

CLEAN, SAFE WATER FOR ALL CANADIANS

All Canadians will have access to clean, safe water thanks to new regulations for managing municipal wastewater. The Government of Canada's Action Plan for Clean Water has committed \$96 million for the restoration of Lake Winnipeg, Lake Simcoe and parts of the Great Lakes. The proposed regulations ensure that the release of wastewater effluent does not pose any risk to humans, the environment and fishery resources. The Honourable **Jim Prentice**, Minister of the Environment made the announcement on August 6, saying that a strong, comprehensive approach will ensure that our water resources are used wisely and ecologically.

Other commitments for the protection of Canada's water resources are:

- Accelerating First Nations' infrastructure projects, focusing on schools and water through \$515 million under Canada's Economic Action Plan;
- Investing in infrastructure through the \$33 billion Building Canada Fund to help municipalities and First Nations communities across Canada upgrade wastewater facilities;
- Regulating specific industries like metal mines and pulp and paper to reduce the toxicity of their effluents; and
- Investing in \$2.5 million over five years to support the United Nations Environment Program's (UNEP) Global Environment Monitoring System GEMS/Water.

The proposed regulations will include national performance standards, timelines and monitoring and reporting requirements and should be published in the *Canada Gazette, Part 1*, in December 2009.

The AMM has very real concerns with the cost of these regulations and is working with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) to have these addressed.

SIMPLIFIED LICENSING PROCESS FOR MINOR WATER-CONTROL WORK

The approval process for minor water-control work on farmland is now faster thanks to a new policy and procedure announced on September 11, 2009 by the Minister of Water Stewardship, the Honourable **Christine Melnick**.

The simplified licensing process comes from recommendations from the Lake

Winnipeg Stewardship Board and the ombudsman. Manitoba Water Stewardship has 23 staff across the province to provide licenses and assistance to landowners thus ensuring the requirements of the *Water Rights Act* are met. In rural Manitoba there are six new offices to meet the needs of landowners.

Water-control work includes the installation of or changes to dikes, dams, drains, culverts and waterways. Once the license has been granted it does not have to be renewed by the current or future landowners to maintain the work. Projects not deemed minor must go through a more formal approval process.

The Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM), Keystone Agriculture Producers (KAP), Manitoba Cattle Producers Association and members of the Manitoba Conservation Districts Association were part of the consultation process in developing this policy. For more information please go to www.gov.mb.ca/water-stewardship/licensing/index.html.

MANITOBA FIRST TO IMPLEMENT BIODIESEL MANDATE

Also on September 11, 2009 the Honourable **Jim Ronda**, Minister of Science, Technology, Energy and Mines announced that beginning November 1, 2009, Manitoba will require, on average, 2% biodiesel in all diesel fuels sold in a year. This mandate gives fuel suppliers the flexibility to deal with the cold weather conditions in Manitoba. It is expected 5% biodiesel blends will be used to meet the mandated requirements. Once a Canadian fuel standard for biodiesel blends above 5% is in place Manitoba will consider raising its mandate.

In the spring of 2010 the current fuel tax exemption will be replaced with a 14 cent per litre, five-year production grant for both on and off-road biodiesel produced in Manitoba. In doing so Manitoba remains competitive with incentives offered in other North American jurisdictions.

There are two biodiesel plants currently under construction in the towns of Arborg and Beausejour.

HEALTHIER FOOD CHOICES FOR MANITOBA SCHOOLS

The Honourable **Peter Bjornson**, Minister of Education, Citizenship and Youth

and the Honourable **Kerri Irvin-Ross**, Minister of Health announced amendments to the Public Schools Act banning the sale of foods with high levels of trans fats to students. These amendments took effect September 1, 2009.

Legislation requires that school boards ensure artificial trans fats are not contained in packaged foods or other food products sold or distributed to students. Vegetable oils and spreadable margarines must not exceed two per cent of the product's total fat content. Excluding meat or dairy, the trans fat content of other foods cannot exceed 5% of the total fat content.

Exceptions to this include school lunches from home, school bake sales, and hot dog days or pizza lunches if not available in school on a daily basis.

School advisory councils or school committees are required to review the food and nutrition policies annually. Actions implementing the policies will be included in the school's annual plan.

H1N1 FLU

Has your municipality prepared its municipal emergency plan for a possible H1N1 flu pandemic?

The best defense against the H1N1 flu is to stay home from school or work while ill and limit contact with others. Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Cover coughs or sneezes by coughing or sneezing into elbows or sleeves or using tissue to cover your nose or mouth. Hand sanitizers are effective and available in travel sizes. Should you experience shortness of breath, dehydration, worsening fever, cough or weakness contact your physician or closest health care provider.

For information about H1N1 or pandemic planning you may contact your local regional health authority disaster management officer or EMO Regional Emergency Manager.

H1N1 health information is available for all Manitobans at www.manitoba.ca/flu or on the EMO website at www.manitoba.ca/emo.

GRANDVIEW AND MCCREARY JOIN THE MBTELEHEALTH NETWORK

The Honourable **Theresa Oswald**, Minister of Health announced the expansion of video-conferencing technology

linking health-care providers to patients in rural Manitoba.

Grandview and McCreary are the fifth and sixth communities to join the MBTelehealth Network in the Parkland District. The other locations are Swan River, Ste. Rose, Roblin and Dauphin. This expansion would not be possible without Grandview and McCreary community contributions and support. These sites should be in operation by late fall 2009.

At present 74 communities and 21 Winnipeg locations have MBTelehealth sites. MBTelehealth is part of the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority's Manitoba eHealth Program. Included are 16 First Nations communities along with at least one site for each regional health authority in Manitoba. For more information visit www.mbletehealth.ca.

\$21.2 MILLION FOR WATER-CONTROL IMPROVEMENTS

The Honourable **Ron Lemieux**, Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation announced the commitment of \$21.2 million for improve-

ments to Manitoba's water-control infrastructure. This includes improving major culverts, dams, drains, dikes and diversions across Manitoba. These improvements will enable water to move more effectively from farmers' fields, roads and residential areas.

In addition, \$3 million, through the highway capital program, has been allocated for bridge crossing upgrades within the water-control network. Safety measures will be improved for workers and the public at dam sites by installing safety rails and fences, work platforms and improving navigational warning signs.

Assessments were done to determine areas in need of improvements. The RMs of Morris, Dufferin, Alexander, Portage la Prairie, St. Andrews, Caldwell, Bifrost, Armstrong, Minitonas, Dauphin, Mountain and Kelsey will receive funding for the reconstruction of drains. The communities of St. Adolphe, St. Jean Baptiste and Emerson will receive funding for improvements to their community dikes. Ralls Island will begin constructing a flood protection dike.

The Province is responsible for the operation of 4,700 kilometres of provincial drains, 125 dam and control structures, 12 diversions, 41 pumping stations, 18 community dikes and associated infrastructure. **L**



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Incentive offers \$50 per controlled circuit.
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