

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Saskatoon Environmental Advisory Committee (SEAC) is an advisory body of concerned citizens consisting of nine members of the general public, one City Councillor and one member of Public Health Services, who meet to provide advice on environmental issues relevant to the City of Saskatoon. City Council, acting on a recommendation of its Planning and Operations Committee, formed SEAC in 1973 to assist in providing specialized environmental advice to City Council.

## **PURPOSE**

To provide City Council (through the Planning and Operations Committee) advice on environmental implications of City undertakings and to identify environmental issues of potential relevance to the City of Saskatoon.

## **AIMS and DUTIES**

- ◆ To provide knowledgeable, trustworthy and impartial advice to the City on the environmental implications of proposed and ongoing City undertakings.
- ◆ On the initiative of the Advisory Committee, to identify environmental management problems at their earliest stages and to communicate this information to the City.
- ◆ To provide informed and objective environmental information to the general public via the news media.
- ◆ To be aware of the resources available to the City of Saskatoon for dealing with environmental problems.
- ◆ To prepare and publish an annual report on the activities of the Committee over the past year.
- ◆ To encourage liaison between the City of Saskatoon and environmental agencies serving higher levels of government.

## **COMMITTEE STRUCTURE**

Saskatoon Environmental Advisory Committee is made up of 11 members, all of whom are appointed and/or nominated by City Council. One member is a City Councillor representing the City. Another member is appointed as a representative of Saskatoon District Health Board – Public Health Services. The remaining nine members are members of the general public who are appointed to the Committee by City Council.

Members are appointed for two-year terms, which are renewable. In the event that a member fails to complete his/her term, a replacement may be named to complete that term. New appointments are made by City Council upon resignation of a member.

## **QUALIFICATIONS OF MEMBERS**

Members of SEAC possess:

- ◆ A sound general knowledge of the Saskatoon area and its existing and potential environmental issues; and
- ◆ Expertise in disciplines such as ecology, biology, chemistry, physics, geography, economics, demography, sociology, medicine, aesthetics, toxicology, engineering and conservation.

## **MEETING SCHEDULE**

Meetings are held monthly.

Day            Third Thursday

Time           12:00 noon

(except July, August and December)

Meetings are open to the public. Members of the public wishing to attend a meeting are able to review the agenda prior to the meeting, at any branch of the public library beginning on the Friday prior to the meeting date.

## **THE YEAR IN SUMMARY**

### **Pesticides**

In 2001, the Saskatoon Environmental Advisory Committee (SEAC) discussed how to reduce exposure to pesticides within the City of Saskatoon. There are concerns that the use of these chemicals may pose a serious health hazard, particularly for children and people with multiple chemical sensitivity syndrome. Initially, discussions revolved around establishing legislation to regulate pesticide use in Saskatoon. Later in the year, SEAC began working with the Communications Branch on the development of an information campaign as an initial step to try and reduce the risks to the public, from pesticides.

On July 18, 2000, an SEAC report to the Planning and Operations Committee made several recommendations with regard to pesticides (see appendix).

In March of 2001, Mr. Bill Kalyn, Manager, Parks Branch and Mr. Dave Domke, Superintendent, Urban Forestry Section, Parks Branch spoke to SEAC. Mr. Kalyn shared information from his investigation of pesticides. The City of Saskatoon has been a leader in moving away from use of man-made pesticides and in addition has also greatly reduced the use of water for irrigation. Mr. Domke reviewed the program for Dutch Elm Disease Control. He reported that every city tree is inspected once every 7 years. Pruning is an important part of the strategy to ward off the beetles that spread the disease. There have been no cases of Dutch Elm Disease identified in the City of Saskatoon.

The City of Halifax passed legislation to ban the use of pesticides for cosmetic purposes. This law was examined by SEAC and a copy was forwarded to the City Administration. The Halifax pesticide law was at the web site:  
<http://www.region.halifax.ns.ca/legislation/bylaws/HRM/index>

Mr. Bill Wright, the Public Health representative on SEAC, reported that the Safe Committee of Public Health supports integrated pest management programs to reduce exposure of the public to pesticides.

