

Green is the Colour ... Environment is the game

Saskatchewan Environment's Regulatory Review a main focus for the urban sector

by Wes Jickling, Policy & Communications Director

A new Rider season is upon us, and like everyone else in Saskatchewan we at SUMA are getting geared up. We've got more than just a few Rider Priders in the office and on the Board! While the Green and White begin their journey to certain Grey Cup glory, SUMA can say that Green will also be our focus this summer – in a very different way. Environmental issues remain a major priority for the municipal sector.

The Ministry of Environment is right now carrying out a Regulatory Review, with the objective to create a better environmental management system in the province. The Ministry is proposing a big package of changes to its processes, staffing, management structure, legislation, and use of technology. Most importantly, the Ministry is proposing a shift to a 'results-based approach' to environmental regulation. The results-based approach would mean that the Ministry defines the desired environmental outcomes and makes operators – including municipalities – accountable to provide those outcomes.

Municipalities are major stakeholders in the proposed changes. After all, it is municipalities that deliver the key environmental services to everyone living in the province – drinking water, wastewater, solid waste management services are all delivered by the municipal order of government. Not to mention that municipalities represent 75 per cent of all environmental expenditures in Canada!

Clearly, municipalities need to be at the table, making sure that Environment's proposed changes will work for municipalities. And SUMA is at the table, taking the lead in analyzing the proposed changes from the

municipal perspective. The entire urban sector – cities, towns and villages – is united behind SUMA's analysis and response to the Ministry of Environment.

SUMA supports in principle the aims of the regulatory review and the proposed shift to a results-based approach to environmental regulation. But beyond the overall aims, SUMA has identified some areas of interest and concern.



Positive Developments

- **Contaminated Sites:** the Ministry is looking to begin terminating liability of polluters, provided that abandoned gas stations (for example) are cleaned up to meet acceptable standards. Also, the province has committed to establish a contaminated sites registry.

- **Solid Waste Management and Recycling:** the Ministry has indicated that it will take steps to develop a province-wide, integrated solid waste management system. As well, a Multi-Material Recycling Program will be launched by late 2010.

Areas of Concern

- **Downloaded Costs and Liabilities:** There is concern that some costs and li-

abilities will be downloaded to municipalities, which is of major significance given municipalities' limited capacity to absorb new costs and liabilities.

- **Land Use Planning:** SUMA wants to ensure that the Ministry's proposals for provincial land-use frameworks will respect the autonomy and jurisdiction of municipalities over local land-use.

- **Environmental Standards:** SUMA wants to ensure that the municipal sector is closely involved in developing (and updating every five years) relevant sections of the new Saskatchewan Environment Code. Municipalities have limited capacity to react and comply with changing environmental standards, so it's important that municipalities' capacity constraints are respected in the process.

SUMA enjoys very close consultation with the Ministry of Environment on this issue. There have been several opportunities to communicate the urban perspective through two rounds of consultation, written submissions and most recently a meeting between SUMA and Environment Minister, Nancy Heppner.

We are confident that through our harmonious government-to-government relationship, we can work with the Ministry of Environment to ensure that any changes will meet municipalities' needs and respect municipal capacity challenges.

So, SUMA's summer will be a Green one! We'll be staying closely engaged with the Regulatory Review process, and continuing our advocacy efforts on municipalities' environmental priorities – solid waste management, recycling and water management.



TALK TO US!

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Email Rae Anne Moen at rmoen@suma.org or call 306-525-4396.
We'd love to hear from you!

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Many of us are familiar with the children's book 'Where's Waldo?' Given my schedule during the month of June, there were certainly times when I felt as though I could empathize with Waldo! The past month has been a flurry of activity - from FCM meetings in Whistler to SUMA Spring Regional Meetings throughout the province - there was much to do as we all tried to wrap up some critical business in advance of the summer months.

I was pleased to meet with so many of you out at our regional meetings. They are truly one of my favorite activities as your President. It provides me with the opportunity to join our SUMA team on the road to update you on what we've been working toward on your behalf. I truly appreciate the opportunity to meet with you in your home regions to discuss issues of local interest, and to hear your comments and concerns.

Each and every Saskatchewan village, town and city has their own unique cultures, traditions, and histories. Community pride was evident from each of our host communities, and I wish to express sincere thanks to each of our host communities for their hospitality.

SUMA is truly the voice of urban municipalities, and as such, is asked on a regular basis to consult on matters of concern to our members. At present, SUMA is being asked to respond to 28 consultations from the province - the three major ones being the Environmental Regulatory Review, Climate Change and the Uranium Development Partnership (UDP). We will do our very best to keep you apprised of our progress in these areas.

