

Municipalities

Today

Working Together for a
Wide Open Future

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Special Insert:

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Biting Back - West Nile Virus

Warm, sunny days are here again as is the familiar buzz of the mosquito. Only this year, mosquitoes are packing more than the usual annoying itch.

West Nile Virus is expected to strike people this summer and municipalities are looking for ways to keep mosquito populations under control.

Saskatchewan Health will help. Municipalities are invited to submit proposals to Saskatchewan Health, after consulting with public health officials in their regional health authority, for funding to reduce the threat of West Nile Virus. Saskatchewan Health sent letters to SUMA, SARM and FSIN in April outlining the funding formula and the process for submitting proposals.

One million dollars is available to urban and rural municipalities for approved mosquito control activities with the province providing matching funds. Activities may include staff training, larviciding, purchase of equipment and supplies,

mapping of breeding sites, operation of mosquito traps, public education, and monitoring of programs.

Because funding is available on a per capita basis, the province is recommending that communities with fewer than 2,000 residents submit joint proposals with neighbouring communities.

In addition to the 50/50 funding, \$200,000 will be held in a contingency fund for control of adult mosquitoes in high-risk areas, \$250,000 will be spent on enhanced surveillance and the hiring of a West Nile Virus coordinator, and \$40,000 will go to continued public education on personal protection and prevention.

Saskatchewan Health will have brochures about West Nile Virus available in late June at Regional Health Authorities.

For more information about West Nile Virus visit the Saskatchewan Health web site: www.health.gov.sk.ca

The Municipal Leadership Development Program

This fall, watch for the new Municipal Leadership Development Program (MLDP). The program is designed to strengthen local government leadership and will benefit Mayors, Reeves, Councillors and senior municipal staff.

Municipal officials who participate in the program will receive a Certificate of Completion to acknowledge the specific seminars attended.

The program is designed to be responsive to the needs of municipal officials and therefore, seeks continuous feedback through the municipal associations regarding the education and training interests of municipalities.

The program is being designed through a partnership of the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association (SUMA), the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM), the Urban Municipal Administrators Association of Saskatchewan (UMAAS), the Rural Municipal Administrators Association of Saskatchewan (RMAAS), New North and the Department of Government Relations and Aboriginal Affairs.

How Should We Fund Education?

The provincial government is ready to make changes to the way our Kindergarten to Grade 12 education system is financed. Your input is needed.

On May 2, the provincial government announced that Ray Boughen of Moose Jaw will head the new independent commission on Financing Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education.

The former mayor of Moose Jaw served as Vice-President of SUMA in 1998. Mr. Boughen also brings to the commission his 35 years of knowledge and experience in education – as teacher, vice-principal, principal and director of education.

The Government of Saskatchewan believes in a strong, publicly funded education system. Fair and equitable financing of public education is in the best interests of all Saskatchewan students and taxpayers.

To this end, the commission will conduct a province-wide review of issues impacting how the K-12 education system is funded such as:

- Provincial and school board contributions;
- Balance between the use of property tax and other sources of taxation;
- Fairness and equity in financing education among property taxpayers; and
- The fiscal capacity of school divisions to raise tax revenues and the assessment and spending per student among school divisions.

Public consultations will be held throughout the province. As well, the commission will work closely with stakeholders such as SARM, SUMA, and the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association.

The commission will present a full report to the Finance Minister and the Learning Minister by December 31, 2003.

**For more information about the commission phone:
(306) 787-7020**



More than 40 municipal officials attended the first ever Northern Education and Training for Municipal Officials Symposium held in LaRonge on March 4, 5, and 6.

The symposium was organized by the Saskatchewan Association of Northern Communities Services Inc. (New North).

Message from the Minister: Provincial Budget 2003-04

This year's Provincial Budget is good news for Saskatchewan people.

The province's finances have improved considerably over the past year. We've profited from rising oil prices and increased income tax revenue due to more people working. We've been able to negotiate a reduction by half of the \$300 million equalization repayment to the federal government.

Saskatchewan has a prosperous and competitive economy. This year Saskatchewan is expected to become one of the leaders in economic growth in North America.

