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THE

VEGETATION MANAGER *magazine*

2024

STATUS AND IMPACT OF PESTICIDE BANS IN CANADA

NATIONAL PESTICIDE APPLICATOR PROGRAM UPDATE

KEITH SANFTLEBEN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF INSECT PEST DAMAGE

**UTT - UTW
40 YEAR ANNIVERSARY**



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PRESIDENT'S REPORT



- LISA RYBCHUK, PRESIDENT PVMA



The first order of business for 2024 was to finalize the details of the Spring Conference planned for February 28th, at the Radisson Hotel in Red Deer. The theme this year is the celebration of 40 years of the UTT/UTW program! As such, we are excited to announce the latest steps taken towards formalizing the UTT/UTW Certification as a Designated Trade. Consultant, Patrick Perry, has been hired

under the partnership of the PVMA and UVMA to conduct the necessary legwork to submit the application to the Alberta Government Skilled Trades program and we look forward to hearing from him at the conference.

These annual in-person events are always a great opportunity to meet new people and to visit with familiar cohorts. With such diversity in the vegetation management world, the PVMA strives to bridge the gap between all the stakeholders and bring value to the membership at large.

A special 'Thank You' to the wonderful casino volunteers for helping to make this event possible as well as to our Conference Sponsors. Because of the support, we were able to offer reduced registration fees. As always, we look forward to your input as to how you would like to see the casino funds used. Please also recognize that there are many strict rules from the AGLC that we must follow.

If you would like to contribute to the operation of the PVMA on a more active level, please consider joining a committee or putting your name forward for a position on the PVMA Board of Directors. Voting takes place at the Annual General Meeting, typically held in conjunction with the Spring Conference. Hope to see you there!

Lisa Rybchuk, PVMA President

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FALL WORKSHOP 2023

- SUBMITTED BY ORVILLE MCLEAN

The PVMA Fall Workshop & AGM (October 26, 2023) was held online again on the InEvent platform. It was great to see good attendance and people engaged even though it was a virtual meeting.

This year we had two speakers, Jon Berlie and Simon Kenyon. Jon started off the day with a presentation “The Role of Invasive Species Management in Ecological Restoration”. There were a lot of good and informative points, and we thank Jon for a well-delivered and entertaining message. Next up was Simon Kenyon who gave an excellent and challenging presentation “Re-thinking Safety Metrics”. He joined us while on vacation overseas, so we appreciate that. Simon pushed us to consider some of the norms that we take for granted and some of our perspectives. Safety is such an integral part of what we all do, and I think that we can fall into biases and muscle memory at times.

The workshop then moved on to the PVMA General Meeting. Our board members shared updates on what the various committees have been up to. We discussed scholarships and ways to honor the work and memory of Keith Sanftleben. More information about scholarship recipients and board reports are in this issue.

In Keith’s spirit, I wanted to reflect for a moment on contributing to the community and industry. Everyone of us has something to bring to the table. We all have a lot of overlapping skills and experience and the industry needs a strong, capable, and sustainable workforce. I would like to encourage you to think about the unique thing that you have, the special thing that you can do. Vegetation Management and Utility work need new perspectives, direction, inventive methods of doing the work that’s required. Time moves on no matter what we do, so leave your mark.

Are you interested in getting involved with the PVMA? I encourage everyone to think about a few things as a professional. Are you doing good, safe quality work every

day? Are you bringing the best version of yourself to your company, your peers, your industry? Are you gaining new skills and perspectives? Are you networking? The PVMA board, committee leadership, and junior committee roles are great ways to either get started or continue your professional development. Want more info? Reach out to a member and we will point you in the right direction.

We thank all our speakers for taking the time to prepare and present for us. If you missed the workshop some of our speakers have provided follow up articles to be published in future issues of the Vegetation Manager magazine.

We also want to thank all those who registered and attended the workshop. Thank you to Brandon Tupper for IT support and wrangling up all the folks we needed to be on the virtual conference. We send a special thank you to our president, Lisa Rybchuk for all her positive energy to make sure these events are meaningful, well planned and succeed on the day.

Finally, a slow clap for Val and her team. We couldn’t ever pull off an event, publish a magazine, run the UTT program, or survive day-to-day without her diligent and persistent effort.





