

INCREASE TO EDUCATION FUNDING

The Province announced its commitment to double education funding in public schools by 5.25%. The tax incentive grant will be continued. Support for qualifying small schools will guarantee a minimum of \$125,000 for instructional support. Grade 11 and 12 physical education funding will be increased by \$1.6 million from last year's \$2.1 million. This funding will support the new physical and health education requirements that will be implemented.

\$26 MILLION FOR MINERAL EXPLORATION

Through the Mineral Exploration Assistance Program (MEAP) the Province will provide \$14 million to support any new mineral exploration projects. These projects should generate additional expenditures of \$26 million.

In April of 2008 the MEAP was renewed for three more years with \$2.5 million to be allocated each year. Assistance of up to 25% of approved eligible expenses to a maximum of \$300,000 will be provided. Mining communities like Snow Lake,

Lynn Lake and Leaf Rapids are eligible for assistance up to 35% to a maximum of \$400,000 for the exploration in under-explored frontier regions.

MEAP project locations can be seen at www.gov.mb.ca/stem/mrd/busdev/incentives/index.html.

NORTHERN COMMUNITIES RECEIVE TRAINING INITIATIVES

Workers in northern communities are eligible under the new Forestry and Mining Training and Workforce Retention Initiative to receive training in order to get through these tough economic times. The Province has committed \$1 million in funding for this training program.

Around the world, the mining and forestry industry are experiencing severe market pressures due to the global economic recession, record low commodity prices and the US housing market collapse. Reduced production and layoffs have been the cause of serious stress to workers and their families. Local communities are also feeling the economic crunch.

This initiative will work with forestry and mining companies and their employees to implement customized training and workforce retention initiatives to help bridge periods of downtime. The existing workforce will receive up-skilling or re-skilling opportunities that match the current and future job demands. Apprentices will be able to complete their apprenticeship programs.

The Federal Government has provided funding for the new Forestry and Mining Training and Workforce Retention Initiative through the Community Development Trust Fund.

VETERINARY SERVICES REPORT COMPLETED

The veterinary services task force submitted its report to the Province of Manitoba for review in January 2007. The task force evaluated veterinary services throughout the province and determined what early warning and surveillance systems are currently in place to combat local and foreign animal diseases.


In order to meet the current and future demands on the veterinary medical services the task force included 33 recommendations for all livestock and animal owners.

The Province, along with the Veterinary Services Commission, Manitoba Veterinary Medical Association and commodity groups will continue to work together to advance these recommendations.

CULTURAL PLANNING FOR CREATIVE COMMUNITIES

Canadian municipalities can find plans and ideas to adapt the emerging "fourth pillar of sustainability" into planning, budgeting, decision making and community leadership from the new book *Cultural Planning for Creative Communities* by **Gord Hume**.

This book provides an insider's look at forming local roundtables and community action groups for cultural planning. Local governments are given the process necessary in implementing municipal cultural planning. Cultural mapping is also detailed.

Cultural Planning for Creative Communities is published in Canada by Municipal World, Inc. The cost of the book is \$36.95 plus shipping, handling and GST. Call the toll-free order hotline at 1-888-368-6125 for more information. 





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