This year's budget theme is ***Building for the Future***. Because of our strong and vibrant economy, we're able to build for the future, a ***Wide Open Future***.

We're making priority investments in health care, education, agriculture and infrastructure. We're investing \$2.5 billion in health care. We're investing a record \$1.2 billion in education, creating opportunities for youth. We're investing \$296.2 million in roads, building better highways. And we're supporting our farm economy with \$1 billion over five years to support farmers, plus \$240 million in tax exemptions and rebates for farmers.

We are not raising taxes or fees. In fact, this year completes our four-year personal income tax reform.

This year's budget is investing a total of \$115 million to support the government's vision of strong and vibrant communities, including more than \$104 million to the municipal sector.

Revenue Sharing

This year's \$10 million increase to the revenue sharing pool will be distributed through urban, rural and northern municipal revenue sharing pool increases of 15.4 per cent.

An additional \$4.9 million is going into the urban pool. An additional \$4.3 million is going to the rural pool. And an additional \$0.8 million will go to the northern pool.

The formulas upon which increases were based were suspended some time ago and it is time to review the issue of the distribution

arrangements for revenue sharing as a whole.

Over the next few months, department officials will consult with municipal associations to consider the options available in arriving at a methodology for distribution on the entire pool of funding.

This work will be completed well in advance of next fiscal year so that municipalities will be aware of the distribution arrangements in time to consider municipal planning and budget decisions.



Minister Osika

Urban, rural and northern municipalities will receive \$10 million more in annual revenue sharing this fiscal year and an additional \$10 million next year.

This significant investment we are making this year is in addition to the \$10 million invested last year resulting in a \$30 million increase in revenue sharing transfers over the 3 year period. This is the first time revenue sharing has been on an upward swing in more than a decade.

By 2004-05, a total of \$85 million in revenue sharing will be provided to municipalities – an increase of 54% compared to 2001-02.

This money will help municipalities meet operating and capital needs. It will also assist those who may benefit from new federal infrastructure assistance expected in 2004-05.

The funding will put municipalities in a stronger position to ensure that water and sewer infrastructure needs are addressed, and can continue to be addressed through appropriate utility fees.

It will put municipalities in a better position to consider road issues in rural Saskatchewan.

This year's \$104 million dollar investment in municipalities is made up of:

- \$75 million for revenue sharing.
- \$10 million in provincial money for the Canada Saskatchewan Infrastructure Program.
- \$6.02 million is budgeted for the municipal and library portion of grants-in-lieu of property taxes. And payments will continue to be based on the previous years assessment.
- \$5 million for municipal infrastructure projects supported by the Centenary Fund.
- \$2.65 million will be provided for Transit for People with Disabilities Program.
- \$5.82 million to the Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency. You will recall last year that we increased SAMA's budget by \$1.67 million last year or 40%. A portion of the increase was multi-year funding for development of the CAMA system and the income approach for commercial assessment in preparation for the 2005 assessment period.

Other funding that supports Saskatchewan communities in this year's budget includes:

- \$3.74 million to our urban parks from Saskatchewan Environment, which includes a 10% increase to statutory funding.
- \$6.78 million for grants-in-lieu of taxes paid to school boards.

And in addition, there is funding to hire 10 additional police officers to support integrated, targeted, community based approaches to reduce crime. This will include six additional municipal positions – two for Regina, two for Saskatoon, one for North Battleford and one for Prince Albert.

After having served in cabinet as the minister responsible for municipal affairs for nearly three years now, I have reached at least these two conclusions.

First, those of you who work in the municipal sector – in whatever capacity – work hard, conscientiously, and completely to serve your communities; often in the face of challenging financial circumstances.

Second, over this period of time, the province has responded very proactively to provide a generous amount of funding to municipalities.

Whether it has been in funding arrangements to address crises such as wildfires – or specific programs such as Transit for People with Disabilities Program, infrastructure programs or Grants-in-Lieu of Taxes.

We are taking significant steps to assist you in addressing the expenditure and taxation pressures you face as municipal governments.

This support will enable us – together – to continue to build the kinds of communities Saskatchewan is proudest of. Saskatchewan - Our Future is Wide Open.

