



## FEATURED:

### AUC Consultation on Proposed Standardized Setbacks for Renewable Energy Infrastructure

In February 2024, the Minister of Affordability and Utilities requested that the Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) pursue standardized setbacks for renewable infrastructure in the province. The AUC is now proceeding with targeted consultation with municipalities through a virtual open house on April 24 from 11AM to 12PM.

[Read RMA's initial input and learn more...](#)

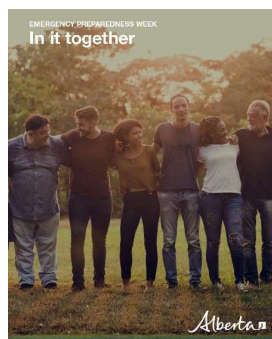
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## MEMBER BULLETINS

Member bulletins are posted to [RMAAlberta.com](http://RMAAlberta.com) regularly each week. Below is a list of all the member bulletins compiled from the past week.

Emergency Preparedness Week 2026:  
May 3-9

Research shows that communities who have established strong social connections before an emergency often experience better outcomes



following the emergency. Emergency Preparedness Week takes place May 3-9 and will be focused on the steps to make community connections.

[Learn more...](#)

## Enhancing Grocery Accessibility – Engagement Opportunity

The Government of Alberta is working to understand grocery accessibility in different communities, including rural. Opportunities for written submission and to attend a virtual engagement session are available.

[Learn more...](#)

## Mitigating Root Intrusion

Tree and shrub roots will find a way to infiltrate municipal sewer systems. Having a well-planned approach to mitigate this risk will help prevent loss, and the resulting downtime of a costly and lengthy sewer repair. RMA Insurance has prepared this in-depth resource to help guide your preventative maintenance.

[Learn more...](#)

## Spring Cleaning Your Property

Alberta's harsh winters can lead to accumulated snow, ice buildup, and moisture infiltration, increasing risks of flooding, mould, and structural weakening. This bulletin from RMA Insurance is designed to help build up your best practices around spring cleaning and upkeep.

[Learn more...](#)



## AGRICULTURE UPDATE

**Moisture Situation Update**  
March 27, 2026

## JOB POSTINGS

RMA Insurance

**Claims Adjuster (Northern AB)**

Canoe Benefits

**Group Benefits Account Manager**

Flagstaff County

**Administrative Assistant – Municipal Services**

Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

**Advisor, Asset Management**

Strathcona County

**Facility Maintenance Operator**

Leduc County

**Shift Captain – Fire Services**

Lacombe County

**Supervisor of Accounting Services**

Lamont County

**Interim Chief Administrative Officer**

**VIEW OUR JOB BOARD**

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

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

RMA provides legislative updates while the Government of Alberta is in session. The legislature did not sit this week.

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

## REMINDERS

### Government of Alberta Introduces Bill 28: Municipal Affairs and Housing Statutes Amendment Act, 2026

The Government of Alberta has introduced Bill 28, which proposes a wide range of amendments to the *Municipal Government Act* (MGA) across several major municipal policy areas. RMA is currently reviewing the Bill and will provide members with a detailed initial analysis in the near future.

[Read the preliminary analysis now...](#)

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### Alberta Electoral Boundaries Commission Submits Final Report to Cabinet

The Alberta Electoral Boundaries Commission has submitted its final report to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. The final report also includes a minority report from two dissenting commissioners, which includes alternative electoral boundary maps.

[Learn more...](#)

### Emergency Use Registration for Strychnine Approved

Health Canada announced that it has authorized Alberta and Saskatchewan's re-submission for emergency use registration for two per cent liquid strychnine for Richardson's ground squirrel control until November 2027.

[Learn more...](#)

### Canadian Infrastructure Council Calls for Evidence for Second National Infrastructure Assessment

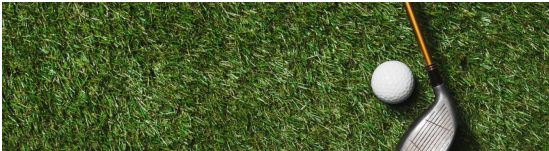
The Canadian Infrastructure Council (CIC) has announced a national Call for Evidence to support the development of Canada's second National Infrastructure Assessment (NIA) report.

[Learn more...](#)

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### You're Invited: 2026 Charity Golf Tournament - Registration Now Open!