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KEITH SANFTLEBEN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT



KOLE EICHELT

The very first recipient of the Keith Sanftleben Memorial Scholarship is Kole Eichelt. Kole completed a Bachelor of Engineering Degree and is now in his final year of a Bachelor of Theology Degree (Worship Arts Emphasis) at Vanguard College in Edmonton. Kole spent 4 summers working for a couple of municipalities as a light equipment operator and on the mowing and maintenance crew.

Kole has already made a positive impact on others by being part of a humanitarian team that travelled to Nicaragua to distribute Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes, host eye glass clinics, and provide basic dental care. He continues to make a positive impact through serving those in his church and in the surrounding community, and following graduation he desires to take part in another humanitarian trip as well as volunteer with some local not-for-profits. You can read his full essay included in this issue of the Vegetation Manager magazine.

Kole received a \$3,000 award towards his tuition and was invited to the 2024 Spring Conference to be recognized publicly.

"IT WAS A WELCOMED SURPRISE TO LEARN THAT I AM THE FIRST RECIPIENT OF THE KEITH SANFTLEBEN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP. I AM GRATEFUL TO THE SCHOLARSHIP DONOR AND PVMA AWARDS COMMITTEE FOR RECOGNIZING MY PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE COMMITMENT TO IMPROVING THE WELFARE OF OTHERS. THE MONETARY VALUE INCLUDED IN RECEIVING THIS SCHOLARSHIP WILL BRING SIGNIFICANT FINANCIAL RELIEF TO MY EDUCATIONAL STUDIES. THANK-YOU FOR BELIEVING IN ME AND INVESTING IN MY EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS." – KOLE EICHELT

The memorial scholarship was set up to honour Keith's memory and to highlight students that have an interest in making a positive impact on the community and others.



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KEITH SANFTLEBEN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP ESSAY

- SUBMITTED BY KOLE EICHELT

My grandmother, who recently turned 90, has been an influential figure in my life. As long as I have known her, she has lived with care and generosity towards others. She has set an example for loving others well. One tangible way this has materialized over the years has been through the making of hundreds of dresses for little girls in third world countries. Carried and distributed by those going to serve there, her simple skill with a sewing machine has brought smiles to countless children's faces. I was blessed a number of years ago to experience this firsthand. An opportunity came my way to join a team in Nicaragua for humanitarian purposes. While we were there, we distributed Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes, hosted eye glass clinics, and provided basic dental care. The positive welfare impact we made was evident. For the trip, I packed several of my grandmother's dresses into my suitcase. Once there, I kept my eye out for little girls who looked like they could use a special gift to uplift their spirits. They were not hard to find, given the living conditions in Nicaragua. Giving those dresses out on behalf of my grandmother is a moment I'll cherish forever. They brought so much joy to the kids' hearts. Given the example of my grandmother in my life, it comes as no surprise that I desire to follow in her footsteps and make a positive difference in the lives of others. She has taught me that neither age nor skill level should prevent me from loving others well. The remainder of this essay will now discuss some ways this has occurred as well as my plans to have a positive impact going forward.

As a devoted Christian, who grew up in a religious home, I have continually found myself serving others in one capacity or another. This has primarily taken place within the context of Devon Community Church. The unique thing about a church is its diversity. People come from all walks of life each with their own unique story. Over the years, I have served these people by helping meet both spiritual and physical needs. For example, every year I help with a family fun fair put on by the church that provides free entertainment and inexpensive food. This provides a positive experience for lower income families who cannot afford the carnival that comes to town. Another example would be planning and leading youth events.

Over the last four summers, I have been able to provide a safe space for community youth to engage with friends and wholesome activities. For the spiritual side, my position as the worship director has given me the responsibility to choose songs that can help people express their faith. This includes expressing complex emotions like grief, frustration, joy, and doubt through song. I have also had the honor of serving at funerals that have taken place at my church over the years. In those times, I get to tangibly support those who are processing grief in a small but important way. Overall, I believe my serving history up to this point has made a positive difference in the lives of those who live in Devon and the surrounding area.

Looking forward, I am excited to utilize my theological education and post-graduate time to serve others both inside and outside the church. After graduation, I plan to find a full or part time position in a church related to worship/music. There I will continue to meet spiritual and physical needs of the attendees. In particular, I have a passion to help people process the difficult emotions associated with loss and regret. This can be achieved through specific theological teachings, appropriate songs, and reflective gatherings. It is also on my heart to partake in another short-term humanitarian trip to a Central American country within the next couple years, where I can contribute to local welfare. I believe Samaritans Purse will be a good organization to partner with to achieve this goal. Finally, I hope to use my extra post-graduation time to serve at a non-for-profit in my local community. If I end up staying in Edmonton, there are great organizations I would like to get involved with such as the Mustard Seed or Hope Mission, which provide essential welfare care to the homeless population. There is also More Than a Fad Thrift Store that financially supports a women's shelter. I had an opportunity to volunteer at More Than a Fad this past Spring. With these plans, it is my hope and desire to have a positive impact on the community I find myself a part of.



CONGRATULATIONS: 2023 PVMA SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



EMMA THOMPSON

Meet Emma Thompson. Emma is an Honor student, currently in her third year of a Biology Degree at Concordia University. She has worked as an Herbicide Applicator Assistant. Emma's journey into the field of vegetation management began with the summer job that she held as a herbicide applicator. In that role, she worked to manage vegetation growth in diverse fields, including oil and gas, environmental, and agricultural sectors. Pursuing a major in biology at the university level allowed her to delve into the scientific principles underlying vegetation management. The knowledge she gained from her experiences in the field and her academic pursuits intertwined, providing her with a greater understanding of the implications of vegetation management. As she continues down this career path, she carries with her not only the technical know-how but also a profound appreciation for the interconnectedness of science, nature, and the responsibility we bear in managing our environment.



BRENNA MEERES

Introducing Brenna Meeres. Brenna is in her second year at Olds College in the Land and Water Resources Program with a Reclamation and Remediation Major. In her summer position with a vegetation management company, she gained her Pest Applicator's Assistant License. She is looking forward to working in the Environment sector and has learned a lot more about plants—specifically weeds!

In her future career, she hopes to one day to get to work in Northern Canada where there may be less vegetation but very resilient species. She also enjoys working with water and looks forward to learning more about wetland plants and peatlands. Overall, her experience in the classroom and in the field has taught her so much about vegetation management which will benefit her greatly in her career, whether it is working in reclamation and remediation for an oil field consulting company or working as a weed inspector/disease scout.



LEXIS ELLIOTT

Lexis Elliott is another of our scholarship recipients. Lexis is a second year Political Science student at the University of Alberta who applied to switch degrees to Environmental Biology – completely switching career paths from the previous year. She is now taking classes that relate exactly to what she learned to love this past summer.

Lexis wasn't always a lover of the open spaces. She only came to appreciate them this past summer when she began work as a Weed Inspector for her County. As she worked, she began to love looking at all the species of vegetation. Throughout the summer, she slowly realised that this is what she wanted to do for the rest of her life, resulting in her switching degrees. Lexis would love to continue working in vegetation management, with a focus on invasive species. She eventually plans to take a master's degree in invasive species as well, in hopes that her thesis can be used to help understand how invasive species engage and interact with the ecosystems they take over.



SIDNEY ANDERSON

Sidney Anderson has also received a PVMA scholarship. He is pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Archaeology and Geography at the University of Lethbridge. He also has work experience as a Safety Coordinator, Customer Service Representative, and Arborcare Assistant with a vegetation management company.

In his current semester, Sidney will be discussing the application of principles of vegetation management that he has observed throughout his education thus far. From archaeologists' evidence of vegetation management found in the Inca empire, learning about how vital vegetation inside urban areas is in environmental science to using geographic information systems to analyze data that could revolutionize plant management. The applications of the principles of plant management are pervasive, from aesthetic management of Inca elite estates to reducing effects of urbanization such as the urban heat island or the cross-application of geographic principles through geographic information systems. Due to his experience with plant management and working for a plant management company, these materials have captured his attention in his studies.



DARON CYR

Another scholarship recipient, Daron Cyr, is enrolled in his second year of a Bachelor of Commerce program at MacEwan University. Growing up Daron was exposed to vegetation management through both his father, an agronomist and manager of a crop inputs supply company, as well as his uncle, a grain farmer.

The opportunity arose to work for a vegetation management company this past summer, where he obtained the role of an herbicide applicator. He didn't fully understand what the job entailed from the job description, but it sure went far beyond what he imagined. From working on the Basal crew, to the Facilities crew, then doing roadside work spraying the ditches around residential powerlines, and finally time on a Hagland crew spraying under big powerlines. After his summer work Daron is thinking of majoring or minoring in either vegetation management or forestry. This summer really opened his eyes to see how vegetation management really affects our province. It's more complex than people realize and an essential part of our future.



ELEANOR KYME

A scholarship was also awarded to Eleanor Kyme. Eleanor is working on a Business Management Diploma at Olds College as well as a Project Management Certificate with the University of Calgary. She worked this past summer for a vegetation management company. One of Eleanor's primary interest lies in industrial vegetation management. This field is of great importance because it directly impacts the safety and functionality of these sites. Another area of her interest is Forestry Vegetation Management because of its crucial role in maintaining healthy forests. Her interest in these areas is rooted in a holistic approach that seeks to balance human activities with environmental conservation. By focusing on safety, efficiency, sustainability, wildfire prevention, biodiversity conservation, and invasive species control, she aims to contribute to the preservation of natural ecosystems, the sustainable use of resources, and the safety of industrial operation.

continued next page...



CALDER THOMPSON

Our final Scholarship recipient is Calder Thompson. Calder is completing a Bachelor of Science in Physical Education, Kinesiology at the University of Alberta Augustana. Calder was constantly learning about herbicides and weed identification while growing up, as his parents run a vegetation management company. With this long-term exposure and opportunity for growth in the field, he was heavily involved with vegetation management throughout his summers.

When he was old enough, he obtained his assistant applicator license and got hands-on experience. After obtaining a pesticide applicator license, he began operating ATV's and UTVs for boom spraying as well as basal tree spraying with a backpack sprayer. After continuous summers of spraying, he began leading crews and headed spray programs for major oilfields and oversaw the spray program of an MD. These projects have enhanced his capabilities in both weed identification and pesticide application, sharpening his understanding of both industrial and forestry vegetation management.

Each of the PVMA Scholarship recipients were awarded \$1,500 towards their tuition and were invited to attend the PVMA 2024 Spring Conference as our guests, to be recognized publicly. The PVMA is proud to support students through Scholarships and Bursaries.

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THE STATUS AND IMPACT OF PESTICIDE BANS IN CANADA

A SUMMARY OF THE PRESENTATION AT THE SPRING CONFERENCE 2023 BY LISA RYBCHUK:

The topic of pesticide bans is controversial and often leads to more questions than answers. With many factors to consider, one must look beyond the politics and public perception and focus on the science to answer the question; Are pesticide bans an effective tool to reduce the negative impacts of pesticides in the environment?

The word pesticide is a broad term given to anything that is intended to prevent, destroy, repel, attract, or manage a pest. It is important to clarify that most pesticide bans in Canada are referring to the use of Cosmetic pesticides, those used solely for non-essential or aesthetic purposes, simply to make lawns and green spaces look better. Cosmetic pesticides do not include those used for the control of pests that cause economic or health threats, including agricultural and industrial applications.

Pesticides are regulated federally by Health Canada; however, their sale and use are determined by each province or territory. The first province to enact a pesticide ban was Quebec in 2003, followed by Ontario and New Brunswick in 2009. These provinces implemented a broad pesticide ban, which included the use of herbicides, fungicides, and insecticides in all landscaping elements. In 2011, Nova Scotia, PEI, and Newfoundland also enacted pesticide bans, but focused mainly on the use of 2,4-D for the control of broadleaf weeds on lawns.

In 2014, Manitoba enacted the “Non-Essential Pesticide Use Regulation” but later revised it in 2022 to allow for the application of pesticides to lawns and green spaces in low-risk areas such as boulevards, right-of-ways, and sports fields. In a press release they stated ‘The Manitoba government is committed to protecting human health and the environment. It is also committed to science-based decision making.’

The topic of pesticide bans continues to make its way West, to the provinces of BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and the Territories. While there are currently no province-wide bans in place, some have implemented pesticide use restrictions and others have initiated educational requirements. For example, the BC Ministry of Environment requires that all homeowners complete the free online Residential Applicator Certificate prior to purchasing and using domestic class pesticides.

Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the Canadian government, through Health Canada, to protect the health and safety of all Canadians and to mitigate pesticide risks to the environment. To this end, all pesticides registered for use in Canada undergo rigorous testing to assess the risks to human, animal, and environmental health and to ensure that the pesticides meet strict health and safety measures.

While there are several organizations that monitor for the presence of pesticides in the environment, it is difficult to find conclusive evidence that isolates the source of pesticides specifically from the cosmetic applications, nor evidence to suggest that a pesticide ban results in the reduction of the detected cosmetic pesticides. It is fair to say, however, that the responsible use of pesticides, by whomever is the end-user, is critical in meeting the health and safety measures set out by Health Canada.