June was also a time when the UDP consultations that took place throughout the province concluded. While we await UDP Chair Dan Perrins' report on what he heard in communities throughout Saskatchewan, I encourage you to make your voice available to the discussion. I believe that critical to this process and doing what is right for our province is for everyone to understand the facts. There are some great resources out there, and I encourage you, if you've not already done so, to seek them out and make an informed decision.

Like most of you, I am looking forward to some 'down time' during the summer months. Personally, my wife Diane and I will be vacationing where we always do - at Piprell Lake.

Wherever summertime takes you and yours, I wish you all an enjoyable and safe Saskatchewan summer!

Allan Earle



Coming back from the annual convention of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), I am still reflecting on a number of outcomes from this gathering of municipal officials. From my perspective, one of the most significant developments was the call by the City of Regina for a partnership of municipal, federal, provincial and private sectors to develop a 20-year strategy to manage the municipal infrastructure gap. While there has been significant progress in this area over the past few years, an overall strategy has yet to be defined.

Another outcome was the adoption of a resolution positioning municipalities on the "Buy America" provisions which are being applied at the municipal and state levels in the United States. Municipalities adopted a resolution (accessible on FCM's website) which encourages our Federal Government to engage with the US to repeal these restrictions against goods and materials manufactured in Canada. The resolution offers a window of 120 days to address this issue. Municipalities have also served notice that, after that date, they will consider implementing similar restrictions on this side of the border.

At FCM, as with other conventions, much is also discussed outside of the plenary sessions and workshops. In analyzing the current state of the economy, many elected officials are already concerned with the strategies which will be implemented by federal and provincial governments to recover from the unprecedented deficits which are being experienced across the nation. A repeat of the early 1990s is evidently on everyone's mind. There is a shared concern among mayors that once again municipal governments may be asked to tighten their belts to help balance the books. Are programs such as the GST exemptions, Gas Tax Funding and other capital investment programs at risk? Will municipalities be asked to share the burden of the auto sector bail outs? Other officials dared compare the mass amount of stimulus funds and the speediness of the response to the industrial sector needs compared to the municipal infrastructure gap.

These concerns will be best addressed by clearly stating our positions and by coordinated united actions from the municipal sector. FCM's mandate is very much the same as that of our own association. Both SUMA and FCM exist to promote, defend and protect the interests of their members. Local governments remain the foundation of our communities and of our economy. As much as global economic times may be challenging, people continue to expect quality water and sewer services, excellent protective services, safe playgrounds and great quality of life. That is job one for our mayors, councillors and municipal administration! That is what we do.

Laurent Mougeot

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Board meeting caps busy month of June

Regional Meeting Update

SUMA staff along with President Allan Earle hit the road once again for the annual SUMA spring regional meetings during the month of June. Meetings took place in locations throughout Saskatchewan, including Sturgis, Eston, Glaslyn, Choiceland, Cupar, Montmartre and Swift Current.

Held semi-annually, SUMA regional meetings are an excellent opportunity for SUMA members to hear the latest developments on topical, province-wide issues that are of concern to Saskatchewan's municipalities, discuss regional issues, and hear from special delegations. The meetings also provide SUMA an excellent opportunity to meet with our members and hear local issues and challenges.

Much of the time was devoted to topical policy items for SUMA members, including the Bridge Funding Recycling Program, federal and provincial infrastructure commitments, Tangible Capital Assets update and Municipal Operating Grants.

Attendees heard about two new SUMA Advantage programs, including the fuel supply program and computer software purchase program.

Guest presenters also provided information on the following:

- SaskPower delivered a presentation on demand charges for recreational facilities
- The Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency (SAMA) provided an update on the property revaluation cycle; and
- Officials from Corrections, Public Safety & Policing provided an update on the Public Safety Review Committee

The meetings were well attended, with delegates engaging in lively discussions addressing a broad range of issues and concerns. Some regions took the opportunity to bring forward resolutions on matters they would like to see SUMA address, such as supporting the recommendations of the Public Safety Review Committee.

In case you missed the meetings and are interested in viewing the presentations, visit www.suma.org

The SUMA staff looks forward to meeting with the membership again during the fall tour. If you have topics that you'd like to see covered, please contact your regional director.

Board Meeting highlights

The SUMA Board of Directors gathered in Regina for its quarterly meeting on June 26-27. Friday morning kicked off with a series of committee meetings. SUMA committees include: Environment, Resolutions, Protective Services, Corporate Services, Convention Planning, and Transportation.

