Canada Activities

Federal Activities
On September 16, Prime Minister Trudeau announced the next steps for the $19 billion Safe Restart Agreement with the provinces and territories. The premiers have now submitted the letters and the federal funding will be transferred to the provinces and territories. The Safe Restart Agreement supports measures to increase testing and contact tracing to protect Canadians from future waves of the virus. It will help support the capacity of our health care systems, including through services for people facing mental health challenges. It will also provide municipalities with funding so they can quickly deliver essential services, like public transit, and secure a reliable source of personal protective equipment for essential workers.

On September 14, the Canada Employment Insurance Commission (CEIC) set the 2021 Employment Insurance (EI) premium rate at $1.58 per $100 of insurable earnings for employees and $2.21 for employers who pay 1.4 times the employee rate, which is unchanged from the 2020 premium rate.

On September 14, following the recent warnings issued by our partners at the Canadian Centre for Cyber Security (CCCS) and the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), the government is asking organizations involved in COVID-19 research to be vigilant and alert to potential threats directed to their people and their work.

On September 11, the government announced an investment of over $4.5 million for E2Metrix Inc. to help mining operations recycle wastewater and operate in a more sustainable way.

On September 8, the government announced the extension of rent relief for small businesses by one month, to help eligible small business cover rent in September. As of September 7, 2020, the program has supported over 106,000 small business tenants, representing 994,000 employees, for a total of over $1.32 billion in rent support.

Alberta
AEM continues to monitor updates in the province.

On September 3, Premier Kenney met with new federal Intergovernmental Affairs Minister Leblanc. Kenney raised Alberta’s concerns with federal regulations on the province’s natural resources sector, as well as the proposed new Clean Fuel Standards.
On September 2, the province highlighted $262 million in federal funding coming to Alberta to support the safe reopening of schools in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**British Colombia**
The COVID-19 pandemic’s impact on provincial revenues and unprecedented government spending on supports for people and businesses has led to an updated provincial deficit forecast of $12.8 billion for the 2020-21 fiscal year.

On September 15, the state of emergency was extended through to the end of day on September 29.

On September 9, a three-day mining summit opened virtually in BC. It will focus on the opportunity B.C. has to play an important role in the global movement to responsible sourcing of raw materials and the transition to a low-carbon economy. It also addresses the importance of environmental, social, and corporate governance in the future of mining. The summit will continue with sessions on September 15 and September 30.

On September 8, with 429 new cases of COVID-19 reported over the long weekend, Adrian Dix, Minister of Health, and Dr. Bonnie Henry, B.C.’s provincial health officer made a joint statement, including recommending that “Now is the time for all of us to go back to our smaller, safer social interactions, especially if our households are increasing our interactions in other ways.”

**Manitoba**
On September 14, the province expanded the back to work wage subsidy program. Through the Back to Work initiative, private-sector and non-profit employers can receive up to $100,000 to subsidize 20 employees (up to $5,000 per employee) hired since July 16.

On September 10, the province renewed emergency measures as part of the COVID response, and extended the state of emergency effective September 10 for another 30 days.

On September 4, the province responded to the August Labour Force results, indicating Manitoba’s employment numbers increased by 8,100 from July to August. Since the province’s recovery began in April, it has added 62,500 jobs, which accounts for close to seventy per cent of the job losses in March and April.

**New Brunswick**
In the first mid-pandemic general election in a province in Canada, Progressive Conservative New Brunswick Premier Blaine Higgs secured a change from minority to majority government on Monday, September 14.
Newfoundland and Labrador
AEM continues to monitor updates in the province.

Nova Scotia
On September 11, the province announced the easing of some of the self-isolation requirements for out-of-province rotational workers. A rotational worker is someone who has a set schedule where they alternate between living in Nova Scotia and working outside the province, such as an Alberta oil worker. The changes are only for rotational workers who are residents of Nova Scotia who travel to another province or territory in Canada to work. They do not apply to rotational workers who work outside of Canada.

On September 4, the province announced that the state of emergency was renewed until noon on September 20.

Ontario
On September 16, the province launched a new COVID-19 screening tool to help protect students and staff at schools.

The Ontario Legislature resumed on September 14, with the government outlining its fall priorities as:

- Investing in Ontario's health care system to ensure the province is prepared for a potential second wave of COVID-19 and for any future public health challenges;
- Building Ontario's production capacity for personal protective equipment, ventilators and other medical gear so the province never has to rely on any other jurisdiction again for these critical supplies;
- Protecting families and those most vulnerable and helping them get back on their feet as the province reopens;
- Helping young people and workers receive the skills training they need to join the modern workforce and contribute to the recovery of the province;
- Accelerating the construction of critical highway, transit and broadband infrastructure projects to create jobs and boost the local economies of communities across Ontario;
- Providing relief to Mainstreet Ontario and small business owners so they can recover from the impact of COVID-19 faster and get back to the work of building their business; and
- Expanding manufacturing by creating the conditions to bring investment and jobs to the province and world-class, Ontario-made products to consumers around the world.

On September 11, the province launched a webpage to report COVID-19 cases in schools and child care centres. The page will be updated every weekday with the most up-to-date COVID-19 information available, including a summary of cases in schools and licensed child care centres.
and agencies, if a COVID-19 case is confirmed at your school and where the numbers come from. Parents deserve to know what we know.

On September 8, the province announced that it was pausing its reopening plan for four weeks as COVID-19 cases spiked.

**Prince Edward Island**
AEM continues to monitor updates in the province.

**Quebec**
On September 15, four more regions in the province moved into the “yellow” zone due to an increase in cases of COVID-19. The four regions are Bas-Saint-Laurent, Chaudière-Appalaches, Montreal and Montérégie.

On September 10, the province announced that individuals who refuse without reason to wear a mask in indoor public places will be subject to fines.

On September 9, the Minister of Labor, Employment and Social Jean Boulet confirmed that the employment relationship of employees of Quebec will be protected if they have to take time off work due to COVID-19.

On September 8, Minister of Health and Social Services Christian Dubé unveiled the alert system and regional interventions developed by Public Health which will specify, for each region of Quebec, the additional measures to be deployed to ensure the health and safety of Quebecers over the coming months, if necessary, for a potential second wave of COVID-19. Four possible levels of alert and intervention are planned: Vigilance (green), Early warning (yellow), Moderate alert (orange), and Maximum alert (red).

**Saskatchewan**
On September 15, the province announced new regulations and industry options to advance Saskatchewan’s climate strategy. As part of the strategy, government introduced performance standards in 2019 that are required for facilities that emit at least 25,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO2e) in the province. Amendments were made to allow for voluntary registration for facilities in the upstream oil and gas sector wishing to combine emissions into an aggregate facility, for a combined 10,000 tonnes of CO2e. In July 2020, government directed that the emissions threshold for voluntary registration be lowered from 10,000 tonnes CO2e to 0 tonnes CO2e for upstream oil and gas aggregate facilities.

On September 4, the Labour Force Survey indicated 4,700 more jobs in the province in August compared to July. Saskatchewan’s unemployment rate in August was 7.9 percent (seasonally adjusted), the lowest among the provinces and well below the national rate of 10.2 percent.
On September 1, the province announced its largest ever fall tender for highway projects, at $437 million.