here's to hoping there will be adequate late-season moisture which will still help some of the grain belt and pastures and give us some optimism for next year.

All the best until we meet again.

IT'S THE PEOPLE



When people think of Saskatchewan, quite often the large rural landscapes and beautiful skies are the first things that come to mind.

BY JAY MEYER, SARM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This province has much to offer, including a great regional and provincial park system, providing all ages with the opportunity to enjoy land that is preserved for recreational use in its' natural beauty. Many of our municipalities provide fantastic views overlooking landscapes that include sandhills, forests, rivers, lakes, and plains. This truly creates a sense of public pride.

Saskatchewan has the Roughriders, a team we all get behind, through thick and thin, as we all understand that green is the colour. We are the world leader in agriculture, the fifth-largest oil producer in North America, and the manufacturing here produces a wide range of goods that are exported around the world.

When it comes to quality of life, Saskatchewan is well ahead of many jurisdictions. Housing costs are lower than in many other provinces, and we truly do have four distinct seasons. All these advantages are marketed to the outside world to assist in understanding who we are, and what we represent. These attributes assist us in attracting and retaining individuals to live, work, and play in our home province.

Many of us grew up in rural Saskatchewan where we enrolled in school, participated in recreation, attended church, or played sports for the local team. We had a chance to enjoy the culture that rural Saskatchewan provided us, and our families. When you think about community, you think of what community has or can do for you. You remember how community made you feel, and this is because of the people. Rural Saskatchewan is a place where we put people first and where we

do not operate as individuals. This is generational. In rural Saskatchewan we get to know our neighbours; we love and protect our neighbours and we welcome new people to the community no matter where they are from. When neighbours are down, rural people are always there to lend a helping hand. During times of crisis, rural people are there to support even if it means flipping pancakes at a fundraiser to assist a family in need.

Yes, there are challenges in today's world. Things may not be the same as they used to be, but one thing that remains unchanged is our people. We are people that care, people that stick together through thick and thin, and people who do not ask for a favour to be returned. It may be the land of living skies that attracts you to rural Saskatchewan, but it's the people that will make Saskatchewan feel like home, and make you never want to leave.



GREEN ENERGY: AT WHAT COST TO OUR AGRICULTURE ECONOMY & THE RURAL MUNICIPALITIES

BY BOB MOULDING, DIVISION 1 DIRECTOR

I recently attended a very informative meeting put on by a rural municipality (RM) that is starting to deal with a green energy project.

They invited a reeve from a county in Alberta who has been dealing with green energy since 2013 to provide his perspective on how it affects his county. He discussed the good aspects as well as the challenges facing an RM and its ratepayers.

Green energy began in 2013 in their county which consisted of 1.3 million acres, 4000 residents, one town, and five villages. They had 166 windmill starts with an expected cost of \$600 million dollars to build and a completion timeline of one year. Carbon credits for that project are now owned by Pacific Gas and Electric in San Francisco, California, USA.

In 2020, 1.3 million solar panels were installed in the county at a cost of \$700 million covering 3300 acres of agricultural land. Along with the solar panels, 83 wind towers were erected covering 600 acres. Each wind tower is taller than the Calgary Tower. Carbon credits for these projects go to Amazon.

This agricultural land is in a county that is mostly grassland used for grazing which was a suitable location for these projects and now they are using valuable farmland to build these projects.

The county does benefit from these projects as 50% of its tax revenue is generated from green energy. They also benefit from the very large, temporary workforce that utilizes the amenities of the town and villages. Wind turbines are still farmed around and the solar panel areas are utilized for grazing sheep. Also, the landowners are benefiting with \$600-\$1000/acre land rent for solar panels and \$15,000-\$20,000/year / wind turbine.

Sounds good, right? Maybe in the short term, but the life expectancy of these projects is 20 years, so who is going to be responsible for the reclamation? Land values may become strained because of the cost of reclamation. Energy credits and projects are purchased and sold often, which may lead to problems, like some RMs are

facing with oil and gas wells. Costs to decommission these projects have yet to be determined. Who will pay? Landowner? RM? Or the taxpayers of the province or country? Now, going forward, landowners are required to sign a gag order for all new projects. Why?

With good producing farmland now being consumed by the push for green energy, who will help feed the world?





GIVE YOURSELVES SOME CREDIT!

BY CODY JORDISON, DIVISION 2 DIRECTOR

The old boys club— there, the elephant in the room, let’s address it and put it to rest.

When it comes to RM councils the narrative has been set, all they are is a bunch of old farmers just trying to keep taxes low. While it’s tough to deny the general overall age of rural councils, it’s not because they are a group that’s actively trying to keep youth and diversity out. Rural Saskatchewan has a history of being progressive when it comes to voting. Under represented groups have done well in the voting booths, the problem is convincing them to run.

One of the first SARM conventions I attended was when Carmen Sterling ran for vice president; a young female in a room full of old men. Honestly, I didn’t think she had a chance even though I had met her before and was impressed by what she had to say. Carmen had my full support, but I still didn’t see it going well for her, yet she won the election that day. I remember that moment well, I looked around the convention hall and what I thought I understood was quickly rewritten. This was a membership that had spoken— they were open to change.

When I decided to run for the SARM Board of Directors I knew there would be no way to avoid the issue of my age. A few people gave me suggestions on how to work around it, but I went in the other direction and embraced it. I was under 40, employed full-time, and had

kids in daycare. I was the opposite of who traditionally was in the role. While the votes were close, it ultimately worked out in my favour, the membership had spoken and they were again open to change.

While campaigning, one of the constantly recurring themes I heard was the frustration from long-term council members regarding the lack of people running. Members on third, fourth, or fifth terms said they would gladly step down if someone else was there to step up. In some places, there is a legitimate shortage of people to run, however, as farms begin to transition to the next generation there are new groups of people available. Local municipalities and SARM need to reach out to these

people and encourage them to run.

The number of women on councils has started to grow but they are still drastically under-represented. Historically, women do well when they run for council, but there are not enough willing rural candidates. Currently, there are two groups in Saskatchewan that are promoting and encouraging women to run for public office. They both provide resources and support before and after elections and are doing great work. I hope the results of this work quickly reveals itself. These groups are:

- www.rmedenwold.ca/p/women-in-government
- www.qualvoice.ca/chapters



So back to the elephant in the room, the old boys club. How do we go about dispelling this myth? I doubt there's a silver bullet out there, but I have a few suggestions.



Recognition & promotion:

When councils get newly elected members, they should let ratepayers know and encourage positive change... getting fresh faces out there for the public to see. In many municipalities, councils tend to fly under the radar, out of sight, and out of mind. Council should make the extra effort to let the public know about forthcoming elections, and the process to become involved.



Adjust meetings and processes to accommodate a more diverse council:

Flexibility and creativity are needed to attract a younger more diverse council. Almost every office can now host virtual meetings, making this option available means it is easier for council members to attend more meetings. Technology isn't going anywhere, it's an easy way to both improve transparency and promote councils.

To wrap up my first article for the Rural Councillor, I'd like to reiterate the title— give yourselves some credit! Let's strive to make rural Saskatchewan a truly open-minded, welcoming, and progressive place to live, work, and grow. Despite challenges, we should all be optimistic about the future and the direction we are heading!



Mentorship:

This doesn't need to be overly complicated. Council members can reach out to community members and encourage them to run. A little education about the time commitment, and some positive encouragement, can go a long way.



Making every drop count

Recovering. Recycling. Reusing

By recycling used oil, filters, antifreeze, their plastic containers and DEF containers, you help keep Saskatchewan's water, land and air clean and safe.

With 37 EcoCentres, nearly 100 drop-off points and over 30 registered collectors province-wide, we have one of the best recycling networks in the country, let's use it!



usedoilrecyclingsk.com
Toll free in SK: 1.877.645.7275



Let's Keep Our Channels Flowing.

APPLY FOR YOUR REBATE TODAY!

Are you:

- A rural landowner?
- A municipality?
- An RM representative?

The Water Security Agency is providing landowners and local governments \$1 million to complete channel clearing and maintenance projects. This rebate program is now accepting applications, which will help keep our creeks, streams and rivers clear of sediment and obstructions.



wsask.ca

2023 RURAL MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATORS' ASSOCIATION OF SASKATCHEWAN



CONVENTION REPORT MAY 15TH - 18TH, 2023



**BY ROSE ZIMMER,
EXECUTIVE-DIRECTOR**

A total of 342 administrators, spouses and visitors gathered at the Saskatoon Inn and Conference Centre for the 103rd Annual Convention of the Rural Municipal Administrators' Association of Saskatchewan.

The conference commenced with the annual RMAA Golf Tournament on Monday at the Moon Lake Golf and Country Club and the 'Admin on the Go' Tour for the Prairie Lily Boat Cruise and excursion to Wilson's Lifestyle Centre. The golf event was sponsored by the 'Gang of Three' - ATS Traffic, Finning Canada and Prairie Steel. Following a

meal for the golfers at the clubhouse, awards and prizes were presented.

Convention registration throughout the week was courtesy of staff from Saskatchewan Municipal Hail Insurance Association. Monday evening concluded with a Welcome Reception and social evening for delegates.

TUESDAY

At 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, the convention was called to order by President Guy Lagrandeur. The singing of 'O Canada' was led by Brian Schauf, Administrator of the RM of Snipe Lake No. 259. The convention was officially opened by Don McCallum, retired Rural Administrator, RM of Cut Knife No. 439.

At 9:15 am Rodney Schoettler, CEO, Saskatchewan Municipal Hail Insurance Association, spoke to the delegates about the previous hail season and changes for this year. Mr. Schoettler introduced Diana Lee as the keynote speaker and presentation of "Resiliency in the Workplace". Saskatchewan Municipal Hail Insurance sponsored the keynote presentation.

Following the keynote presentation, twenty-two new members were inducted into the Association:

Alicia Blake	DeAnne Robblee
Prabhjot Lasher	Faye Stewart
Jessica Jelinski	Tracy Joorisity
Giselle Bouchard	Richard Levesque
Shawn Sylvester	Tracy Edwards
Kelsey Dutka	Erin Roberston
Jenna Smolinski	Lorrie Champ
Dana Kennedy	Jessica Dyck
Joanne Rependa	Donna Flavel
Marla Shirley	Krystal Graham
Kelsie Walkeden	Carrie Jansen

Presentations were then made by the Rural Board of Examiners to administrators who attained advanced certification designation during the past year.

Class 'A' Certificates:

Rhonda Brandle	RM of Round Valley No. 410
Kathy Collins	RM of Wise Creek No. 77 and RM of Grassy Creek No. 78
Cheryl De Roo	RM of Walpole No. 92
Jessica Green	RM of Sutton No. 103
Christine Hoffman	RM of Maple Creek No. 111
Sarah Leck	RM of Cymri No. 36
Bertha Buhler	RM of Laird No. 404
Shala Kanasevich	RM of Francis No. 127
Jacquelynne Mann	RM of Kinistino No. 459
Erin Simpson	RM of Loon Lake No. 561
Karen Zaharia	RM of Edenwold No. 158

Class 'Superior A' Certificates:

Cathy Legault	RM of Val Marie No. 17
---------------	------------------------

Following the presentation of Advanced Certificates, two 25 YEAR MEMBERS were recognized and presented with a pin for their long standing service to rural local government.