As professional applicators, it is our duty to mitigate potential pesticide risks to the public and the environment. It is our responsibility to reassure the public that pesticide bans are not the answer and to demonstrate that the most effective tool to reduce the negative impacts of pesticides on the environment is to use an integrated pest management approach and always read and follow the label directions.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF INSECT PEST DAMAGE

- SUBMITTED BY THOMAS WHITNEY, PHD - DAVEY TREE EXPERT COMPANY



Insects are undeniably important creatures. There are an estimated 3-30 million species, which amount to approximately half of the total animal biomass on earth. A robust insect community often indicates a healthy ecosystem, including our urban landscapes. “Beneficial” insects, such as predators, parasitoids, decomposers, and pollinators, provide valuable ecosystem services. “Pest” insects, although a detriment to our interests, similarly serve important roles in an ecosystem. Most pests engage in herbivory, consuming and sometimes weakening plants, but also providing prey for other insects within the food web. Hence, they serve as a link in the chain of energy movement throughout ecosystems.

Nevertheless, managing pest populations is appropriate when they eclipse thresholds of acceptable damage on our properties. The first step to pest management is diagnosis, which means knowing your insects and the type of damage they leave behind. There are three functional pest insect groups of the urban landscape: defoliators, sap-feeders, and wood borers:

DEFOLIATORS – These are leaf chewing insects and comprise of several taxonomic groups, especially beetles, caterpillars, and sawflies. As a plant, less leaf surface area means less photosynthetic capacity, resulting in fewer synthesized sugars. Healthy plants can tolerate some defoliation, but repeated leaf loss can stunt growth, reduce vigor, or even kill a tree. Examples of some leaf damage types:

- Free-feeding – All parts of the leaf are consumed.
- Skeletonizing – Only the soft parts of the leaf are consumed and the veins remain.
- Leaf mining – The inner leaf tissue is consumed and the upper and lower cuticles remain.

SAP-FEEDERS – These comprise mostly of the “true bugs” and are unique because they have specialized piercing-sucking mouthparts to extract vascular fluids from plants. Where defoliators rob plants of their sugar-producing factories (leaves), sap-feeders rob plants of the already-synthesized sugars themselves. Like defoliators, heavy and repeated sap-feeding pressure is required to cause a healthy plant to decline. Examples of some sap-feeder signs:

- Honeydew – Most sap-feeders excrete this sweet, sticky waste product, which covers leaves and, unfortunately, any man-made structures underneath.
- Black sooty mold – If honeydew persists on leaves, sometimes this fungus will start metabolizing those sugars and cover leaves.

WOODBORERS – These insects feed inside plants on vascular tissue and are comprised primarily of beetles (but also some moths and wasps). Vascular tissues include the water, sugar, and nutrient transport system for plants, so when damaged and disrupted, woodborers significantly affect plant health. Their damage is the most severe out of these three pest groups. Examples of some woodborer symptoms and signs:

- Canopy decline – This general symptom occurs when the vascular system is damaged or disrupted. Woodboring insects, as well as damage to roots, soil compaction, and drought, can cause this.
- Entry/exit holes – Small, perfectly circular (and sometimes “D” shaped) holes can indicate a woodboring insect infestation.
- Boring dust – This is excrement that looks like fine sawdust due to boring activity.



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COMMITTEE REPORTS

- INDUSTRIAL/NATIONAL

IVMA B.C held their 2023 Biennial Conference Titled “Agility in Vegetative Management” was held in Kamloops BC on November 7-9th. Conference included sessions on Climate Change, Fire & Floods, Indigenous Perspectives, Doing Business, and Innovative Techniques. Check out their website at <https://www.ivma.com/> for association information and upcoming events and C.E.C’s.

IVMA -ManSask has no current updates.

OVMA 2024 Tour and seminar will be held in Chatham, Ont. Golf on September 24th, and Tour on Sept 25th, Sept 26th is the seminar and AGM. There are currently around 100 members. This past fall six webinars were held online for their members to receive Applicator Credits

Executive has Chad Horton as President, Brad Hayhoe is Past President, Alana Respondek Treasurer.

