



FEATURED:

RMA Releases a Report on Charitable Gaming in Alberta

As the final component of the “Losing Bet” campaign, RMA released a report on charitable gaming in Alberta. RMA is calling on the Government of Alberta to implement the recommendations outlined in this report and collaborate with both rural and urban stakeholders to develop an equitable charitable gaming model.

[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.

RMA Statement on United States Tariffs on Canada

RMA President Kara Westerlund has made a statement in response to the tariffs imposed on Canada by the United States this week.

[Learn more...](#)

Board Governance Review Delivers Recommendations

The Board Governance Review Committee presented recommendations to the RMA Board of Directors on March



AGRICULTURE UPDATE

**Moisture Situation Update -
February 26, 2025**

7, 2025. The report's recommendations will be voted on by members at RMA's 2025 Spring Convention.

[Learn more...](#)

2025 RMA Position Statements – Volume 1 Now Available

Position statements provide a concise overview of the RMA's positions on key policy areas. The RMA encourages members to review position statements and use them as a resource in local advocacy efforts.

[Learn more...](#)

Government of Alberta to Bring the Provincial Priorities Act into Force

The Government of Alberta recently filed the Provincial Priorities Regulation with the King's Printer and intends to bring the Provincial Priorities Act and Regulation into force on April 1, 2025.

[Learn more...](#)

Government of Alberta Conducting Review of Land and Property Rights Tribunal Processes

As part of the Government of Alberta's review, the external consultant is conducting a survey to gather feedback from stakeholders. The survey can be accessed [here](#) and closes **March 30, 2025**.

[Learn more...](#)

JOB POSTINGS

Woodlands County

**Administrative Assistant,
Economic Development**

Town of Crossfield

Community Peace Officer I

City of Camrose

**Accounting Support 3 –
Utilities and Taxation
Support**

Special Areas Board

**Heavy Duty Mechanic II –
Journeyman**

M.D. of Bonnyville

**General Manager, Corporate
Services**

Parkland County

Shelter Keeper I

Flagstaff County

Health & Safety Officer

Town of Edson

**Information Technology
Manager**

[VIEW OUR JOB BOARD](#)

**LOOKING FOR
INFORMATION FROM
A PREVIOUS ISSUE?**

View our [Contact newsletter archive](#) or our [member bulletin archive](#).

Wildfire Working Group Summary Report Now Available

The RMA's Wildfire Working Group (WWG) met throughout the summer of 2024 and again in January 2025 to develop a strategy to manage wildfires outside the Forest Protection Area. This work has culminated in **RMA's Wildfire Working Group Report**. A **summary report** is also now available that presents the report's key findings in a condensed format.

[Learn more...](#)

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

[Forward to friend](#)

Government of Alberta Releases Police Review Commission Survey

The **Police Review Commission** (PRC) is a new agency that will independently investigate complaints against the police in Alberta. The Government of Alberta is hoping that residents will participate in a short online survey to help ensure that the PRC meets the expectations of independence, transparency, and the delivery of fair, timely resolutions.

[Learn more...](#)

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Public Engagement Course Open for Registration

Registration is now open for the Elected Official's Education Program (EOEP) Public Engagement online course. This course will be held on March 27, April 3, and April 10 from 6:30pm to 8:45pm.

[Learn more...](#)

New Help Line for New Parents and Newborns Launches in Rural Alberta

Alberta Health Services recently expanded a Health Link 811 service that refers new parents with postpartum and/or newborn related queries to registered nurses specializing in postpartum care to the North, Central, and South zones.

[Learn more...](#)

RMA Insurance: Wildfire Preparedness

As we prepare for another wildfire season in Alberta, it is always a good idea to ensure you are ready if an emergency arises. Here are some steps to take to help get everyone ready for the potential dangers of wildfire season

[Learn more...](#)

REMINDERS

Alberta Budget 2025 – 2026: RMA Initial Summary

The Government of Alberta has released **Budget 2025** and the **2025 – 2028 Fiscal Plan**. The RMA addressed the budget with an initial summary as well as a backgrounder that goes into more details.

[Learn more...](#)

Resolutions for the RMA 2025 Spring Convention Now Available

The resolutions that will be presented during the resolution session at the RMA 2025 Spring Convention are now available.