- Our Charity Golf Tournament in support of the Stollery Children's Hospital Foundation is returning June 19, 2026! Join us at the Cougar Creek Golf Resort in Carvel, AB for a great day on the links in support of an even greater cause.

[Click here to learn more.](#)

### Rooted in Community: Building the Future of Rural Healthcare Conference | Oct 6-8, 2026 | Peace River, AB

- The RHPAP Conference brings together community leaders, healthcare professionals, educators, researchers, and rural champions from across Alberta and beyond. This gathering is designed to spark learning, collaboration, and innovation that strengthens healthcare in rural and remote communities.

[Click here to register.](#)

### Municipal Climate Change Action Centre (MCCAC): Keep Up to Date!

- MCCAC has a lot of great things going on this spring. To make sure you don't miss program **application deadlines, new opportunities,**

success stories ... or anything else, the MCCAC invites you to **subscribe to their monthly newsletter, The Current Climate**, and follow on **LinkedIn**.

## **Elected Officials Education Program (EOEP)**

### **Upcoming Courses**

- EOEP equips municipal leaders with the knowledge and skills required under the Municipal Government Act (MGA) to govern effectively, lead strategically, and serve their communities with confidence. **Learn more and register.**
- **Strengthen Regional Collaboration**  
Learn practical strategies to build trust, strengthen relationships and lead effective collaboration across municipal boundaries across municipal boundaries
  - Date: April 16 | April 23 | April 30, 2026 (must attend all three sessions)
  - Time: 1:00 – 3:30 pm
  - Location: Online
  - Cost: \$295
- **Expand Your Knowledge on Public Engagement**  
How much should you engage your residents for input and how should you do it? This course will offer tips, help you strengthen transparency and incorporate public input into council decision-making.
  - Date: May 6 | May 13 | May 20, 2026 (must attend all three sessions)
  - Time: 9:00 – 11:30 am
  - Location: Online
  - Cost: \$295

### **Communities in Bloom Alberta Invitation: 13 Ways... Presentation**

- Communities in Bloom Alberta will be welcoming former MLA Doug Griffiths for his presentation "13 Ways..." This presentation is focused on the need to adapt and change and grow to make our communities more appealing, because where people want to live is where businesses and

investment go. [Click here for all details and ticket info.](#)

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## IN THE NEWS

- **Supporting communities against drought and floods**
  - **Alberta-China advisory committee launches**
  - **CRTC seeking new Broadband Fund proposals to help improve Internet services for Canadians**
  - **Rural municipalities ask Alberta to open grizzly bear hunt**
  - **Grizzly hunt debate: Alberta Wildlife Federation calls for new research**
  - **Lakeland municipalities weigh in on new universal standards for council conduct**
  - **Healthcare students get hands-on rural experience in Vulcan**
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# AUC Consultation on Proposed Standardized Setbacks for Renewable Energy Infrastructure

Posted on: April 10, 2026



In February 2024, the Minister of Affordability and Utilities requested that the Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) pursue standardized setbacks for renewable infrastructure in the province. In response, the AUC consulted on appropriate setbacks from residences and other important infrastructure as part of the Rule 007: *Facility Applications* review. RMA **provided input** (<https://rmalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/RMA-Submission-on-AUC-Rule-007-Blackline.pdf>) that setbacks are established locally and should remain at the discretion of municipalities. The revised Rule 007 did not contain a decision establishing standardized setbacks.

The AUC is now proceeding with targeted consultation with municipalities through a **virtual open house** (<https://media.auc.ab.ca/prd-wp-uploads/News/2026/2026-04-07-Announcement.pdf>) on **April 24** from 11AM to 12PM. The session will focus specifically on setbacks with a stated goal to collaboratively consider default setback standards for renewable energy projects. RMA encourages members to **register** (<https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/bad6d64a-ab82-450d-b139-495eab1d5afe@e3ee1f8a-1fff-41c5-a45a-c32798e765eb>) to participate and to review the **proposal document** ([https://media.auc.ab.ca/prd-wp-uploads/regulatory\\_documents/Consultations/Proposed%20Standardized%20Setbacks%20for%20Renewable%20Infrastructure.p](https://media.auc.ab.ca/prd-wp-uploads/regulatory_documents/Consultations/Proposed%20Standardized%20Setbacks%20for%20Renewable%20Infrastructure.p)). Municipalities also have an opportunity to provide written feedback by **May 1, 2026**.

