



# MEMBER ADVISORY

## UPDATE: AMENDMENTS TO THE ONSITE WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS REGULATION

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**October 1, 2009** – The AMM is extremely disappointed in the Province’s heavy-handed decision to move forward with aggressive amendments to the Onsite Wastewater Management Systems Regulation, particularly the province-wide ban on sewage ejectors. The Regulation, MR 83/2003 under *The Environment Act*, governs the standards, installation and management of Onsite Wastewater Management Systems (OWMS) from private dwellings and businesses which generate a wastewater flow of less than 10,000 litres (2,200 gallons) per day. The Province announced yesterday it would proceed with the amendments, despite widespread objection heard through its consultation with municipalities.

The AMM took the following actions throughout the consultation process:

- **February 25, 2009** – The AMM Resource Management Committee heard a presentation by Donna Smiley of Manitoba Conservation regarding the proposed regulatory amendment.
- **February 26, 2009** – President Dobrowolski sent a letter to the Honourable Stan Struthers, Minister of Conservation regarding concerns with the proposed amendments and the short consultation period. The Minister agreed to extend consultations until May.
- **February 27, 2009** – AMM distributed a Member Advisory to encourage municipalities to comment on the proposed amendments.
- **March, 2009** – AMM included the issue on the agenda for the Mayors, Reeves and CAOs meetings;
- **April 15, 2009** – The AMM featured the discussion in a plenary session at the Municipal Officials Seminar and ensured the Department of Conservation was available to answer questions during and immediately following the session.
- **May 28, 2009** - The AMM met with Minister Struthers to discuss the proposed regulatory amendments and to express concern with the impact the proposed amendments would have on residents.

Manitoba Conservation also held a number of regional meetings with dozens of concerned municipalities throughout its consultation process. Despite the clear message delivered from AMM members and from other organizations, including Keystone Agricultural Producers (KAP), the Province proceeded to amend the regulation and place a province-wide ban on sewage ejectors. The AMM feels this is excessive as there is no scientific evidence to support such a widespread measure, and will be following up with the Province for more details on the health and science research the Province refers to throughout the regulation.

Municipalities submitted resolutions on the issue at the Parkland, Central and Midwestern June District meetings, asking that the “AMM lobby the Province of Manitoba to have the new regulation apply on a case by case basis where there are scientifically justified environmental concerns and identified high risk areas.” AMM members will vote on this resolution at the annual Convention in November, and the AMM will continue to monitor the impact these regulations have on our members.

The amended regulation can be viewed at <http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/regs/2009/156.pdf>.