

Community Contact

Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs



September
2007

For and
About Local
Government
Development

Band and Community
Constable Training 2007
2

37th NACC Annual General
Meeting and Tradeshow
4

Increasing Involvement,
Building Community
5

Community Taxation Basics
6

Important Tax Details
8

Community
Inventory Process
9

Red Cross Builds
on Commitment in
Northern Manitoba
10

New Requirements
from the Office of
Drinking Water
11

Profile
12



Summer 2007 constable training program participants were: Front row (left to right) Jimmy Colomb Sr. of Mathias Colomb, Sergeant Marion Craig of Canadian Law Enforcement Training (CLET), Cpl. Elizabeth Kauk of RCMP Aboriginal Policing, Sergeant Jacquie Genaille of RCMP Aboriginal Policing, Deborah Porter of CLET, Jim Lechner of CLET, Isaac Laponsee of Brochet.

Second row (left to right) Luke Maurice Keno of Garden Hill, Barbara Sinclair of Mathias Colomb, Cindy Jacobson of Cormorant, Lena McDougall of Wasagamack, Rosemary Harper of Garden Hill, Nellie Yassie of Sayisi Dene, Harvey Harper of Wasagamack, Roger Ross of Cross Lake First Nation.

Third row (left to right) Timothy Mitchell of Poplar River, Bernard Beardy of Grand Rapids, Daniel Bighetty of Mathias Colomb, Edward Houle of Skownan, Mervin Ross of Manto Sipi, Clifford Ross of Pimicikamak, William Fontaine of Poplar River, Edward Cook of Sapotaweyak, Michael Spence of O-pipon-na-piwin.

Back row (left to right) Jessica Yellowback of Manto Sipi, Chris Harper of Red Sucker Lake, Jack McDougal of St. Teresa Point, William Wayne Wavy of York Factory, Kerry Beardy of Shammattawa, Charlie Ducharme of O-pipon-na-piwin, Lorne Wood of Manigotagan/Seymourville/Bissett, Laurie Chartier of Grand Rapids.

**Northern Links
Recreation
Edition
INSIDE**

This Issue

Welcome to the September 2007 Community Contact Newsletter.

The theme for the September newsletter is Local Governance/Municipal Administration. In this issue, we feature articles on taxation, the community inventory process and new requirements from the Office of Drinking Water. This information will be valuable to community council members and employees as well as community residents. We also look back at two successful events that involved people from many communities over the summer months.

Our feature story looks at the band and community constable training that took place in July. This training took place at facilities that were not air conditioned during three of the hottest weeks of the year. Despite the weather, the constables successfully completed all of the training. Also on the topic of community policing, we highlight the distribution of a constable vehicle to the community of Cormorant. This was the 10th vehicle provided by ANA to a community with a constable program. We also recap the 37th Northern Association of Community Councils (NACC) Annual General Meeting and Tradeshow that took place at the end of August.

Along with the main articles, we provide information on community volunteering and the opening of the Red Cross Northern Manitoba office in Thompson. In our Profile section, we've provided information about several staff changes that took place at ANA over the summer months.

Inserted with this issue, you will find the *Northern Links* recreation newsletter and a list that combines the Community Years of Service Honour Roll and the Community Service Excellence Awards for 2007 presented during the 37th NACC annual meeting and tradeshow.

Enjoy this issue and please contact us with your comments, pictures and article suggestions, or to request additional copies.



Band and CONSTAB

This past July, 26 constables from three ANA communities and 23 First Nation communities graduated from band and community constable training. Previously conducted at RCMP "D" Division in Winnipeg, the July 9 to 27, 2007 session was moved to facilities at the Southport Aerospace Centre in Portage la Prairie.

The training was made possible by a partnership between Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs, the RCMP and the Aboriginal Policing Directorate of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada. This partnership allows small numbers of ANA community constables to share training resources with First Nation band constables and experience RCMP training that is more sophisticated than would otherwise be possible.

A full schedule of training included full day sessions during weekdays supplemented by additional sessions during evenings and weekends. Constables and their trainers are commended for their dedication to task while enduring unusually uncomfortable weather conditions during their training sessions. The training facilities were not air-conditioned and training coincided with two weeks of the hottest, most humid weather on record for southern Manitoba.