Tammy Franks	RM of Stonehenge No. 73
Diane Watt	RM of Victory No. 226

Convention was adjourned for lunch with the blessing by President Guy Lagrandeur followed by a plated lunch served by the Saskatoon Inn & Conference Centre staff.

Following the luncheon, delegates then observed a Moment of Silence in remembrance of members who passed away



Timely delivery of maintenance was a major priority for the Agency in 2023, and SAMA delivered maintenance on time to 87% of our client municipalities.

In 2023, SAMA is also planning to complete 31,121 agricultural property reviews in 21 RMs. The Agency is also planning 18,873 residential/resort property reviews and 12,527 commercial, industrial, and industrial flowline property reviews in both rural and urban municipalities. In addition, analysis for the 2025 revaluation is in full swing.

It is time to start preparing for the 2024 assessment rolls. Please sign in to MySAMA to submit your maintenance requests for your 2024 roll. To sign up for MySAMA, please contact your local SAMA office.

For more information visit our website at: www.sama.sk.ca.

Contact SAMA by phone at: 1-800-667-7262,
or by email: info.request@sama.sk.ca.

Clifton

**TAILORED
ENGINEERING
SOLUTIONS
FOR RURAL
PROJECTS**

www.clifton.ca

during the past year. Greetings were brought by Ray Orb, President of SARM, Fraternal Delegates – Tyler Lawrason, Alberta Rural Municipal Administrators Association; Nettie Neudorf, Manitoba Municipal Administrators Association and Landon Chambers, Urban Municipal Administrators' Association of Saskatchewan. The reply was given by Vice-President Sheila Keisig.

At 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday afternoon, Rose Zimmer provided convention announcements as well as the Executive-Director's Report. Members moved and adopted the 2022 audited financial statement.

At 2:15 p.m. President Guy Lagrandeur introduced the current Executive Board and delivered his formal address to the delegates. After the President's address, the RMAA Board Members updated the delegates of the various committee work completed in the year since the last convention.

At 3:20 p.m. Ray Orb, President of SARM addressed the delegates. Ray Orb along with SARM Executive Director Jay Meyer, Craig Williams Director of SARM Member Services, Colin Warnecke Manager of SARM Risk Management and Dustin Resch Manager of SARM Programs Executive-Director of SARM, participated in a Fireside Chat outlining the various SARM services available to members. This concluded the Tuesday session.

WEDNESDAY

Wednesday proceedings commenced at 9:00 a.m. with a presentation by municipal advisors Megan Istace and Theresa Hick on Public Disclosure Statements. This presentation was followed by a presentation on Amending Zoning Bylaws given by Ian Goeres and Veronica Blair of Community Planning.

After a buffet lunch delegates attended two presentations: LA Foip Presentation by Nicole Protz and Alyx Larocque and an Employee Rights presentation by Adam Touet.

Following the afternoon session was the Wednesday evening convention banquet sponsored by Saskatchewan Municipal Hail Insurance.

Following the meal, the head table guests were introduced. A moment of Silence was observed for Bob Jacobs and previous Lou Jacobs recipients who had passed since last convention. Dan Dufour gave greetings on behalf of the Lou Jacobs Family followed by a Public Service Awards presentation to RMAA retiring members:

Linda Boser
R.M. of Swift Current No. 137
Sherry Huber
R.M. of Reford No. 379 and
Buffalo No. 409
Betty Johnson
R.M. of Battle River No. 438
Brenda Kasas
R.M. Grass Lake No. 381
Yvonne Nelson
R.M. of Lacadena No. 228
Frances Olson
R.M. of St. Philips No. 301
Ursula Scott
R.M. of Laurier No. 38
Gary Vargo
R.M. of Hazelwood No. 94

During the evening delegates also heard from SARM President Ray Orb, SMHI CEO Rodney Schoettler SMHI President Wayne Black. Mr. Black announced his retirement. His outstanding service as SMHI president and relationship to the RMAA was acknowledged with a standing ovation from attendees. Mr. Schoettler and Mr. Black presented a number of awards to various administrators in recognition of successful sales of SMHI and AMHI hail insurance products during 2022.

The draw for three door prizes that were sponsored by the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities completed the evening.

THURSDAY

Thursday morning commenced at 8:45 a.m. with Past President Wendy Gowda updating the delegates with the results food bank drive. In addition to the food donations, monetary donations to the food bank of \$585.00 were collected.

Tanya Mengel from Government Relation did a presentation on the Municipal PEER Mentorship program. This was followed by a presentation on

the Advance Mentorship Program (AMP) by coordinator Jill Palichuk.

At 9:30 a.m. Lara Ludwig and Nanette Salamon of SaskPower did a presentation on SaskPower's Future Supply Plan.

Delegates then broke into their respective divisional meetings. Elections were held in Divisions 2, 4 and 6.

Following the divisional meetings, Guy Lagrandeur introduced the new Executive of the R.M.A.A. for the year 2023-2024 as follows:

President
Guy Lagrandeur, Rouleau
Vice-President
Sheila Keisig, Balcarres
Immediate Past President
Wendy Gowda, Christopher Lake
Executive-Director
Rose Zimmer, Wolseley
Director Ex-Officio
Ray Orb, Cupar

Division Directors:

Division 1 Cheryl Barrett, Moosomin
Division 2 Carol Bellefeuille, Moose Jaw
Division 3 Raylene Packet, Webb
Division 4 Barry Hvidston, Canora
Division 5 R. Doran Scott, Bradwell
Division 6 Michelle Buechler, Paynton (Absent)

The Resolutions Committee, Doran Scott and Michelle Buechler did not receive any resolutions.

The RMAA Executive moved two bylaw amendments. Bylaw 9 was amended to remove RM's 278 and 408 since they no longer exist. Bylaw 13 was amended to remove the provision for a reduction of professional development hours for Administrators with 25 or more years of experience. Both bylaw amendments were passed by the delegates.

The convention concluded with the Staycation prize draw that included a one night stay at the Saskatoon Inn, a carry-on suitcase from Armtec and the book 'Silently Said' by Diana Lee.

The convention adjourned at 11:30 am.



MINISTER'S MESSAGE

BY THE HONOURABLE DONNA HARPAUER
MINISTER OF FINANCE

Agriculture is a vital industry for Saskatchewan. Agri-food exports reached \$18.4 billion in 2022, the third consecutive year of record agrifood exports from the province. Ensuring fair and consistent taxation for the agriculture industry is part of growth that works for everyone in Saskatchewan.

Farm machinery including combines, tractors, swathers, implements, grain bins and repair parts to cite a few examples, as well as fertilizer, pesticide and seed, have long been exempt from Provincial Sales Tax (PST). These exemptions have a forecast value of \$475 million in 2023, providing relief to help the province's producers stay competitive and sustainable.

Harvesting equipment in Saskatchewan isn't always a massive crop-reaping combine or swather. Sometimes it's a sleek airboat, skimming wild rice from pristine waters. Bins store grain, but storage buildings are also used for fruits and vegetables, all part of the province's diverse agriculture sector.

Saskatchewan's 2023-24 Budget introduced initiatives to improve the fair and consistent application of PST to the agriculture sector, specifically for fruit and vegetable producers and wild rice farmers.



Boats with attached harvesting equipment used primarily for rice harvesting, and storage buildings used specifically for storing fruits and vegetables grown commercially, are now exempt from PST, recognizing these vital aspects of agriculture in Saskatchewan. Those exemptions have a forecast value of \$1 million annually.

PST exemptions introduced this year help Saskatchewan's wild rice and fruit and vegetable producers clarify PST related to certain farming and agriculture activities made in the previous year's budget. Those included exemptions for on-farm portable seed cleaning equipment, on-farm digging of dugouts and for certain storage tanks.

Overall, the 2023-24 Budget includes \$548.2 million for the Ministry of Agriculture, a 19 per cent increase

from the previous year's budget to fund programs, services and agricultural research as well as providing business risk management programs.

Our province is leading the country in a growing economy, and Saskatchewan's agriculture industry is at its centre. This economic growth allows the government to pay down up to \$1.0 billion in operating debt this fiscal year. Along with the \$1 billion of debt reduction in the 2022-23 budget, that will equate to \$117 million in interest savings. The government's strong fiscal management will allow further investments in Saskatchewan's agriculture and other economic sectors to ensure provincial prosperity.

For further questions or discussions on the content of this article, please call 1-800-667-6102 or email sasktaxinfo@gov.sk.ca.

Whatever it takes to **HAUL.**

Trail King Steel Side Dumps have the rugged strength & durability to stand up to your toughest loading, hauling & unloading demands.

Manufactured in Saskatchewan, DeCap Belly Dumps are your trusted trailers for hauling & distributing aggregates.



FIND THE TRAILER YOU NEED TO GET THE JOB DONE.

CONTACT YOUR LOCAL REDHEAD EQUIPMENT TERRITORY MANAGER.

SOUTH SASK
RON DUDA | 306.721.2666
Corporate Sales Manager, Trucks & Trailers

NORTH SASK
NATHAN YELLAND | 306.934.3555
Northern Sales Manager, Trucks & Trailers

AGRICULTURAL | CONSTRUCTION | TRUCKS & TRAILERS

redheadequipment.ca

Whatever it takes to **BUILD**

CASE
CONSTRUCTION

CASE 621G Wheel Loaders combine productivity, efficiency & performance to help you get the job done.



AGRICULTURAL | CONSTRUCTION | TRUCKS & TRAILERS

redheadequipment.ca

FIND OUT WHAT A CASE WHEEL LOADER CAN DO FOR YOU.

Contact your Redhead Equipment Territory Manager or local Redhead Equipment branch.

SASKTEL'S RURAL FIBRE INITIATIVE IS AN INVESTMENT IN THE FUTURE OF RURAL SASKATCHEWAN

SaskTel's Rural Fibre Initiative (RFI) is accelerating the expansion of its fibre optic broadband network to more communities, including the Town of Outlook, located approximately 100 kilometres southwest of Saskatoon (Photo courtesy of Henry Buys).

In December 2022, SaskTel announced it is doubling its investment in the multi-phase Rural Fibre Initiative (RFI), bringing the Crown corporation's total investment in the RFI to \$200 million. This will allow SaskTel to expand SaskTel *infiNET*TM service to over 110,000 residents and businesses living and operating in more than **130 rural communities**.

"A key part of our government's plan to build a stronger Saskatchewan is to invest in the infrastructure that will allow our province to continue to succeed," said Don Morgan, Minister Responsible for SaskTel. "Through the Rural Fibre Initiative, SaskTel is expanding their advanced fibre optic broadband network to towns and villages across Saskatchewan, and ensuring more families and businesses have access to

the same online resources, tools, and opportunities as those living in larger urban centres."