[Learn more...](#)

Spring 2025 Emergent Resolution Deadline is March 17

As per the RMA's Resolution Process policy, an emergent resolution is defined as a resolution submitted to the RMA after the resolution deadline – February 18, 2025 for the 2025 Spring Convention – that addresses a subject or problem that has arisen subsequent to the resolution deadline. The RMA Resolutions Committee will meet prior to the resolution session to determine whether submitted emergent resolutions meet the criteria as “emergent” and are added to the Order Paper.

[Learn more...](#)

Participate in RMA's First-Ever Board of Directors Forum at the Spring 2025

Convention

The Board of Directors Forum will provide elected officials from RMA's full member municipalities with an opportunity to ask the RMA Board of Directors questions about any relevant topics or issues. The forum will be held on Tuesday, March 18, during the RMA 2025 Spring Convention, from 4:30 – 5:30 PM at the Edmonton Convention Centre, Hall D.

[Learn more...](#)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MCCAC Updates

- **Learn from your peers, make friends, influence change:** Peer network member Jenna Chernuka says, “As a steady source of inspiration, support, and momentum, peer-driven networks can both anchor us and amplify collective change. There is strength to be found in numbers and real power behind regional alignment.” Be like Jenna: join the Alberta Climate Leaders Staff Peer Network today-- the next meeting is scheduled for March 14! [Learn more...](#)
-

IN THE NEWS

- **Experts warn snowpack lower than last year in parts of Alberta**
- **Red Deer hospital one step closer to opening new cardiac centre**
- **Alberta prepares as wildfire season begins**
- **Southern Alberta crews extinguish several blazes as Alberta's wildfire season begins**
- **Demand for food banks in Lethbridge continues to rise**
- **'Buy Alberta' campaign to be led by Ag Minister Sigurdson**

- **Alberta transferring ownership of health care properties April 1**
 - **Could Alberta's new midwife strategy improve local midwifery services?**
-



Our mailing address is:

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Source URL: rmalberta.com/news/rma-releases-a-report-on-charitable-gaming-in-alberta/

RMA Releases a Report on Charitable Gaming in Alberta

Posted on: March 7, 2025

As the final component of the “Losing Bet” campaign, RMA is releasing a report on charitable gaming in Alberta.

The current charitable gaming model is a “losing bet” for rural Alberta. The model requires rural organizations to travel further, wait longer, and earn lower revenues than organizations located in Edmonton or Calgary. Despite hosting more types of charitable events in addition to casinos, rural organizations are at a distinct disadvantage.

RMA is doubling down on advocacy efforts to make the charitable gaming system more equitable for rural charities in response to **Resolution 12-23S: (**<https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/12-23s-casino-opportunities-for-charitable-organizations/>**)** Casino Opportunities for Charitable Organizations. Despite many years of advocacy from RMA and other rural stakeholders, the Government of Alberta has not acted to ensure gaming funds are equitably distributed to charitable organizations across the province.

RMA is not backing down from this issue, recognizing that now is a critical time for reform, especially as community organizations’ contributions become even more essential amidst economic uncertainty. In response, RMA launched a six-week campaign, “**Losing Bet (**<https://rmalberta.com/advocacy/rmas-charitable-gaming-resources/>**)**,” which calls on the Government of Alberta to change the charitable gaming model.

- Introduction
- Week 1 – Laying the Cards Out for Charitable Gaming in Alberta
- Week 2 – The Great Divide: Inequities in the Charitable Gaming Model
- Week 3 – Rural Reality: The Price is Not Right
- Week 4 – Laying our Cards on the Table: RMA’s Proposal to Create an Equitable Charitable Gaming Model
- **Final Report Release – More Work for Less Money: A Losing Bet for Rural Communities – Alberta’s Charitable Gaming Model**
(<https://rmaalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/CharitableGamingReport-0.2.pdf>)

RMA is calling on the Government of Alberta to implement the recommendations outlined in this report and collaborate with both rural and urban stakeholders to develop an equitable charitable gaming model. This model should fairly recognize the significant work of charitable organizations across Alberta, regardless of location. An improved charitable gaming system will allow everyone – rural charities included – to hit the jackpot.