The afternoon focused on policy development, with Directors devoting significant time to discussing critical policy areas for SUMA members. During this time, the Board adopted policy positions in the following areas: Shortening of the property revaluation cycle to two years, subject to a favourable detailed cost benefit analysis and the Province providing the greater share of SAMA's cost. Positions on the Education Property Tax and Municipal Infrastructure were also agreed upon.

Saturday was devoted to strategic plan updates, Executive, administrative and Committee reports, and policy. For SUMA policy statements, visit our website.

Lobby Days

During the month of June, SUMA representatives met with provincial decision-makers to discuss opportunities and challenges for Saskatchewan's municipal sector. Priority agenda items included infrastructure, environment, district planning and health care.

As part of these meetings, SUMA had the opportunity to meet with provincial representatives that have recently taken on new responsibilities as part of the Premier's reorganization of Cabinet that was announced on May 29. Those representatives are Hon. Jeremy Harrison, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Hon. Jim Reiter, Minister of Highways. Both meetings were very positive, and launches our collaborative relationship with both Ministries.

Newly-elected Leader of the Opposition, Dwain Lingenfelter, stopped by the SUMA office in mid-June to discuss issues of concern to the SUMA membership. We appreciated the opportunity to articulate concerns of the municipal sector to Mr. Lingenfelter.

During our meeting with Environment Minister Nancy Heppner, she demonstrated a clear command of SUMA's concerns and requirements. Our representatives received some key assurances from her that SUMA's interests will be considered and addressed, particularly in relation to the Province's Environmental Regulatory Review.

Off to a good start!

The Province, SUMA and our colleagues in the municipal sector have worked hard to establish a healthy government-to-government relationship – one that SUMA and new Municipal Affairs Minister, Jeremy Harrison plan to continue. SUMA President Allan Earle and Policy and Communications Director, Wes Jickling met with Minister Harrison shortly after his May 29 appointment to Cabinet to discuss opportunities and challenges for Saskatchewan's municipal sector.

SUMA representatives were also pleased to see Minister Harrison attend two SUMA spring regional meetings, in Glaslyn and Swift Current. At the meetings, the Minister expressed his gratitude to former Minister Bill Hutchinson for his work, and said that he looks forward to working with SUMA to advance the municipal agenda.

Minister Harrison grew up in Meadow Lake. He completed an undergraduate degree in Political Science and Canadian History from the University of Alberta in 2001. He then graduated from the University of Saskatchewan with a Bachelor of Laws in 2004. He was elected to Parliament in the same year, and at age 26 became one of the youngest people ever to sit in the House of Commons. Minister Harrison was elected to the Saskatchewan Legislature in 2007. He has served the Legislature in various capacities, including Legislative Secretary, member of the Standing Committee on the Economy, and member of the Public Accounts Committee. Harrison was appointed as Minister of Municipal Affairs in May 2009.



Minister Harrison at SUMA spring meeting in Glaslyn

Hello ... Good bye!

Johnna Van Parys joins SUMA team



Hello! My name is Johnna Van Parys and I recently joined SUMA for a summer term as a junior policy advisor.

I've been asked to introduce myself to you, so here goes!

Born and raised in Regina, I have returned home after spending four years at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon, where I completed my B.A. in Political Studies this spring. During my time at the U of S, I participated in student government and college governance,

volunteered with the Open Door Society, and worked in IT support and university retention.

After my term here at SUMA ends, I am moving to Ottawa to begin a joint program in Common Law and International Affairs. While I am looking forward to this new challenge, I hope I can acclimatize to eastern-Canadian humidity!

When not working and studying, I enjoy catching up with family and friends, especially when the weather cooperates. I have recently been introduced to the joys of camping and have a few weekend adventures planned at campgrounds around the province. Other summer plans include a trip to the Calgary Stampede and attempting to wrestle my life into two suitcases and three boxes!

I will be working on a range of projects this summer, including providing support for the Municipal Recycling Bridge Funding Program and on going projects for Policy and Communications.

I have really enjoyed learning about municipal and local governments and look forward to applying this experience to my studies next year.

Have a wonderful summer!

Policy Advisor Jennifer Fink leaving SUMA

It is with both sadness and pride that we say 'farewell' to Policy Advisor, Jennifer Fink.

Jenn will be joining the Municipal Affairs' team as their Senior Program Policy Analyst on July 15. Her major focus will be the delivery of the New Deal (Gas Tax) Program.

Jennifer joined SUMA in March of 2008. She quickly engaged with the Policy team and became the lead on numerous critical files, including the highly successful launch of our lobby days. More recently, she designed the delivery of the Bridge Funding Recycling Program. Jenn never saw any barriers in our workplace. She freely shared her ideas and experiences with everyone.

