

RMA Spring 2020 Submitted Resolutions

- 1) Call to Order
- 2) Acceptance of Order Paper
- 3) Resolution Session

- 1-20S** **Alberta Wetland Mitigation Directive** (*Saddle Hills County*)
- 2-20S** **Additional Depreciation of Machinery and Equipment Property (Schedule D)** (*MD of Opportunity*)
- 3-20S** **Implementing Western, Rural Municipal Representation on FCM WEST** (*Sturgeon County*)
- 4-20S** **Water and Wastewater – Laws, Regulations and Funding** (*County of Grande Prairie*)
- 5-20S** **Regional Economic Development Alliances Continued Provincial Funding** (*MD of Spirit River*)
- 6-20S** **Economic State of Crisis** (*Brazeau County*)
- 7-20S** **Health Care Co-ops** (*County of Warner*)
- ER1-20S** **Loss of 2% Strychnine** (*Cypress County*)
- ER2-20S** **New Physician Funding Framework** (*Lac La Biche County*)
- ER3-20S** **Housing Management Body Compliance Requirements During Pandemic Response** (*Mountain View County*)

- 4) Vote on Emergent Resolutions
- 5) Closing of Resolution Session

Alberta Wetland Mitigation Directive

Saddle Hills County

*Simple Majority Required
Endorsed by District 4 (Northern)*

WHEREAS the Alberta Wetland Policy requires municipalities to implement practices that impact budgets and project timelines with minimal improvements to the environment; and

WHEREAS the wetland application process can take several months if a field assessment is required as it can only be completed during the plant growing season; and

WHEREAS most of the costs associated with the wetland restoration program are used for administration, with a minimal amount used to improve the environment; and

WHEREAS municipalities are required to hire engineers to complete desktop and wetland assessments and Alberta Environment and Parks use significant staff resources to review engineer assessments and process applications; and

WHEREAS rural municipalities manage the majority of Alberta's public road infrastructure; and

WHEREAS roads require consistent maintenance and/or re-building to support a growing province, ensure public safety, accommodate increased use including extra weight and more traffic, and align with current standards; and

WHEREAS the consequences of not completing road maintenance as required, due to extended time and extra cost, could include putting public safety in jeopardy due to a lack of upgraded roads, and loss of transportation routes for industry and the public due to road bans or road closure;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta urge the Government of Alberta to modify the Alberta Wetland Mitigation Directive to minimize the administration and assessment process to reduce costs and approval times for municipalities; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that funds collected through the Alberta Wetland Mitigation Directive be directed to environment improvement projects that have low administration fees.

Member Background

Recently, Saddle Hills County has hired consultants to complete wetland assessments on projects and have found the process is time-consuming and expensive, especially if wetlands are found. Below is a summary of an example of one such project:

Summary of Wetland Assessment – Highway 725:02 / Township Road 811

The Highway 725:02 and Township Road 811 intersection improvement project consists of a 0.31 km road widening for turning lanes, culvert extension and relocation of a private driveway.

A desktop assessment of the wetland was completed which identified impact to five wetlands including a 50 metre buffer. Therefore, a full wetland assessment and impact report was completed. The wetland assessment started on February 27, 2019 and was completed on July 17, 2019 at a cost of \$21,855 which includes \$7,400 of wetland compensation.

RMA Background

9-18F: Impact of the Alberta Wetland Policy on the Cost of Maintaining Public Road Infrastructure

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta urge the Government of Alberta to modify the Alberta Wetland Mitigation Directive to allow all wetland impacts as a result of municipal road maintenance or re-building of existing roads to utilize a one to one ratio, or D to D value wetland replacement; and/or consider exempting all wetland impacts in road right of ways that are smaller than one hectare in size.

15-18F: Wetland Mitigation Directive – Restoration and Compensation

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta request that Alberta Environment and Parks follow the Wetland Mitigation Directive and that permittee-responsible mitigation either through enhancement or construction of wetlands be allowed, be it either through the Alternative Land Use Services program or through wetlands constructed as a part of stormwater management ponds.

Additional Depreciation of Machinery and Equipment Property (Schedule D)

MD of Opportunity

*Simple Majority Required
Endorsed by District 4 (Northern)*

WHEREAS machinery and equipment (M&E) property is assessed in accordance with the *Alberta Machinery & Equipment Assessment Minister's Guidelines* (the Guidelines), adopted by way of Ministerial Order every year; and

WHEREAS additional depreciation may be granted under Schedule D of the Guidelines "[f]or any depreciation that is not reflected in Schedule C...provided acceptable evidence of such loss in value exists"; and

WHEREAS several assessment complaints have been filed with the Municipal Government Board respecting assessments for M&E requesting additional depreciation under Schedule D of the Guidelines on the basis of industry-wide economic conditions; and

WHEREAS the Provincial Assessor's policy with respect to Schedule D is to not grant additional depreciation on the basis of industry-wide economic conditions; and

WHEREAS the Provincial Assessor's policy ensures that assessments are not affected by industry-wide economic conditions and that assessment of M&E is based on a stable, predictable system; and

WHEREAS policies are already in place to reduce assessments prepared for and taxes paid on M&E, including the reduction of all assessments of M&E to 77% of the value determined in accordance with the Guidelines, a 25% immediate depreciation on M&E pursuant to Schedule C of the Guidelines, and the exemption of M&E from education requisitions; and