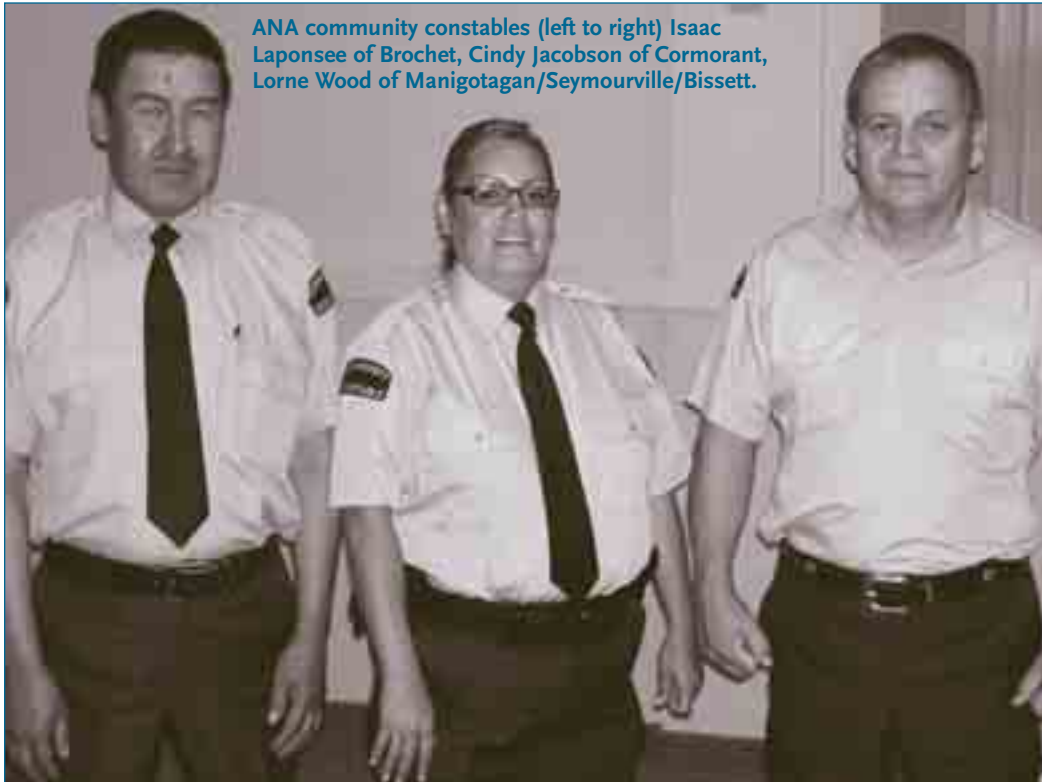
The three constable training graduates from ANA communities include:

- Isaac Laponsee of Brochet
- Cindy Jacobson of Cormorant
- Lorne Wood of Manigotagan/Seymourville/Bissett area

Representatives from the First Nations and ANA communities were invited to attend the graduation and witness distribution by the Province of the Peace Officer Status to the graduate constables. Communities are already realizing the benefits of having well-trained constables to serve local policing needs.



Community LE TRAINING 2007



ANA community constables (left to right) Isaac Laponsee of Brochet, Cindy Jacobson of Cormorant, Lorne Wood of Manigotagan/Seymourville/Bissett.



ANA Minister Oscar Lathlin presents police vehicle keys to Cormorant Constable Cindy Jacobson. Left to right: RCMP Constable Dan Wallace of The Pas, Minister Oscar Lathlin, Constable Cindy Jacobson and Cormorant councillors Ernest Lavallee and Larry Ladouceur.

Cormorant Receives a Constable Vehicle

On Friday, August 3, 2007, Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Minister Oscar Lathlin presented Cormorant, Manitoba with a specially equipped new police vehicle for use in its community constable program. This represents the last of 10 police vehicles presented to ANA communities over the past year, as recommended in a 2005 review of community constable programs.

Community constables are hired and managed by community councils using funding provided through Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs. The Cormorant constable completed training this past July, allowing the vehicle presentation as part of Manitoba's support for the community's constable program.