SaskTel's *infiNET* network is already the largest fibre optic broadband network in the province, and when the announced phases of the RFI are complete the network will reach approximately 80 per cent of all Saskatchewan households. Further, SaskTel's fibre optic network has the capacity to grow to support the evolving needs of customers, ensuring Saskatchewan has the infrastructure necessary to compete in the modern world.

"Delivering internet speeds of up to a Gigabit per second, our *infiNET* network ensures SaskTel customers have the bandwidth they need to surf, stream, and connect faster than ever," said Chad Olson, SaskTel Chief Technology Officer. "By upgrading our broadband networks to fibre, combined with the significant investments we are making to deploy our 5G wireless network, we will ensure Saskatchewan remains one of the most well-connected provinces in the country."



The Town of Aberdeen, located about 40 kilometres northeast of Saskatoon, is one of 80 communities included in SaskTel's latest Rural Fibre Initiative announcement (Photo courtesy of Getty Images).

Jay Meyer is the Executive Director at the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM) and a passionate advocate for the increased development of internet infrastructure in Saskatchewan. He also sits on the Saskatchewan Broadband Action

Committee (SBAC) which is represented by a collective of organizations - including SaskTel - who share concern and understanding over the issues related to rural broadband connectivity across the province.

“SARM fully supports investments into improved broadband services for communities in rural Saskatchewan,” said Jay. “It is essential that access to

broadband services in rural Saskatchewan achieves parity to those services available in larger communities and we look forward to working with the provincial government on future projects to continue to expand broadband services for the benefit of all rural residents and businesses in the province.”

The RFI, along with the expansion of their 5G wireless network, are key parts

of SaskTel’s commitment to invest more than \$1.6 billion of capital across Saskatchewan over the next five years.

Added Minister Morgan, “The Rural Fibre Initiative is an investment in the future prosperity of our province as a whole, and one that ensures rural Saskatchewan will continue to be the best place to live, work, and raise a family.”

See the table below for the complete list of the communities currently included in the RFI.



PHASE 1	Balgonie*	Biggar*	Langham*	Pilot Butte*		
PHASE 2	Kindersley*	Meadow Lake*	Rosetown			
PHASE 3	Canora	Carlyle	Esterhazy	Fort Qu’Appelle	Hudson Bay	Indian Head
	Kamsack	La Ronge^	Lumsden	Maple Creek	Moosomin	Shaunavon
	Watrous	Wynyard				
PHASE 4	Assiniboia	Buffalo Narrows	Caronport	Carrot River	Dalmeny	Davidson
	Dundurn	Foam Lake	Gravelbourg	Gull Lake	Île-à-la-Crosse	Kipling
	La Loche°	Lanigan	Macklin	Osler	Outlook	Oxbow
	Preeceville	Regina Beach*	Rocanville	Shellbrook	Unity	Wadena
PHASE 5	Aberdeen	Balcarres	Beauval	Big River	Carnduff	Churchbridge
	Cudworth	Delisle	Eston	Grand Coulee	Grenfell	Hague
	Hepburn	Herbert	Ituna	Kelvington	Kerrobert	Langenburg
	Lashburn	Leader	Maidstone	Milestone	Pense	Pinehouse
	Porcupine Plain	Radville	Southey	Spiritwood	Stoughton	Strasbourg
	Waldheim	Watson	Wilkie	Wolseley		
PHASE 6	Allan	Arcola	Asquith	Avonlea	Bethune	Blaine Lake
	Borden	Bruno	Cabri	Central Butte	Clavet	Colonsay
	Craik	Cupar	Cut Knife	Duck Lake	Eastend	Eatonia
	Edam	Elrose	Hafford	Hanley	Kenosee Lake	Kyle
	Lampman	Leroy	Manitou Beach	Marshall	McLean	Muenster
	Naicam	Nokomis	Norquay	Paradise Hill	Pierceland	Ponteix
	Qu’Appelle	Radisson	Raymore	Rouleau	Springside	St. Walburg
	Sturgis	Turtleford	Vanscoy	Vibank	Vonda	Yellow Grass

* infiNET launched

^Including Air Ronge and Kitsaki #156B

*Including Buena Vista and Kinookimaw

°Including Clearwater River

For more information about the work SaskTel is doing to keep Saskatchewan connected please visit www.sasktel.com/about-us/news



“Having stable, reliable health care services in communities across the province will always be a priority for the Government of Saskatchewan and we are taking aggressive action to ensure the future of those services,”

Rural and Remote Health Minister Everett Hindley



L to R: SARM Vice President, Bill Huber; SARM President, Ray Orb; the Honourable Everett Hindley, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, Seniors, and Rural and Remote Health; the Honourable Paul Merriman, Minister of Health

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH, GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

The Ministry of Health and health care partner agencies are working every day to improve access to health services for Saskatchewan residents, build additional capacity within our health care system, and strengthen health care teams.

“Having stable, reliable health care services in communities across the province will always be a priority for the Government of Saskatchewan and we are taking aggressive action to ensure the future of those services,” Rural and Remote Health Minister Everett Hindley said.

In 2023-24, nearly \$100 million is being invested into Saskatchewan’s Health Human Resources Action Plan to recruit, train, incentivize and retain more health care professionals, including physicians, nurses and other in-demand professions across the province.

“There are so many careers in health care. The diversity of jobs is amazing.”

Cara RN, BSN
Saskatoon, SK

Find your opportunity. Find your health career, in Saskatchewan.

Join Saskatchewan’s growing health-care workforce. We’re recruiting hundreds of new workers. Opportunities are available for workers at every stage of their career—from recent graduates to experienced professionals.

Be our next hire.

Opportunities:

- Financial incentive packages for jobs in rural locations
- Loan forgiveness for students
- Graduate Retention programs and paid clinical placements
- Up to 175 new full-time positions in rural communities

Accelerate your career here



saskatchewan.ca/hhr




“Our dedicated health care workers are the foundation of Saskatchewan’s health system. We are developing made-in-Saskatchewan solutions to set up our current and future workforce for success across the province,” Hindley said.

Meeting Increasing Demands for Health Services

- Hiring hundreds more health care workers
- Performing thousands more surgical procedures to reduce patient wait times
- Adding more permanent and complex care beds in our hospitals
- Expanding acute care services and intensive care unit capacity
- Increasing the volume of specialized medical imaging procedures to reduce waitlists, including CT and MRI scans
- Improving quality of life for senior citizens either living in care facilities or requiring help at home so they can better age-in-place

saskatchewan.ca Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan has expanded health care training opportunities by creating more than 550 new training seats in 18 high demand health occupations in 2023, in addition to 150 nursing seats added in 2022-23.

The province continues to offer competitive incentive packages of up to \$50,000 to recruit health care workers in nine high priority classifications in 54 rural and remote communities, in exchange for a three-year return-of-service.

Since launching last fall, this initiative has seen success with incentive packages approved for newly hired health care workers including nurses, continuing care assistants, and medical laboratory technologists and assistants.

Progress is also being made on stabilizing staffing in rural and remote areas by adding hundreds of new and enhanced permanent full-time positions.

Competitive programs like the Rural Physician Incentive Program are offering up to \$200,000 for a five-year return-of-service to recent Canadian and international medical graduates who establish a practice in rural Saskatchewan.

Recent expansion of the Saskatchewan International Physician Practice Assessment (SIPPA) program means more internationally-trained family physicians will be practising in the province. Over 280 physicians are already working here as a result of the SIPPA program, with the majority working in rural communities. An additional 15 physicians are expected to enter practice by October 2023.

Increased funding in the 2023-24 provincial budget will support emergency medical services (EMS). Ground ambulance staff is being added and community paramedicine expanded in 31 rural and remote communities across Saskatchewan.

The provincial government is also making significant investments in health care infrastructure to meet the needs of a growing and thriving province. This includes addressing those future needs by building new hospitals in Prince Albert, Weyburn, Rosthern, Battlefords and Esterhazy, and long-term care homes in La Ronge, Grenfell and Watson.

Ensuring Saskatchewan people have access to mental health and addictions services continues to be a priority. New initiatives will focus on the mental health of children and youth, address the needs of vulnerable populations, and add more addictions treatment spaces to ensure people can access the help they need.

OUR PROVINCE IS GROWING, AND THE GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN IS WORKING TO ENSURE THE GROWTH WE SEE HAPPENING AROUND THE PROVINCE WORKS FOR EVERYONE, WHEREVER THEY MAY LIVE IN THE PROVINCE.

“Rural Saskatchewan is an integral part of our province. Thank you to the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities for their dedication to the communities they serve, and for working together with the provincial government to enhance healthcare in our rural communities,” Rural and Remote Health Minister Everett Hindley said.

SUPPORTING GROWTH: THE SUBDIVISION PROCESS AND TARGETED SECTOR SUPPORT INITIATIVE



MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTRY OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS, GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

With Saskatchewan's population increasing and economic momentum continuing, municipalities are reminded of some of the programs and processes available to help support and manage growth in and around their communities.

When local development occurs, one of those important processes is the subdivision of land - an integral part of the growth of municipalities across the province.

A subdivision results after the creation of a surface parcel or the re-arrangement

of the boundaries or limits of a surface parcel on an existing division of land. Basically, a subdivision is required when a new commercial development is proposed or a new residential neighbourhood is needed to create new lots for housing.

This process involves landowners, professional agents and municipalities, along with provincial ministries and agencies.

In Saskatchewan, this subdivision process falls within *The Planning and Development Act, 2007* and the regulations adopted under that Act - notably *The Subdivision Regulations, 2014* and *The Statements of Provincial Interest Regulations, 2012*.

THERE ARE FOUR GENERAL PHASES OF THE SUBDIVISION PROCESS, WHICH OFTEN OVERLAP:

- 1 A landowner works with a professional agent to prepare a plan and submit an application.
- 2 That application is reviewed by an approving authority to determine site suitability and ensure public interest is met. This includes:
 - a.) A landowner's compliance with a municipality's official community plan and zoning bylaw.
 - b.) Completion of a servicing agreement between a landowner and a municipality for the capital cost to upgrade municipal infrastructure to serve the proposed subdivision.



As part of GR’s review process, subdivision applications are referred to other ministries and agencies to ensure proposed sites meet the public interest and development won’t negatively impact surrounding areas. GR sends every subdivision application to the municipality where the subdivision is proposed to ensure municipal interests are addressed prior to the provincial government issuing a decision on the subdivision application.

During the review period, a municipality is encouraged to provide comments about the application and analysis about whether the proposal conforms to local bylaws. GR takes a collaborative approach to ensure development meets the needs of local communities and relies on the local knowledge and feedback received from municipalities.

A tool available to municipalities during the subdivision process is a servicing agreement. Such an agreement is a legal contract a municipality can enter into with landowners to ensure any to-be-built infrastructure meets local standards, like road construction and drainage, or to recover municipal capital costs for new or upgraded infrastructure required for the subdivision like wastewater expansion. Servicing agreements help enable future growth and ensure fairness for existing ratepayers. GR staff are available to help municipalities who have questions about the use of servicing agreements.