WHEREAS municipalities depend on the stable, predictable assessment system established by the Guidelines; and

WHEREAS if the Provincial Assessor's policy respecting the assessment of M&E is changed, there will be a significant redistribution of the assessment base within municipalities;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) advocate for the Government of Alberta to take steps to ensure that assessments for Machinery and Equipment are not adjusted under Schedule D of the *Alberta Machinery & Equipment Assessment Minister's Guidelines* on the basis of industry-wide economic conditions; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that RMA advocate for the Government of Alberta to amend Schedule D of the *Alberta Machinery & Equipment Assessment Minister's Guidelines* to confirm the status of the current policy that additional depreciation under Schedule D is not available on the basis of industry-wide economic conditions; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that RMA advocate for the Government of Alberta to not consider any changes to the *Alberta Machinery & Equipment Assessment Minister's Guidelines* without full consultation and consideration of the impact of any changes on all Alberta taxpayers.

Member Background

Canadian Natural Resources Limited ("CNRL") filed complaints with the Municipal Government Board (MGB) for property assessments prepared by the Provincial Assessor for designated industrial property in the 2018 and 2019 tax years.

The complaints seek reductions in assessments for Machinery and Equipment (M&E), as well as Buildings and Structures, across Alberta. The requested reductions in assessments are in the range of 50%. The properties under complaint are found within 52 Alberta municipalities (the full list of which is provided below). The specific properties under complaint and the affected municipalities vary for 2018 and 2019. The full list provided includes those municipalities affected by both or either of the complaints.

In relation to the assessment of M&E in both 2018 and 2019, CNRL argues that the regulated standard found in the *Alberta Machinery & Equipment Assessment Minister's Guidelines* (the Guidelines) should include depreciation on the basis of industry-wide market or economic conditions under Schedule D.

The Municipal District of Opportunity No. 17 understands that this same argument has been raised in other complaints before the MGB, and it is expected that further complaints will be filed in 2020 (and beyond) on the same basis.

If industry-wide market or economic conditions form part of the regulated assessments, then there is little difference between a market value assessment and the regulated assessment process established by the Guidelines.

The Provincial Assessor's current policy is to not allow additional depreciation under Schedule D of the Guidelines on the basis of industry-wide economic conditions. Regulated assessments are not intended to vary with general changes in the economy the way that market value assessments do; this perceived disadvantage is more than offset by the preferential policies embedded in the system. Municipalities depend on this stable, predictable system to ensure an even distribution of property taxes amongst all taxpayers.

If this current policy is changed, there will be a significant impact on the distribution of property taxes throughout every municipality in the Province that collects property taxes on M&E. The result will impact all taxpayers within those municipalities due to the resultant shifting of the tax burden.

No changes should be made to the current policy respecting application of the Guidelines without full consultation and consideration of the impact such changes would have on all taxpayers.

The following municipalities host assets that are subject to the complaints filed by CNRL:

- Athabasca County
- County of Barrhead No. 11
- Municipal District of Bonnyville No. 87
- Camrose County
- Municipal District of Fairview No. 136
- Flagstaff County
- Foothills County
- County of Forty Mile No. 8
- County of Grande Prairie No. 1
- Special Areas Board
- Kneehill County
- Lac Ste. Anne County
- Lacombe County
- Lamont County
- County of Minburn No. 27
- County of Newell
- County of Paintearth No. 18
- Ponoka County
- Red Deer County
- Smoky Lake County
- County of St. Paul No. 19
- Starland County
- County of Stettler No. 6
- Sturgeon County
- Municipal District of Taber
- Thorhild County
- County of Two Hills No. 21
- County of Vermilion River
- Vulcan County
- Municipal District of Wainwright No. 61
- County of Warner No. 5
- Westlock County

- County of Wetaskiwin No. 10
- Wheatland County
- Municipal District of Willow Creek No. 26
- Cypress County
- Clearwater County
- Brazeau County
- Woodlands County
- Municipal District of Greenview No. 16
- Yellowhead County
- Northern Sunrise County
- Birch Hills County
- Saddle Hills County
- Clear Hills County
- Mackenzie County
- Municipal District of Lesser Slave River No. 124
- County of Northern Lights
- Municipal District of Opportunity No. 17
- Town of Drumheller
- Lac La Biche County
- Improvement District No. 349

RMA Background

RMA has no active resolutions directly related to this issue.

Implementing Western, Rural Municipal Representation on FCM WEST

Sturgeon County

*Simple Majority Required
Individual Resolution*

WHEREAS rural municipalities across western Canada are members of the **Federation of Canadian Municipalities** (FCM) which is a collective of 2000 local governments of all sizes across Canada; and

WHEREAS FCM's purpose is to advocate on behalf of all types of municipalities with influence and access to key federal-decision makers within every federal Canadian political party to drive investment in municipal priorities; and

WHEREAS FCM has established the **Western Economic Solutions Taskforce** (WEST) to address municipal priorities and challenges specific to western Canada; and

WHEREAS rural municipalities in Alberta, while appreciative of the creation of WEST, believe sufficient western, rural representation does not exist within the group; and

WHEREAS attendance at the 2019 FCM conference resulted in disappointment for many western rural municipal leaders because the issues impacting them were not accurately represented at the conference; and

WHEREAS rural municipalities in Alberta believe there is opportunity for improvement in FCM's representation of western, rural Canadian issues and perspectives, specifically in the WEST;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) urge the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) to address the lack of western, rural representation within the Western Economic Solutions Taskforce (WEST) by advocating to FCM that membership to WEST reflect a balance between urban and rural mayoral perspectives, while keeping the size of the Taskforce at a manageable level.

Member Background

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) currently represents approximately 2000 municipalities across the country, which collectively serve about 90% of the Canadian population. Approximately 80% of FCM's member municipalities are classified as rural.

Rural municipalities are generally characterized by low population densities and large geographies. However, rural municipalities provide the essentials of daily life including the production of grain and meat for food, gas and oil for cars and industrial vehicles, gas to heat our homes, and wood to build our homes. In fact, the vast majority of major value-added commercial and industrial projects (oil and gas), agriculture, forestry, and the manufacturing sector happens in rural municipalities. While significant residential, commercial and industrial development occurred throughout the country over time, recent economic conditions have significantly restricted growth for municipalities in western Canada.

In turn, the economic downturn has done significant damage to western Canada, with the impact resonating throughout the entire country. In response to this crisis, FCM formed a special taskforce to ensure western Canadian perspectives could be communicated more clearly to Ottawa. This Taskforce, called the Western Economic Solutions Taskforce (WEST) has been mandated with addressing this pressing national concern.

WEST brings together urban and rural leaders from across western Canada so they may collectively focus on the economic downturn, generate solutions and partnerships with the Government of Canada, and ensure the western Canadian perspective is well-represented nationally.

The composition of WEST includes:

Chair , Randy Goulden	Chair of FCM's Prairies and Territories Regional Caucus
Co-Chair , Al Kemmere	President of Rural Municipalities of Alberta
Co-Chair , Charlie Clark	Mayor of the City of Saskatoon
Michael Fougere	Mayor of the City of Regina
Don Iveson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor of the City of Edmonton • Chair of the Big City Mayor's Caucus
Naheed Nenshi	Mayor of the City of Calgary
Brian Bowman	Mayor of the City of Winnipeg
Bill Karsten	President of FCM
Darren Hill	Third Vice-President of FCM
Ray Orb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President of Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities • FCM Rural Forum Chair
Gordon Barnhart	President of Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association
Barry Morishita	President of Alberta Urban Municipalities Association
Ralph Groening	President of the Association of Manitoba Municipalities
Maya Tait	President of the Union of British Columbia Municipalities
Garth Frizzell, *ex-officio	First Vice-President of FCM
Joanne Vanderheyden, *ex-officio	Second Vice-President of FCM
Vicki-May Hamm, *ex-officio	Past President of FCM

Two out of 17 members on WEST are rural-focused, and the group contains no rural mayors (yet there are five urban mayors). This warrants action to ensure that important rural, western perspectives are more effectively represented. The reason why rural municipalities exist, their priorities, their values, their opportunities (economic, environmental and social), and their challenges are fundamentally different from those of their urban neighbours. Having both the urban and rural municipal perspectives is vital to effectively meeting WEST's mandate for western Canada.

RMA Background

8-19F: Opportunity for Improvement in FCM Representation of Rural Issues and Western Perspectives

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) use their collective strength and understanding of the rural municipal perspective and priority issues to promote accurate inclusion of rural and western Canadian issues and perspectives at the annual Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) conference, and in FCM communications and advocacy efforts; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that RMA send a letter to FCM identifying areas of alignment and concern with the content of the 2019 annual FCM conference and requesting that planning committees for future annual conferences include appropriate representation from rural western Canada to ensure that conferences are relevant and meaningful to all member municipalities.

Water and Wastewater – Laws, Regulations and Funding

County of Grande Prairie

*Simple Majority Required
Endorsed by District 4 (Northern)*

WHEREAS the Government of Canada and Government of Alberta draft and implement laws and regulations to protect the environment and public health, including the production and distribution of potable water and the collection, treatment, and release of wastewater; and

WHEREAS the production and distribution of potable water and the collection, treatment, and release of wastewater are essential services crucial to safe, healthy communities; and

WHEREAS the production and distribution of potable water and the collection, treatment, and release of wastewater are often provided by municipalities, municipal commissions, or municipally-owned utility companies; and

WHEREAS the laws and regulations governing the production and distribution of potable water and the collection, treatment, and release of wastewater can have both direct and indirect effects on the cost of providing these services; and

WHEREAS many water and wastewater service providers are challenged to fund the infrastructure deficits under the current laws and regulations governing the production and distribution of potable water and the collection, treatment, and release of effluent;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) advocate that the Government of Canada and Government of Alberta consider and evaluate the financial impacts that all existing and proposed laws and regulations governing the production and distribution of potable water and the collection, treatment and release of wastewater will have on municipalities, municipal commissions, or municipally-owned utility companies, and share this information with RMA; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the governments of Canada and Alberta establish adequate, stable, long-term funding for all affected water and wastewater service providers which considers the rising costs of providing these services due to federal and provincial laws and regulations.

Member Background

Located in northern Alberta, the Water North Coalition's membership is comprised of 93 communities, service providers and organizations including cities, towns, counties and municipal districts, hamlets, Metis Settlements, and commissions. The Water North Coalition sent out a survey to its 93 members to gather input on the water and wastewater issues.