Alberta leads the country in renewable energy development, which brings both benefits and challenges for rural municipalities. Adequate consideration of municipal plans and perspectives in the decision-making process is critical for municipal autonomy. Concern with the AUC approval process is reflected in several RMA member resolutions, including **5-23F** (<https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/5-23f-municipal-involvement-in-quasi-judicial-agencies/>), and RMA will continue to advocate for municipal governance and autonomy.

Any questions about the consultation process may be directed to [engage@auc.ab.ca](mailto:engage@auc.ab.ca) (<mailto:engage@auc.ab.ca>).

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Source URL: [rmalberta.com/news/emergency-preparedness-week-2026-may-3-9/](https://rmalberta.com/news/emergency-preparedness-week-2026-may-3-9/)

# Emergency Preparedness Week 2026: May 3-9

Posted on: April 10, 2026



Research shows that communities who have established strong social connections before an emergency often experience better outcomes following the emergency, including reduced impacts and recovery time. If affected, your community members are the first to lend a hand, as well as the last, as you rebuild your community together. However, the 2025 Preparedness Survey of Albertans reports that only 12% of Albertans have an established community support system. Emergency Preparedness (EP) Week, a national campaign dedicated to building risk literacy and community resilience, takes place May 3-9 this year and will be focused on the steps to make community connections, including:

- Defining community
- Identifying everyday opportunities to make connections
- Learning who is in your community, including the skills, knowledge and resources you could share
- Learning who community connections play a role during and after an emergency
- We all have a role to play in emergency preparedness—but if we work together, we are more resilient.

We're In It Together—before, during and after an emergency. Visit Alberta's Be Prepared program's dedicated EP Week webpage at [www.alberta.ca/EPWeek](https://www.alberta.ca/EPWeek) (<http://www.alberta.ca/EPWeek>) for more information and resources to share in

your household, community and workplace.

Strengthening community and Indigenous partnerships alongside intermunicipal collaboration and provincial-municipal collaboration are key recommendations in RMA's **Wildfire Working Group Report** (<https://rmalberta.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/RMA-Wildfire-Working-Group-Report.pdf>) and the **Alberta Wildfire Mitigation Strategy**



(<https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/a205dcde-1f02-4a23-a306-1416bd25683f/resource/e135d79c-2bbb-4481-9962-da4a30922652/download/fp-alberta-wildfire-mitigation-strategy-2026.pdf>). Stronger partnerships and intergovernmental collaboration can support preparedness, response and recovery measures across a range of emergency situations. As Alberta heads into another wildfire season, RMA will continue to advocate for adequate representation and support in the implementation of recommendations.

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# Enhancing Grocery Accessibility – Engagement Opportunity

Posted on: April 10, 2026



*The Government of Alberta is working to understand grocery accessibility in different communities, including rural.*

It is no secret that rural, remote, and northern regions may face challenges in accessing essential food services. Factors such as long travel distances, limited market competition, and other factors can restrict where food retailers choose to operate. In addition, exclusivity clauses may influence where grocery stores or food retailers are able to operate, which may limit service availability.

The Government of Alberta is examining **how these factors affect grocery accessibility (<https://www.alberta.ca/enhancing-grocery-accessibility-engagement>)** and is looking for municipal perspectives to help inform practical, effective policy and program options.

Opportunities for municipal participation:

- Virtual engagement session
  - Monday, April 13 from 9:30am – 11:00am
  - To confirm attendance, please contact **[LTO.Stakeholder@gov.ab.ca](mailto:LTO.Stakeholder@gov.ab.ca)** (**<mailto:LTO.Stakeholder@gov.ab.ca>**).
- Submit a written submission

- o Additional feedback or detailed commentary can be sent to **LTO.Stakeholder@gov.ab.ca (mailto:LTO.Stakeholder@gov.ab.ca)**, no later than April 15, 2026.

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Source URL: [rmalberta.com/news/mitigating-root-intrusion/](https://rmalberta.com/news/mitigating-root-intrusion/)

# Mitigating Root Intrusion

Posted on: April 10, 2026



Tree and shrub roots will find a way to infiltrate municipal sewer systems due to their natural inclination to seek water and nutrients. This can go undetected over time until a loss occurs, either to municipal or private property. Having a well-planned approach to mitigate this risk will help prevent such loss, and the resulting downtime of a costly and lengthy sewer repair. This involves prevention, control and removal of tree root intrusions that can cause pipe blockages, sewage overflows, and reduced hydraulic capacity.