To follow along with this campaign, please visit the **RMA’s Charitable Gaming Resources webpage** (<https://rmaalberta.com/advocacy/rmas-charitable-gaming-resources/>).

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Source URL: rmalberta.com/news/rma-statement-on-united-states-tariffs-on-canada/

RMA Statement on United States Tariffs on Canada

Posted on: March 7, 2025



In response to the tariffs imposed on Canada by the United States this week, RMA President Kara Westerlund has made the following statement:

The United States' blanket 25% tariffs on Canada, along with the 10% tariff on Canadian energy exports, will have direct and lasting impacts on rural municipalities, rural residents, and the resource-based sectors that call rural Alberta home and drive the province's economy. RMA remains focused on working with both the Government of Alberta and the Government of Canada to strengthen the resiliency of rural municipalities and identify opportunities for local, regional, and domestic market and supply chain growth.

During times of global uncertainty, rural municipalities continue to be a stable, Alberta-first partner for government. While rural municipalities operate at the local level, they provide the infrastructure and services that Alberta's largest companies rely on to access resources and markets. RMA is committed to working with the province to turn this challenge into an opportunity by removing interprovincial trade barriers, supporting development of new resources and other projects, and expanding access to new domestic and international markets.

While these issues may seem beyond the scope of municipalities, rural infrastructure is the foundation of Alberta's supply chains and a critical link to economic growth at both the national and global levels. By working together, rural Alberta can strengthen its role in supporting the province's economic future.

For all media inquiries, please contact Shamelle Pless, General Manager of Marketing & Communications, at **shamelle@rmalberta.com** (**mailto:shamelle@rmalberta.com**) or 780.886.2480.

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Source URL: rmalberta.com/news/board-governance-review-committee-delivers-recommendations/

Board Governance Review Committee Delivers Recommendations

Posted on: March 7, 2025



Be ready to vote on the Board Governance Review Committee's recommendations at RMA's 2025 Spring Convention

In order to operate effectively and remain accountable to members, RMA is committed to undertaking a review of the association's governance structure every four years. RMA undertook its most recent review beginning in December 2024. The Board Governance Review Committee (BGRC) consisted of one voting member from each of the RMA's five districts, as well a non-voting chairperson intended to guide discussions.

The composition of the BGRC is as follows:

- Non-voting Chairperson: Todd Brand
- District 1: Laurie Lyckman, Councillor, Vulcan County
- District 2: Larry Clarke, Reeve, Stettler County
- District 3: Ashtin Anderson, Councillor, Athabasca County
- District 4: Dalen Richardson, Councillor, MD of Fairview
- District 5: Gene Hrabec, Deputy Reeve, Beaver County

The BGRC has now finished deliberations and presented recommendations to the RMA Board of Directors on March 7, 2025. The report and all recommendations are now available for review **here (<https://rmalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/BGRC-Report-FINAL.pdf>)**.

The report's recommendations will be voted on by members at RMA's 2025 Spring Convention. The BGRC will provide members with an overview of the report and recommendations prior to voting on Tuesday, March 18, 2025 at 9:15 am.

Any inquiries may be directed to:

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Source URL: rmalberta.com/news/2025-rma-position-statements-volume-1-now-available/

2025 RMA Position Statements – Volume 1 Now Available

Posted on: March 7, 2025



Position statements provide a concise overview of the RMA's positions on key policy areas.

The RMA is committed to advocating for the rural municipal perspective with government leaders, industry, and other stakeholders. To support these efforts, the RMA develops and periodically updates a series of **Position Statements** (<https://rmalberta.com/advocacy/position-statements/>) that summarize and reflect the RMA perspective on key policy areas. These position statements are reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors twice each year. Volume 1 of the 2025 Position Statements is now available on RMA's website. The RMA encourages members to review position statements and use them as a resource in local advocacy efforts. Position Statements are organized into the following categories:

- **About RMA** (<https://rmalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/About-RMA-Position-Statements-1.pdf>)
- **Agriculture** (<https://rmalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Agriculture-Position-Statements-1.pdf>)
- **Broadband and Connectivity** (<https://rmalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Broadband-and-Connectivity-Position-Statements-1.pdf>)
- **Climate Change** (<https://rmalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Climate-Change-Position-Statements-1.pdf>)