One significant concern which showed itself in the results was the rising cost of water and wastewater service delivery. The average water/wastewater infrastructure deficit reported among the respondents was \$36.4 million, with a lack of adequate, consistent and sustainable funding being cited as the largest challenge. Aging infrastructure and small customer bases in rural areas also add urgency and challenges, as service providers struggle to fund critical projects whose costs will be spread among relatively few customers, which can make the services cost prohibitive.

These challenges are often amplified in small and rural areas as funding criteria can exclude the water and wastewater service delivery models often found in these communities. These funding programs exclude commissions and water cooperatives from applying for funding as the process does not recognize these organizations as service providers. The commissions and water cooperatives, however, are expected to follow the same regulations. The funding programs often lack a formal application process, and have tight timelines when funding does become available, which often poses a disproportionate challenge for smaller and rural communities that lack the resources required to engineer shovel-ready plans, especially in the face of changing laws and regulations.

RMA Background

RMA has no active resolutions directly related to this issue.

Regional Economic Development Alliances Continued Provincial Funding

MD of Spirit River

*Simple Majority Required
Endorsed by District 4 (Northern)*

WHEREAS for 20 years the Government of Alberta (GOA) has embraced a partnership with Alberta municipalities to plan and undertake regional economic development initiatives of mutual interest; and

WHEREAS the success of this partnership has made Alberta a leader in the delivery of regional economic development; and

WHEREAS Regional Economic Development Alliances (REDAs) provide a cost-efficient venue for the GOA and municipalities to build partnerships to foster economic growth in their regions; and

WHEREAS REDAs provide a substantial multiplier effect on dollars invested; and

WHEREAS the GOA has limited staffing resources and capacity to offer comparable economic tools and opportunities to rural members to those in urban areas, and

WHEREAS the majority of rural municipalities cannot afford to hire their own economic development officers; and

WHEREAS REDAs are dependent on the GOA's support due to additional downloading onto municipalities such as policing, which limits the ability of REDAs to charge greater membership fees to municipalities; and

WHEREAS the five-year funding agreement for REDAs expired March 31, 2020 and there has been no response on a renewal of this contract; and

WHEREAS the loss of REDAs due to GOA funding cutbacks may result in the loss of strong intermunicipal collaborations in rural Alberta that have taken 20 years to build;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) advocate that the Government of Alberta enter into a five-year contract with the existing nine Regional Economic Development Alliances (REDAs) at an equivalent or higher funding arrangement as was in effect in the previous agreement; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that RMA request that the Government of Alberta enter into meaningful discussions with REDA chairs to ensure long-term sustainability of REDAs.

Member Background

Rural Alberta communities rely on REDAs to help plan and undertake economic development activities. REDAs provide a forum and mechanism for municipalities and other economic development agencies to identify common issues and solutions to problems or opportunities beyond the limited resources of individual municipalities. Examples of big problems that benefit from the collective actions of municipalities include: broadband research, alternate and value-added crop studies; medical training in rural communities; regional infrastructure needs including future access to water; the retention of companies in rural communities through productivity initiatives; and the importance of supporting innovation and competitiveness as a way to retain and grow rural communities.

REDAs are supported by their member municipalities, community futures, post-secondary institutions, chambers of commerce and industry. Member municipalities are being asked by the GOA to prosper on reduced provincial grants, less funding and increased costs such as policing. This challenges REDAs to go back to their municipalities for more funding to make up for any shortfall from the GOA.

RMA Background

RMA has no active resolutions directly related to this issue.

Economic State of Crisis

Brazeau County

*Simple Majority Required
Individual Resolution*

WHEREAS Alberta's unemployment rate is trending upward and remains above the national average; and

WHEREAS consumer bankruptcies increased by 9.1% from November 2018 to November 2019; and

WHEREAS citizen dependence on employment insurance in Alberta is on the rise; and

WHEREAS consumer confidence is plunging due to sustained economic decline; and

WHEREAS rural crime, due in part to increased unemployment, has increased markedly since 2014; and

WHEREAS commercial bankruptcies are seeing a year over year increase since 2016; and

WHEREAS certain bureaucratic government policies in response to perceived environmental emergencies have resulted in actual corporate and personal financial crisis;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta advocate to the governments of Alberta and Canada to declare an economic state of crisis and work with all levels of government to develop and enact policies designed to secure investment and employment in the energy sector.

Member Background

Western Canada's resource-based communities are facing unprecedented challenges due to many factors. These factors connect western Canadians but create a disconnect from those elsewhere in the country. Such factors include a lack of awareness on the part of many Canadians about the challenges being faced in western Canada and the perceived indifference of the Government of Canada to continued attacks by radical environmental groups on the industries that are a major contributor to Canada's economic engine.

These factors have led to one common outcome: significant financial challenges for every Canadian who is reliant, either directly or indirectly, on the energy sector for their living. In Alberta, all business is impacted; not only direct energy-related businesses or secondary and tertiary businesses but the local grocery shops, clothing stores and other essential local businesses. Community organizations, sports teams, and schools are suffering due to a lack of membership and financial support as community members move or suffer mental/physical and emotional distress due to the loss of employment.