In June 2001, the Planning and Operations Committee forwarded a report to City Council recommending:

- 1) that administration of civic operations such as the golf courses, cemetery and city parks continue to carry out their operations in a responsible manner and within the regulations of the Provincial Pest Control Act;
- 2) that the Communications Branch develop a partnership consisting of Federal and Provincial representatives and public and private sector stakeholders to design a comprehensive communications and public awareness plan complete with cost estimate to be presented for consideration by the Budget Committee for the 2002 Operating Budget; and
- 3) that, in follow-up to the recommendation of the House of Commons Standing Committee on the Environment and Sustainable Development for the phasing out of the use of most pesticides for cosmetic purposes, as outlined in the Standing Committee's report entitled "Pesticides: Making the Right Choice for the protection of Human Health and the Environment", City Council write to the Federal Government in support of prohibiting the use , for aesthetic purposes, of those pesticides which experts judge represent a risk to health.
- 4) Planning and Operations Committee also recommended:
  - a) that the matter respecting possible legislative authority requirements for City Council to consider controlling and regulating the use of chemical herbicides and pesticides on private property within City limits be referred to the Saskatoon Environmental Advisory Committee for a report back on what specific legislative authority, and the extent of the legislative authority, is required from the Province; and

- b) that the Saskatoon Environmental Advisory Committee also report as to whether the Province would be willing to endorse and enforce the requirement for private citizens to post notices within 24 hours of their intent to administer herbicide/pesticide applications.

In response to the report from Planning and Operations Committee, the City of Saskatoon communicated with the federal government. Communications received by the City from the Federal Ministers of Health and Environment are contained in the appendix. The response of Alan Rock, Minister of Health, dated July 20, 2001 includes the "Action Plan on Urban use of Pesticides".

An ad hoc subcommittee, consisting of Councillor Tiffany Paulsen, Leo Monseler, Harry VanEyck, Roger Peters and Carroll Chubb, was established to prepare recommendations regarding the regulation of pesticide use within the City.

In August Theresa Dust Q.C., City Solicitor, provided a report which was referred to SEAC by the Planning and Operations Committee, and which indicated that as a result of the Supreme Court decision (28 June 2001) in the case of Canada Ltée (Spraytech, Société d'arrosage) vs. Hudson (Town), the City of Saskatoon was legally capable of implementing a bylaw banning cosmetic pesticide use. The report outlined current legislation - the Federal legislation, *The Pest Control Products Act*, regulates import, export, sale, manufacturing, registration, packaging and labeling of pesticides within Canada, and the Provincial legislation, *The Noxious Weeds Act, 1984*, gives City Council the authority to appoint a noxious weed inspector to control noxious weeds only on infested land, but not neighbouring property. *The Pest Control Products (Saskatchewan) Act* provides standards that must be met with respect to selling, regulating, packaging and labeling of pesticides. It also gives any inspector the right to suspend or terminate use of a particular product if they have the opinion that the pesticide is or may be dangerous to human or animal health. The Province also has *The Environmental Management and Protection Act*, which allows that Minister to order the person responsible for a pollutant to take necessary measures to restore and

protect the environment. The City Solicitor felt that this may include application methods and advanced notification before application of pesticides. It was her opinion that the province has the authority under both *The Pest Control Products (Saskatchewan) Act* and *The Environmental Management and Protection Act* to regulate pesticide use within the City of Saskatoon. However, the Deputy Minister of Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management stated that these acts would not be enforced within the City and that it was their view that the City of Saskatoon was responsible for pesticide regulation within city limits. The Federal government announced the *Action Plan on Urban Use Pesticides*, which incorporates integrated pest management to reduce reliance on pesticides. This plan also involves a comprehensive review of the most common chemicals in lawn care pesticides.

In September of 2001 it was noted that in light of a Supreme Court of Canada decision made during the summer, the City of Saskatoon has the authority to restrict the use of pesticides to protect public health and does not need special enabling legislation from the Provincial Government. SEAC then began to focus on development of an information campaign designed to increase awareness of the risks of pesticides, the alternatives to pesticides and the safest ways to use pesticides.