We are very happy for the opportunity Jenn has been offered to work with the Province on municipal programs, and look forward to continuing our working relationship with her through these new responsibilities.

Jenn – thanks for your contribution to SUMA, your team spirit, your humour, and the passion you have developed for the municipal sector.

We wish you the very best!

~ Your friends at SUMA



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Canada

SIGI saves Yorkton \$2.8 million

They call Yorkton the city 'Where good things happen'.

For City Mayor Chris Wyatt, the latest of these good things has come in the form of a \$14.5 million loan from the province through a program called 'SIGI'.

A program of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, the Saskatchewan Infrastructure Growth Initiative (SIGI) provides municipalities with interest subsidy grants for up to five years on \$75 million per year, totaling \$300 over four years. Launched in 2008, SIGI has become a popular program with Saskatchewan's municipal leaders, largely due to the simple application process.

Wyatt said that Yorkton's funding approval was timed perfectly because local projects approved under SIGI - including a new water treatment plant building, well water line replacement and subdivision development - were already near completion of the planning stages. "We were definitely shovel-ready. These projects would have gone ahead either way, so this funding is really like being given money," said Wyatt.

The real interest savings is for the City of Yorkton is projected to be \$2.83 million, money that Wyatt said will be used to invest in other projects. With loans secured through local financial institutions at a com-

parable rate to that being offered by the Municipal Finance Corporation, the City plans to use the money it had in reserves to accelerate payment schedules.

Here's how it works: the municipality initially incurs and pays the interest costs. They then must submit the required Request for Payment form and supporting documentation (including proof of payment) to receive the appropriate reimbursement through a SIGI interest rate subsidy.

SIGI program objectives include: lot development (and necessary infrastructure), meeting the needs of municipalities, delivery of services at an appropriate cost to taxpayers, reasonable accountability, administrative efficiency, and sustainability.

With the assistance of their part-time grant writer - something that Wyatt strongly recommends to other municipalities - Yorkton was approved for three SIGI applications, each of which took less than two months to be approved.

Wyatt said that in addition to the simple process and speedy approval period, an additional benefit of SIGI is the message that it sends to municipalities. "SIGI is an assurance that the province is there to help communities. It's a great way to reward communities for due diligence, for good planning

and good budgeting," he said.

Yorkton has several projects in the queue as part of its long-term capital plan to accommodate population growth and business development, including additional subdivisions and an industrial corridor.

"If the province keeps the program in place, we will definitely apply again," said Wyatt.

For more information on the SIGI program, visit www.municipal.gov.sk.ca



Yorkton Mayor Chris Wyatt said that the City will be applying for more SIGI funding.



Yorkton's Water Treatment Plant under construction.



The City has used a loan from the Saskatchewan Infrastructure Growth Initiative (SIGI) to fund the Queen Street Water Treatment Plant project.

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Municipal water and waste management professionals needed to form Industry Panel

ECO Canada is launching a nation-wide study to investigate labour market issues and trends relating to municipal water, wastewater, and solid waste management facilities. The study will identify:

- Critical skills gaps and human resources issues
- Industry supply and demand issues
- Future trends of the labour markets working in these facilities

Professionals in this industry are invited to join ECO's panel and answer questions pertaining to the facilities in their municipality or region in the form of a survey.

Email invitations to those who have joined the panel will be sent starting June 23, 2009. Responses will be used to ensure that labour market conditions are understood and addressed. The results of the full survey will be available in January 2010 from the ECO Canada web site.

To learn more about the survey, how the results can be used to benefit your facility and to pre-order the report visit www.eco.ca/mwwwm.

About ECO Canada:

ECO Canada develops programs that help individuals build meaningful environmental careers and provides employers with resources to find and keep the best environmental practitioners. It also informs educators and governments of employment trends to ensure the ongoing prosperity of this growing sector. For more information please visit: www.eco.ca.

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SMA Awards recognize innovative partnership

He had hair when the project began – at least that’s the way that Leo Arcand tells it.

Arcand is Vice-President of the ‘Northern Regional Recreation Centre’ (NRRC), a volunteer board comprised of members of the Little Red River Band, the R.M. of Buckland no. 491 and the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation. The group was recognized for its efforts with a ‘Regional Leadership and Partnerships Award’ at the Saskatchewan Municipal Awards Luncheon in Regina in May.

The NRRC project all began with a run-down recreational facility and aspirations to offer opportunities to local residents. Situated in the RM of Buckland, just north of Prince Albert, the initial vision for the Centre was to enhance the region’s social, sport and recreation opportunities, providing local residents with a place to exercise and develop as athletes. In 2007, the building renovation began, with support from the Canada-Saskatchewan Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund, Farm Credit Canada, True Sport Foundation of Canada, and Northern Lights Community Development Corporation.