37th NACC Annual General Meeting and Tradeshow

Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (ANA) co-ordinated an August 21 information day for delegates to the Northern Association of Community Councils (NACC) 37th Annual General Meeting and Tradeshow held in Winnipeg August 21 to 23, 2007. The meeting and tradeshow theme was Partnering with Neighbouring Communities for a Healthier & Safe Environment.

The ANA information day featured the following organizations and topics:

- ANA Program Planning and Development – review and discussion of community chief administrative officer training, community public works employee training and new community election regulations
- Green Manitoba – a panel discussion on Manitoba recycling initiatives
- Office of the Fire Commissioner – incident command for the agency executive
- Manitoba Red Cross – activities and services offered by the Red Cross in Manitoba
- Science, Technology, Energy and Mines – New Technology and Website Development

Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Minister Oscar Lathlin and ANA Executive Director Freda Albert provided the welcome and opening remarks. The conference also allowed ANA staff from both regions to network and meet new community delegates.



Delegates take in a guest presentation during the 37th NACC annual general meeting and tradeshow in Winnipeg this past August.

Delegate comments indicate the ANA information day was highly successful and presentations were well received. ANA expects to continue providing NACC communities with relevant and valuable information at future AGMs.



Mona Ladouceur of Matheson Island.

During the 2007 NACC Annual General Meeting, ANA distributed more than 140 Community Service Excellence and Community Years of Service Awards for the year. Congratulations go to all community and individual recipients. **A list of this year's winners is included with this newsletter.**

ANA is particularly pleased to recognize Mona Ladouceur, Community Administrative Officer for the

community of Matheson Island. Mona won her award for the Administration category of the **Community Nominated Service Excellence Awards**. A community leader who continually meets and exceeds job expectations by bringing new ideas to council, Mona also volunteers as a committee member of the Matheson Island Harbor Authority and helps Community Administrative Officers from other communities.



Increasing Involvement, Building Community

What inspires people to give back to their community?

Here are three main reasons why people help each other. Knowing about them can help you encourage involvement from people in your community:

1. It is a privilege to help others by offering our unique gifts and talents. By doing so you not only help others but you also help yourself become a stronger person.
2. Many of us feel a deep-seated sense of responsibility to help each other. We know at some level of consciousness that we cannot survive without each other and we make a point of helping others with the thought that what we offer others may be available to us some day, should we need it.
3. By working together and sharing our talents, we help create a diverse community that is stronger because of that diversity. Being a part of a strong and diverse community makes us more confident, stronger and better able to face challenges as a group and as individuals.

If you are looking for people in your community to become involved, it will also help if you can show them your own example. You can set the example by sharing your talents willingly and showing people how helping and sharing have made you and your community stronger. Remember, people will respect what they see more than what they hear.

So once you have people interested in helping, how do you go from interest to action? The number one reason people volunteer or become involved is because they believe in the cause – they believe that the project or event is important.

How do you get people to believe in something? Make sure they have a stake in the success of the project – make sure they have a sense of ownership, that they have some ability to influence how it's done.

The bottom line? Get people involved at the start – at the planning stages, at the brainstorming stage – so as many people as possible have the ability to shape the project and feel that it's their own. **By the people, for the people** is a good saying to remember.

How do you get people involved at the start? It is as simple as asking. The number one way people become involved in a community effort is because somebody they knew and respected asked them personally. Putting up a poster or making a community announcement is not the same as calling or visiting and asking a person to help. It sounds so easy, but it is surprising how many people say that they aren't involved because no one ever asked them. By asking them, you are giving them an opportunity to say **yes**.

Community Contact thanks Tracy Douglass, community outreach co-ordinator for Volunteer Manitoba. Tracy is responsible for co-ordinating learning opportunities in the areas of volunteerism, the overall management of non-profit organizations and board development. She can be reached at: 1-888-922-4545 ext. 222 or vmoutreach@mts.net. More information about Volunteer Manitoba is available on the Internet at www.volunteermanitoba.ca

Community



Communities use local taxation revenue to help support the costs associated with infrastructure such as construction and maintenance of community-owned roads, water and sewage facilities, landfill operations and buildings.

The annual mailing of municipal tax bills from Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (ANA) each summer stimulates a variety of questions from citizens about the taxation process. If you have questions, the most important thing to understand first is that collecting municipal taxes allows municipalities to help with the costs of local services and education. It also helps to have a background understanding about how property taxes are calculated and know how to proceed if you don't agree with your property assessment.

Property Assessment

Every property in a municipality is assessed on the same basis and the resulting property values are used to determine how much the owner must pay in municipal and school taxes.

Property Assessment determines a fair market value of your property in relation to other properties in your municipality. An assessor employed through Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs typically determines a property's assessed value by taking into account factors such as location, size, age, types of structures and local real estate market conditions.

Properties in Manitoba are assessed every four years to ensure assessment values keep pace with changing market values within the province.

There are many reasons why your property's assessed value may change:

- Market conditions – in the four years since your last assessment, it is likely that market values have changed.
- Changes to your property – significant

improvements, like building a deck, an addition or other renovations will often add to your property's market value.

- Changes in your neighborhood – a new school, park, or other improvements in your neighborhood may add to your property's market value.
- Changes in property classification – if your property is classified for a different use than it was during the last assessment, it may change your property's assessed value (ex: residential to commercial).

A market value system means property assessments are based on potential selling prices at a specific point in time – such as the reference year. *The Municipal Assessment Act* defines market value as the most probable selling price of your property under normal market conditions, which means a sale by a willing seller to a willing buyer. The assessed market value may not be the exact selling price of the property. Assessed market value is a typical value established by comparing similar properties with similar characteristics and uses in a given reference year. The reference year of an assessment is the specific year used to determine the market value of your property, for the 2006 reassessment, the reference year was 2003.

The assessed value of your property is used to calculate property taxes. Municipal and school board budgets are used to establish the total amount of taxes to be collected for each property.

Board of Revision

The board of revision is a committee appointed to hear applications to review assessments. You may appeal your assessment based on the following reasons:



Taxation Basics

- you feel the amount of assessed value is too high or too low
- you believe your property has not been put in the correct property class
- you feel your property should be exempt from school taxes or exempt from both municipal and school taxes

Before deciding to appeal your revision, you should:

- discuss the value of your property with an assessor (ANA can help you contact an assessor)
- review the assessor's information about your property
- review information about comparable properties with the assessor

To appeal your revision, send a letter to the board of revision, care of Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs, ensuring that the secretary of the board of revision receives it at least **15 days before** the scheduled appeal hearing date. The hearing date, usually in the fall, is shown on your revision notice and is also posted in your community. There is no cost to file an appeal. Your letter should include:

- the tax roll number and legal description of the property
- your reason for appealing
- your name, mailing address and telephone number

An assessor may contact you to review your property file and arrange a re-inspection of your property. The municipality will notify you of the date, time and location of the hearing. At the hearing, you will be given an opportunity to present your reason for appealing along with any supportive information you may have. Although the hearings are fairly informal, they are similar

to a court session. Your information will be regarded as evidence and you will have to swear it is truthful. The assessor will present evidence and is bound by the same rules. You may call or subpoena witnesses to support your case.

The board hears all information, makes its decision based on the evidence provided and informs both parties. Please note that **you cannot appeal your property taxes, but you may appeal your property assessment.**

Property Taxes

Property taxes are based on the calendar year, January 1 to December 31, 2007. Everyone who owns land or buildings or occupies Crown land must contribute to the cost of local services and education. Property taxes are levied by applying the mill rate to the assessed value of your property.

Mill Rate: A mill is equal to \$1 of tax for each \$1,000 of assessed value. To calculate property tax, multiply the assessment of the property by the mill rate and divide by 1,000.

For example, a property with an assessed value of \$10,000 located in a municipality with a mill rate of 34.25 (seven mills for the municipal levy plus 27.25 mills for the Frontier School Division levy) would generate a property tax bill of \$342.50 per year.

School levies support education costs provincially and within the Frontier School Division. Municipal levies support services in your community such as:

- roads
- landfill
- water and sewage facilities
- building maintenance

Tax credits are available to residents who pay more than \$250 in property tax in a year. The Manitoba Education Property Tax Credit helps offset the property taxes Manitobans pay to support our public school system. The basic credit is \$525. This tax credit is available to you if you are the registered owner(s) of the property and the property is your primary residence.