## The Nature of Things

Roots respond to weather and climate conditions in various ways. Drought conditions, such as when the water table is low and the soil underneath the tree is dry, will cause roots to “search” for moisture and nutrients. Sewer lines with cracks, gaps or misaligned joints enable nutrient-rich wastewater to escape from its intended route and into the soil, and the roots will thrive. On the flipside, when groundwater is high due to heavy rains and runoff, sewer systems can become stressed, causing leaks into the adjacent ground, providing this same nutrient-rich supply to hungry roots.

Roots can enter a sewer system through hairline cracks, loose or offset joints, deteriorated gaskets or seals, corroded or porous pipe

### **Tree species with aggressive and/or invasive root systems:**

All poplar species, willows, elm, ash, birch, and silver maple have more aggressive root systems. When any

walls, and gaps. Fine root hairs can enter through fissures and then expand into thicker roots and fibrous masses that can partially or completely block the flow of wastewater. They can crack and collapse clay, cast iron, and even poorly installed PVC lines, enabling soil and other ground debris to enter.

of these species grow in proximity to buildings, it can reasonably be expected that there will be fine roots gaining access to drainage pipes and in some cases, getting into storm water or sewage pipes through the pipe joints. Once inside, the roots develop a plug of fine roots that eventually block the pipe leading to backup of fluids and flooding. **Safer species to plant include Japanese Maple, Eastern Redbud, or Crabapple.**

## Common Indicators of Root Intrusion

- Soggy or sunken spots (sinkholes) in lawns and other areas adjacent or over a sewer line
- The appearance of lush, green patches of lawn
- Mature trees/large shrubs grow near the sewer line
- Visible root systems from large trees proximate to sewer line
- Faster than normal tree or bush growth
- Strong sewer odours
- Residents report sewer backups in showers or floor drains, clogged pipes or slow drains
- Increase in insect activity near the sewer line

## Who Is Responsible for Sewer Lines?

Canadian courts have accepted the principle that roots growing across a property line can constitute a nuisance. Generally, municipalities are responsible for the main sewer line buried on municipal property, while private and commercial property owners are responsible for the **sewer lateral** (the pipe connecting their building to the main municipal line). If a municipally owned tree's root damages a privately-owned sewer pipe, the municipality may be liable for repairs if proven negligent in its maintenance of the tree.



Damage caused by roots from trees growing on private property is the owner's responsibility, even if it affects the municipal system. Some municipalities in Canada have bylaws stating that the property owner is responsible for the maintenance of the sewer lateral on both the public and private side, but these have been legally challenged by private property owners. In Canada, lawsuits against municipalities regarding sewer failures, including those caused by tree roots, often hinge on whether the damage occurred on public property (the main sewer line) or private property (the lateral line connecting to the building). While property owners are usually responsible for their sewer lateral line to the property line, private property owners may successfully sue if they can prove the municipality was negligent in maintaining trees or main lines, with cases sometimes reaching small claims courts or higher. Municipalities may also counter that the privately-owned portion of the sewer line was old, damaged, or that the owner had not properly maintained it; or they may rely on legislative protection for municipal acts of negligence.

<p><b>Characteristics of Sewer Line Materials</b></p>	<p><b>Clay Tile:</b> Found in older neighbourhoods. Clay systems feature shorter pipe lengths that require joints every few feet, so there is greater risk of loose joints.</p> <p><b>Cast Iron:</b> Strong, but susceptible to internal corrosion and joint failure.</p> <p><b>Concrete and Orangeburg (fibre conduit, not used since the 1970s):</b> Age, pressure and chemical exposure can lead to cracking, blistering and deformation.</p> <p><b>PVC/ABS:</b> Less likely to deteriorate, but poor installation (misaligned joints and fittings) can create gaps.</p>
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## Short Term Techniques to Prevent and Mitigate Root Intrusion

If the pipe is in good structural condition and if root intrusion is minimal and infrequent, or if you're planning to replace the line in the near future, then a short-term solution may be ideal for you. Here are a few techniques:

**Regular Video Camera Inspections:** A flexible, waterproof camera, equipped with a location transmitter, can record visuals of fine root hairs or thick root masses – whether isolated or in many locations. It can identify cracks, fractures or missing sections of pipe, offset joints, evidence of prior repairs, or failed patches. The technician can pinpoint the exact location and depth of any problem areas and can determine if the issue is located under driveways, streets, landscaping or structures.