Although Arcand said that some people were initially skeptical, the success of the project has turned the naysayers into believers. Offering free ice time for schools, free skating during after school hours and Sundays, approximately 7,000 children have made use of the newly refurbished facility. The rink also features shoulder-season ice, something that isn’t available elsewhere in the region. The rink is booked to 80 per cent capacity during the week.

In addition, Arcand said an underlying benefit is how the facility has enabled people of the community to come together. “First Nations kids who may not have felt a part of the community before are using the Centre alongside non-First Nations kids. They feel welcome there,” said Arcand.

The collaborative approach that’s been developed by the board is a big reason why Arcand believes the project has become so successful. “There are open discussions at our meetings, and everyone has their say. While we may not always agree, there is a real respect that underlies everything we do,” he said.



Group photo, from left to right: Leo Arcand, Vice-Chairman, Northern Regional Recreation Centre (NRRC); Bill Hayes, Councilor, R.M. of Buckland no. 491, Board of Directors, NRRC; John Halkett, Councilor, Little Red River Band Administration; Chief Tammy Cook-Searson, Lac La Ronge Indian Band; Wes Stubbs, Reeve, R.M. of Buckland No. 491; Nadine Wilson, MLA, Saskatchewan Rivers; Doug Hobson, Chairman, NRRC; Clayton Sewap, Councilor, Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation; Richard Ahenakew, General Manager, Northern Lights Casino; Alphonse Dorion, Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation, Board of Directors, NRRC; Tracey Halkett, Little Red River Band Administration, Board of Directors, NRRC; Linda Clavelle, Coordinator, NRRC

He also thinks that the potential for partnerships with First Nations is something that more municipalities should explore. The Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation and Lac La Ronge Indian Band, with which the Little Red River First Nation is affiliated, each represent 8,000 people respectively.

As for what’s next for the NRRC, Arcand said that the group will work towards refurbishing equipment and additional building renovations, including new rink boards, six new dressing rooms and a rental facility that would help to generate revenue.

Although Arcand and the project team left the Municipal Awards luncheon with the hardware, the real winners are the school children in the Prince Albert area that can now skate in a newly refurbished indoor rink.

Congratulations also goes to the Town of Kindersley and five surrounding R.M.s who were also in the running in the ‘Regional

Leadership and Partnerships Award’ category. Their efforts have led to improvements to the Kindersley airport.

About the Saskatchewan Municipal Awards

A partnership of SUMA, the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM) and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, 2009 marked the 3rd Annual Saskatchewan Municipal Awards Program.

Congratulations to our 2009 recipients:

Municipal Service Excellence
Affordable Housing Business Plan
City of Saskatoon

Economic Development Leadership
Torch River Rail Project
Town of Nipawin, Town of Choiceland,
Village of White Fox and
R.M. of Torch River No. 488

Community Development Leadership
Centre 48 Arts and Education Centre
Village of Montmartre and
R.M. of Montmartre No. 126

Environmental Stewardship
McKell Wascana Conservation Area
City of Regina

Regional Leadership & Partnerships
Northern Regional Recreation Centre
R.M. of Buckland No. 491, Little Red
River Band Administration, and Peter
Ballantyne Cree Nation

For more information,
visit www.municipalawards.ca



The well utilized NRRC rink has hosted hockey tournaments with over 600 participants.

The 3R's: Recycling Reinforcements Rolling

By Johnna Van Parys, Junior Policy Advisor

In May 2009, SUMA launched the Go Green Municipal Recycling Bridge Funding Program on behalf of the Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment. As a result of the sharp decline in market prices for bailed paper and cardboard, municipalities providing recycling services to their residents are at a greater risk of scaling back or shutting down services. In order to alleviate some of the financial burden placed on municipal recyclers, the Ministry of Environment has contracted SUMA to distribute funding to independent municipal recyclers. Response for the program has been enthusiastic as municipalities demonstrate their passion for building sustainable, healthy communities.

SUMA is administering this bridge funding while the Provincial Government works on developing a comprehensive Multi-Material Recycling Program (MMRP), slated for implementation in late 2010. The MMRP will provide a long-term funding solution for the recycling of household paper, cardboard, plastic, tin and glass while encouraging producers and users to take a greater role in product stewardship. In the interim, the Ministry of Environment has engaged SUMA and two other organizations, the Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres (SARC) and the Association of Regional Waste Management Authorities of Saskatchewan (ARWMAS), to support municipal recycling services. SUMA is providing funds for recyclers not receiving services from or that are members of local SARC or ARWMAS organizations.

