



Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SGI dropping non-productive call rate to compensate hometown fire departments

Today, SGI will stop using the non-productive call rate for time spent by fire departments responding to motor vehicle collisions (MVCs) on provincial highways.

Saskatchewan's fire departments will now be compensated at a rate of \$913 for every hour spent at a collision in 2018, rather than having their time potentially classified at the lower, non-productive rate of \$549 per hour. The change will result in approximately \$510,000 more in reimbursement for Saskatchewan's fire departments in the first year alone.

"Fire departments are not legally or legislatively responsible for responding to MVCs outside their municipality, but our hometown departments do so because they are committed to public safety," said Gordon Barnhart, SUMA President. "Dropping the non-productive call rate means our departments will be more fairly compensated for their dedication, and it will allow municipalities to continue providing much needed services."

For Doug Lapchuk, President of the Saskatchewan Volunteer Fire Fighters Association, the change will not only help compensate fire departments, and ultimately municipalities and their taxpayers, for all equipment and manpower used at an MVC, but it alters the perception that certain duties performed by members are less valuable than others.

Kevin Eskra, President of the Saskatchewan Association of Fire Chiefs, believes the compensation may also increase responder safety.

The change is a result of four years of SUMA advocacy efforts, in partnership with the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, the Saskatchewan Association of Fire Chiefs, and the Saskatchewan Volunteer Fire Fighters Association.

SUMA is continuing to work with SGI to increase the productive call rate to \$1,200 per hour, as third-party research commissioned by SUMA shows that current compensation rates, even for time deemed productive, are failing to fully cover costs incurred by fire departments.

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For more information visit www.suma.org, or to arrange an interview please contact:

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Founded in 1905, SUMA is the voice of Saskatchewan's hometowns.