

AMM Meets with Ministers, MTS

The AMM met with the *Honourable David Chomiak, Minister of Energy, Science and Technology* on October 24, 2005. The AMM began the meeting with Minister Chomiak by inquiring about the progress of the Efficiency Manitoba agency. The Province indicated that the new focus will be industry-driven and include broad consultation. The main focus will be on household hazardous waste, electronics and blue box recycling. The AMM stressed that recycling in Manitoba is successful and needs to continue at the existing 80:20 funding ratio.

The AMM also asked for an update on the wind power initiative in the province. The Province indicated that there are a number of companies in Manitoba that are interested in wind power development. The Province is aggressively looking at this initiative as it is a key component of its focus on alternative energy. The AMM also indicated it would like to see the recommendations of the Bio-Diesel Advisory Committee moved forward. An announcement on this was made November 1 (see below).

In closing, the AMM also raised the issue of Lake Winnipeg water levels with the Minister, as it was an issue

heard at the summer flood meetings. Additionally, the AMM raised the general issues of planning and education funding with the Minister.

The AMM stressed that recycling in Manitoba is successful and needs to continue at the existing 80:20 funding ratio.

The AMM met with the *Honourable Oscar Lathlin, Minister of Aboriginal and Northern Affairs*, on October 25th, 2005. The AMM opened the meeting by highlighting the need for improvements to the Treaty Land Entitlement (TLE) process, and the need to act on the recommendations of the Southern Chiefs Association Report, which outlines the disparity between TLE agreements in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. The Minister indicated he would respond formally in a letter to the AMM on this issue.

The AMM also raised the issue of legal costs of negotiating TLE agreements with Minister Lathlin. Again, the Minister said he would respond in a letter. He noted that while the process is slow, there is no budget to help with legal costs at the moment.

The AMM also raised concerns with the high cost of food in Northern communities. The Minister indicated that the Province is looking at a long-term strategy by making improvements in the winter roads network. It is hoped that this will help drive down transportation costs, which would help to lower food prices also.

In closing, the AMM raised the need for reliable VIA rail service to the North with the Minister, along with the general issues of education tax and the need to have First Nations involvement in any planning initiatives.

On October 27th, 2005 the AMM met with Manitoba Telecom Services (MTS) to discuss various issues, including:

- the need for special billing for non-profit organizations
- concern with the costs of installing phone lines for emergency operations centres (EOC)
- the fact that cellular service continues to be a top priority in some areas of the Province.

MTS raised the topic of high speed internet. In 2005, 22 communities will have received service with 20 more set to get service next year. MTS is also looking at the business case for expanding its television service outside the perimeter. ■

PROVINCE ANNOUNCES ACTION PLAN TO DEVELOP BIODIESEL IN MANITOBA

An action plan to promote the development of biodiesel as a new economic opportunity for Manitoba producers and rural communities and a clean-energy alternative to fossil fuels was announced November 1 by Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives Minister Rosann Wowchuk and Energy, Science and Technology Minister Dave Chomiak.

The two main components of the program are geared towards increasing production in Manitoba. Effective immediately, the province will no longer collect the 11.5 cents per litre fuel tax on 100 per cent pure biodiesel. This will offer a tax advantage over regular diesel of approximately 5.5 cents per litre after provincial sales tax has been applied. The provincial tax incentive will be reviewed after four years. The province and Natural Resources Canada will also work together to provide a \$1.5-million request for proposals (RFP) support package to Manitoba biodiesel producers who wish to either increase production of biodiesel or to start a new venture. ■



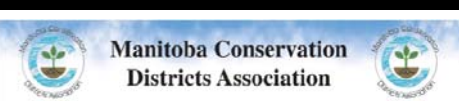
Minister Wowchuk, Minister Chomiak and President Bell at the Nov. 1 announcement

Coming Events



AMM Annual Convention Agenda Times

Please note that up to date agenda times can be viewed on the AMM website at www.amm.mb.ca. In addition, you will receive a supplemental agenda upon registration at the convention.



Manitoba Conservation Districts Association (MCDA) 30th Convention

*"Celebrating Watershed Successes -
Thirty Years and More"*

**December 5 & 6th, 2005
Keystone Centre
Brandon Manitoba**

For further information go to

www.mcda.ca
and click on convention
Telephone: 204-571-1097
Email: mcda@mts.net

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For further information contact:

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A NOTE ABOUT EMAIL

The AMM office has been sending out a high number of emails to our members recently. This is due to the many details we require regarding convention. Email is wonderful as it is fast and paperless, but sometimes we aren't sure if you have received our email. The majority of our members read and respond to emails promptly and we do appreciate your efforts. For others, please help us to communicate with you better by:



Responding swiftly

One reason we send an e-mail is because we would like to receive a quick response. Therefore, we would ask that, for emails that require a response, you reply within at least 24 hours, and preferably within the same working day (unless another deadline is stated).

We understand this is not always possible. In that case just send an email back saying that you have received it and that you will get back to us. This lets us know that you have received the email and helps us to better follow up with you.

Notifying us of changes

Please ensure you let us know if you have changed your email address. We don't want you to miss out on any important information because we don't have your correct address.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION!