



FEATURED:

Join RMA for a Webinar on Renewable Energy Development Policy Changes

The RMA, in collaboration with Brownlee LLP, will be hosting a webinar on April 19 to discuss the recent policy changes related to the development of renewable energy projects and explore what it means for rural municipalities. Register today!

[Learn more...](#)

MEMBER BULLETINS

Member bulletins are posted to [RMAAlberta.com](#) regularly each week.

Below is a list of all the member bulletins compiled from the past week.

Bill 18: Provincial Priorities Act Receives First Reading

On April 10, 2024, Bill 18: *Provincial Priorities Act*, was introduced in the Legislative Assembly. The RMA has several concerns regarding with Bill 18, as it reduces municipal autonomy and increases the amount of red tape around federal grant funding.

[Learn more...](#)

RMA Assigns Statuses to Nine Fall 2023 Resolutions



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AGRICULTURE UPDATE

Moisture Situation Update -
April 7, 2024

JOB POSTINGS

The RMA updates the resolutions database and issues bulletins with updates as responses are received. The RMA has recently received responses to nine member resolutions passed at the 2023 Fall Convention. Given these responses, the RMA has drafted an initial reaction to the resolutions.

[Learn more...](#)

Farm Restricted Class 1 Driver's License Announced

The Government of Alberta has launched a Farm-Restricted Class 1 Driver's License, which will allow eligible farmers to obtain a Class 1 license without completing a pre-licensing training program.

[Learn more...](#)

REMINDERS

RMA Spring 2024 Endorsed Resolutions

Resolutions form an important part in identifying direction for the RMA's advocacy efforts. The RMA membership endorsed 11 resolutions in Spring 2024.

[Learn more...](#)

RMA Requests Asset Management Data from Members

The RMA is undertaking an ambitious study to assess the current infrastructure deficit in rural municipalities. This is a critical initiative to support ongoing advocacy efforts and to demonstrate the importance of provincial investment into rural municipal infrastructure. This work has recently been initiated and will extend into the first half of 2024.

[Learn more...](#)

Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework Engagement Underway

RMA

**General Manager of
Marketing &
Communications**

Client Relations Manager

Canoe Procurement Group of
Canada

Group Benefits Analyst

Town of Drumheller
Development Officer

Brazeau County
**Emergency Management
Coordinator**

Town of Vegreville
**FCSS Community
Development Coordinator -
Term Position**

City of Red Deer
**Senior Engineer - Planning
ELP**

Town of Morinville
**Fire Prevention Officer -
Permanent Full-Time**

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INFORMATION FROM
A PREVIOUS ISSUE?**

View our **Contact newsletter
archive** or our **member
bulletin archive**.

Learn more
about the key
issues facing rural
Alberta by reading
our **position
statements**.

Alberta Municipal Affairs has released an engagement survey seeking municipal input on intermunicipal collaboration frameworks (ICFs). ICFs are intended to facilitate shared service delivery between neighbouring municipalities in cases where collaboration makes sense for both parties. **The survey closes on April 19, 2024.**

[Learn more...](#)

-  Forward to friend
-  Share on Twitter
-  Share on Facebook

RMA Seeking Participants for Volunteerism in Rural Alberta Study

The Alberta Centre for Sustainable Rural Communities (ACSRC) at the University of Alberta, in collaboration with the RMA, is conducting an academic research study that explores recent trends in volunteerism in rural Alberta and their impacts on rural municipalities. The RMA is encouraging all members to engage in this important project, as it will help better define trends in how services are delivered in rural Alberta.

[Learn more...](#)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Scaling Up Municipal Climate Action Survey

The **Community Energy Association**, **Clean Air Partnership**, **Climate Caucus**, **ICLEI Canada**, and **QUEST Canada** are collaborating to scale up municipal climate action across Canada. Your perspectives will help identify the unique barriers that impede climate action, disrupt what's not working, and ultimately allow innovations in the right direction. They are asking municipal staff and elected officials in small and mid-sized municipalities with a year or more experience working on climate and energy-related initiatives to **complete this survey**. The deadline is April 15, 2024, and, as a thank you for participating, respondents may enter a draw for one of three \$100 gift cards for Patagonia.

MCCAC Updates

- **Sturgeon County Electric Vehicle Chargers:** As part of the MCCAC's Electric Vehicle Charging Program (EVCP), Sturgeon County purchased and installed three level 2 EV charging stations for public use (6 plugs total). Two of the chargers are located at the Sturgeon County Centre in Morinville, and the other charger is located at Cardiff Park. The County received a combined rebate of \$56,716 from the MCCAC for the three chargers at the two locations. This project was funded by the Government of Alberta and Natural Resources Canada. [Read more.](#)
- **Alberta Energy Efficiency Alliance Summit:** Register today for the Alberta Energy Efficiency Alliance Summit to hear MCCAC Sustainability Services Program Manager, Ronak Patel, speak about the role of local government in energy efficiency and emissions reduction. [Sign up here](#) for the event on April 23 & 24.

Canadian Red Cross: Support for Households Impacted by the 2023 Alberta Wildfires

The Canadian Red Cross is committed to supporting communities impacted by the 2023 Alberta Wildfire season, both in their recovery from the event and in increasing resilience to future events. The Support to Households Program offers two different elements:

- **Personalized Recovery Support**
- **Residential Mitigation Incentives**

For those who have incurred major damage or whose homes are destroyed (uninhabitable), the Red Cross can provide personalized recovery support. **Applications will be accepted until April 30, 2024.**

RCA: Beyond the Bylaw Webinar

Learn about further actions that municipalities, businesses, and individuals can take to address and reduce single-use items in Alberta in this 1-hour webinar May 6 with the Recycling Council of Alberta (RCA). Each

speaker brings firsthand knowledge on the subject, as they have been actively and successfully building programs, supporting decision-makers, and advocating for reducing single-use item waste locally. **Register today!**

Open Scan: Futures of Water

What might water scarcity and contamination mean for city planning, services, or public health in 2040? Join Creative Futures on April 24 to explore changes impacting the futures of water, and what that could mean for cities. In this session, you'll explore these changes and more, followed by a discussion of potential implications for cities in 2040. Please note: This session is highly interactive and not a webinar. **Register online today!**

IN THE NEWS

- **Regional economic growth bolstered by grant program**
- **Alberta's labour force is building back strong**
- **Growing the benefits of digital tech in agriculture**
- **Alberta's 2023 wildfire season was a record breaker. Another hectic one is forecast**
- **Sask. greenlights deal with Alberta, Manitoba to manage underground water reserves on Prairies**
- **Province signs deals with private ambulances for patient transfers in Edmonton, Calgary**
- **Alberta bill requiring provincial approval of federal funding risks political meddling, academics say**
- **Review of Yellowhead County wildfire response calls for more planning, provincial support**



April 9, 2024

Join RMA for a Webinar on Renewable Energy Development Policy Changes

The RMA and Brownlee LLP will be reviewing the recent policy changes related to the development of renewable energy in Alberta

On February 29, 2024, the Minister of Affordability and Utilities announced [several policy changes](#) related to the development of renewable energy projects based on the recent Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) inquiry into the sustainable development of renewable energy. The RMA will be [hosting a webinar](#) discussing the changes and exploring what they mean for rural municipalities in collaboration with Brownlee LLP.

The policy changes include:

- ♦ Taking an “agriculture first” approach when evaluating the best use of agricultural lands for development.
- ♦ No development on Class 1 and 2 lands unless the proponent can demonstrate the ability for agrivoltaics.
- ♦ Developers will be responsible for reclamation cost through either bond or security. The reclamation costs will be provided either to the province or may be negotiated by landowners.
- ♦ [Buffer zones of a minimum of 35 kilometres](#) will be established around protected areas and other pristine “viewsapes” as designated by the province.
- ♦ Municipalities are automatically granted the right to participate in AUC hearings and are eligible for cost recovery.
- ♦ Municipalities will be able to review rules related to municipal submissions.

The RMA will be hosting a webinar with Brownlee LLP on **April 19 at 1:30 pm** to discuss these changes and the impacts they will have on municipalities. This webinar is open to all RMA member municipalities. To attend, please [register](#) prior to the webinar.

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Bill 18: Provincial Priorities Act Receives First Reading

The RMA has several concerns with the Bill, which will require provincial approval for federal funding agreements with municipalities

On April 10, 2024 [Bill 18: Provincial Priorities Act](#) was introduced in the Legislative Assembly. Bill 18 is intended to ensure the province reviews and approves any funding agreements made between the federal government and “provincial entities” (including municipalities) to ensure that the funding aligns with provincial priorities. This bill’s intent is similar to Quebec’s [Act Respecting the Ministère Du Conseil Exécutif](#), which also requires any federal funding agreements with municipalities to be approved by the provincial government.