Since subdivisions must conform to municipal standards, municipalities benefit from having land use planning bylaws in place to guide growth. Land use planning bylaws can provide direction on where growth will occur in the community, outline how a municipal reserve will be dedicated, separate incompatible land uses, and ensure efficient use of municipal infrastructure.

Municipalities can also access the Targeted Sector Support (TSS) Initiative as an additional tool for planning.

The TSS is a non-infrastructure funding program that encourages inter-community cooperation and to help municipalities strengthen their core

governance and administration responsibilities.

TSS provides cost-shared grants to support municipalities who partner on projects focused on dispute resolution and relationship building, capacity building, municipal transition and regional co-operation. Partners can include, but are not limited to, other municipalities, First Nations, district planning commissions, organized hamlets and parks.

Project applications are reviewed and approved by the TSS Steering Committee, which consists of representatives from the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association (SUMA), the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM), the Saskatchewan Association of Northern Communities (New North) and GR.

THIS SUMMER, A COMBINED PROVINCIAL INVESTMENT OF MORE THAN \$700,000 UNDER TSS WAS ANNOUNCED TO SUPPORT 16 PROJECTS ACROSS SASKATCHEWAN.

These new projects included the Village of Muenster’s Regional Land Use Feasibility Study, the RM of Piapot No. 110’s Southwest Municipal Road Network and Tangible Capital Asset GIS Mapping Project, and the Northern Hamlet of St. George’s Hill Regional Co-operation Feasibility Study.

Cities, towns, villages, resort villages, rural municipalities and northern municipalities are encouraged to begin conversations with their neighbouring communities about projects under this initiative and to consider applying for the sixth TSS intake, which is expected to open this fall.

A TSS application guide will be available when the next intake opens.

For more details about planning, TSS or other municipal information, email: muninfo@gov.sk.ca

c.) Dedication of municipal reserve for public recreational opportunities.

3 A decision about whether or not to proceed with a subdivision is issued by an approving authority. In Saskatchewan, the provincial Ministry of Government Relations (GR) is the approved authority, except for the cities of *Estevan, Lloydminster, Moose Jaw, North Battleford, Prince Albert, Regina, Saskatoon, Swift Current, Weyburn and Yorkton*. These cities have been granted subdivision approving authority status by the provincial government.

4 A landowner registers a survey plan at Information Services Corporation and creates the titles for each lot.

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR ENGINEERS AND GEOSCIENTISTS IN SASKATCHEWAN



**DANIEL SEGAL,
P. ENG., PMP
SENIOR MUNICIPAL
BRIDGE ENGINEER**



**ALEXANDER UDEY,
M.SC., P. ENG.
MUNICIPAL BRIDGE
ENGINEER**

How does the Government of Saskatchewan ensure fair transactions take place between Professional Engineers or Geoscientists and the ordinary people that require their services? The answer is: professional regulation.

Through *The Engineering and Geosciences Professions Act (E-9.3)*, the Government of Saskatchewan has entered into an agreement with the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Saskatchewan (APEGS). This piece of legislation grants APEGS the ability to regulate the engineering and geoscience professions in Saskatchewan. APEGS is expected to



develop, implement, and enforce various rules which protect the public by ensuring its professional members provide services competently and ethically. To ensure that this is the case, APEGS is required to have a complaint and discipline system which allows the public to raise concerns about APEGS' members who fail to meet the obligations and standards of the profession.

At SARM's 2022 Midterm Convention, Resolution 16A-22M was passed, which addressed the challenges associated with obtaining quality engineering in a rural municipal environment. In response to this resolution, the Honourable Jeremy Cockrill (Minister of Highways, the Minister responsible for the *Engineering and Geosciences Act*) stated that he was "committed to working with APEGS to improve

accountability and transparency" and that "[APEGS] has a complaint process that anyone can access for issues pertaining to allegations of professional incompetence and/or professional misconduct against its members."

SARM encourages its members to utilize the APEGS complaint process whenever it is appropriate. If a legitimate problem or pattern of behaviour exists amongst engineers or geoscientists engaging with rural municipalities, then this is the best method of drawing attention to it. For APEGS to regulate engineers and geoscientists, rural municipalities need to report potential issues that are occurring in the rural municipal sector.

This brings us to the APEGS Investigation and Discipline process. It is important to know that this process can be used to not only raise concerns with a professional engineer or geoscientist, but any individual who offered services or performed work where engineering or geoscience services might be required (<https://www.apegs.ca/complaints-enforcement/practice-and-title>). The complaint process is started by submitting a written complaint containing sufficient information to allow APEGS to establish their jurisdiction and to investigate the complaint further.

All of the information needed to understand and access the APEGS Investigation and Discipline process is available through the complaint section of the APEGS website (<https://www.apegs.ca/complaints-enforcement/submit-a-complaint>).

Your RM should not let the outward formality and complexity of the process discourage you from submitting a complaint. APEGS has ownership of the challenging parts of the process; your RM simply needs to know when and how to submit a complaint. A complaint should be submitted if an issue arises between your municipality and a professional engineer or geoscientist, and you are unable to come to a satisfactory resolution.

To discuss issues of concern directly with APEGS, or receive further information regarding process, contact Chris Wimmer, P.Eng., FEC, Director of Professional Standards 1-800-525-9547 cwimmer@apegs.ca.

For example, if your municipality encounters problems where an engineered design is substandard, the professional does not act ethically (<https://www.apegs.ca/complaints-enforcement/code-of-ethics>), and/or a service provider implies that the work will be completed by an engineer or geoscientist but does not provide documents sealed by the professional, a written complaint could be submitted to APEGS. However, before making a complaint, your municipality should attempt to resolve the issues with the engineer or geoscientist.

The submission process will be much easier if your municipality has endeavoured to collect and maintain good records whenever interacting with a professional engineer, or any supplier or service provider who is offering engineering. These records will facilitate APEGS establishing jurisdiction over the complaint and pursuing it further. The more information your RM can provide in the initial complaint, the better. Do not worry about submitting a "perfect" written complaint; there is a greater onus on APEGS as the regulatory body to follow-up and assist on any complaint that they receive.

Professional engineers must hold paramount the safety, health, and welfare of the public and the protection of the environment and promote health and safety within the workplace.

SARM encourages municipalities to use the resources available from APEGS to ensure that engineers and geoscientists working in the rural sector are being held to the standards and ethics that are expected of them.

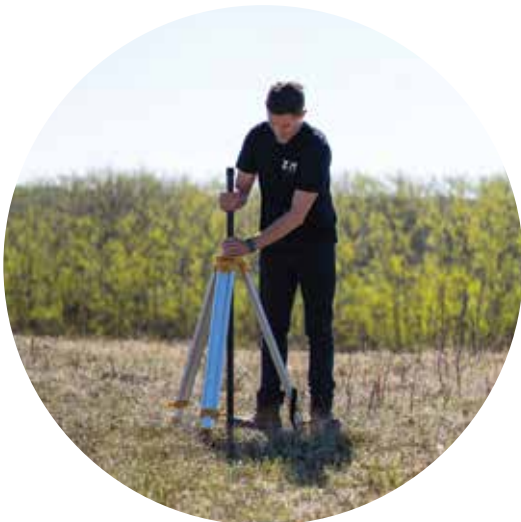


MEMBER PURCHASING
SUPPLIER FEATURE



THE EFFICIENCY OF DRONES IN AGGREGATE

ZACHARY LOEPPKY, OWNER OF ZACH JAMES MEDIA



Drones are becoming increasingly important when it comes to measuring gravel. In the past, measuring large amounts of gravel was a time consuming and dangerous task. Workers had to manually measure the piles of gravel using a tape measure or other measuring device. This was often a dangerous job, as workers were often exposed to hazardous conditions, such as exposure to dust and debris.

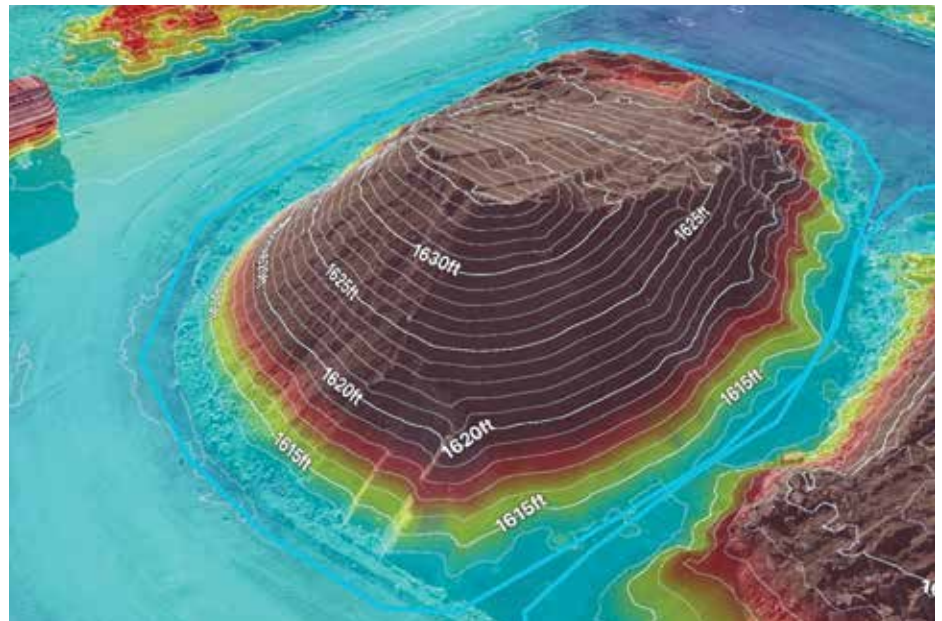
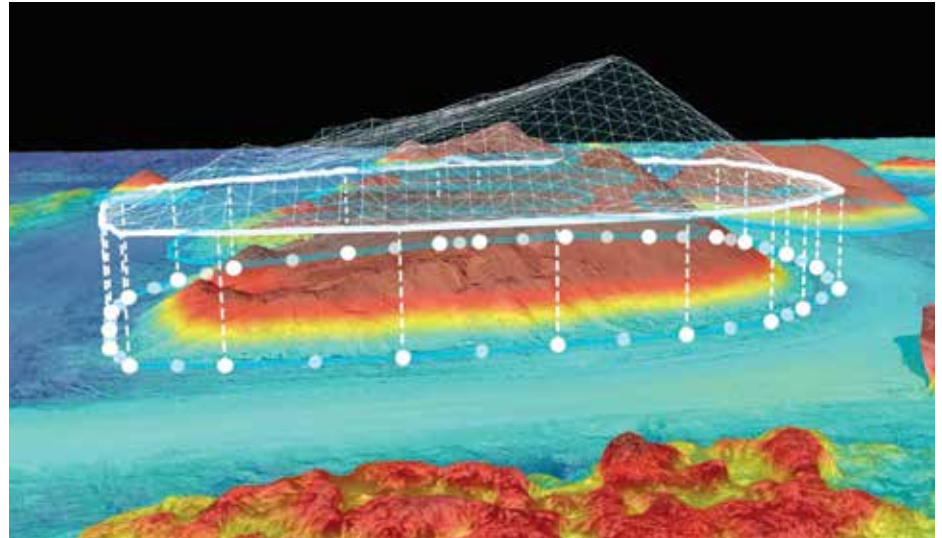
Now, drones are changing the way we measure gravel. Drones can fly over the gravel and take measurements from above. This eliminates the need for workers to be exposed to hazardous conditions. Additionally, drones can measure large piles of gravel in a fraction of the time it would take workers to do the same job manually.

**THEY ARE FASTER,
MORE ACCURATE, AND
MORE COST EFFECTIVE
THAN MANUAL
MEASUREMENTS.**

Using drones for measuring gravel also has many advantages. For example, drones can take measurements at a much higher accuracy than manual measurements. This is especially important for large construction projects, where accuracy is paramount. Additionally, drones can measure over a much larger area than manual measurements can. This means that the amount of gravel that needs to be measured can be done in a much shorter amount of time.

In addition, drones can also take measurements of the volume of gravel in a much more precise manner than manual measurements. This means that construction companies can know exactly how much gravel they need to order for a project. This eliminates the need for them to order too much or too little, saving them both money and time.

Finally, drones are also much more cost effective than manual measurements. Manual measurements can be expensive, as they often require special tools and equipment. With drones, all that is needed is the drone and the software used to control it. This makes them much more cost effective than manual measurements.



Overall, drones are becoming an increasingly important tool for measuring gravel. They are faster, more accurate, and more cost effective than manual measurements. Additionally, they are much safer than manual measurements, as workers no longer have to be exposed to hazardous conditions. For these reasons, drones are becoming an increasingly popular way to measure gravel.



Phone: (306) 270-6737
www.zachjamesmedia.com



For more information please visit SARM Member Purchasing:

sarm.ca/services/member-purchasing/gravel-pit-measuring-data-processing

COMMANDEERED EQUIPMENT COVERAGE



**COLIN WARNECKE,
MANAGER, RISK
MANAGEMENT, SARM**

By the time this article is published, the renewal process will be well underway as SARM prepares the information emails and documents which are sent to the membership in November.

One area of coverage that SARM has not marketed well is the Commandeered Equipment Coverage available under PSIP, so I'm going to attempt to (i)

explain the importance of the coverage and (ii) how the coverage works.

2023 has been a difficult year for part of the province in terms of drought. At the time of writing, approximately 67 rural municipalities have declared an emergency status because of the drought, and I'm sure that number will increase throughout the summer if the rains don't come. Not only does drought have an impact on crops and pasture lands but it also causes an increase in the potential of fires within the affected area, especially when the harvest is well underway. The potential of very dry conditions, strong winds, and equipment causing sparks from hitting rocks is the perfect combination to start a grass fire, which can quickly get out of control.

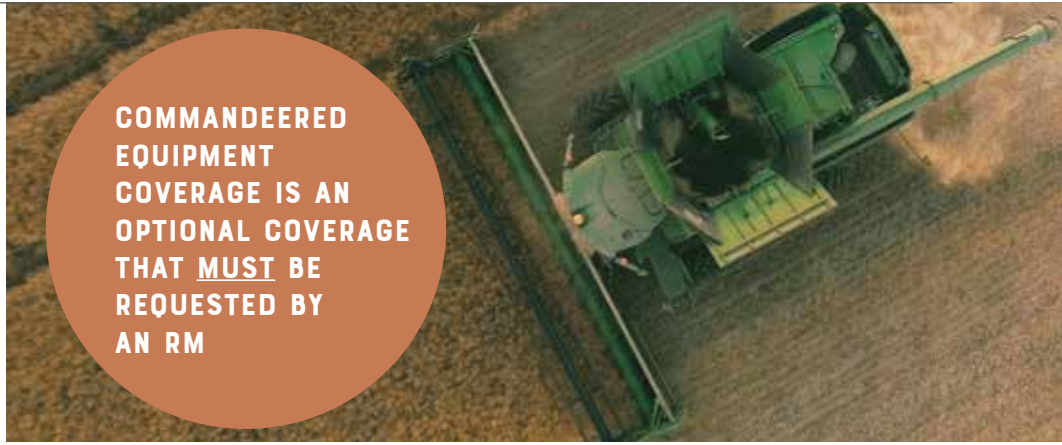
THERE HAVE BEEN 317 FIRES SO FAR THIS (AS OF JULY 21, 2023), THE FIVE-YEAR AVERAGE IS 288.

So how does this impact the Rural Municipalities in these areas where drought conditions exist? Each RM has a responsibility to manage fires within their borders. The Wildfire Act of Saskatchewan [2014] states the following:

- 11(1) Subject to subsection (2) and to the other provisions of this Act, if a fire originated or is burning in a rural municipality, the rural municipality:*
- (a) is responsible for controlling and extinguishing the fire, including in the following areas:*
 - (i) all private land and occupied Crown land;*
 - (ii) any lands that are an environmental reserve, public reserve or municipal reserve within the meaning of The Planning and Development Act, 2007 and that are administered by the rural municipality;*
 - (iii) any road and road right of way under its direction, control and management;*

- (iv) any structure, vehicle or landfill, transfer station, or waste collection site; and
- (b) shall pay the costs and expenses for controlling and extinguishing the fire, subject to its right to recover costs and expenses pursuant to section 12.

Now that there is a legal obligation to act, what happens if the RM doesn't have the resources to fight the fire? Likely, requesting assistance from ratepayers is an option for a large fire, especially if neighbouring volunteer fire departments are not able to respond in a timely manner. When the call goes out for assistance, the first question that will be asked is 'Who's insurance is responsible if my equipment is damaged?'

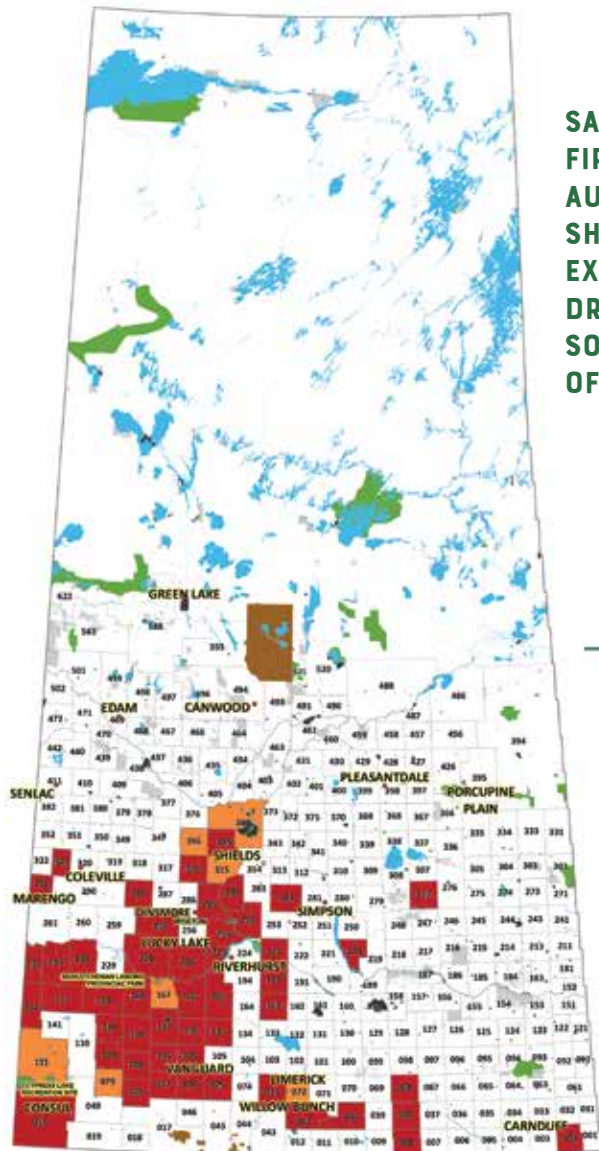


COMMANDEERED EQUIPMENT COVERAGE IS AN OPTIONAL COVERAGE THAT MUST BE REQUESTED BY AN RM

This is where Commandeered Equipment Coverage can come into play.

The PSIP wording defines Commandeered Equipment as meaning "construction equipment and/or mobile portable

equipment, appliances and devices of every kind and description usual to the operation of a rural municipality which the RM has requested participate in an emergency situation, for which they are legally liable, or have assumed liability." Commandeered Equipment coverage is an optional coverage that must be requested by an RM. The basis of settlement for the coverage is Actual Cash Value, meaning depreciation is applied to the equipment. The maximum amount of coverage SARM can provide is \$1,500,000. The other aspect is this coverage is meant to be second payor, which means that coverage is only triggered if the owner of the equipment that sustained damage is either not insured or the owner's insurer refuses to provide coverage. Though, I have had conversations with the province's largest agricultural insurer, and they indicated coverage would not be denied if an emergency has been declared and assistance was requested by the RM to a ratepayer for assistance to extinguish a grass fire.



SASKATCHEWAN FIRE BAN MAP AS OF AUGUST 14, 2023, SHOWING THE EXCEPTIONALLY DRY AREAS IN THE SOUTHWEST PORTION OF THE PROVINCE.

This coverage is important as it ensures those that are assisting do not suffer a financial loss should their equipment be damaged. Having that peace of mind should prevent any hesitation to aid, not that rural Saskatchewan residents would hesitate much, as that is our nature to help our neighbours.

If you require more information regarding this coverage or you would like to add the coverage to your PSIP Schedule, please contact Colin Warnecke, Manager of Risk Management at 306.761.3946 or by email at cwarnecke@sarm.ca.



IF ONLY YOU COULD GIVE CANADA PARENTING ADVICE, WHAT WOULD THAT LOOK LIKE?



ALICIA BAY, SENIOR POLICY ANALYST SARM POLICY AND RESEARCH

If we look at our great nation as a family, the provinces are much like siblings, different and unique, but all born into this great nation we call Canada. Our federal government, much like a parent, is to oversee our country, not impede but allow for lessons and growth.

When the Liberals started, they were like newly minted parents, bright-eyed and bushy-tailed. They were excited about all the possibilities that lay before them and were determined to do better than their parents before them, and they wanted to “do things differently.” However, the tone quickly shifted, and over the last number of years, the parenting style has been more authoritative, especially regarding issues like climate change. There has been a lot of yelling, door slamming, temper tantrums, and in some cases, “the silent” treatment on the part of the federal government and the province. Unfortunately, the consequences imposed have not served to “teach a lesson” or much less alter behaviour like the federal government would have hoped. People in this province still need to live their everyday lives. Homes still need to be heated. Fuel is still required to keep vehicles running, the lights on, and our businesses running.

Sadly, this has created defiance where there could have been cooperation. Hurt feelings and alienation replace where there should have been mutual understanding and respect.

Perhaps, it would serve Ottawa well to step back. Look at how they are “parenting” the nation. Rethink what they are doing, and come at it from a gentler place. The path they currently are on is not effective, nor is it achieving the desired results.

Like in parenting, it’s okay to admit when you didn’t get things right. Leading more gently would encourage more partnership, and it is about making choices based on internal willingness instead of external pressure or force. The government must become more aware of the behavior being modelled and be more encouraging, compassionate, and welcoming emotions brought to the table. There must be an acceptance that

provinces are whole, capable beings, and celebrate them for their uniqueness and strength.

If less animosity occurred, then more focus and energy would be placed on initiatives that fundamentally support environmental change. For example, ensuring the country can access reliable, expedient broadband would be a game changer.

In the trucking industry, they could manage their fleets better by having more real-time data and logbooks. In Saskatchewan municipalities, traffic flow management can also be managed better. Less idling and stagnant traffic could occur by controlling lights and adjusting based on the volumes and patterns. The pandemic highlighted the value of creating virtual working spaces and video conferencing. A lot can accomplish, all while never leaving your home.

Our agriculture sector has a real opportunity to take operations to the next level. Saskatchewan producers have always been innovative in their approach. It's no secret that they were early adopters of zero till technology. Saskatchewan farmers have worked tirelessly to perfect agricultural processes and the equipment used to carry out the work. However, as technology advances, equipment needs access to the internet to maximize today's technology. You can only control the amount of spray used on a crop if the machinery can communicate and download the information needed to get the job done.

Saskatchewan is lush with resources that Canada needs and the world demands. The province is home to 23 of the 31 critical minerals on Canada's Critical Mineral List. The area is poised to help meet the global market for potash, uranium, helium, lithium, copper, zinc,

cobalt, nickel, and rare earth elements. Saskatchewan is home to a growing helium sector and has the first-of-its-kind minerals-to-metals rare earth processing facility in North America. That is a real opportunity for our country.

Instead of imposing carbon taxes and squabbling about electricity production, our federal government could have utilized that time to invest in the province. They could have taken the boots-on-the-ground approach and accepted the many offers to see what Saskatchewan has to offer: our resources, people, and hope for the future.

Hopefully, as we advance toward the next election, the government will evaluate how they are doing as "parents" to our great nation and try to do things differently for our province's sake and the "families" sake as a whole.

Wetlands are powerful assets that benefit your residents.

Wetlands help mitigate and adapt to a changing climate. They:

- Buffer against drought
- Create a cooling effect during heatwaves
- Sequester carbon
- Store floodwater

Protecting and restoring wetlands in your rural municipality can prolong the life of built infrastructure, lower your operational costs, and offer additional spinoffs like improved water quality, groundwater recharge and recreation.

Call us for more information on how wetlands and other green infrastructure can work in your RM.

1-866-252-DUCK



Ducks Unlimited
Canada

du_regina@ducks.ca



WHAT IS CLUBROOT?

Clubroot is a soil-borne disease caused by the pathogen *Plasmodiophora brassicae*. Clubroot affects the roots of cruciferous field crops such as canola, mustard, camelina, oilseed radish and taramira, as well as cruciferous vegetables. Weeds in the Brassica family, such as stinkweed, shepherd's purse and wild mustard, can also host for this pathogen.

Symptoms:

During the initial stage of infection, the clubroot pathogen infects the roots of the host plant, which results in swelling of the root tissue (galls). In the early stages, no symptoms are visible to the naked eye. As the disease progress, infected roots will have swollen tissue (galls), which impact the plant's ability to uptake nutrients and water. These galls will initially appear fleshy and white, but around harvest time, galls will start to disintegrate to a peat-like consistency. It is at this stage that spores are released back into the soil. Watch for above-ground symptoms such as stunting, yellowing, and premature ripening. These symptoms may indicate the presence of a clubroot but could also be related to other diseases or environmental conditions.

Yield losses are related to the amount of pathogen in the soil, the susceptibility of the host crop and environmental conditions. The clubroot pathogen thrives in warm moist soil with lower soil pH. The clubroot pathogen overwinters in the soil, and spores may survive up to 20 years.

CLUBROOT SCOUT, PREVENT & MANAGE

BY BETTY JOHNSON
PLANT HEALTH TECHNICAL ADVISOR
SARM DIVISION 3



HOW TO PREVENT AND MANAGE CLUBROOT?

Prevention starts by restricting the introduction of clubroot-infected soils, which also means preventing spore movement. Clubroot spores can be transferred in any way that soil can be moved, specially from areas where clubroot is known to be present.

ROAD WORK AHEAD?

Sidewalk, alleyway, road and sewer repair is important. But don't rush it. Damaging an underground utility line is dangerous and costly.

Request a line locate.

Click
Before
YouDig.com



The following list below can be used to prevent clubroot in your farm:

- Think about biosecurity and practise good sanitation to reduce soil movement. Knock soil off equipment between fields. Pressure wash equipment and disinfect it when possible.
- Minimum or zero tillage can limit soil spread. Minimize traffic in and between fields.
- Create a separate exit as far as possible from the field entrance.
- Notify whoever has access to the land if clubroot has been confirmed and talk openly about biosecurity with all groups working on your land.
- Keeping the pathogen level low is the key to managing clubroot in your field. Start with preventing spore build-up by implementing a proper crop rotation and using resistant varieties.
- Extend your crop rotation; include a break of at least two to three years between susceptible crops, even when clubroot-resistant varieties are used.

- Manage weeds effectively, including volunteer canola in all fields.
- If clubroot is confirmed in a limited area, consider seeding perennial grass to that area.
- Test soil yearly to monitor spore level.

HOW TO SCOUT FOR CLUBROOT?

Scout your crops, even when resistant varieties have been used. Plants might appear healthy above ground, but symptoms and pathogen levels may be severe below ground. A full plant assessment should be done at high-risk areas such as field entrances, water runs, low areas, or high-traffic areas. It is recommended to dig and pull up the whole plant to examine the roots for any visible symptoms (clubroot galls).

Soil testing helps with the early detection of the clubroot pathogen and enables proactive management to keep the pathogen levels low and minimize yield loss. Collect soil samples from the

high-risk areas and submit them to a laboratory for a DNA-based clubroot test. The test results will provide information about the pathogen level.

CLUBROOT AND THE PEST CONTROL ACT

In 2009, clubroot was declared a pest under *The Pest Control Act*, which gives Rural Municipalities (RMs) the authority to undertake prevention and control measures.

For more information, or to contact your local Plant Health Technical Advisor, visit: sarm.ca/programs/sustainable-canadian-agricultural-partnership/plant-health-network/

Additional resources:
<https://www.saskatchewan.ca/business/agriculture-natural-resources-and-industry/agribusiness-farmers-and-ranchers/crops-and-irrigation/disease/clubroot-of-canola>

EMPOWERING RURAL FEMALE ENTREPRENEURS IN SASKATCHEWAN'S FOOD SECTOR

AUTHOR: KENDRA WACK



As the Director of the Female Entrepreneurs in Agri-Food Development (FEAD) program (previously known as AWESOME), I have the privilege of working closely with business women across Canada.

It is important to shed light on the unique challenges faced by rural entrepreneurs. With the goal of fostering a supportive community and providing essential resources, our program aims to reduce barriers and empower women to thrive in this agri-food and beverage sector. We are excited to announce the renewal of the FEAD program with support from the Saskatchewan Food Centre, as well as renewed federal funding through ISED, Women's Entrepreneur Strategy fund.

Rural female entrepreneurs in Saskatchewan encounter barriers that affect entry and growth. These challenges include limited access to capital, proximity to inputs, access to manufacturing, access to qualified talent, lack of mentorship and networking opportunities, and the

struggle to balance business and family responsibilities.

Mentorship and networking play a vital role in an entrepreneur's success, offering guidance, advice, and connections. However, rural areas lack formalized mentorship programs, communities' and networking events specific to the food sector. This isolation can hinder knowledge sharing, skill development, and the establishment of critical partnerships.

Rural female entrepreneurs often face the daunting task of juggling business ambitions with familial obligations. Generally, there is a significant shortage of childcare and support services in rural communities. Striking a balance between these roles can be a significant challenge.

Did you know?

The FEAD team's offices are located within the Saskatchewan Food Industry Development Centre in Saskatoon, SK. This intentional decision allows them to effectively serve and connect their members to Food Centre resources. As a non-profit organization, the Food Centre is passionately committed to driving food innovation and minimizing capital risks associated with new ventures. Their dedicated teams specializing in product development (including consumer package labelling), extrusion technologies, engineering process design, sustainability programs, fermentation, food safety training, toll processing, grant assistance, and more, offer a comprehensive range of services to foster industry growth. The Food Centre acts as a one-stop-shop, supporting the entire journey from idea conception to commercialization

ENTREPRENEUR SPOTLIGHT

To bring a real-life perspective, I had the privilege of interviewing Jennifer Belcher. Jennifer is the founder and owner of Ma and Me Bakery, a thriving bakery and cafe based in Unity, Saskatchewan. Opening a bakery had been a dream of hers and was a natural transition as her home based business had expanded. Jennifer opened Ma and Me Bakery in December 2021, and has plans to continue growing her business by providing additional services to her community.

How do you manage the work life balance as a rural female entrepreneur? What strategies or support systems have proven beneficial in maintaining this equilibrium?

Balancing life and being an entrepreneur is hard. I work night shift baking, and sometimes I have to work day shift too. I am thankful because my son is older but I definitely would not be able to do this without the support of my close friends because my husband works out of town. The community and support of women in our community is awesome, we lean on each other, and it takes a village.

How has being a rural female entrepreneur influenced your approach to business? What role has the FEAD program or other resources played in your success?

I love being an entrepreneur. I like to be on the go all the time, for female



entrepreneurs especially you have to have so much drive. It's been a positive experience for me, there's days that I get drained but its so rewarding. Living in a rural setting and being an entrepreneur is a dual-edged sword, one side the community is amazing, the other side it very hard to find anything like the community and support you find in the urban centres. I am excited about FEAD and the community because I know I can trust the team to advocate for what is best for my business.

What do you think organizations like SARM could help SME Food Businesses in their municipalities with?

It would be amazing if more people knew about supports available, and our municipalities brought experts to our communities. I had trouble finding resources and supports; even when I did, they weren't always accessible.

It would be great if our municipal offices had a resource book of what available for rural entrepreneurs in Saskatchewan. I feel overlooked as a rural entrepreneur, its hard to attend events and network as an entrepreneur but if municipalities banded together regional events for celebrating entrepreneurs would be amazing to build community and network.



Rural female entrepreneurs in Saskatchewan's food production sector face unique challenges in establishing and growing their businesses. The team at FEAD is working to foster supportive networks, provide mentorship opportunities, create online resources, and advocate for improved access to capital. Our team is driven to reduce barriers to create a more inclusive environment where rural female entrepreneurs can thrive.

Sign up to join our community today: www.fead.ca/join





Government of Canada
Gouvernement du Canada

ENVIRONMENTAL FATE OF PESTICIDES

BY HEALTH CANADA



HOW DO WE KNOW WHAT IMPACT PESTICIDES HAVE ON THE ENVIRONMENT? HOW DO WE TRACK THEIR EFFECTS?