Safe Drinking Water Strategy

March 28, 2003 marked the one-year anniversary of the completion of Commissioner Robert Laing's report and recommendations resulting from the North Battleford water inquiry. In all, 28 recommendations were made. The province accepted those directed at government and concurred with the rest.

The Safe Water Strategy builds on the Water Management Framework, 1999 and responds to the needs identified in the North Battleford water inquiry to demonstrate the province's commitment to making the conservation and protection of our water a top priority.

The Strategy focuses on the human health issues associated with drinking water and ensures that the water quality needs of everyone are being met.

That requires source-to-tap solutions that will help ensure reliable drinking water. Those solutions focus on a clear and effective regulatory system, a component of which will ensure consumers have all the information they need about the quality of their drinking water and source water protection by improving watershed management and support for infrastructure and operation.

**For more information contact:
1-866-SASK-H2O
(1-866-727-5420)**

Get Ready for the Wildfire Season

Saskatchewan experienced one of its worst fire seasons in 2002. For the first time in recent history, agricultural areas were also hit hard by wildfires. Twenty seven municipalities requested and received \$7.5 million in wildfire suppression assistance from the province. Provincial suppression resources were stretched thin to meet the demands of municipalities and the provincial forest.

Following the 2002 fire season, a team of government department representatives was assembled to examine how municipalities could better address wildfire concerns. The team reviewed topics such as building wildfire response capability in RMs, emergency planning, training issues and prevention options.

The team's efforts led to several initiatives to assist municipalities:

- Public meetings were held in Meadow Lake, Preeceville and Prince Albert where the Office of the Fire Commissioner, Saskatchewan Emergency Planning and Saskatchewan Environment (SE) gave a presentation on what municipalities can do to better prepare for wildfire.

- Grassland and forestland fire suppression training packages were developed over the winter by SE's Fire Management and Forest Protection Branch. The Office of the Fire Commissioner will be holding "Train the Trainer" courses this fall to certify individuals to deliver the training. Municipalities interested in receiving "Train the Trainer" courses should contact J.D. Lloyd at (306) 933-5733.
- An advertising campaign with the theme "Don't let your fire go wild" will be aimed at reducing the number of human caused fires, particularly in the forest fringe area from Big River to the Alberta border, the driest area of the province.

SE is developing a web site to help municipalities manage wildfire. Fire weather information will be posted for the forest, fringe and southern areas of the province. Current and forecast fire weather will be posted to help municipalities track fire danger, to manage fire, and to better prepare during high hazard conditions.

Other information available on the web site will be: reporting a wildfire, requesting suppression assistance, wildfire training, provincial and national wildfire situations, historical

fire information, education and prevention information, employment opportunities and monthly weather summaries. You can visit the web site at : www.se.gov.sk.ca/fire

Bylaws can also help a municipality manage fire, for example, a bylaw requiring permits prior to any burning. When conditions reach high to extreme levels, permits can be suspended or tighter conditions imposed.

Many municipalities are also imposing bylaws that manage burning barrel and fire pit construction. Firewise construction bylaws can be implemented in areas where fire hazards are high because of surrounding fuels.

For more information to set up a bylaw for your municipality contact J.D. Lloyd at the Office of the Fire Commissioner.

The public is a valuable asset to fire detection. The earlier a fire is reported, the better the chance of controlling it.

For ideas on burning permit conditions or Firewise planning, contact Larry Fremont with Fire Management and Forest Protection Branch at (306) 953-3245.

What's New on the Web?

For Community Planners

The Community Planning Branch has put out two new papers as resources for municipal officials:

- *Giving Notice of a Proposed Planning Bylaw* outlines the purpose of giving notice, the possible types and timing of notices, and what a notice must contain. It also provides some details about whether a bylaw may be altered as the result of submissions from the public.
- *Conducting a Public Hearing under The Planning and Development Act, 1983* describes the purpose of holding a public hearing and the requirements to hold a hearing. It provides a recommended process for conducting a hearing.