The municipal portion of property taxes collected is forwarded to your community in January of each year. Unpaid property taxes reduce the amount of funds your community receives for local services. School taxes must be paid, even if the money is not collected from the taxpayers. Unpaid school taxes are subsidized by deducting them from the community's general municipal taxes, thus reducing the community's income.

If you own property and your taxes are two years in arrears, you risk having your property sold at a public auction through the tax sale process.

If your home is on Crown land, Aboriginal and Northern Affairs may ask a court to garnishee your wages or sell your assets. The province may also revoke unpaid Crown lease permits and force delinquent taxpayers to move off the land.

If you have questions about taxes please call for more information:

Kari Halleux, Taxation Clerk
Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs
Box 37, 59 Elizabeth Drive
Thompson, Manitoba R8N 1X4
Phone: toll free 1-888-667-6621 or 677-6621 in Thompson
Fax: 1-204-677-6753
E-mail: anataxes@mts.net

Important Tax Details

There are currently many ways to pay your municipal tax bill, including:

- a cheque for the full amount
- money order
- in person by cash (do not send cash in the mail)
- post-dated cheques
- electronic debit at the Thompson ANA office

Cheques must be payable to: **Minister of Finance.**

Future payment options will include:

- online banking
- telephone banking
- payment at a bank branch
- electronic debit at your community office

Board of Revisions

Board of Revisions and tax sale information can be found in the Grassroots newspaper or on-line at www.grassrootsnews.mb.ca.

Property sale or transfer

If you sell or transfer your property to another person, it is important that legal title changes hands and property is registered to the new owner.

It is best to have a lawyer make sure the proper paperwork is completed. If you do not choose to obtain legal services, the information here may help you:

1. You must be the registered owner or permit holder of a property to sell it.
2. Both parties must agree on an offer to purchase and a price.

3. Taxes for the property need to be paid in full to avoid any confusion.

4. Once money changes hands and the deal is final, the new purchaser needs to have the land transferred into his/her own name.

a. If the individual **owns the property**, this must be done at the Land Titles office, which will change the name and advise ANA of the transfer so tax bills will be sent to the correct individual.

b. If the individual **is the permit holder** for the property, the new owner must apply for a permit under his/her own name. This is done through the Manitoba Conservation Land Branch Agency, currently located in Portage la Prairie.

5. You should direct questions to the Lands Titles office or Manitoba Conservation Land Branch Agency.

6. If a property owner dies, follow the same steps to transfer the title, even if the property is transferred to a family member. This will ensure that the property tax bill will go to the correct person so taxes are kept current.

Important Tax Dates

Taxes are due **September 30, 2007.**

The annual tax sale is **November 29, 2007.** Public auction begins at 2:00 p.m. Please make sure tax arrears are paid and your payment is received well in advance to avoid the sale of your property, including land and buildings.

Community Inventory Process

Inventory Due Date *November 1, 2007*

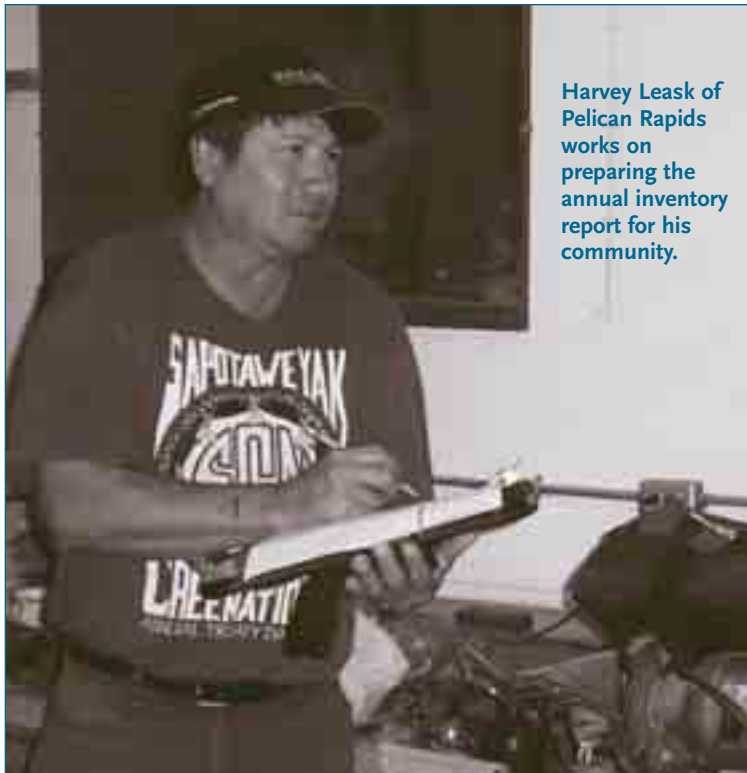
Unless property is owned by a legally incorporated community, assets located in Manitoba's northern and remote communities technically and legally belong to Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (ANA) and thus the Province of Manitoba. These assets are entrusted to communities for the use and benefit of those communities.