The energy industry's record of environmental stewardship, Indigenous outreach policy and proven economic success is something that governments at all levels should champion. There is significant scientific information supporting the environmental practices of Alberta's energy industry compared to other petroleum producers such as Saudi Arabia or Venezuela. Consultation and inclusion with Indigenous peoples has significantly increased as the reconciliation process has evolved. Alberta's Indigenous communities have played a significant role and investment in the energy sector which is a key economic driver of the Canadian economy.

RMA Background

1-19S: Municipal Support for the Energy Industry

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta advocate for the Government of Alberta to further develop and implement a targeted, national education and marketing campaign on behalf of Albertans in order to offset foreign protectionism and de-marketing campaigns, regulatory delays, and the combined infrastructure and economic factors that are creating a significant, negative effect on Canada's local, provincial, and national economies. The elements of the education and marketing campaign include as outlined in "Schedule A";

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the Government of Alberta provide resources to offset the combined negative impacts affecting the energy industry through:

1. the continuation of the Petrochemicals Diversification Program;
2. key energy industry-supporting infrastructure development; and
3. a continued strong presence and advocacy with federal, municipal and foreign governments.

Health Care Co-ops

County of Warner

*Simple Majority Required
Individual Resolution*

WHEREAS many rural municipalities are involved in supporting the delivery of health care services in their community; and

WHEREAS health care co-operatives can provide responsive, cost-effective and quality health care services;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta request the Government of Alberta to adopt a strategy to support the establishment of health care co-ops to be used to better serve rural residents in the overall delivery of health services.

Member Background

Health care co-ops cannot impose conditions on services governed by the *Canada Health Act*, but they can work to improve access to these services and provide services not covered by the Act. Health co-ops are focused on preventative health care and education and work to empower individuals to take control of their own health and well-being.

Co-operative healthcare has been well established in Canada for over 50 years, addressing the social determinants of health in response to the unique wellness and health needs of individual and communities. They are care-effective, efficient, community-based, member-controlled and values-driven. They provide outstanding services. Health care co-ops are productive, fiscally responsible and socially necessary, as they address the social determinants of health in their communities. They can assist communities and the Government of Alberta in making effective use of health care dollars that are more responsive to local needs.

Solving Health Care Challenges Together

a **co-operative** approach
to building **healthier** communities

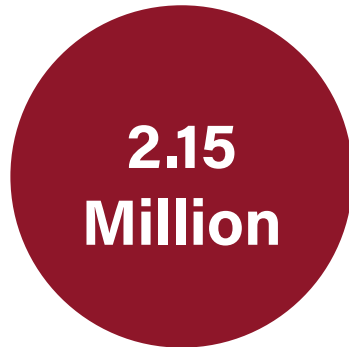
January 2020



ALBERTA COMMUNITY & CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION

www.acca.coop * info@acca.coop

ACCA's Member Co-ops



Member owners in Alberta

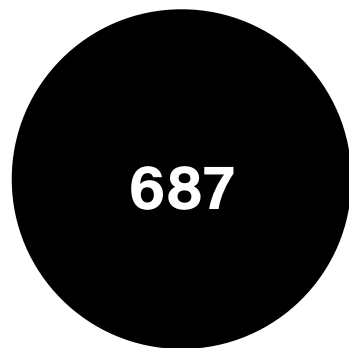


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2017

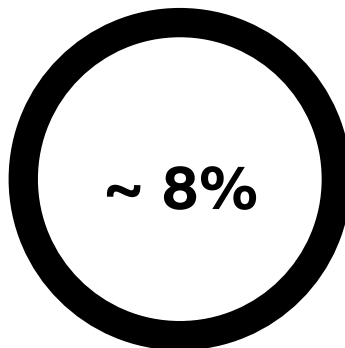


Active in Agriculture,
Financial, Housing, Insurance,
Petroleum, Retail, and Rural
Utility Industries

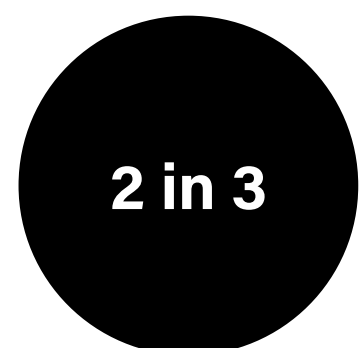
Alberta's Co-op Sector



Incorporated co-operatives
and credit unions

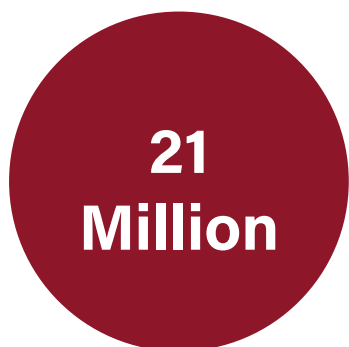


of all co-operatives in Canada
are found in Alberta

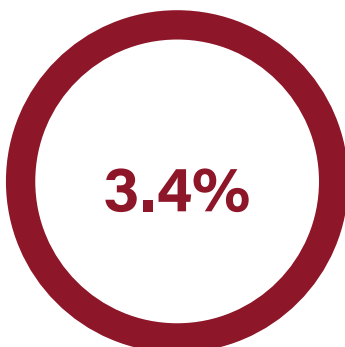


Albertans are a member of a
co-operative or credit union

Canada's Co-op Sector



Member-owners



GDP contribution



jobs in every industry

Co-ops play an important role in Alberta's communities

Whether banking at credit unions, supplying farmers, feeding families, or powering homes, the co-operative model is by no means an experiment: it is a proven success especially in rural Alberta.