- **Community Services (<https://rmalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Community-Services-Position-Statements-1.pdf>)**
- **Energy (<https://rmalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Energy-Position-Statements-1.pdf>)**
- **Environment (<https://rmalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Environment-Position-Statements-1.pdf>)**
- **Health (<https://rmalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Health-Position-Statements-1.pdf>)**
- **Industry and Resource Development (<https://rmalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Industry-and-Resource-Development-Statements-1.pdf>)**
- **Municipal Finances (<https://rmalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Municipal-Finances-Position-Statements-1.pdf>)**
- **Municipal Governance (<https://rmalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Municipal-Governance-Position-Statements-1.pdf>)**
- **Municipal Service Delivery (<https://rmalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Municipal-Service-Delivery-Position-Statements-1.pdf>)**
- **Municipal Taxation and Assessment (<https://rmalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Municipal-Taxation-and-Assessment-Position-Statements-1.pdf>)**
- **Planning and Development (<https://rmalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Planning-and-Development-Position-Statements-1.pdf>)**
- **Policing and Rural Crime (<https://rmalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Policing-and-Rural-Crime-Position-Statements-1.pdf>)**
- **Rural Economic Development (<https://rmalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Rural-Economic-Development-Position-Statements-1.pdf>)**
- **Transportation and Infrastructure (<https://rmalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Transportation-and-Infrastructure-Position-Statements-1.pdf>)**

If more detail is needed on a certain issue, please search for related resolutions on the **RMA's Resolution Database** (<https://rmberta.com/advocacy/resolutions/resolutions-database/>) or contact the advocacy team member listed in each position statement category to discuss.

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Source URL: rmalberta.com/news/government-of-alberta-to-bring-the-provincial-priorities-act-into-force/

Government of Alberta to Bring the Provincial Priorities Act into Force

Posted on: March 7, 2025



The Government of Alberta recently filed the Provincial Priorities Regulation with the King's Printer and intends to bring the Provincial Priorities Act and Regulation into force on April 1, 2025.

The Provincial Priorities Act, 2024 (formerly Bill 18) requires provincial entities to obtain approval from the Government of Alberta before entering into, amending, extending, or renewing an agreement with the federal government. The act's details relating to the approval process, the conditions that must be fulfilled before a provincial entity can enter into an agreement with the federal government, and any exceptions to the legislation were left to the regulation, which was released by the province on February 21, 2025.

Based on RMA's analysis of the regulation, some agreements will be exempt from requiring ministerial approval; this includes those valued under \$100,000, or under \$250,000 in the case of the construction, maintenance, or development of housing accommodations, as well as in-kind contributions. However, exempt agreements must still be submitted to the minister responsible for the provincial entity for the exemption to be valid, and any agreements exceeding \$5 million will require the approval of cabinet, not just the responsible minister.

In 2024, the RMA participated in a province-led engagement relating to Bill 18, where RMA called for:

- “Provincial priorities” to be pre-determined, clearly defined by the Government of Alberta, and transparent to municipalities, to ensure a straightforward and accessible application process.
- Project applications that align with “municipal purposes” as defined under s. 3 of the *Municipal Government Act* to be excluded from provincial approval requirements.
- The Government of Alberta to work with municipal stakeholders on the development of the regulations and the creation of a list of federal program-based exemptions. From RMA’s perspective, municipal-federal agreements under most existing federal programs are not in conflict with provincial priorities.
- An increase to the project value threshold of \$100,000 to better focus the approval process on larger-scale projects.

RMA has several concerns with the Provincial Priorities Act coming into force. 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 initiatives.

At a time when municipalities of all types across Alberta are facing 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 counterproductive to the needs of Alberta’s municipalities.

RMA will work to gather more information in anticipation of the regulation taking effect, including how current funding agreements will be impacted, and keep members updated.