In November, Mr. Chris Dekker, Communications Manager, City of Saskatoon attended the SEAC meeting to discuss the issue of pesticide regulation. He informed the Committee that City Council has requested the Communications Branch to bring forward a communications plan and budget for consideration as part of Council's 2002 budget. Mr. Dekker informed SEAC that he would employ a proactive, educational approach to protect the health of citizens and the environment of Saskatoon. A brochure, poster, lawn signs, Internet information and non-paid forms of advertising are all being considered as methods of communicating information about pesticide use. Mr. Dekker advised SEAC that he would provide draft copies of the strategy to all SEAC members and both Carol Chubb and Leo Monselor volunteered to meet with Mr. Dekker to discuss the draft strategy once it was prepared.

## **Landfill and Waste Management**

In May SEAC received the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Waste Minimization Options Paper. In November SEAC discussed the concept of a product stewardship program for manufacturers to decrease packaging as well as a possible stewardship tax, however, no recommendations have been formulated at this time.

The Solid Waste Management Master Plan was also given further consideration in November. Currently, the question is whether to switch to a front collection system or alternatively to a single container for back lane collection in order to implement a user-pay system. The Solid Waste Management Master Plan highlighted a problem concerning fires in the large, common use garbage bins currently located in back lanes. SEAC concluded that the question of user-pay is a political issue and would require strong support of Council to implement. The concept of a Blue Box program has been determined to be economically unfeasible at this time, but the Committee would like to keep that possibility as well as other recycling options open. SEAC discussed the possibility of writing to Council with respect to ideas regarding long-range plans, but no action has been taken at this time.

## **Meridian Dam Project**

In September, the Planning and Operations Committee resolved that SEAC spearhead a group consultation process regarding the Meridian Dam Project. SEAC received copies of a report to Planning and Operations Committee on the proposed Meridian Dam project that was prepared by Utility Services and dated August 31, 2001. Planning and Operations Committee had also sent copies of the report to the South Saskatchewan River Basin Committee, the Meewasin Valley Authority, Tourism Saskatoon, Saskatoon Regional Economic Authority and the Saskatchewan Environmental Society. Mr. Mark Keller, Water Treatment and Meters Branch Manager was invited to the SEAC meeting in October to discuss this matter in more detail. He informed SEAC that the dam would likely prolong low-flow conditions, which would result in evaporation and storage concerns. Mr. Keller also has concerns regarding the

impact of the dam on the local environment. Currently the City uses 6.5-7% of the flow through the City and a minimum flow of 42.5 m<sup>3</sup>/sec is required. The main concerns are:

- 1) reduced quantity of water (Contaminant concentrations would increase. This would increase the risks and cost of drinking water in Saskatoon.)
- 2) disturbance of ecosystem along the river; and
- 3) aesthetics of river valley would change.

SEAC recommended that a report be submitted to Planning and Operations Committee indicating that the Committee was awaiting the results of the Feasibility Study that was to be completed by December 31, 2001 and would report further after reviewing this Study. A request was also sent to SaskWater to add the Saskatoon Environmental Advisory Committee as a stakeholder to receive a copy of the Feasibility Study and also to find out if members of SEAC could participate at stakeholder meetings. SEAC also recommended that concerns regarding the adverse effects of the dam on Saskatoon be included with this request.

### **Green Power**

Mr. Henry Hildebrandt, Electric Systems Manager attended the September meeting to discuss green power. Mr. Hildebrandt indicated that the City would like to work with SaskPower in order to offer City customers the same green power options. At this point in time there was no formal agreement between the City and SaskPower. Currently, the cost of green power is slightly higher because of the shorter life span of the generators. Mr. Hildebrandt felt that there is little incentive to switch to green power and until the Federal Government implements stringent emission controls, that this would not change.

## **Web Page**

In January, Mr. David Lawlor, a former member of SEAC, completed work on the SEAC web page. He suggested that it should be updated either semi-annually or annually as additional SEAC reports become available. The 2001 SEAC reports to the Planning and Operations Committee and the 1999 Annual Report were added to the web site. It was planned that sometime in the future, a link to the SEAC agenda would be made available at the web site. Mr. Roger Peters was designated as the manager of the web site for update purposes.