Advisory Services

- Calendars outlining the dates by which actions must be done for the upcoming municipal and school board elections.
- A Community Bylaw Library listing bylaws available on some municipalities' web sites. More examples in the Sample Bylaw sections.

Grants Administration

- A 2003 budget form for rural & urban municipalities.

Policy Development

- A report on *Road Issues in the Heavy Oil Producing Region of Saskatchewan*.

Under Construction

We're working on adding a feedback form. It will let you report problems and suggest improvements.

We're looking at adding more administrator manuals and guides for passing bylaws, closing roads and selling dedicated lands.

Design work also proceeds on implementing new Municipal Directory and Municipal Financial Reporting Systems that will let municipalities submit new information from their computers.

Changes are also in the works for the ComMuniLink web site. New software is being evaluated that will allow the Municipal Relations Division, SUMA, SARM, SANC and the administrator associations to have sections in which to post headlines about what's new on their respective web sites. This will let people check just one provincial website to find out the latest news offered by all the various municipal organizations.

People will also be able to subscribe to the sections to get email messages advising them when any or all of the sections are updated.

The Buzz at Saskbiz.ca

Saskbiz.ca is a new web site by Saskatchewan Industry and Resources to provide comprehensive economic development information about Saskatchewan's communities and regions.

The site supports investment attraction, site selection, economic planning, opportunity identification, and community and business development and retention. Saskbiz.ca puts communities of all sizes, both urban and rural, on the radar screen of potential investors and those seeking to retain or develop businesses in Saskatchewan.

The mapping capabilities of the web site provide users with a unique tool for retrieving information and data for the smallest geographic areas possible and for a variety of regional boundaries. The analytical functions are convenient and easy-to-use, yet extremely powerful in putting a wealth of information at the user's fingertips.

Saskbiz.ca started with a pilot area in south east Saskatchewan. Now we want to ensure that all cities, towns, villages and rural municipalities are able to showcase their locations in Saskbiz.ca. Staff of Saskatchewan Industry and Resources Regional Offices will be contacting municipalities in June to invite your participation in Saskbiz.ca. Your help is needed to provide community profiles as well as statistical and other local information.

Visit www.Saskbiz.ca today.

www.municipal.gov.sk.ca

61 New CSIP Projects in 2003-04

More than \$40 million in federal, provincial and municipal funds is being invested in 61 infrastructure projects in communities across the province this year.

On April 14, 2003, Ralph Goodale, Federal Public Works and Government Services Minister and Saskatchewan Government Relations Minister Ron Osika announced funding support through the Canada-Saskatchewan Infrastructure Program (CSIP).

CSIP provides up to two-thirds of the eligible costs of infrastructure projects. Communities provide the remaining one-third of the costs, making a unique partnership between all three levels of government.

The first priority of CSIP is green municipal projects – water and wastewater developments and upgrades, solid waste management and recycling, and improving the energy efficiency of municipal buildings. More than 80 percent of all projects announced so far this year are green.

Forty-three communities will receive more than \$9.2 million in federal-provincial funds to upgrade water supply and wastewater services. Another \$2.9 million will be invested in four solid waste projects. Two energy efficiency projects will receive \$43,330. When the municipal contribution is included more than \$23 million will be spent on green projects.

Eleven communities will spend more than \$8.7 million in federal-

provincial funds and \$8.5 million in municipal funds to repair or upgrade streets and rural roads. The Saskatchewan War Memorial Inc., located on the Legislative grounds in Regina, will receive \$100,000 from the strategic portion of the fund for a war memorial project to recognize Saskatchewan soldiers killed in the Second World War, the Korean War and on peacekeeping missions.

With this announcement, the federal, provincial and municipal governments have announced more than \$174.5 million for 295 projects since 2001. Over the five years of the program more than \$170 million in federal, provincial and municipal funds will be invested in Saskatchewan municipalities.