Applications for SUMA's bridge funding were received until June 30. Category I funding, designated for independent municipal recyclers receiving or paying a fee to drop paper and cardboard at a mill or broker, began flowing July 1. Eligible municipalities will receive \$35.80/metric tonne (MT) or \$25 for loose-loads dropped at a mill or broker. The rate was developed to ensure a level of support equitable to that being distributed by SARC and ARWMAS to their respective member organizations. Category II funding will begin rolling out in early 2010 after the per capita rate has been set in late 2009.

Uptake for the program has been strong. Over 100 applications were received from municipal recyclers, demonstrating municipalities' strong dedication to recycling. The survey portion of the registration form is being collected to help SUMA obtain a more comprehensive picture of municipal recycling operations in the Province. This data will give SUMA, a major partner in municipal recycling, key information during the development phase of the MMRP. It will also facilitate SUMA's future policy work and outreach on issues concerning recycling and waste management.

As funding under this program continues to be dispersed, SUMA is looking forward to being better able to represent the urban interest in recycling and waste management. If you would like more detailed information on the program, funding categories, and FAQs, please visit our website at www.saskmunicipalrecycling.ca



Eligible municipalities that have been stockpiling paper and cardboard will soon be getting some relief through the Bridge Funding Recycling Program

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As a service to urban municipalities, SUMA offers election forms, supplies and ballot printing - a one-stop shop for all SUMA members with the assurance that supplies will be up-to-date and a staff member available to answer questions or refer you to the appropriate contacts at Municipal Affairs.

Elections are being held on the following dates:

- Resort Villages – Saturday July 25, 2009
- Cities and (southern) Towns and Villages – Wednesday October 28, 2009
- Northern municipalities (Northern towns, Northern Villages and Northern Hamlets) – various dates in the fall of 2009 that are locally determined.

Watch the Urban Update and SUMA Advantage website for 2009 Election forms and pricing. For further information contact Tania Meier, Manager, Corporate Programs at 306-525-4379.

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Building Stronger Communities

New Federal Program Offers Low-Cost Loans for shovel-ready Housing-Related Projects

The Municipal Infrastructure Lending Program (MILP) will help municipalities create jobs and build healthier, stronger and more sustainable communities. This new program, administered by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), offers municipalities across the country up to \$2 billion in direct, low-cost loans for housing-related infrastructure projects that are ready-to-go.



“The Municipal Infrastructure Lending Program will open the door for more municipalities to put cost-shared federal stimulus programs to work in the near-term, creating jobs and meeting local infrastructure needs,” said Jean Perrault, President of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). “That’s good news for the national economy, and for the cities and communities where Canadians live and work.”

“This program will help municipalities across Canada,” added Ken Seiling, Regional Chair, Regional Municipality of Waterloo. “With access to preferential lending rates, it should assist many communities in advancing their critical infrastructure projects.”

By offering quick access to low-interest loans, the MILP program will significantly decrease borrowing costs for cities and towns across Canada. The money can also be used to fund municipal contributions to cost-shared federal infrastructure programs. To be eligible to receive funding, projects must be shovel-ready and relate directly to housing. Only infrastructure projects serving new or existing residential areas may be considered. This includes:

- Infrastructure projects for water supply facilities, wastewater and sewage management systems, recycling services and solid waste management
- Power generation and other utility projects for the residential areas
- Local transportation infrastructure within or into residential areas, such as building or improving roads, bridges and tunnels
- Residential transportation and quality of life projects, such as building or enhancing sidewalks, lighting, pathways, landscaping and residential green space

The program is open to rural and urban municipalities of any size, anywhere in Canada. But funding will be awarded to eligible projects largely on a first-come, first-served basis, so municipalities are encouraged to visit the CMHC website at www.cmhc.ca/housingactionplan to submit an application as soon as possible.

CMHC has been Canada’s national housing agency for more than 60 years. CMHC is committed to helping Canadians access a wide choice of quality, affordable homes and making vibrant and sustainable communities and cities a reality across the country. For story ideas or to access CMHC experts or expertise, contact CMHC Media Relations - National Office at: 613-748-4632 or by email: media@cmhc-schl.gc.ca

Editor’s note: Since this article was written, Basil Stewart has been elected FCM President.

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The Benefits of Regionalizing Recreation Facilities

by Tanya Doucette, Development Officer, Municipal Capacity Development Program

With summer arriving, recreational facilities are being prepped for new and old patrons. In some cases, the costs to operate and maintain these facilities are often too much for one municipality to carry on their own.