The environmental fate of pesticides refers to the life cycle of a pesticide after it is released into the environment and depends on the physical and chemical properties of the pesticide as well as the environmental conditions. Pesticides may become airborne, enter the soil or bodies of water, or be taken up by plants and animals. The physical and chemical properties of the pesticide determine how likely it is to move through soil (soil mobility), how well it dissolves in water (water solubility) and how likely it is to become airborne (volatility).

Once used, a pesticide enters the environment and can be broken down by:

- Exposure to sunlight (photolysis)
- Exposure to water (hydrolysis)
- Exposure to other chemicals (oxidation and reduction)
- Microbial activity (bacteria, fungi and other microorganisms)
- Plants or animals (metabolism)

Environmental fate studies allow for the calculation of a "half-life" for a pesticide, which is a measure of the time it takes to break down a pesticide after use. These studies provide an indication as to how long a pesticide may last in the environment, which can vary under different environmental conditions.

Environmental fate studies include information on:

- Rates and methods of application;
- Number of applications per season;
- Soil characteristics;
- Application timing;
- Geographic area.

Environmental risk assessments are performed on all pesticides to evaluate the likelihood of adverse environmental effects that may occur (or are occurring) as a result of exposure to a pesticide. If risks are not acceptable, mitigation measures can be implemented to reduce exposure and protect the environment.

Mitigation measures can include:

- Spray buffer zones,
- Vegetative filter strips,
- Reductions in the rates or
- Reduction in number of applications
- Cancellation of use



WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Read, understand and follow the label. To do this:

- Review pesticide labels before using;
- Apply pesticides according to label directions and warnings, including using all personal protective equipment specified on the label
- Use a pesticide only for its stated purpose;
- Only apply pesticides:
 - o at the rate stated on the label;
 - o as often as stated per season
 - o at the times of application
 - o on the target pest
 - o in the correct location
- Be aware of the environmental hazards section of the label. If there are special restrictions on a pesticide to protect the environment, this is where they will be identified.

Report possible environmental incidents:

- A pesticide environmental incident is a negative affect (adverse reaction) to the environment (plants or wildlife) that can result from being exposed to a pesticide
- There are two ways you can report an incident:
 - o Contact the pesticide company as listed on the product label
 - o Report directly to Health Canada’s Pest Management Regulatory Agency through their public engagement portal [Voluntary Incident Reporting Form](#)

Using a pesticide contrary to label directions is a violation of the Pest Control Products Act (PCPA) and may be subject to enforcement actions such as warning letters, compliance orders,

Administrative Monetary Penalties and prosecution. Companies are encouraged to maintain an internal checklist of the steps to be taken to ensure compliance, so that they and the environment remain safe.

For more information please go to <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/consumer-product-safety/pesticides-pest-management.html> or contact us in the Prairies at info.prairies@hc-sc.gc.ca

OIL AND GAS TAX ARREARS?

Gregory Law office collection on contingency basis. No fee unless we recover. Some limitations apply.

Contact us for a no obligation consultation
Russell Gregory (306) 236-1973



**Gregory
Law Office**





BUILDING THE FUTURE: WHY RURAL COMMUNITIES MUST PRIORITIZE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION



**BY CHANDRA GUSIKOSKI,
AGRICULTURE IN THE
CLASSROOMS (AITC) -
SK COMMUNICATIONS
MANAGER**

The future of agriculture is sitting in classrooms across the province. Have you ever considered what the future of agriculture might hold in ten, twenty, or thirty years?

Agriculture is a remarkable industry with its innovative and technological

advancements, sustainable and regenerative practices, and modern agricultural practices. But who will carry on its legacy, shape farming policies, and ultimately inform decisions that will impact your farm or business in agriculture?

There is a growing divide between people and agriculture—a gap that widens as more individuals become disconnected from the processes and realities of food production. As each year passes, less of the population is exposed to farming activities, limiting the understanding of where their food comes from.

Agriculture is the foundation of many Saskatchewan communities, and it plays a vital role in the province’s economic well-being. When there is a disconnection between the community and agriculture, there is a lack of understanding and appreciation for

agriculture that may lead to a far deeper impact on the future of the industry and rural communities.

Agriculture is intricately tied to the natural environment. Disconnecting from agriculture can result in a lack of awareness about the environmental impact of food production. Sustainable farming practices, powered by modern science, innovation, and technology, require consumer demand and support. Without understanding the link between agriculture and the environment, individuals may unknowingly contribute to unsustainable practices.

Knowing the origin of our food grants us insight into the complexity of food systems—how food is produced, distributed, and consumed. Without this knowledge, consumers are unaware of the challenges farmers face now and for the future. Understanding the source of food helps cultivate a sense of



immersive learning opportunities, we empower the next generation to become catalysts for innovation and the continued growth of the agricultural industry. The students we reach today are the future of agriculture and rural communities.

By investing in agriculture education, we ensure that our farms and agriculture businesses will thrive as they are carried forward by capable hands. By supporting Agriculture in the Classroom, you contribute to a legacy that extends far beyond your own farm. Together, let us nurture a generation of farmers, leaders, policymakers, and innovators who will uphold the values of agriculture and secure a prosperous future for our farms, families, and communities.

appreciation for the effort and resources required to produce it. When individuals are disconnected from where food comes from, they may take it for granted and fail to appreciate the hard work, skill, and resources required to produce it.

Without a basic understanding of the intricacies of the food system, people are unaware of the diverse career opportunities in the agriculture industry. And they fail to see how their unique interests and skillsets are needed and can play a role in helping to feed the world. As a result, fewer individuals are entering the agricultural workforce, exacerbating the existing labor shortage in the industry and potentially impacting food production and security in the long run.

To mitigate these impacts, agriculture education initiatives focused on building a personal connection between individuals and agriculture are crucial, **and it begins with youth.** By fostering stronger connections between youth and agriculture, we can minimize the effects of the disconnect, leading to more sustainable, resilient, and prosperous agriculture communities.

Agriculture in the Classroom is a charitable organization committed to providing students with essential knowledge while fostering a genuine

appreciation for food and agriculture. Our mission extends beyond education as we strive to create

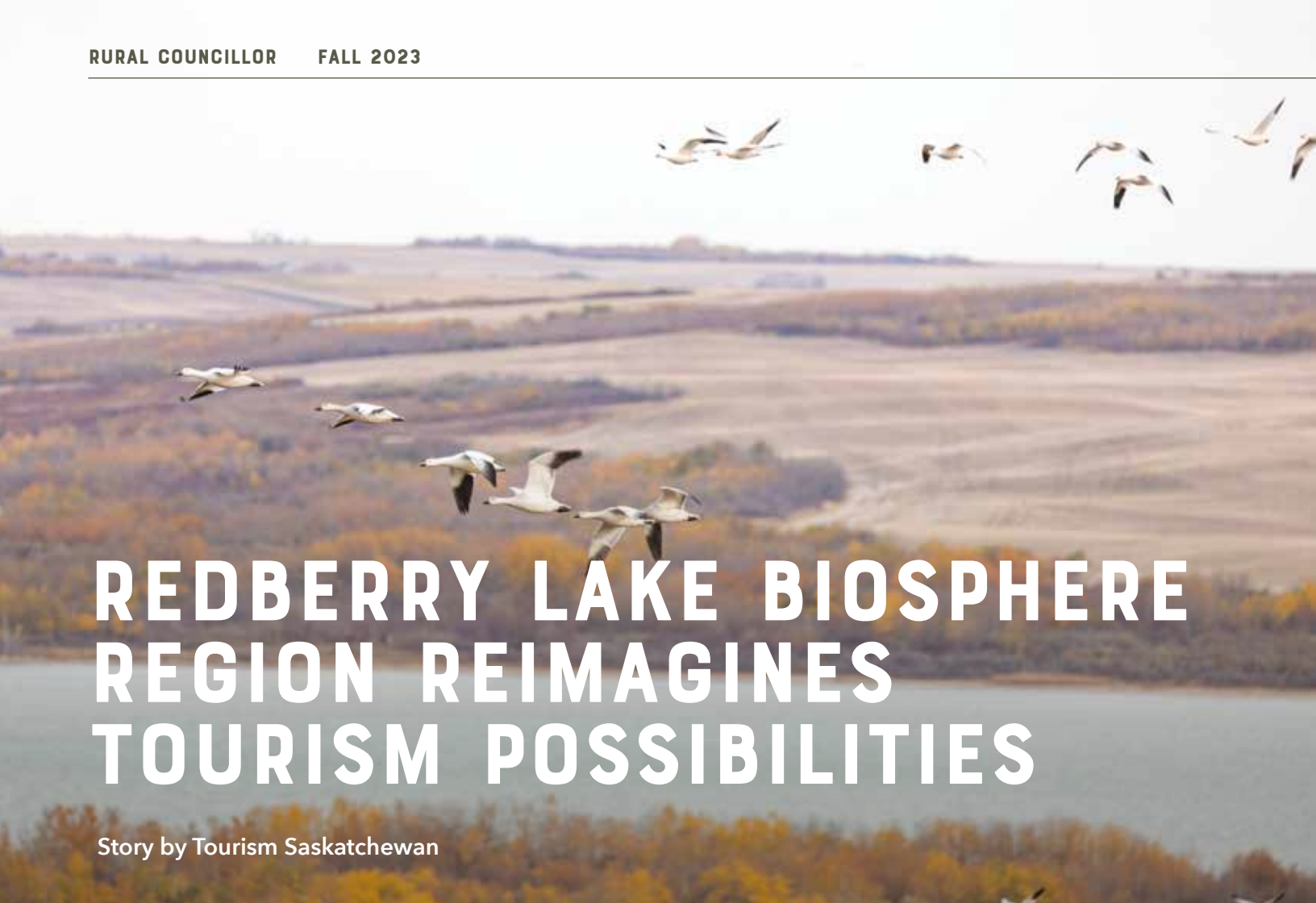
transformative experiences that inspire lifelong care and concern for food and agriculture.

Through a range of engaging initiatives, such as indoor school gardens, farm tours, agriculture career expos, and teaching resources, we ignite students' passion and establish a profound connection with the world of agriculture. By offering hands-on encounters and

THERE IS A GROWING DIVIDE BETWEEN PEOPLE AND AGRICULTURE—A GAP THAT WIDENS AS MORE INDIVIDUALS BECOME DISCONNECTED FROM THE PROCESSES AND REALITIES OF FOOD PRODUCTION.

Many Rural Municipalities around the province have committed to supporting this movement, strengthening our ability to create change, and advocating for the future of agriculture. To learn more, visit aitc.sk.ca.





REDBERRY LAKE BIOSPHERE REGION REIMAGINES TOURISM POSSIBILITIES

Story by Tourism Saskatchewan

Photo by Neil Zeller

The Redberry Lake Biosphere Region (RLBR) is in a category all of its own. Its importance is recognized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which granted designation as a UNESCO Biosphere Region in 2000. Despite the UNESCO designation, it remains one of Saskatchewan's best kept secrets.