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Source URL: rmalberta.com/news/government-of-alberta-conducting-review-of-land-and-property-rights-tribunal-processes/

Government of Alberta Conducting Review of Land and Property Rights Tribunal Processes

Posted on: March 7, 2025



The Government of Alberta is organizing a review of the Land and Property Rights Tribunal to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

The **Land and Property Rights Tribunal (<https://www.alberta.ca/land-and-property-rights-tribunal-about>)** (LPRT) is responsible for decisions related to land use planning, development, right of entry, compensation, and assessment matters. These responsibilities, which were formerly managed by the Municipal Government Board, Land Compensation Board, Surface Rights Board, and New Home Buyer Protection Board, were consolidated under the LPRT in 2018.

The process review is being conducted by an external consultant to evaluate the LPRT's practices and procedures. The review focuses on the complete set of processes involved in delivering the LPRT's services and aims to assess how well LPRT's processes meet the needs of all stakeholders, including industry, municipalities, landowners, developers, and the Government of Alberta. This will be the first review of the LPRT since it was established in 2018. Note that the review will not assess LPRT's decisions or policies.

RMA is pleased to see the Government of Alberta undertaking this important review. Recently, RMA has been actively engaging with members and conducting research regarding the LPRT's processes. Through these efforts, RMA has been advocating

for improvements to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the tribunal's operations. RMA is committed to the continued advocacy for members' interests and is optimistic that this review will provide valuable insights and opportunities for improvements to LPRT processes.

As part of the Government of Alberta's review, the external consultant is conducting a survey to gather feedback from stakeholders. The survey can be accessed **here** (<https://www.mnp.ca/en/clients/public-sector/lprt-process-review>) and closes **March 30, 2025**.

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Source URL: rmalberta.com/news/wildfire-working-group-summary-report-now-available/

Wildfire Working Group Summary Report Now Available

Posted on: March 7, 2025



The RMA's Wildfire Working Group (WWG) met throughout the summer of 2024 and again in January 2025 to develop a strategy to manage wildfires outside the Forest Protection Area (FPA), as requested by RMA resolution **7-23F: Strategy for Management of Wildland Fires Outside Forest Protection Area** (<https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/7-23f-strategy-for-management-of-wildland-fires-outside-forest-protection-area/>).

This work has culminated in **RMA's Wildfire Working Group Report** (<https://rmalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/RMA-Wildfire-Working-Group-Report.pdf>), which provides 31 recommendations to the Government of Alberta, Government of Canada, municipalities, and other agencies and organizations. The board of the Alberta Fire Chiefs Association (AFCA) has endorsed the recommendations of this report, and RMA is grateful for their support on this important work. A **summary report** (<https://rmalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Summary-Wildfire-Working-Group-Report.pdf>) is also now available that presents the report's key findings in a condensed format.

This work includes recommendations related to how respective parties prepare for, respond to, and recover from wildfires outside of the FPA. Additionally, the report provides an overview of previous after-action reports and presents the analysis of an RMA survey conducted in conjunction with the report. RMA is sending the report

to the various ministries and agencies responsible for wildfire management requesting a response, and will report to members on progress in actioning the various recommendations in the coming months.

To explore the report in more detail, RMA will dedicate a plenary and workshop spot at the upcoming spring convention to this report. More details on the exact times will be available as the agenda is finalized.

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Source URL: rmalberta.com/news/government-of-alberta-releases-police-review-commission-survey/

Government of Alberta Releases Police Review Commission Survey

Posted on: March 7, 2025



The Government of Alberta is gathering input regarding the Police Review Commission.

The **Police Review Commission (<https://your.alberta.ca/prc>)** (PRC) is a new agency that will independently investigate complaints against the police in Alberta. The PRC was created in response to long-standing calls for policing reforms to meet the public's evolving expectations around increased accountability and transparency.

Once operational, the PRC will be a single provincial agency that will intake, assess, investigate, and determine resolutions for complaints against municipal and First Nation police services in the province.

The PRC is expected to launch in December 2025. The Government of Alberta is hoping that residents will participate in a short online survey to help ensure that the PRC meets the expectations of independence, transparency, and the delivery of fair, timely resolutions.

The **survey (<https://your.alberta.ca/prc/surveys/police-review-commission-community-survey>)** will take 10 to 15 minutes to complete and closes **March 28, 2025**.

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Source URL: rmalberta.com/news/public-engagement-course-open-for-registration/

Public Engagement Course Open for Registration

Posted on: March 7, 2025



Effective public engagement is key to fostering transparency, inclusivity, and trust in municipal decision-making.