If your facility provides services or has the ability to service patrons from surrounding municipalities, it may be a benefit to create a regional structure for the recreational facility. A number of models that have been implemented by municipalities, choosing the one that works best for your municipality will provide a sustainable foundation for operation. A formal way to ensure the continued operation of regional facilities and the provision of related programs and services is to form a regional recreation board with representatives from each participating community.

There are a number of benefits to a regional facility and regional recreation board with the first being the decreased risk of closure. Other benefits include:

- Opportunity for other municipalities to have a voice in the governance of the facility including programs, services, budget and use;
- Lower costs to one municipality for an area-wide service and provide better financial support for operating through cost sharing;
- More funding dollars available for a regional project
- Address both current and future needs and opportunities
- Improved communication among volunteers, councils and users of the region facilities;
- Common rules and regulations for operation of facilities;
- Reducing duplication of services;
- Opportunity to hire a recreation professional to oversee the region;
- Provide a central source for recreation information in the region.

The Municipal Capacity Development Program (MCDP) is currently collecting sample agreements and best practices to post on www.municipalcapacity.ca. If your municipality is operating a regional facility or has established a regional recreation board other municipalities can benefit from your experiences. Your agreements can be posted (without identifiers) on our website by emailing Tanya Doucette at TDoucette@sarm.ca.

One of the major frustrations in upgrading, renovating or replacing facilities is the cost involved. Municipalities are challenged by the numerous resources spent on finding and applying for grants to make the necessary changes to their recreation facilities.

MCDP recently delivered a grant and proposal writing presentation for a recreation facility at the RMAA Convention in May 2009.

Some of the tips included:

- Provide more than one estimate with the proposal and don't quote the lowest estimate for budget on the project;
- Give solid evidence, statistics and research of the problem and to prove the solution;
- Have letters of support from those who use the facility;

• Provide a plan for progress towards sustainability of the facility;

• Partnering with other municipalities and organizations can improve your chances of a successful application.

Whatever way a recreational facility operates or is funded, having a plan and open communication with other municipalities and their citizens can benefit the future of your facility and other services that you provide.

For more information on the presentations delivered by MCDP or to make suggestions for future workshops visit www.municipalcapacity.ca



Saskatchewan kids will be having fun in the sun this summer at local municipal recreational facilities.



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Fuel Supply Purchase Program

Prairie Fuel Advisors (PFA) was specially designed to assist municipalities in managing their fuel purchases. Since 1995, the program has been successfully negotiating fuel contracts and developing long-standing relationships with petroleum producers. PFA currently has four municipal associations under the program: Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM), Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM), Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties (AAMDC) and recently SUMA. Through the combined purchasing power of these four associations, the PFA is able to negotiate price, payment terms and delivery on behalf of the associations.

In partnership with the PFA, we are able to offer members a total fuel management program where members can combat the one-side pricing advantages enjoyed by petroleum producers and purchase fuel at a lower cost all while supporting local fuel dealers.

How the Program Works

Bulk fuel and packaged lubricant delivery is straightforward and begins when a member chooses a supplier and places an order. The order is sent to a local agent who delivers the fuel/lube, leaving a delivery ticket as proof of purchase with the member. A copy of this order is sent to both the suppliers' credit department and to PFA for invoice processing.

PFA receives the invoices on behalf of SUMA, and its individual members. PFA generates the invoices and emails to each member. From the member invoices, the member pays SUMA, SUMA then pays the suppliers on behalf of the members.

Cardlock and keylock processes are the similar to bulk purchases. When a member fills up at a Cardlock they must retain the receipt that is issued at time of fill. This is the only hardcopy receipt for the transaction and cannot be duplicated once a transaction has been made.

The Cardlock system is entirely electronic, from site fill direct to PFA as an electronic file upload and to supplier credit department. A copy of this order is sent to both the suppliers' credit department and to PFA for invoice processing. From there the process is identical to the above bulk/lube purchases.

For the retail credit card program, the process is the same as above except the member gets fuel from any FasGas or RaceTrac retail outlet.

Member Benefits

- Lowers the cost of gasoline, diesel and lubricants
- Prices are locked in for a week at a time with two day price change notices given
- Eliminates the cost and administrative burden of tendering for fuel
- Supports local fuel agents that supply members with the fuel and lubricants
- SUMA provides invoicing to members and pays the suppliers on behalf of its members

Joining the Fuel Supply Program

- Any member can join the program at any time, subject to the requirements that the term of any existing contract for fuel supply be honoured. There is no cost to join the program. There is an administration fee of 1.2 cents per liter of fuel and 5 cents per liter of lubricants.
- Each member selects the fuel from suppliers that have entered into supply contracts with SUMA.
- A member may withdraw from the Fuel Supply contracts at any time, without penalty.

If you have any questions or would like a free cost analysis, contact Tania Meier, Manager of Corporate Programs at tmeier@suma.org or 306-525-4379.

SUMAdvantage Software Purchasing Program

At spring regional meetings, municipal representatives learned about the new software purchasing program through Acrodex. The program is not mandatory but does provide significant savings over purchasing through retail channels. If you have relationships for support and purchase options locally and you want to maintain those relationships locally that is up to each individual council to determine.

There are two options under the Software Purchasing Program for Microsoft Software. You can choose to enter into the Enterprise Agreement or the Select Agreement.

Enterprise Agreement

This is a comprehensive three-year program (with an option to extend for three years) that ensures your desktop software in your administration office remains current for any desktops enrolled. The software covered includes the operating system (Windows), the Office suite of products (Word, Excel, etc.) and some server client licenses.

If you are a municipality with one desktop or multiple desktops you can take advantage of this program. Software Assurance is the maintenance portion of the program that is paid to Microsoft, but also provides other benefits to municipalities with machines enrolled into the program. Software Assurance benefits are based on the number of machines enrolled into the program.

Benefits provided are: home use licenses, employee purchase program (direct from Microsoft online) and E-Learning (online access to Microsoft courses for software covered). There are other benefits that would be provided to the overall group – training vouchers, spread payments (only pay for one year at a time during the three year term), Windows Fundamentals for Legacy PC's, Technical Support Calls and more.

Select Agreement

Available to everyone - including those enrolled in the Enterprise Agreement - and would allow for the transaction purchases for software not covered by the Enterprise Agreement. The price list will be posted on the SUMA site each month and a municipality can purchase any type of software or quantity that they desire; there is no minimum to be met. The program is designed for you to purchase the software you need when you need it.

To determine which program(s) will be created in October the enrollment form provided as part of the package at the regional meetings would need to be filled in and faxed back to Acrodex. Or if you need a copy of this form, visit www.sumaadvantage.org.

If you have questions, please contact Acrodex at 306-584-3401 or email tim.sterzer@acrodex.com.

Saskatchewan Water & Wastewater Association



The Saskatchewan Water & Wastewater Association provides operator training workshops at various locations throughout the province, and an annual conference and trade show. This training is required by our members to achieve and maintain the certification necessary to be compliment with the Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment mandatory Water & Wastewater Operator Certification Program.

Nominations are now being accepted for the upcoming SWWA Board of Directors elections at this year's annual conference in Saskatoon between November 4th to 6th. Regular members of the association are eligible to be elected to the Board of Directors. Regular members are employees involved in the operation and maintenance of water and wastewater treatment, distribution, and collection systems located in Saskatchewan.

Please support our association by nominating one of your employees to serve on the SWWA Board of Directors. Your employee will learn from the experience and increase his public speaking and organizational skills. This in turn will benefit your town or city. Please contact Monique Will, SWWA Office Manager, by phone at 761-1278 or email swwa.office@sasktel.net.

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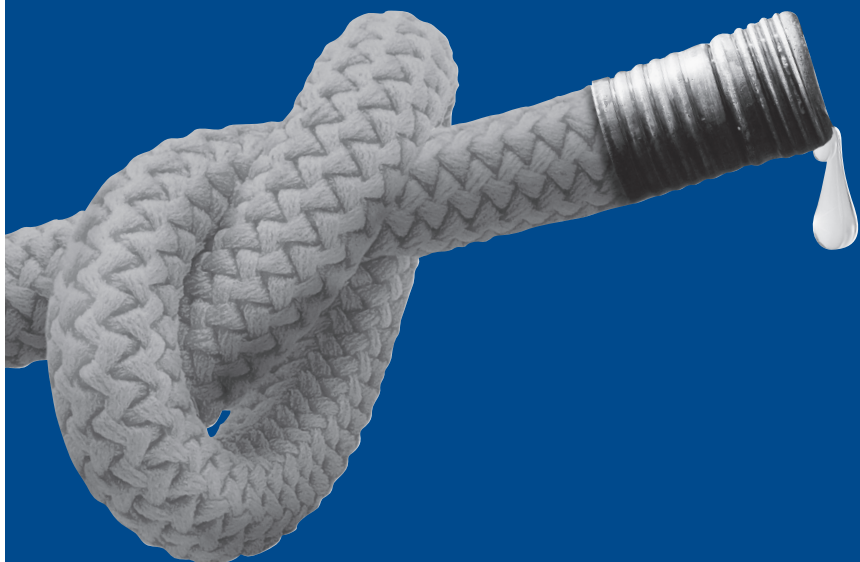
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