Canada-Saskatchewan Infrastructure Program 2003-04 Federal and Provincial Total Combined 50/50 Contributions for Approved and Announced Projects as at April 14, 2003

Water Supply Projects				
Village of Arran*		\$9,212	Town of Luseland	\$4,308
Town of Balcarres * **	2003-04	\$316,696	Village of Makwa	\$4,806
	2004-05	\$185,400	Town of Maple Creek * **	2003-04 \$517,500
Village of Bethune		\$7,298		2004-05 \$517,500
RM of Brokenshell*		\$33,426	Village of Margo*	\$6,902
Village of Cadillac*		\$254,452	Village of Markinch	\$6,752
Village of Carievale		\$11,138	RM of Mayfield* (Glenburn Regional Park)	\$3,584
Village of Conquest		\$8,456	Town of Meadow Lake*	\$333,332
Village of Creelman*		\$66,672	RM of Meeting Lake* (Regional Park)	\$11,386
Village of Debden		\$76,848	Village of Osage	\$19,568
Village of Fenwood		\$3,000	Village of Pleasantdale	\$8,266
RM of Garry		\$5,230	RM of Porcupine* (Hamlet of Prairie River)	\$49,260
RM of Lakeview* (Hamlet of Hendon)		\$5,512	Village of Webb	\$8,720
Town of Langham*		\$777,972	Village of Willowbrook*	\$11,120
			Village of Windthorst	\$4,054
			Total	\$3,268,370

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Waste Water Projects			
Village of Dodsland		\$9,476	
City of Estevan*		\$166,666	
Village of Fillmore*		\$8,154	
Village of Macrorie		\$10,900	
City of Moose Jaw*		\$133,334	
Village of Neudorf*		\$10,000	
Village of Waseca*		\$8,646	
Town of Wilkie* **	2003-04	\$22,528	
	2004-05	\$283,398	
RM of Wood River*		\$37,972	
Total		\$691,074	
Solid Waste Projects			
Village of Primate*		\$2,834	
RM of Willow Bunch* **	2003-04	\$82,132	
	2004-05	\$322,438	
Total		\$407,404	
Northern Projects			
Village of Buffalo Narrows*		\$96,000	
Town of Creighton*		\$824,000	
Town of La Ronge*		\$453,334	
Village of Pinehouse* **	2003-04	\$476,666	
	2004-05	\$476,666	
Total		\$2,326,666	
Transportation Projects			
RM of Meadow Lake* **	2003-04	\$139,410	
	2004-05	\$139,410	
	2005-06	\$139,412	
City of Moose Jaw*		\$533,280	
RM of Moose Mountain*		\$24,028	
RM of Reno*		\$139,788	
RM of Sasman*		\$157,298	
RM of Surprise Valley*		\$34,706	
RM of Wawken*		\$58,082	
Total		\$1,365,414	
Energy Efficiency Projects			
RM of Benson*		\$12,810	
RM of McCraney		\$30,520	
Total		\$43,330	
Heritage Projects			
Saskatchewan War Memorial, Regina (SI)		\$100,000	
Total		\$100,000	
TOTAL CSIP CONTRIBUTIONS			\$8,202,258
Canada-Saskatchewan Infrastructure Program			
2002-03 Federal and Provincial Total Combined 50/50 Contributions for Additional Approved and Announced Projects as at April 14, 2003			
Water and Sewer Projects			
City of Melfort**	2005-06	\$194,480	
	2004-05	\$194,480	
Total		\$388,960	
Solid Waste Projects			
City of Prince Albert* **	2002-03	\$683,332	
	2003-04	\$1,720,000	
Total		\$2,403,332	
Waste Water Projects			
City of North Battleford**	2003-04	\$400,000	
	2004-05	\$549,000	
Total		\$949,000	
Transportation Projects			
City of Saskatoon**	2003-04	\$2,733,332	
- 4 projects	2004-05	\$3,326,666	
	2005-06	\$1,266,000	
Total		\$7,325,998	
Northern Projects			
Northern Settlement of Bear Creek**		\$464,654	
Northern Settlement of Sled Lake**	2002-03	\$614,966	
	2003-04	\$614,966	
Total		\$1,694,586	
TOTAL CSIP CONTRIBUTIONS			\$12,761,876
GRAND TOTAL OF CSIP CONTRIBUTIONS			\$20,964,134

*pending environmental assessment; ** multi-year project;
SI-Strategic Initiatives Fund