The RLBR is one of 19 UNESCO biospheres in Canada, and the only one located in Saskatchewan. Efforts are underway to heighten awareness and curiosity, create transformative visitor experiences and devise opportunities for local entrepreneurs and artists to be part of the tourism economy. New developments and activities aim for a minimal environmental footprint and be least disruptive to the land, forest, plants and species of this unique area of Saskatchewan.

The world network of UNESCO biosphere reserves covers 700 regions in over 120 countries. "Every designated biosphere region worldwide has a core area with some level of protected status," John Kindrachuk, RLBR Executive Director, said. "Most of those in Canada are part of a national park. Ours is somewhat unique in that Redberry Lake has protection as a Federal Bird Sanctuary."

The UNESCO designation covers the Redberry Lake watershed, which is over 110,000 hectares and touches seven Saskatchewan rural municipalities - Great Bend No. 405, Mayfield No. 406, Blaine Lake No. 434, Redberry No. 435, Douglas No. 436, Leask No. 464 and Meeting Lake No. 466.

Kindrachuk acknowledged some of the confusion concerning travel to the area and assumptions that it is an entirely protected zone, off limits to development, business and recreational activities. More accurately, the area sees a symbiotic relationship between conservation and commerce. While the lake has protected status, rural communities and farms dot the area. Redberry Lake Regional Park bustles with activity in the summer. The landscape is a mix of cultivated and grazed land with patches of natural prairie and aspen forest.

Redberry Lake, itself, is unique in that it reaches a depth of 75 feet - unusual for a saline lake. The water reflects vibrant shades of turquoise and blue, due to the magnesium sulphate composition. The extended area around the lake is a nesting and feeding spot for migratory birds, including endangered whooping cranes. Nearly 200 bird species have been spotted in the area.

The RLBR fulfils a mandate of conservation practices, sustainable development and capacity building through working collaboratively with partners at the local, provincial, national and international levels. Bringing multiple municipalities and stakeholders together and finding mutual goals is, understandably, challenging. Kindrachuk stresses that clear communication and consultation have led to greater appreciation of the region's tourism potential, and that recruiting local champions is important.

"There are so many things to see in rural Saskatchewan," he said. "But there is misunderstanding, even at the local level. Some people ask, 'Why would anyone come here?' We are trying to educate them that we have lots here to offer - that activities they consider common can be unique experiences for

visitors. Looking ahead, part of the tourism experience will be teaching visitors about the importance of biodiversity - everything from plants to birds to insects and all the species that inhabit the area."

The RLBR set ambitious goals for growing the local visitor economy, with a focus on developing a keystone experience that attracts visitors and enables them to stay overnight or longer. Extending their stay means more spending and more opportunities for local entrepreneurs, artists and people who can offer unique, authentic guest experiences. "It's not just about Redberry Lake, but about building a base location," Kindrachuk said. "With that in place, people can do excursions from here. We are seeing interest from a number of small operators interested in starting their own tourism ventures."

Additionally, the area is a popular destination for birding enthusiasts, some of whom make annual pilgrimages to enjoy rare sightings and capture photographs. Accommodations for these visitors has been a missing piece of the puzzle, now addressed through the construction of geodesic domes that sleep up to six people.

This year has literally been a building year for the RLBR, which received funding from the Government of Canada's 2 Billion Trees program to construct a tree nursery, greenhouse and maintenance building. The sale of native plants, trees and shrubs will be an important source of income that, along with other revenue streams, ensures stable funding. Building and operating the nursery will create a number of new jobs in the area.

Support from Prairies Economic Development Canada, through the Tourism Relief Fund, made the construction of a new interpretive centre possible. The multi-purpose building will be used for meetings, retreats, indoor programming and as a classroom setting.

Investment through Tourism Saskatchewan's Diversification Program supported the creation of new programming and experiences, along with a bird banding station. Guests now have a variety of package options, ranging from half-day tours that include working with a bird banding specialist to overnight and multi-day excursions that involve nighttime activities.



Photo by Neil Zeller

WINNING PRACTICES:

SASKATCHEWAN MUNICIPAL AWARD WINNERS

The Saskatchewan Municipal Awards (SMAs) recognize innovative projects that are happening in Saskatchewan’s hometowns and celebrate municipal success. The awards program is a partnership between the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association (SUMA), Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM), the Rural Municipal Administrators Association (RMAA), the Urban Municipal Administrators Association of Saskatchewan (UMAAS), the Saskatchewan Association of Northern Communities, and the provincial ministry of Government Relations.

Four projects by eight municipalities were recognized in the 16th Annual Saskatchewan Municipal Awards (SMA’s). The SMA’s celebrate the excellent and innovative practices of Saskatchewan’s municipal governments. This year’s winners have revitalized their communities through transformation and restoration. The award presentations took place at the SARM and SUMA Conventions this spring.

The selection committee was made up of:

- **Keith Comstock**, (Executive in Residence at the Johnson Shoyama School of Public Policy)
- **Malcolm Eaton**, (former Mayor of Humboldt and former Vice-President of Cities for SUMA)
- **Wendy Gowda**, (Municipal Advisor, former Administrator for the RM of LeRoy No. 339 and Past President of RMAA)

- **Don Taylor**, (Reeve of the RM of Saltcoats No. 213 and former board member for SARM)
- **Jim Toye**, (former City Manager for the City of Prince Albert) and
- **Loretta Young**, (former administrator for the RM of Longlaketon No. 219 and the Village of Earl Grey)

Selection committee members noted that the winning projects were some of the first of their kind in the province and reflected the needs of their respective municipalities.

Projects supported the community’s infrastructure including developing a solar power project to power municipal facilities, the revitalization of a main street, and regional planning. You can see all the details on the winning projects, including videos with project and community leaders talking about their projects, on the SMA website at www.municipalawards.ca.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE WINNERS! WE LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING ABOUT THE GREAT WORK IN YOUR MUNICIPALITY WHEN NOMINATIONS FOR THE 17TH ANNUAL SASKATCHEWAN MUNICIPAL AWARDS OPEN ON SEPTEMBER 12, 2023!



FIRST PLACE

Solar Power for New Infrastructure
(Town of Lumsden)

Winning practice: Initiated a solar power project to reduce greenhouse gas emissions at four new municipal facilities and contribute to the long-term sustainability of the community.

SECOND PLACE

Biggar Revitalization Project
(Town of Biggar)

Winning practice: Developed a four-phase plan, with community input and partnerships, to revitalize Biggar’s Main Street.

THIRD PLACE

Women in Government Program
(RM of Edenwold No. 158)

Winning practice: Adopted a program to attract and encourage women to run for municipal council.

REGIONAL COOPERATION

P4G Planning District
(RM of Corman Park No. 344, Town of Osler, and Cities of Martensville, Saskatoon, and Warman)

Winning practice: Established a partnership to ensure a coordinated approach to regional planning and servicing, preparing the region for growth and economic prosperity.



SEC ensures the issues affecting rural Saskatchewan are heard by both provincial and federal levels of government as well as the general public through the distribution of timely information and helpful resources that enhance and highlight the voice of Saskatchewan's rural municipal government.

Communications:

- Website
- Media Relations
- News Releases
- Rural Councillor quarterly magazine
- Rural Sheaf monthly digital newsletter
- Rural Dart weekly digital newsletter
- Advertising (digital, print, radio)
- Social Media: Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn

Events:

- Annual Convention and Trade Show
- Midterm Convention
- June Division Meetings
- Travelling July Board meetings
- Webinars

Getting to know SARM

Strategic Engagement & Communications (SEC)



Jared Tabler
Managing Consultant



Amy Roettger
Communications & Events Coordinator, Sr



Adam Brougham
Communications & Events Coordinator



Corette Mihalcea
Communications Specialist

Members come to SEC for helpful resources and timely information. SEC also handles SARM's branding and marketing, stakeholder engagement, and social and media relations. They are responsible for SARM events and a variety of communications.

SEC's recent moments of pride:

- Over the past year, SARM's social media presence has risen to over 2,800 followers across 3 platforms, including a new LinkedIn account that gains new followers with every post.
- Thanks to thoughtful redesigns, SARM's digital publications have also grown in readership to 300+ weekly, 400+ monthly, and 3,000+ quarterly. SARM's webinars have gained in popularity too, reaching 45 to 150 registrants per session.
- In-person attendance for this year's conventions and trade show were back up to pre-pandemic numbers, partly in thanks to the in-house registration platform that the SEC team built with McQueen Creative. This customized solution not only allows SARM to better serve its members, it's also saving thousands of dollars each year.

With optimistic eyes on the future, SEC is excited about all the ways they can engage with and better serve their partners, sponsors, internal teams, and SARM members.



SARM.ca



MEMBER NEWS

IN MEMORIAM



BARRY DOLAN **RM OF MILDEN NO. 286** **IN MEMORIAM**

Barry Dolan passed away peacefully June 27th, 2023. Barry was born & raised in the RM of Milden No 286 and settled on the family farm in 1951 with his wife Dorothy where they raised 5 children. In addition to his farm & family, Barry enjoyed square dancing, Lions Club, winters in Arizona, fixing things and all community events.

Barry Served on the RM of Milden No. 286 Council from 1976 - 2000. The first 4 years as Division 5 Councillor, then from 1981 to 2000 as Reeve. His knowledge and dedication was a great value to the Municipality.

Barry will be missed by all who knew him. □

RETIREMENT

DAVID SCHAEFFER **R.M. OF FRANCIS NO. 127** **RETIREMENT**

The RM of Francis No. 127 would like to bid a farewell to David Schaeffer for his esteemed role as councillor for Division 6 from 1994-2022 for 28 years.

Throughout his tenure David has been an exceptional public servant, dedicating countless hours above and beyond to serving our RM.

He has been an advocate for economic stability, development, and sustainable growth. His visionary leadership and business experience have contributed to numerous initiatives that have enriched our RM.

As David embarks on a well-deserved retirement with his wife Linda on his farming operation, we extend our warmest gratitude and best wishes for this new chapter in his life. His legacy of public service will continue to inspire us, and his contributions will be remembered for years to come. □

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 phone's camera 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!



SaskWater

Want peak performance from your water supply system?

Wish you had a knowledgeable, certified operator backed by a diverse team of experts?

Does rain fall?

We have the answers.

Visit [saskwater.com/municipal](https://www.saskwater.com/municipal)



NEVER IDLE.

Dig uptime? Dump downtime with the most proven & productive excavators on Earth & lifetime support from Brandt!

Comprehensive Lineup

Complete your fleet with loaders, graders & more from Brandt – in stock & ready to rumble!

Technology Leaders

Pressure “keeping up”? Brandt gets it. With 15+ years in construction tech we’ll help you get it right.

24/7/365 Support

With Brandt you get 100+ equipment service locations, mobile techs & the parts you need, pronto!

Your time is money and we won’t waste either! ▶ Find your Brandt dealer or talk to us now at brandt.ca/never-idle

brandt.ca/never-idle
1-888-227-2638



Brandt