As co-operatives, we don't have customers or offshore shareholders - we have members.

They are owners and investors who believe that business profits - and the jobs they create - should stay right here in Alberta.

Co-ops are built by people and communities who cannot afford to wait on outside help. They understand that the power of local ownership and democratic decision-making is a fairer way of doing business.

As people-driven enterprises, we are in tune with the "let's get this done" attitude that defines Albertans.

Co-operatives are woven into the Alberta past and present landscape, but there is much more we can do to ensure that co-operatives are a core part of the vibrant future of Alberta.

Co-operative Social Responsibility

Co-ops are actively engaged in the communities where they do business.

"Co-operative Social Responsibility" is about doing what is right and not just about checking off a box on a corporate to-do list.

If our community fails, we fail.

Co-ops are guided by seven global principles

Co-ops around the world are organized according to the seven international principles of co-operation.

1. Voluntary and Open Membership
2. Democratic Member Control
3. Members Economic Participation
4. Autonomy and Independence
5. Education, Training and Information
6. Co-operation Among Co-operatives
7. Concern for Community

THE SEVEN CO-OPERATIVE PRINCIPLES
ONE VOLUNTARY AND OPEN MEMBERSHIP
TWO DEMOCRATIC MEMBER CONTROL
THREE MEMBERS' ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION

FOUR AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE
AND INFORMATION
SIX CO-OPERATION AMONG CO-OPERATIVES
SEVEN CONCERN FOR COMMUNITY

Solving Health Care Challenges Together

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Solving Challenges Together in Health and Senior Care

Accessing quality health care is an ongoing priority for Albertans. Concerns about access to primary, preventative and home care services will only increase as our population ages.

The strain on government budgets to meet these growing needs, accelerated by the option of effective but expensive new technologies, promises to deepen. New forms of service delivery are required to meet these demands, and co-operative health care organizations in Canada and worldwide are responding.

In Canada, co-operatives offering health services take different forms ranging from community health centers, medical clinics, ambulance services, and home care co-operatives.

Role of the health and senior care co-ops

As businesses owned by their members, health and senior care co-ops fill the gaps in the public health system. Working in conjunction with their provincial health authorities, co-op services focus on the health and well-being of their members, and most use the social determinants of health to guide improvements in the health of individuals.

In Canada, health and social services co-ops provide Canadians with access to a multitude of care options (e.g. primary care clinics, comprehensive care clinics, ambulance services, home care, palliative care, training and information, health promotion, group purchasing medical supplies, mental health facilities, orientation for newcomers health insurance), thus meeting most of the criteria established by the World Health Organization for defining a comprehensive health care benefit.

While owned and controlled by their users, all health care co-ops align with the *Canada Health Act* and provide services to any Canadian, regardless of whether they are members of the co-operative.

Benefits Overview

Health care co-operatives can provide responsive, cost-effective and quality services to seniors in both health care and housing. ACCA sees an opportunity to utilize the co-operative model within Alberta Health's Clinical Alternative Relationship Plans (ARP).

Unlike private health care systems, co-operative health care services are owned and managed by their patients on a non-profit basis and have proven they can work fully within the *Canada Health Act*. There are already over 500 health and social service co-operatives in Canada and they are proving to be a successful model that we can use right here in Alberta by exploring the opportunities through ARP.

Services offered by co-operatives improve overall health and well-being, help reduce the workload in the public sector, and reduce the need for family physicians.

According to the last federal census, about 25% are health care co-operatives, 15% are senior care co-operatives, and 12% of ambulatory care co-operatives. Co-operatives in this sector employ more than 10,000 people and serve around 161,000-members. Co-operative clinics also report significantly higher usage of nurse practitioners in delivering primary care and greater reliance on salaried, rather than fee-for-service compensated, physicians.

Services offered by co-operatives improve overall health and well-being, help reduce the workload in the public sector, and reduce the need for family physicians. In Quebec alone, health care co-operatives provide 2.6 million of hours of home care each year and provide primary medical care to 178,000 people in the province.

In terms of outpatient services, Canadian co-operatives outside Quebec provide care directly or indirectly through community health clinics, ambulance services and home care.

Co-operative health and senior care offer quality solutions that are often more personalized and transparent than what is found in the public system or among private providers.

Health care co-operatives take the form of worker co-operatives, consumer co-operatives, multi-stakeholder co-operatives, consumers/workers/ community organizations areas, purchase co-operatives or shared services.

Alignment with Alberta Health Priorities

We believe that co-operatives could be used to deliver one or more of the following benefits to Albertans:

- Improve access to a range of health care services in underserved communities
- Improved health care practitioner recruitment and retention
- Reduce patient wait times
- Improved home care services for individuals and better working conditions for home care providers
- Develop new self-management models for the delivery of health care services to Indigenous peoples and deepen linkages between the delivery of child welfare and health care services for children

Proposed Partnership

The ACCA would like to work in partnership with Alberta Health to leverage the co-operative model in providing better health outcomes for Albertans. We propose a three-phase research project:

Phase 1 - Mapping Opportunities for Co-operative Innovation: This phase includes:

- Identifying and filling significant gaps in

current health care provision in underserved communities.