The web page can be accessed by going to [city.saskatoon.sk.ca](http://city.saskatoon.sk.ca), then choosing 'City Hall', then choosing 'Committees' and scrolling down to 'Saskatoon Environmental Advisory Committee'.

## **Water Quality**

In the spring of 2001 there was an outbreak of intestinal disease in North Battleford caused by cryptosporidium. There was also a Safe Drinking Water Foundation Conference in Saskatoon at which the problem of a lack of practical tests for many viruses in drinking water as discussed. In June the Environmental Compliance Branch Manager, Mr. Pawel Kerc, provided information on the process for monitoring water quality at Saskatoon's drinking water treatment facility.

## **SWANA Conference**

Dr. Carroll Chubb reported on the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Prairie Chapter SWANA Conference of April 30 to May 2, 2002 at the Radisson Hotel, Saskatoon, which was attended in part by herself and some other committee members. The report included the following information:

- There are many recycling projects happening in Saskatchewan.  
Plastics have been a problem because they are not segregated by type.
- Calgary does checks on their landfill to ensure that no radioactive materials are being dumped.

- To get a large percentage of people sufficiently motivated to do composting and recycling, a user-pay system is required that charges higher rates when larger amounts of waste are put in bins for collection. Each house must have its own bin for this approach. Another reason to switch to waste bins for single houses is the problem of fires in the large bins serving several houses.
- There is a strip of land adjacent to the Saskatoon landfill that is owned by SaskPower, and it would be very beneficial to have it available for recycling bins.

There were excellent presentations by Eve Casavant, Solid Waste Superintendent, Environmental Compliance Branch regarding the Solid Waste Master Plan and by Joan Fedyk, Saskatchewan Waste Reduction Council, regarding product stewardship.

### **Canadian Information System for the Environment Consultation Session**

Two members of SEAC, Mr. Leo Monseler, and Dr. Carroll Chubb, attended a consultation session in Winnipeg on the Canadian Information System for the Environment. The federal government paid the costs of their participation. The federal government is interested in establishing a collection of statistics regarding the environment similar to those that exist for economic factors. The information system would also include anecdotal information First Nation sources.

### **Noise Attenuation**

SEAC received a memo from Planning and Operations Committee dated December 1, 2000 indicating that SEAC's report on noise at the November 28, 2000 Planning and Operations meeting was referred to the file regarding sound attenuation.

### **South East Sector Storm Water Management**

The Chair of SEAC, Mr. Leo Monseler, attended a March 16, 2001 meeting on the South East Sector Storm Water Management Master Plan and reported back to SEAC. He also attended a meeting on June 28, 2001. It is expected that the involvement of Ducks Unlimited will protect wetlands in the area.

## **State of the Environment Report**

SEAC continued working on the production of an update to the State of the Environment Report for Saskatoon. Some modification to the format inspired by the City of Regina State of the Environment Report is planned. During 2001 Dr. Howard Harding did some work on Saskatoon's State of the Environment report without remuneration.

## **Social Policy Development Round Table**

The City of Saskatoon established the Social Policy Development Round Table. The SEAC representative was Mr. Harry VanEyck, with Dr. Carroll Chubb authorized to attend meetings in the absence of Mr. VanEyck.

## **Riverbed Samples**

Riverbed samples were collected during construction of the River Heights sanitary sewer line. SEAC was interested in having these samples analyzed. Ms. Amy Langhorne indicated that unless these samples were stored properly and the Committee had specific compounds they were looking for, analysis of these samples would be very difficult. SEAC decided not to pursue this proposal.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

### **Pesticides**

1. Report of Chair, Saskatoon Environmental Advisory Committee dated June 27, 2000 forwarding recommendations for consideration by City Council regarding pesticide use;
2. Letter dated July 20, 2001 from The Honourable Allan Rock, Minister of Health, in response to City Council's letter of June 21<sup>st</sup> advising that City Council supports prohibiting the use of pesticides for aesthetic purposes, and including the Action Plan on Urban Use of Pesticides;

3. Report of City Solicitor dated August 1, 2001 - Use of Pesticides and Enquiry - Councillor T. Paulsen (July 16, 2001) Prohibit, Control and Regulations for use of Pesticides within a Municipality;
4. Letter dated August 30, 2001 from The Honourable David Anderson, P.C., M.P., Minister of the Environment, in response to City Council's letter of June 20<sup>th</sup> advising that City Council supports prohibiting the use, for aesthetic purposes, of those pesticides which experts judge represent a risk to health; and
5. Bylaw of Halifax – Regulation of Pesticides, Herbicides and Insecticides and Bill No. 47 allowing a council to establish a bylaw to regulate pesticides.