Registration is now open for the Elected Official's Education Program (EOEP) Public Engagement **online course (<https://eoep.ca/events/councils-role-in-public-engagement/>)**.

Students in this course will:

- Understand the role of council in public engagement
- Explore managing public expectations and challenges
- Learn the importance of public engagement frameworks and statutory requirements
- Develop skills for strategic engagement planning & decision making
- Navigate how to handle conflict and address misinformation

This course will be held on March 27, April 3, and April 10 from 6:30pm to 8:45pm.

All EOEP sessions are tailored for municipal leaders ready to make a real impact. Expand your expertise, connect with industry experts, and network with colleagues from across the province.

Limited spots are available for this EOEP course. **Register now (<https://eoep.ca/upcoming-courses-2/>)!**

For registration details and inquiries, visit **eoep.ca** (<https://eoep.ca/>) or contact **registrar@eoep.ca** (<mailto:registrar@eoep.ca>).

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New Help Line for New Parents and Newborns Launches in Rural Alberta

Posted on: March 7, 2025

Know a new parent or have a new baby? Here's a new to rural resource to help with questions.

RMA members have endorsed several resolutions with the goal to increase primary health services in rural Alberta:

- **Resolution ER1-24S: (<https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/er1-24s-government-support-for-physician-assistants/>)**
Government Support for Physician Assistants
- **Resolution 1-24F: (<https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/1-24f-attraction-and-retention-strategy-for-rural-health-care-professionals/>)** Attraction and Retention Strategy for Rural Healthcare Professionals
- **Resolution 6-23S: (<https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/6-23s-rural-access-to-supports-for-addictions-homelessness-and-mental-health/>)** Rural Access to Supports for Addictions, Homelessness and Mental Health
- **Resolution 2-22F: (<https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/2-22f-laboratory-and-x-ray-technologists-training-for-rural-healthcare/>)** Laboratory and X-Ray Technologist Training for Rural Healthcare
- **Resolution 8-22F: (<https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/8-22f-rural-mental-health-advocacy/>)** Rural Mental Health Advocacy
- **Resolution 17-22F: (<https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/17-22f-government-funding-for-nurse-practitioners/>)**
Government Funding for Nurse Practitioners

Alberta Health Services recently expanded a Health Link 811 service that refers new parents with postpartum and/or newborn related queries to registered nurses specializing in postpartum care to the North, Central, and South zones. This expanded service is intended to provide one more tool for parents and infants to access the information and primary care like services they need and perhaps save an emergency room visit.

Key points:

- Nurses and 811 are available 24/7
- The service is available for newborns up to 2 months of age
- Offers support for baby, baby's health, breastfeeding, and mother's health

Read the Alberta Health Services release [here](#)

(<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/news/Page18801.aspx#:~:text=Albertans%20can%20reach%20the%20New,under%20two%20>

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Source URL: rmalberta.com/news/wildfire-preparedness/

Wildfire Preparedness

Posted on: March 6, 2025



As we prepare for another wildfire season in Alberta, it is always a good idea to ensure you are ready if an emergency arises. Here are some steps to take to help get everyone ready for the potential dangers of wildfire season:

- Ensure fire department has completed their pre-season checks
- Ensure mutual aid agreements are up to date
- Review Emergency Response Plan (ERP)
- Ensure staff is trained on the ERP
- Understand who is responsible for executing the ERP
- Review insurable assets and ensure adequate coverage is in place
- Review to ensure new assets are insured (buildings, equipment, vehicles)
- Conduct building assessments (note any dry/dead vegetation and address concerns)
- Regularly review Wildfire Hazard Assessments (can be requested through local wildfire officers)
- Conduct a walk-through of the emergency evacuation building. Are there any immediate concerns that need to be addressed? Are there adequate supplies? How is the building condition overall?
- Public Awareness Plan- Where can your ratepayers look for up to date information? How is this communicated to your ratepayers?
- If your area is prone to wildfires, keep a "go bag" in your vehicle throughout the season.

When a wildfire starts, it only takes hours for it to become an emergency. Make sure everyone is ready for the season and plans are in place should the worst-case scenario arise.

