

NEWS RELEASE



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Alberta's major water users commit to improving water conservation, efficiency and productivity

Edmonton ... Some of Alberta's largest users of waters are taking action to develop and implement water conservation, efficiency and productivity plans as part of the province's renewed *Water for Life* strategy.

The Alberta Water Council released a report on December 16, 2008 outlining 21 recommendations for water conservation, efficiency and productivity sector planning to guide seven Alberta sectors in setting and meeting water conservation, efficiency and productivity goals. The sectors include:

- Chemical and petrochemical
- Forestry
- Irrigation
- Mining
- Municipalities
- Oil and gas
- Power generation

All of the sectors are active members of the Alberta Water Council, and have committed to developing Water Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity (WCEP) plans by December 2010 through their various sector associations. The WCEP plans will take a sectoral approach to meeting specific conservation, efficiency and productivity targets, with implementation at the regional level, on a company by company, or community by community basis. All of the plans will be made available to the public, and accountability for implementation will come through an annual reporting process through the Alberta Water Council.

“The commitment by some of Alberta's largest water users to change the way they think about and use water is a significant milestone for the renewed *Water for Life* strategy,” said Alberta Environment Minister Rob Renner. “If all Albertans were to develop and act on conservation plans like this, we would go a long way to securing a safe and sustainable water supply both for today and well into the future.”

“This voluntary commitment by all of these sectors is both admirable and important as they are not only making a collective commitment to change how they use water, but it also signals a change in how they think about water as a resource,” said Gord Edwards, Executive Director of the Alberta Water Council “The fact that these sectors are making a public commitment to improve water conservation, efficiency and productivity is a highly progressive step with all Albertans being the beneficiaries.”

Two of the sectors – irrigation and municipalities – have already begun pilot projects under the WCEP initiative.

“All thirteen irrigation districts in the province have made substantial gains in water-use efficiencies over the past decade. We see our participation in the WCEP initiative as a way to continuously improve our efficiency and productivity,” said Ron McMullin, Executive Director of the Alberta Irrigation Projects Association.

A copy of the report – *recommendations for Water Conservation, Efficiency and Productivity Sector Planning* -- is available at www.albertawatercouncil.ca

Established in 2004, the Alberta Water Council is a multi-stakeholder partnership with 24 members from governments, industry, and non-government organizations. Its primary task is to monitor and steward implementation of Alberta’s Water for Life strategy and to champion achievement of the strategy’s three outcomes of a safe, secure drinking water supply, healthy aquatic ecosystems, and reliable, quality water supplies for a sustainable economy.

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