

Electricity

PETROCHEMICALS

NATURAL GAS

COAL & MINERALS

2001-2002 Annual Report - Highlights

- The fiscal year saw tremendous interest and activity in electricity restructuring, natural gas prices and government rebate programs.
- Communications programs and a Public Information Centre were developed to respond to this interest, and to increase awareness and understanding of energy's role in Alberta's present and future. From July 2001 to March 31, 2002, the department's Public Information Centre responded to nearly 2,700 requests for information
- Investment in Alberta's electricity sector increased markedly in 2001, following industry restructuring. Over the next five years, the private sector is expected to add about 5,000 megawatts (MW) of generating capacity to the provincial electricity grid — taking Alberta's installed capacity to 15,000 MW, nearly one-third more than today's 11,000 MW. Actual new generation added in 2001-02 was 591 MW.
- Analysis of global energy trends expected through 2010 was completed in 2001 providing the foundation for developing long-term energy strategies and policies for Alberta.
- The Department of Energy developed the Northern Gas Strategy to articulate Alberta's position on pipeline development, particularly with respect to promotion and awareness of the Alberta Hub.
- In response to concerns over regulatory overlap and duplication, the department, along with the Alberta Energy and Utilities Board (EUB), Alberta Environment and Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, established a project team to review all energy resource development-related regulations in the coming year.
- During 2001-02, the department developed a tracking mechanism that provides more timely and relevant information on surface access restrictions.
- The department worked with Aboriginal groups to ensure resource development continues in traditional Aboriginal use areas.
- During the 2000-01 fiscal year, the EUB issued Decision 2000-22, which shut in 146 natural gas wells in the Surmont area. In its decision, the EUB determined that continued production of natural gas in the Surmont area presented a significant risk to future bitumen recovery from Gulf Oil Ltd.'s Surmont oil sands leases.
- Surveyed level of satisfaction with the Department of Energy exceeded provincial government expectations in 2001. Polling by an independent research firm found 81 per cent of industry clients to be satisfied in their dealings with the department, up from 76 per cent the previous year.
- During the year, the department helped develop an Alberta approach to climate change and the Kyoto Protocol with Alberta Environment and other stakeholders. We continue to work with industry and other stakeholders to develop a plan to effectively manage and use CO₂ emissions. Up to ten potential projects have been identified, with business cases being developed by industry. A steering committee was established to oversee the process, with co-chairs representing both the department and industry. Information sessions held on the topic in 2001 were well attended.
- VIPIR, the Volumetric and Infrastructure Petroleum Information Registry project to build a shared electronic database for reporting between industry, the department and the EUB, was renamed the Petroleum Registry of Alberta. The registry is on track for implementation, as planned, in October 2002. It will allow electronic transactions in place of the estimated 84,000 paper filings made each year by industry.
- The Natural Gas Price Protection Act and Regulations were developed and enacted. This legislation enables the Alberta government to implement rebates to protect consumers in the event that natural gas prices rise dramatically.
- The department began work to build formal procedures for consultations with First Nations. We also worked with Aboriginal groups to ensure resource development is based on improved relationships among First Nations, industry and government.