FireSmart Tips: How to Protect Your Property for Wildfire Season

- 1. Clean building exterior:** The area around your building may have dry leaves, branches and other debris that may have moved in before the snow. To minimize the risk of fire, take the time to clean all debris and flammable materials. Properly dispose of any waste.
- 2. Assess and clean roof and gutters:** Check your roof and gutters. Gutter and roof cleaning in the spring is a crucial way to ensure that if wildfire approaches, there is no flammable materials in those areas that can easily ignite by flying embers. Monthly inspection of gutters is recommended to ensure they remain clear of debris. You can also install gutter guards to prevent debris from settling in gutters.
- 3. Maintain your lawn:** Maintaining your lawn and green space is vital to ensure the area does not become dry during the wildfire season. Water green space often and ensure shrubs and other plants are watered regularly as well. Pay close attention to any green space near the building.
- 4. Reduce highly flammable plants:** Certain plants can be more flammable than others. Something to consider when checking the property is looking for plants with qualities that are highly flammable and could fuel a wildfire if one approaches. Instead, add plants that do not provide significant fuel to fires.

Highly Flammable Plants	Less Flammable Plants
Leaves that have a strong odor when crushed	Moist leaves
Fine, dry or dead material, like bark, twigs, needles, and leaves within plants	Water-like sap with little to no odor
Trees, branches, and stems with a gummy sap	Very little dry or dead materials

- 5. Prune trees:** There are a wide variety of trees that are more resistant to fire that you can include in your landscaping. Trees such as maple, birch, popular, aspen, cherry, and alder are all more fire resistant than coniferous trees (cones and needle types such as pine and fir). As part of

your spring cleaning, take the time to prune any branches that are within two metres of the ground and remove any flammable debris that may have fallen.

6. **Create a wildfire evacuation plan:** Having a detailed plan in place can be crucial for responding quickly should a wildfire approach. An effective plan will help ensure a timely response. Have an emergency wildfire checklist and ensure all items are completed when evacuating to ensure a successful evacuation. Items on the checklist should include:

- Shutting down the power and water to the building if necessary
- Leaving gates open so emergency response can respond to the area
- Placing a sign on the exterior door(s) indicating the building has been cleared of all personnel (this is a great idea for work and at home)
- Clearing away any debris on the building exterior and moving combustibles a safe distance from building



Source: <https://www.cnv.org/home-property/fire-department/firesmart>
(<https://www.cnv.org/home-property/fire-department/firesmart>)

FAQs

What happens if I send my fire trucks to another area to help? Am I covered?

There is coverage to protect the fire truck against damage and liability. It is always within best practices to ensure that you have a mutual aid agreement, and that the agreement is up to date.

What is covered if I need to commandeer equipment to assist in the fire efforts?

Commandeered Equipment: It is understood and agreed that this Policy is hereby extended to cover property of a similar nature to that insured which has been commandeered by the Named Insured for their use, provided all such property is reported to the Insurer(s) within Thirty (30) days from the date of commandeering. It is agreed that an Additional Premium will be paid by the Insured at the rate applicable under this Policy, pro-rated from the date of commandeering to the expiration or termination thereof.

It is further understood and agreed that the Limit of Liability as respects to commandeered equipment shall not exceed the amount stated in clause 8 of the Declarations hereof.

What evacuation coverage is available?