- Conducting educational workshops with AHS staff on the potential of the co-operative health model including support and mentorship from leaders from health co-operatives in other jurisdictions.
- Framing potential co-operative solutions to these gaps via best practices in co-operative health care provision across Canada and internationally.
- Identifying communities with the potential to host community pilots based on criteria of need and leadership capacity.

Phase 2 - Engage Communities: This phase includes holding community information sessions on the health co-operative model in five to six potential pilot communities, including a minimum of two Indigenous communities.

We would also hold meetings with community leaders and allied health/social service organizations to explore the feasibility of co-operative solutions to priority community health needs.

The result would be to identify three communities (one Indigenous, one rural, and one urban/peri-urban) as potential hosts for the health care co-op pilot.

Explore results - Compile results of the previous two phases and provide education to key ministry staff on evidence-based advantages of the co-operative model, including recommendations for implementation of the pilot health care co-ops in the proposed communities.

Co-operatives ... offer quality solutions that are often more personalized and transparent than what is found in the public system or among private providers.

Examples of Health and Senior Care Co-operatives

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Saskatoon Community Clinic saskatooncommunityclinic.ca

The Saskatoon Community Clinic (Saskatchewan) is a provider of primary health care services. The ultimate goal is to build a healthy population by providing support focused on healthy lifestyles, disease prevention, patient education, diagnosis and treatment.

Although owned and operated by its members, its services are open to all.

The Medical Clinic Les Grès cliniquemedicalelesgres.ca

Saint-Étienne-des-Grès were the first health services co-operative in Quebec to open in 1995.

Currently, 12 doctors and a team of nurse clinicians, a specialized nurse, a social worker and a physiotherapist provide services throughout the surrounding rural communities. The clinic also houses a pharmacy, a dentist, an optometrist, psychologists and a physiotherapist.

Community First Health Co-op healthco-op.ca

Founded in 2003 in response to the loss of services at the local level, Community First Health Co-op (CFHC) is a co-operative of consumers and care providers to improve the health and well-being of communities, families and individuals by providing health care and dental care in the Nelson, B.C., area.

Health Care Co-operatives Federation of Canada healthcoopcanada.com

The Health Care Co-operatives Federation of Canada (British Columbia) brings together co-operatives across Canada that focus on wellness, social services and health.

Offering networking and training opportunities on specialized and larger topics, this national federation shares the work of its member co-operatives and represents the entire sector.

The EESAD Cooperation aidechezsoi.com

The Co-operation Network of Social Economic Enterprises for Home Help (EESAD) is present in the seventeen administrative regions of the province of Quebec.

Via its network of co-operative and non-profit home care organizations, they provide more than seven million hours of service to 100,000 people, including nearly one million hours of business support services.

EESAD employs more than 9,400 people, including 8,700 home service providers with the necessary skills and expertise, to provide quality home support and services to citizens in need.

Our Unique Distributed Ownership Model

Co-ops enable member-owners to impact business outcomes and influence decisions with a model built on a democratic one member, one vote system. This creates access to products, services or markets not otherwise available.



RMA Background

RMA has no active resolutions directly related to this issue.

Loss of 2% Strychnine

Cypress County

*Simple Majority Required
Emergent Resolution*

WHEREAS the federal **Pest Management Regulatory Agency** (PMRA) has cancelled the registration for 2% Liquid Strychnine for use on **Richardson's Ground Squirrels** (RGS) as of March 4, 2020; and

WHEREAS agricultural producers require a product to effectively assist in the control of RGS; and

WHEREAS after March 4, 2023, owning and using strychnine will be illegal and owners/users could face fines;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta request that Health Canada and the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) reinstate the use of 2% Liquid Strychnine on a permanent basis to agricultural producers to utilize on their farms for control of Richardson's Ground Squirrels (RGS); and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that Health Canada and the PMRA provide an alternative solution that produces effective results in a financially responsible manner for the continued control of RGS.

Member Background

Cypress County learned that the Pesticide Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) and Health Canada has cancelled the approved use of strychnine to control Richardson's Ground Squirrels (RGS). The PMRA's decision is based on anecdotal assumptions, not recent research.

PMRA's plan is to phase out the product over the next three years, making the product unavailable after March 4, 2021 and fully banned for use after March 4, 2023. There is currently no alternative to control RGS.

RGS (commonly known as gophers) have been a problem to landowners for several years. In the early spring they can destroy a large amount of seeded grain, as they are looking for a source of food and the crop is an enticing option. Producers are faced with a problem in trying to plant any forage crops, as well as native grass, as these are continually being eaten by the gophers. They not only destroy the crops, they dig so many holes that farmers often break machinery and livestock are often injured, causing both farmers and ranchers additional expense.

Several years ago, the Government of Canada allowed landowners to purchase a 2% Liquid Strychnine solution which they could mix with grain and place down gopher holes. This was effective in controlling RGS. Next, the Government of Canada allowed manufacturers to produce a 5% Liquid Strychnine solution for pocket gophers, which was very effective in controlling these pests.

The Government of Canada then restricted the sale of both 2% and 5% strychnine and allowed the manufacturers to produce a pre-mixed feed instead. This was both very expensive and not effective. As a result, the gopher population became out of control resulting in millions of dollars in losses to producers.