ANA policy states that each community must maintain accurate records of physical assets in their community for inventory control and insurance purposes.

It is imperative to record all assets so an inventory report can be submitted for insurance purposes. Failure to complete the inventory verification will result in no insurance coverage should the item be damaged or lost in a fire or other incident.

Community councils receive the inventory from their regional office by September 1 each year. A verification of community inventory must be submitted by the community council to the regional office by **November 1 each year.**

The following forms are available from ANA for communities to use in keeping updated



Harvey Leask of Pelican Rapids works on preparing the annual inventory report for his community.

inventory records:

- Vehicle Input Form
- Asset Input Form
- Equipment Input Form
- Multiple Equipment Input Form
- Field Definition of Equipment Type
- Inventory Disposal Form

To improve the community inventory process, ANA has changed its policy. While in the past, items valued at \$100 and above were listed, now only items valued at

\$500.00 or more need to be included. Fire equipment inventory now follows the same policy.

To help with the process, ANA recommends that an inventory day be scheduled every year on the second Wednesday in September. This year, that day was September 12. Next year it will be September 10. Be sure to mark your planning calendar ahead of time.

Please remember that the community inventory due date for this year is November 1, 2007. This is the date ANA must receive your report.

If ANA is required to do so, a contractor will be hired to complete the inventory in non-compliant communities. Costs associated with completing the inventory will be deducted from the community's operation and maintenance funding in the following year.

Please contact your ANA regional office for answers to any questions you may have about the annual community inventory process.



Thompson outreach co-ordinator Tammie Clemenson (left) and Manitoba regional council president Phyllis Wiscombe (right) share many years of service as volunteers in their community.

Red Cross

Builds on Commitment in Northern Manitoba

In September 2007, the Canadian Red Cross hired Tammie Clemenson as outreach co-ordinator for Thompson, increasing its commitment to service in Northern Manitoba. A resident of Thompson, Tammy brings eight years of experience with the city's Canadian Cancer Society, where she promoted programs, supported volunteers and participated in fund raising activities.

Clemenson also has a diverse background that includes running a private daycare, doing contract work for the Thompson Downtown Business Association, working as a portal administrator for the Northern e-Biz Centre and doing security work part-time for the Province of Manitoba. She looks forward to a challenging full-time career with the Red Cross.

Hiring Clemenson in Thompson follows the hiring last winter of Rhonda Head as outreach co-ordinator for The Pas and surrounding area. It reinforces a strategic goal by the Red Cross to provide programs and services to northern Manitobans.

Another Thompson resident, Phyllis Wiscombe won election in April 2007 as president of the Manitoba Red Cross regional council. Wiscombe's professional background includes experience as a civil servant for both Manitoba and the Government of Canada. She worked as a regional manager of the provincial training centre in Thompson and ended her career on a special assignment helping the people of the Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation (NCN). She examined training needs and developed programs to help NCN residents learn to work safely and efficiently at the Wuskwatim hydro dam.

No stranger to the Canadian Red Cross, Wiscombe first volunteered for the society as a young girl in Newfoundland. Phyllis moved to Thompson in 1978 and reconnected with the Red Cross as a volunteer disaster management worker when severe forest fires threatened Thompson in 1989. She has remained a volunteer since.

New Requirements from the Office of Drinking Water

Public Works



A reliable supply of safe, clean water is essential to the well-being of every community.

In recent years, there has been a lot of attention focused on public water systems in Manitoba and all across Canada. In the wake of tragic incidents involving poorly managed public water treatment facilities in other parts of Canada, the Manitoba government began drafting legislation to ensure all Manitobans have clean, safe water for drinking and household use.

To ensure quality of our drinking water, the Office of Drinking Water has been putting strict new regulations in place concerning public water systems. Highlights of the new regulations are:

Classification of treatment facilities – recent regulations require public water and sewer system classification according to standards outlined in one of five levels that reflect plant capacity and sophistication.

Certification of operators – standardized facility classifications help in establishing operator qualifications. For example, a class two water treatment plant now requires a class two certified operator. Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (ANA) helps communities train operators for certification in the appropriate class. Initially, ANA helped directly with training sessions, but has since allowed communities more flexibility by providing increased training funding in community operating grants. Communities now arrange their own training and schedules.

Engineering assessment of facilities – to ensure our public water systems are operating safely and effectively, Section 9 in *The Drinking Water Safety Act* requires that all public water systems receive a third party engineering assessment. This part of the act came into force March 1, 2007.

The act also requires each public water system to receive a third party engineering assessment every five years thereafter. The engineering assessment will advise communities of the overall operation of their systems, from source to tap.

Alterations to facilities – Section 3 of the Drinking Water Safety Regulation under *The Drinking Water Safety Act* specifies that

significant construction or alterations to public water or sewer systems require a permit. The permit system protects the public by ensuring water systems meet safety requirements.

Significant alterations include extension or termination of water and sewer mains or changing the type of chemicals used in water treatment plants. Regular operation, maintenance and repairs are not considered alterations. Communities can contact ANA staff or a local drinking water officer to clarify any doubts about where regulations apply.

Licence to operate a classified facility – *The Drinking Water Safety Act* also includes legislation that will require any corporation, partnership, limited partnership, syndicate, trustee, joint venture or association of

persons running a public water system in Manitoba to hold an appropriate operating licence. The Manitoba Office of Drinking Water will require all public water systems to submit an application for a licence to operate by March 1, 2009. Each Northern Affairs Community is scheduled

to submit an application and department staff will help councils with applications.

For more information, please contact Morley Nagle, environmental services consultant for the North Central Region at 204-622-2150. You may also contact Randy Sigurdson, manager of technical and environmental services for the Northern Region at 204-677-6683.

...the Office of Drinking Water has been putting strict new regulations in place...

Profile

Several staff changes have taken place at Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs (ANA) over the summer months. Well-known staff member Don Michalyk, who served as environmental services consultant for the North Central Region, has taken a position as drinking water officer with Manitoba Water Stewardship. Working from an office in Dauphin, Don will cover much of the same territory as he did with ANA and will likely be a regular visitor in many Northern Affairs communities.

Stepping into the position vacated by Don at ANA is Morley Nagle. Morley's name is familiar in many northern region communities. Raised in Cormorant, Manitoba, Morley graduated from Red River College in 1997 with a diploma in

Structural Engineering Technology. Since 2001, Morley has been a technical and public works consultant based in the ANA Thompson office. He has now moved to the ANA Dauphin office to serve as environmental services consultant for the North Central Region.

Evelyn Dutka is also someone familiar in northern region communities. Evelyn grew up in the Pine Falls, Manitoba area and has lived in Ontario, Northwest Territories and British Columbia. She worked previously as a drafting technician based in ANA's Thompson office. She has now moved to fill the technical and public works consultant position vacated by Morley Nagle.



Evelyn Dutka



Morley Nagle

Community *Contact*

Paul Doolan, Editor

1680 Ellice Avenue, Bay 8

Winnipeg, MB R3H 0Z2

Ph: 204-945-2161

Toll free: 1-800-282-8069

Fax: 204-948-2389

E-mail: paul.doolan@gov.mb.ca

Web: www.gov.mb.ca/ana

Community council members, community residents and departmental staff are strongly encouraged to submit feedback, comments, questions, suggestions and ideas to the editor.