**Mechanical Root Cutting Machine:** This machine has a rotating cutting head – the blades scrape and cut roots inside the pipe. The downside is that this is not a permanent solution as the roots will eventually grow back. Blades may also damage already-fragile pipes.

**Hydro Jetting:** High pressure water is used to scour the inside of the pipe to cut and flush out root masses. But this is not a suitable treatment for severely fractured or collapsed pipes, as openings will enable roots to continue to infiltrate afterwards.

**Chemical Root Treatments:** Foaming root killers and herbicidal treatments can kill roots. This method is less abrasive than mechanical cutting and can slow regrowth for a period of time. Sewer lines should be cleaned 3–4 weeks after chemical treatment to remove dead root masses. Some chemicals used in this process require special handling and disposal.

**Root Barriers:** Physical barriers (made of plastic or metal) or chemical barriers can be installed underground to redirect root growth away from sewer infrastructure.

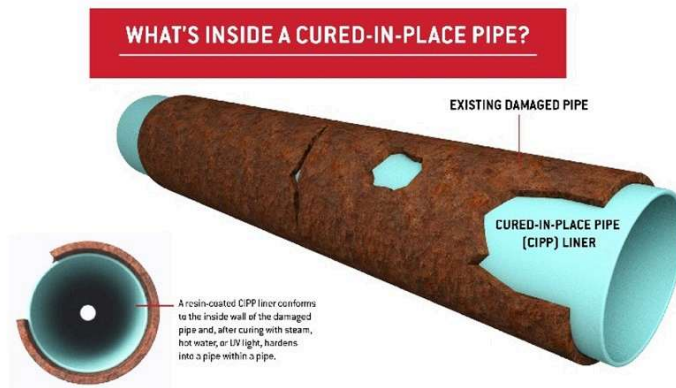
## Longer Term Techniques to Prevent and Mitigate Root Intrusion

**Avoid** planting trees or shrubs known to have aggressive and invasive root systems near municipal and private sewer lines.

**Excavate and Replace:** This is costly due to damage caused to above ground landscaping, roadways and lawns. This also results in more downtime. However, it presents an opportunity to replace older, damaged pipe with a more modern, root resistive material.

**Trenchless Repair/Cured-in-Place Pipe Lining (CIPP):** A flexible liner saturated with epoxy resin is inserted into the existing pipe, then cured in place to form a new, seamless pipe inside the old one.

- Fills in joints and gaps
- Structurally strong, corrosion-resistant pipe that can last 50+ years
- Can be completed in 1-2 days
- Costs 30-50% less than excavate-and-replace option when landscaping and structural work is not required
- Less downtime for businesses and residents
- Less risk of collateral damage to utilities and foundations



**Epoxy Coating:** The application of a specialized epoxy resin to the interior of sewer lines. This process creates a protective barrier that seals leaks, prevents corrosion, and enhances the structural integrity of the pipe. The epoxy is applied without digging trenches, minimizing disruption to the surrounding area.

## Post-Loss Preventative Measures

**Backwater valve incentive programs:** Some municipalities provide backwater valve incentive programs to private or commercial property owners to be installed after a loss. Some personal lines insurance companies will provide more favourable property insurance rates when such a device has been installed.

**Financial Aid:** As an example, Swift Current, Saskatchewan has a program to partner with private property owners that may pay 50% of a plumber's root-cutting bill if the roots enter the private sewer lateral from a tree growing on municipal property.

**Demonstrate Proactive Reasonability:** Having bylaws that clearly state the municipality's responsibilities relating to root intrusion and sewer lines, as well as a root mitigation policy that outlines the municipality's ongoing preventative measures, coupled with heightened awareness on the part of private property owners, can help to establish clear lanes of responsibility to reduce disputes, claims and litigation.

## RELATED ARTICLES INVOLVING ROOT INTRUSION ISSUES AND MUNICIPALITIES

+

While municipalities with aging sewer infrastructure and constrained budgets may have the most immediate interest in this issue, integrating these considerations into the planning of new developments can help prevent significant and unnecessary costs in the future.