Since 2% Liquid Strychnine was reinstated for use in 2001, RGS populations have declined. Dry years with no effective method of control will result in devastating losses.

RMA Background

RMA has no active resolutions directly related to this issue.

New Physician Funding Framework

Lac La Biche County

*Simple Majority Required
Emergent Resolution*

WHEREAS on February 20, 2020 the Government of Alberta ended negotiations with the Alberta Medical Association and terminated the master agreement with Alberta physicians; and

WHEREAS the master agreement ended on March 31, 2020, when a new physician funding framework was implemented; and

WHEREAS the new funding framework changes how Alberta physicians are compensated; and

WHEREAS physicians have expressed serious concerns about the viability of their practices under the new framework, especially in rural Alberta; and

WHEREAS rural and small municipalities have historically struggled to attract physicians under the now-terminated master agreement, making the prospect of doctors leaving under the new framework very likely;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta urge the Government of Alberta to reengage in negotiations with the Alberta Medical Association to mutually arrive at a new master agreement that ensures continued timely access to healthcare for all rural Albertans.

Member Background

Rural municipalities across Alberta have been expressing grave concerns with the new physician funding framework.

On February 20, 2020, the Government of Alberta ended negotiations with the Alberta Medical Association and unexpectedly terminated their master agreement with Alberta's doctors. The master agreement expired on March 31, 2020, with a new, much more restrictive funding framework taking its place. While enactment of the complex modifier and clinical stipend recommendations have been suspended, the nine other funding framework recommendations are currently in effect.

Doctors in Lac La Biche County, rural Alberta, and the entire province have serious doubts about the viability of their practices under the new framework. Even under the now-expired framework, it has been especially difficult to attract and retain doctors to rural Alberta.

With the new model in place, rural clinics could close as physicians move elsewhere. Without local practices, patients will travel long distances to other communities for routine medical check-ups, or take up valuable time in emergency rooms. Moreover, with fewer doctors in communities, local hospitals may have to reduce hours and services or shut down entirely. In emergency situations, where minutes or even seconds can make a difference, many Albertans will lack medical care when they need it most.

Lac La Biche County believes that the Alberta Medical Association and Government of Alberta must renegotiate and come to an agreement that ensures equitable access to medical services for everyone in this province, regardless of where they live. It is imperative that doctors are fairly compensated for the outsized role that they play in keeping our communities healthy and safe. This is especially critical in the midst of a global pandemic, when we need our medical community focused on their jobs rather than their compensation.

RMA Background

RMA has no active resolutions directly related to this issue.

Housing Management Body Compliance Requirements During Pandemic Response

Mountain View County

*Simple Majority Required
Emergent Resolution*

WHEREAS the World Health Organization has declared a global pandemic for COVID-19 on March 11, 2020 and Alberta **housing management bodies** (HMBs) and **continuing care operators** (CCOs) have been in pandemic response since that time; and

WHEREAS HMBs and CCOs have been proactive in taking preventative steps and complying with directives and orders from **Alberta Health** (AH); and

WHEREAS Alberta HMBs and CCOs have incurred unbudgeted costs for labour and supplies and lost revenues to vacancies in order to meet AH compliance requirements; and

WHEREAS the pandemic-related revenue and cost impacts for Alberta HMBs and CCOs are not currently funded by any federal or provincial programs; and

WHEREAS these lost revenues and costs are not recoverable through business interruption insurance; and

WHEREAS at some point, HMBs and CCOs must make up lost revenues and costs to sustain operations; and

WHEREAS in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak in a facility, there is a clear current that a single HMB or CCO will not be able to supply full front-line labour requirements;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) request the Government of Alberta to provide funding to Alberta housing management bodies (HMBs) and continuing care operators (CCOs) in support of front-line workers for the additional labour, personal protective equipment and operational supplies and lost revenues due to complying with COVID-19 pandemic directives and orders; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that RMA request the Government of Alberta to immediately provide a plan for emergency supply of labour, personal protective equipment and operational supplies to Alberta HMBs and CCOs in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak at a facility in Alberta.

Member Background

At this time, Mountain View Seniors' Housing (MVSH) has remained free of any occurrence of the COVID-19 virus. However, MVSH has lost revenues because of requirements to restrict resident admissions and transfers due to expanded outbreak declarations, MVSH has added staffing costs for leaves of absence due to imposed 14-day and 10-day isolation rules, MVSH has added staffing hours for enhanced senior supportive living care, mealtime, housekeeping services and activities. Further, MVSH has been ordered and directed by Alberta Health to meet increased requirements to address care and social isolation, social distancing and restricted access controls to our facilities. MVSH has been ordered to place increased restrictions on staff and maintenance contractor movements between sites, MVSH has added costs to implement measures in the MVSH Pandemic Plan, MVSH has added measures and costs for securing a stable supply of labour, personal protective equipment (PPE) and operating supplies from vendors. The impact for all this at MVSH is estimated to be an additional \$50,000 per month to our operating budget for 2020, starting on March 11, 2020. It is likely that seniors housing providers across Alberta are facing similar labour and fiscal impacts due to the pandemic and require provincial support to comply with new requirements.

RMA Background

RMA has no active resolutions directly related to this issue.