**Meridian Dam Project:**

6. Report of General Manager, Utility Services Department dated August 31, 2001 regarding Technical Review – Meridian Dam Project, which was forwarded to SEAC for a response;
7. Report of Chair, Saskatoon Environmental Advisory Committee dated October 18, 2001 providing initial response to Planning and Operations Committee; and
8. Letter dated November 5, 2001 to Golder Associates Ltd. asking for a copy of the Feasibility Study – Meridian Dam Project, once it has been prepared.

**Canadian Information System for the Environment Consultation Session**

9. Report of Dr. Carroll Chubb, Vice-Chair, Saskatoon Environmental Advisory Committee, following attendance at the Consultation Session of the Canadian Information System for the Environment.

**Other**

10. Letter dated October 31, 2001 to City Council expressing SEAC's appreciation of initiatives undertaken by the Environmental Compliance Branch.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Saskatoon Environmental Advisory Committee wishes to express gratitude to all those who have helped us in 2001. First and foremost, our recording secretary, Marlene Hall. The following individuals provided reports, information, and other forms of assistance:

Carol Chubb and Katherine Gerein	Members of the Saskatoon Environmental Advisory Committee who drafted the 2001 Annual Report
Pawel Kerc	Manager, Environmental Compliance Branch, Utility Services Department, for attending meetings as administrative liaison regarding issues related to Solid Waste Management.
Chris Dekker	Manager, Communications Branch, for meeting with the Committee to provide information on steps the City is taking to communicate information on the hazards of pesticides.
Henry Hildebrandt	Manager, Electric System who provided information on the possibility of offering green power to City customers
Solicitor Harnum	City solicitor who discussed implementation of a bylaw banning pesticides
Mark Keller	Manager, Water Treatment and Meters Branch for providing the Committee with information regarding the Meridian Dam Project
Joan Harrison	Saskatchewan Waste Reduction Council for providing information on the Compost Program.

**MEMBERSHIP of SEAC for 2001**

Ms. Shirley Buzik	Ms. Buzik is a toxicologist and is President and CEO of the International Consultants in Toxicology (ICT) Group.
Dr. C. Chubb (Vice-Chair)	Dr. Chubb is a board member of the Saskatoon Environmental Society. Her fields of study are physiology, biophysics and toxicology.
Ms. K. Gerein	Ms. Gerein has a Masters of Science (Biology) with a background in aquatic ecology. She is a Research Associate at the University of Saskatchewan and also works for the Native Plant Society of Saskatchewan.
Ms. A. Langhorne	Information unavailable (resigned)
Ms. D. Manegre	Interested in Community Economic Development, taught at Community College, Operates Organic Market Gardening Business.
Mr. L. Monseler	Mr. Monseler is a graduate student interested in environmental issues.
Mr. R. Peters	Mr. Peters is a Professional Engineer and Director of International Programs at the Pembina Institute for Appropriate Development. He is also the President of the Saskatchewan Environmental Society.
Mr. T. Rendek	Undergraduate Student in Anthropology, Board Member of Prairie Institute for Human Ecology, Master Composter with Saskatchewan Waste Reduction Council, Works with Good Food Box Program of C.H.E.P, and with Quint Development (Affordable Housing).
Dr. J. Strnad	Dr. Strnad is a Professional Engineer and is a GeoScience Consultant with an interest in environmental matters.

Mr. H. Van Eyck

Mr. Van Eyck has a Bachelor of Science degree (Biology) and is a Research Assistant at the University of Saskatchewan.

Mr. B. Wright

Mr. Wright is a Public Health Inspector/Supervisor, representing the Saskatoon District Health Board.

Councillor Tiffany Paulsen

Councillor Paulsen is a lawyer with an interest in the environmental field.