**For more information, contact your Risk Advisor at [risk@rmainsurance.com](mailto:risk@rmainsurance.com) (<mailto:risk@rmainsurance.com>).**

Source URL: [rmalberta.com/news/spring-cleaning-your-property/](https://rmalberta.com/news/spring-cleaning-your-property/)

# Spring Cleaning Your Property

Posted on: April 9, 2026



Alberta's harsh winters can lead to accumulated snow, ice buildup, and moisture infiltration, increasing risks of flooding, mould, and structural weakening. Municipality-owned buildings (e.g., community centers, libraries, administrative offices) serve critical public functions and must comply with Alberta Building Code standards. Neglecting spring upkeep can result in costly repairs, insurance claims, or operational disruptions. Proactive cleaning reduces these risks by identifying issues early, potentially saving thousands in property losses annually.

The RMA Insurance team has prepared the below checklist to help guide your spring cleaning this year.

## Key Spring-Cleaning Tasks

### Exterior Maintenance:

- Examine roofs, siding, and foundations for cracks or damage from ice dams.
- Clear debris from gutters and downspouts to prevent water overflow during spring rains or melt.
- Replace missing shingles.
- Remove winter salt residues from walkways and entrances to avoid corrosion.

### Interior Maintenance:

- Deep clean HVAC systems, replacing filters to improve air quality and efficiency.

- Check for water stains on ceilings and walls indicating leaks. Address promptly to prevent mould growth, common in Alberta's humid springs.
- Ensure that the sump pump is working and that there are no signs of water seepage.
- Inspect all appliances for leaks, corrosion, or deterioration of materials. Ensure all items are cleaned thoroughly.
- Seal gaps around windows and doors to prevent water infiltration and mold.
- Vacuum and sanitize high-traffic areas to reduce allergens and pests.
- Check that fences are sturdy and that locks (especially for public works yards and areas with a high value content inside) are functioning to manage liability.

## Grounds and Landscaping:

- Rake away dead leaves and inspect drainage systems to mitigate flood risks, especially in low-lying areas prone to prairie runoff.
- Trim overgrown vegetation near buildings to deter rodents, insects and to fire smart your property.

## Safety Systems Check:

- Test fire alarms, sprinklers, change battery in smoke detectors and emergency lighting.
- Ensure exits are clear and accessible, complying with Alberta Fire Code requirements.

## Hiring Contractors:

When hiring professionals for tasks like cleaning gutters or roof repairs, ensure they are properly insured. Be aware of price gouging, particularly after severe weather events. When in doubt, please reach out to **risk@rmainsurance.com** (**mailto:risk@rmainsurance.com**) for guidance on hiring contractors.

## Risk Mitigation (Preventing Claims):

In keeping with best practices, routine maintenance and preventative work are a requirement to ensure your policy will respond. Damage resulting from neglected maintenance, along with wear and tear, may result in coverage not being afforded. Common examples of neglected maintenance include such items as a thirty (30)-plus year-old leaking roof, among others.

Consistently check for mould, which is generally not covered unless the loss is caused by a specific, sudden and accidental insured peril.

## Impact of Alberta's Climate on Property Structures:

- **Water Damage Prevention:** Install sump pumps in basements and grade landscapes away from foundations. Schedule annual roof inspections post-winter to catch leaks early—aim for completion by mid-April before heavy rains.
- **Structural Integrity:** Hire certified inspectors for seismic and wind-load assessments, vital in wind-prone regions like southern Alberta. Reinforce weak points with caulking or seals to block moisture entry.
- **Pest and Environmental Controls:** Use integrated pest management; seal entry points and remove standing water to avoid infestations that could damage wiring or insulation.
- **Insurance and Documentation:** Review municipal insurance policies for flood/winter damage coverage. Document all maintenance with photos and logs to support claims if losses occur.
- **Staff Training:** Train facility managers on spotting hazards; implement a checklist system for routine checks. Reach out to your designated Risk Advisor for assistance.
- **Budgeting for Prevention:** Allocate 1-2% of building value annually for maintenance. Annual allocations will be far less expensive than emergency repairs.

By implementing these practices, Alberta municipalities can maintain safe, efficient buildings while minimizing financial and operational risks.

For more information, please contact: **[risk@rmainsurance.com](mailto:risk@rmainsurance.com)**  
**(mailto:risk@rmainsurance.com).**