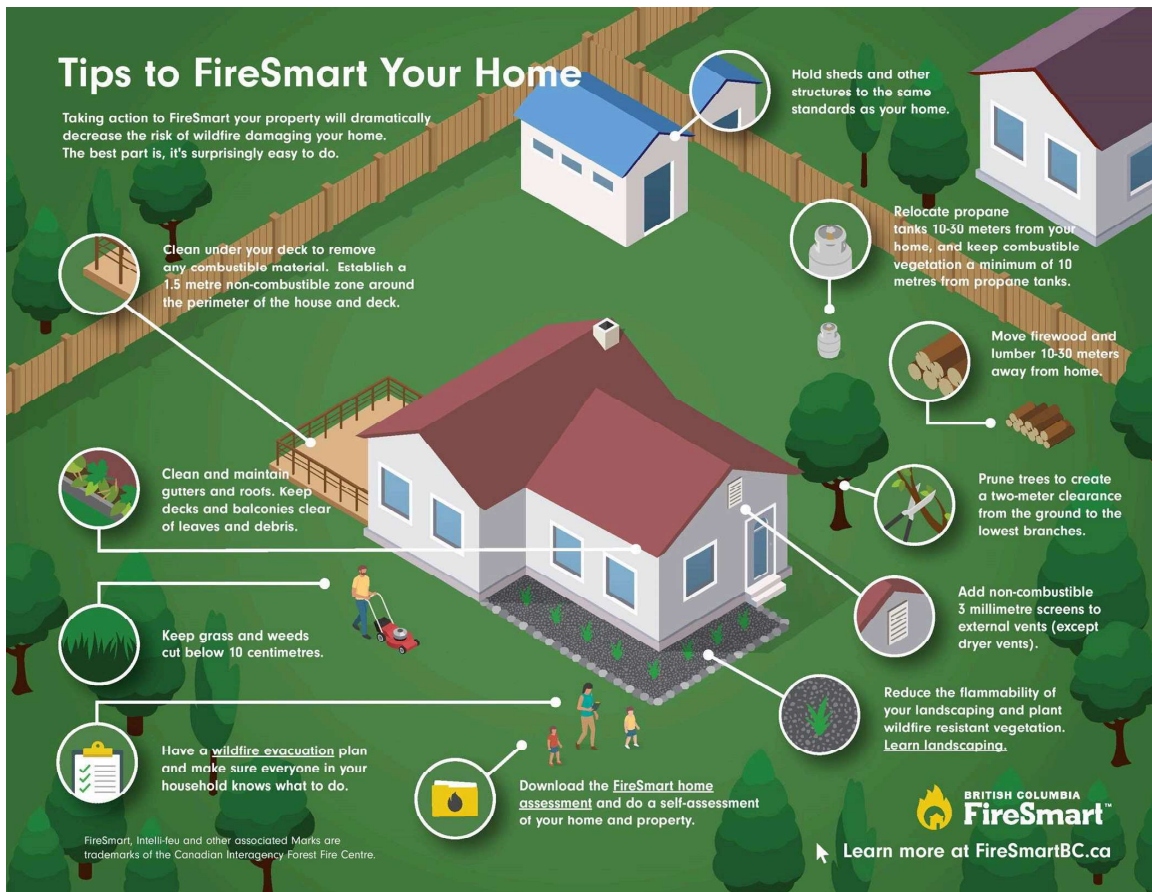
Emergency Evacuation Expense: Subject to a limit of two hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) any one occurrence, this policy is extended to cover all reasonable and necessary evacuation expenses incurred by the insured as a result of compliance with a mandatory evacuation order which requires the evacuation of a covered location(s) and first occurs during the period of insurance.

This additional coverage is provided for up to thirty (30) days after the mandatory evacuation order with respect to each covered location, but not for any period of time beyond ninety-six (96) hours after the date and time the appropriate civil authority allows a return to each covered location (hereinafter, this period of time is referred to as the evacuation period).

The following additional definitions apply to this extension:

- Evacuation expenses means the reasonable and necessary expenses incurred during the evacuation period to transport and house designated persons. Evacuation expenses includes evacuation of designated persons, maintenance of designated persons in another location, and the return of designated persons to the covered location or, if the covered location is not habitable, to a suitable alternative location.
- Designated persons means:
 - Residents and lawful occupants at a covered location; and/or

- Those employees who are essential to implement the mandatory evacuation order at a covered location.



Helpful Resources:

- **RMA Wildfire Program Assistance Guide 2023**
(<https://rmaalberta.com/news/wildfire-program-assistance-guide-2023/>)
- **FireSmart Canada** (<https://firesmartcanada.ca/>)
- **Alberta Wildfire** (<https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-wildfire>)
- **Wildfire Status** (<https://www.alberta.ca/wildfire-status>)
- **Alberta Wildfire Resources** (<https://www.abchamber.ca/wildfire-support/>)
- **Wildfire Defense Systems** (<https://www.wildfire-defense.com/>)
- **Government of Canada – Wildfires** (<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-safety-canada/campaigns/wildfires.html>)
- **Fire & Flood Emergency Service** (<https://fire-flood.com/>)