



Service Capacity and Sustainability

(local government, rural development, community learning)

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Handout notes to accompany an on-demand archival video briefing of the Alberta Water & Wastewater Workforce Development Symposium; also includes presenter's slides/notes from original live-event delivery.

(note to viewer – presentation content was current at January 2012; 23 min run time)

Available for web-based viewing at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-jUDol0uXE4>
or alternative viewing/download of .mp4 (iPod/iPhone/iPad/Android OS) as well as
PDF of slide handout at Archive.org - <http://tinyurl.com/82nkbf>

Municipal Policy/Services Leadership

- AUMA/AMSC has early engaged *Water for Life* at
 - water conservation
 - water efficiency
 - productivity planning
- Municipalities as early focus of Conservation, Efficiency, and Productivity (CEP plans)

Municipal Policy/Services Leadership

- Water Stewardship as an AUMA Board of Directors' strategic initiative
- Early focus – CEP planning process for AUMA local municipalities

Municipal Policy/Services Leadership

- AUMA led Conservation, Efficiency & Productivity (CEP) plan elements
 - Develop local CEP plan
 - Report water use data
 - Conduct water audits
 - Identify leak reduction
- Multi-stakeholder approach is critical to *Water For Life* implementation success

Water Challenges - Municipalities

- ↑ maintaining municipal water/wastewater systems
- ↑ regulatory requirements
- ↑ shortage of skilled operations personnel
- Aquatic systems degrading
- ↓ access to water allocation (especially southern Alberta)

Early/Formative Policy Leadership

- Develop 'Water Primer', including discussion paper
- Essential background facts/ information
- Orientation is information rather than 'prescription'
- Situated as foundational to a prospective AUMA Water Policy

Early/Formative Policy Leadership

- Spirit of 'catalyst' for local conversations/discussion
- Recognition broader, complex issues at play
- Aspires to an 'informed' discussion on water issues
- Inquiry-driven process supportive of the local-level issues/accountabilities

'Water Primer'* Structure...

- Global, Canadian, provincial water context
- Water governance
- Alberta Water For Life strategy/municipal facets
- Key regulations/'DWSP's
- Operations, system models
- Healthy aquatic ecosystems
- Wastewater regulations

* AUMA *Water Primer and Discussion Paper* is accessible in PDF at <http://water.auma.ca>

Emergent Local Engagement

- Pathways for effectively engaging water issues
- Policies, programs, services and communications
- *Water Initiative* through Alberta Municipal Services Corporation (AMSC)

'Water Initiative' Design Elements

- AMSC-led water loss control service
- Intent is cost-effective, municipal water loss control
- Criteria is economic sense, discern acceptable loss-levels
- Strengthen municipal water system infrastructure
- ↓ operating costs
- ↑ improved asset management

'Water Initiative' Design Elements

- Currently developing the business case for water audits
- Jointly-discover a range of 'made in Alberta' solutions
- Next steps include
 - Database of system assets
 - Focused business services

AMSC Business Service Possibilities

Small/medium municipalities as a focal-point:

- Water audits
- Loss control services
- Water billing
- System repairs/maintenance
- Billing software/meter data management
- Metering technical support
- Bulk purchasing
- Monitoring services

University of Alberta ACSRC

ACSRC designed to link/ connect University of Alberta to small rural communities

- Alberta
- western Canada
- pan-Canadian/ internationally (at times)

University of Alberta ACSRC

Mandate undertaken through

- Research
- Knowledge translation
- Education (broadly)
- Partnership/collaboration

Scope of 'Rural' broadly defined

Water – Area of Emerging Interest

Water – critical area of scholarly concern due to water pressures

- Multiple pressures in Alberta
- Twin dimensions
 - Essential to human life
 - Strategic input resource
- Complex questions raised
 - Management and research
 - Sufficient supply/quality

Water – Area of Emerging Interest

Water - one of three priorities of *Alberta Centre for Sustainable Rural Communities*

- Extends early watershed work
- Extends other U Alberta work
- Stakeholders - ↑ criticality
- 'Issue catch-up' (perhaps?)
- Common rural life themes
- Demographics/youth retention
- Inter-sectoral themes/action

Water Issues as a 'Wicked Problem'*

Water issues present as a classic 'Wicked Problem' due to

- Variability of resource
- Complexity of issues
- Criticality of water to
 - Assuring human life
 - Essential to ecosystems

* Original attribution, see Rittel, H.W.J., & Webber, M.M. (1973). Dilemmas in a general theory of planning. *Policy Sciences*, 4, 155-169.

Water Issues as a 'Wicked Problem'

Can't solve 'a water problem,' per se, can only hope to better manage emergent issues

- Supply variability
- Quality variability
- Demand variability

Rural context compounded by

- Demographics
- Youth population attrition

Water – Emergent University Priority

- University of Alberta priority
- Alberta institutional priority
- Networked, joint approach
- All facets of policy/managing
- All Alberta communities
- pan-Canadian/global in scope

Community Adult Learning System

- Mid-1970s – Further Education Councils as Alberta public policy
- Alberta's 80 Community Adult Learning Councils (CALCs) a unique resource in Canada
- Funded by Government of Alberta under Community Adult Learning Program policy
- Integrated in Alberta Advanced Education & Technology's policy

Community Adult Learning System

- CALCs are integrated into Campus Alberta via 7 regions
- Campus Alberta is a formal policy framework for integration
- Campus Alberta policy is designed as 'learner centered'
- Accessibility/Affordability are among foundational principles
- Alberta policy envisions ongoing lifelong learning opportunities

Community Adult Learning System

- Provincial network - Community Adult Learning Councils (CALCs)
- Four policy-mandate based focus areas of adult learning
- Focus is adult populations (>16)
- 80 CALCs across Alberta
- Major rural interagency presence
- CALC types – full-service scope or grant coordination (e.g., latter is generally, larger urban)

Community Adult Learning System

- Focus is lifelong, continuous learning
- Continuous learning is now considered an essential skill
- Literacy as reading, writing, health, computer, interpersonal
- CALCs are flexible, with broad mandate for 'community issues'
- Community-driven, responsive to local needs, discerned locally
- Often short-term, non-credit

Community Adult Learning System

- Practically, CALCs are education hubs (especially in rural Alberta)
- Local inter-agency collaboration
- CALCs as strong local 'brands'
- CALCs as credible, issue-driven
- CALCs responding to changing face of rural adult populations
- Includes being sensible/practical about immigration-related needs

Alberta Rural Development Network*

- ARDN – a network of Alberta's 21 public post-secondary institutions
- Funded by Rural Alberta's Development Fund (RADF)
- Funded to leverage combined expertise of Alberta's 21 PSIs to aid in rural development/growth

* Text points are post-event derived from a content review

Alberta Rural Development Network*

- Facilitates strategic research on issues affecting rural communities
- Community-informed needs assessments
- Identifying gaps in training and education
- In summary, try to connect people and develop solutions by purposeful networking/research

* Text points are post-event derived from a content review
