

Manitoba PC Caucus Review

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PROVINCE OF MANITOBA RELEASES UPDATED FLOOD OUTLOOK

March 29, 2019



The province's Hydrologic Forecast Centre (HFC) forecasts a flood in the Red River Valley at or marginally above 2009 levels with normal to unfavorable weather, Infrastructure Minister Ron Schuler said this week. There also remains a moderate risk of flooding along the Assiniboine River.

"Manitoba Infrastructure continues to make preparations for high water and is working with municipalities to ensure they have the information and support needed for a flood of this magnitude," said Schuler.

"The Red River will once again carry a significant amount of water north, requiring the operation of the Red River Floodway and additional measures taken in partnership with local municipalities."

In its second 2019 spring flood outlook, the HFC notes that with favourable weather, slightly less than 2009 flood levels on the Red River can be expected. With the use of the floodway, water levels at James Avenue in Winnipeg could reach 20.5 feet with unfavourable weather. At this time, the peak at Emerson is expected between April 12 and 23 depending on the rate of the snowmelt and water movement, along with temperatures on both sides of the border. Flood water levels will still be influenced by the rate of snowmelt and future snow and rain accumulation.

"The provincial government is also working with federal officials to ensure the safety of Indigenous communities and preparing to support municipal evacuations if needed," said Schuler. "We are also working with the agricultural producers to ensure livestock is moved out of the impacted areas."

Updated flood material will be available as forecasts further develop. Updated flood info can be found at www.gov.mb.ca/mit/floodinfo/index.html.

MANITOBA EXPANDS REBATE AVAILABLE TO YOUNG FARMERS

As part of Budget 2019, the Manitoba government is partnering with the Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation (MASC) to increase the maximum amount eligible for the Young Farmer Rebate program to \$200,000 from \$150,000, Agriculture Minister Ralph Eichler announced this week.

“One of our government’s priorities is to increase the number of young people in the agriculture industry,” Eichler said. “Increasing the young farmer rebate supports our focus on young producers by reducing the cost of borrowing while they grow their operations.”

Recent census data shows the average age of a Manitoba producer is over 53. In consultation with stakeholders, industry groups and young producers, it was noted that assistance for young farmers is necessary, given rising costs and changes in farm economics over the past decade.

The program provides an annual rebate of up to two per cent on the principal of a loan from MASC for up to five years. As a result of the expansion, the lifetime maximum rebate will also increase, to \$20,000 from \$15,000.

MASC designs and administers lending and insurance programs targeted at young and beginning farmers. As farms consolidate and barriers to entry increase, MASC is enhancing its programs, with a target that 75 per cent of new loan approvals be for young farmers.

Eichler noted this change will be implemented on April 1. For more information on Budget 2019, visit www.gov.mb.ca/budget2019/index.html.

PROVINCE CONTINUES TAKING STEPS TO ADDRESS SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND RESPECT IN THE WORKPLACE



As part of an ongoing commitment to foster a respectful workplace, the Manitoba government has revised its respectful workplace policy and launched a government-wide awareness campaign on sexual harassment, Premier Brian Pallister announced this week.

“Every employee should work in an environment that is respectful and free of all forms of harassment, including sexual harassment and bullying,” said Pallister. “Revising the respectful workplace policy and implementing an awareness campaign are important steps our government has taken to ensure Manitoba government employees experience a respectful workplace and feel safe in knowing reports of inappropriate behaviour will be taken seriously.”

Updates to the policy include providing clearer procedures for reporting and addressing concerns, establishing new and revised definitions, clarifying potential remedies and improving post-incident monitoring.

PROVINCE ANNOUNCES MANDATORY ENTRY-LEVEL TRAINING FOR COMMERCIAL TRUCK DRIVERS

As part of the Manitoba government's commitment to public safety, mandatory entry-level training for commercial truck drivers will be implemented Sept. 1, Infrastructure Minister Ron Schuler announced this week. Requirements will include 121.5 hours of training, which is consistent with other provinces including Alberta and Saskatchewan.

"Our government is focused on public safety on our roads and highways in this province, and mandatory training for new truck drivers will make Manitoba safer," Schuler said. "Commercial truck drivers play an important role in moving our economy forward, and we are focused on ensuring they have the necessary skills and qualifications to do their job in a way that ensures everyone is safe on the road."

In addition, there will be a one-year deferral of new training requirements for the agriculture sector to allow for additional consultations with the industry, in order to determine an appropriate phase-in strategy that mitigates impacts on the start of the 2019 farming season.

Manitoba Infrastructure, Manitoba Public Insurance, and Manitoba Education and Training consulted with over 100 stakeholders including industry associations, agricultural sector agencies, Indigenous organizations, established sector councils, educational providers, municipal stakeholders and small-scale commercial carriers.

NEW BOARD AND NEW MANDATE ANNOUNCED FOR COMMUNITIES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND



The Manitoba government is taking an important step to advance northern economic development and position the region for long-term success, Growth, Enterprise and Trade Minister Blaine Pedersen announced this week.

"We've said from day one that in order to build a sustainable future in the region, northern economic development must be led by northerners, based on the understanding the people of the north best understand their own needs," said Pedersen. "The past few years have shown that when the entire region can unite to address the shared economic opportunities and challenges we face, together we can succeed."

"This announcement follows through on a commitment our government made through the Look North initiative to help empower northern Manitobans to build a brighter economic future in the region," said Pedersen. "We are delighted these five northern leaders have agreed to continue to help lead the way."

For more information, please visit <https://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?item=45147&posted=2019-03-26>