The Minister of Municipal Affairs and the Premier have both emphasized that Bill 18 is intended to ensure agreements between the federal government or federal bodies and municipalities do not contradict provincial priorities or infringe on provincial jurisdiction. In addition to municipalities, the bill will apply to all public bodies in Alberta, including public agencies, municipalities, Crown-controlled organizations, post-secondary institutions, school boards, regional health authorities, and Covenant Health.

The RMA has several concerns regarding with Bill 18. The requirement for provincial approval of all funding agreements reduces municipal autonomy, increases red tape, and could delay or even exclude Alberta municipalities from receiving federal funding support for local events and projects. At a time when municipalities of all types across Alberta face growing infrastructure deficits, heightened expectations to accommodate residential and industrial growth, and downloaded responsibilities from other levels of government, adding more red tape to funding access is the last thing Alberta’s municipalities need.

While the RMA is hopeful that there will be an opportunity to work with the Premier and Minister of Municipal Affairs to develop exemptions and design a streamlined provincial approval process, engagement with municipalities on this issue prior to Bill 18 being drafted may have led to an alternative approach to harmonizing provincial and federal priorities without introducing further risks to municipal sustainability.

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April 12, 2024

RMA Assigns Statuses to Nine Fall 2023 Resolutions

Immediately after resolutions are endorsed by RMA members, the RMA sends the resolutions to the relevant provincial or federal ministry or organization for an initial response. Based on the response received, the RMA assigns the resolution a status and drafts an initial reaction.

The RMA updates the [resolutions database](#) and issues bulletins with updates as responses are received. The RMA has recently received responses to nine member resolutions passed at the 2023 Fall Convention. Given these responses, the RMA has drafted an initial reaction to the resolutions.

The government responses, statuses, and the RMA reactions can be viewed for each resolution on the [RMA Resolutions Database](#):

- [2-23F](#) Amendments to the Municipal Government Act – Section 619
- [3-23F](#) Minimum Standards for Adequate Ambulance Services in Rural Alberta
- [5-23F](#) Municipal Involvement in Quasi-Judicial Agencies
- [6-23F](#) Expediting the Implementation of an Alberta Flood Regulation
- [7-23F](#) Strategy for Management of Wildland Fires Outside Forest Protection Area
- [10-23F](#) Enhancing Home Care Services for Rural Residents in Alberta
- [12-23F](#) Growth Management Board Voluntary Membership
- [17-23F](#) Sustainable Community Hospice Funding Model
- [ER1-23F](#) Limiting Third-party Services in ICF Agreements

The RMA plans to release its 2024 Resolution Status Update - Volume 1 later in 2024, which will include statuses and reactions to all other Fall 2023 resolutions for which a government response is received, as well as status and reaction updates to all other active resolutions.

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April 11, 2024

Farm Restricted Class 1 Driver's License Announced

The Government of Alberta is implementing a program to reduce barriers for farmers seeking a Class 1 driver's license

The Government of Alberta has launched a [Farm-Restricted Class 1 Driver's License](#), which will allow eligible farmers to obtain a Class 1 license without completing a pre-licensing training program. This license will allow eligible farmers and their families to apply for a Class 1 license by completing a Class 1 knowledge and road test, vision screening, and a driver's medical assessment. Drivers under this license will also be required to hold an air brakes endorsement.

To be eligible for the farm-restricted Class 1 license, a farmer is defined as someone:

- ♦ actively and directly farming, in Alberta;
- ♦ responsible for management decisions and operating costs;
- ♦ having control of the farming assets, either by holding title to the assets or having a rental agreement with the person holding title; and
- ♦ having annual farm commodity production worth at least \$10,000 or \$5,000 to \$9,999 if the only other significant sources of income are Canada Pension Plan or Old Age Security.

In addition to farmers as defined above, their family members are also eligible to apply.

The farm-restricted Class 1 will be subject to conditions, including only being valid in Alberta while engaged in transportation necessary for the farming operation. For more information and to apply, visit the Government of Alberta [information page](#).

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