Information on the OVMA can be found at <https://www.ovma.ca/>

AVMA (Atlantic Vegetation Management Association) in-person conference and AGM 2024 is slated for October in Fredericton, New Brunswick. Dates TBA. President - Jason Pond, VP – Mike Porter, Secretary – Holly Toner

Information on the AVMA is located at <http://myavma.ca/blog/>

National Industrial Vegetation Manual update – Please see the separate article in this publication for a National Industrial Vegetation Program Status Update. The new national industrial vegetation manual is live and available at Lakeland College. There is currently a ‘transition exam’ in place to ensure that both individuals who purchased the old manual and individuals who purchased the new manual are both able to find the exam questions within their materials. In roughly six months, modifications to the exam to add more questions that focus on newer manual materials.

As this is my last report after serving for 3 consecutive 2-year terms, PVMA policy has me stepping down from my position on the executive board. I have appreciated the opportunity to represent the membership, and I urge anyone interested to step up and serve the industry we all make a living in. Any questions on my experience on the PVMA – please don’t hesitate to ask.

Geoff Thompson, Director in Charge

- EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

We hope you enjoy this Spring 2024 edition of the Vegetation Manager. Thank you to everyone who contributed this time around. We are always looking for articles and folks to help with research. We want to encourage new ideas and discussions and the VM magazine is a great place for that. Please reach out to Val or Orville if you would like to contribute or if you have any questions.

Orville McLean, Director in Charge

- MARKETING COMMITTEE

After our December directors’ meeting, we have decided that we would continue focusing on getting the word out about PVMA and careers available within our industries. I will be focussing on attending career fairs in 2024 to educate people about possible career opportunities as well as the benefits of being a member of PVMA.

We had the opportunity to have a booth at the AAAF In Service Training in Calgary last December. Thanks to everyone who stopped in!

We have renewed our advertisement in the Canadian Reclamation Magazine for 2024 and have already had a few CLRA members contact us to learn more about PVMA. We are looking to continue building a relationship with the Canadian Land Reclamation Association and are interested in being part of their annual conference in Edmonton next year.

Joanne Ireland – Committee Chair

- PROTOCOL COMMITTEE

With only a few paper copies left of our manuals, please contact PVMA if you would like a copy. Prices are on the website. As always, digital copies are also available for purchase.

Joanne Ireland – Committee Chair

- CASINO COMMITTEE

We await a deposit into our account of the proceeds from our fall Casino. It should arrive sometime in February or March. We are utilizing some of the remaining proceeds to cover a portion of the 2024 Spring Conference costs. Unfortunately, AGLC does not allow us to cover food costs. We continue to explore spending options.

Laura Hammer, Director in Charge

- MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Please remember to complete your 2024 membership renewal if you have not already done so. Your membership is instrumental in promoting environmentally safe vegetation management. Membership in PVMA will allow you to contribute directly to our industry, while promoting environmentally safe vegetation management for the benefit of everyone.

Benefits also include:

1. The opportunity to become acquainted with and learn from fellow professionals in vegetation management, as well as other facets of the industry.
2. Informative meetings with high quality speakers presenting interesting and useful information of key topics in vegetation management. Many of our meetings also have CEC's and CEU's available.
3. A newsletter to provide an opportunity for members to express their views on matters of current interest, as well keeping them informed on recent developments in the industry.

If you have not yet renewed your membership, please contact the PVMA office and they can help you out. PVMA office number 780.752.9800 877.249.1508 (Toll Free)

Jay Manganaro, Director in Charge

- AWARDS COMMITTEE

The Awards Committee is happy to report that we were able to award more scholarships this year than ever before! Due to the increased availability of funds and a fantastic selection of qualified candidates, it was decided to award seven PVMA scholarships this year, up from four in previous years.

We also were privileged to select the first ever Keith Sanftleben Memorial Scholarship Award recipient. In addition to meeting the post-secondary requirements, the scholarship was awarded to an individual that exemplified Keith's values of improving human welfare and making a positive impact on their community. With the excellent quality of candidates, it was a difficult decision, but we think you will agree with our choice in awarding Kole Eichelt with this inaugural Scholarship.

You will find his essay and highlights of other scholarship winners in this issue of the VM magazine. We anticipate that some of the recipients may be joining us at the Spring Conference so please take the time to congratulate them on their success.

Lisa Rybchuk, Director in Charge

- SEMINAR COMMITTEE

We are excited for our upcoming conference February 28 at the Radisson in Red Deer. By exploring options in utilizing casino funds, we have reduced ticket prices to make it more affordable to attend. With 2024 being the 40th anniversary of PVMA's first year of UTT training, we will be highlighting past, present, and future. Patrick Perry will speaking on the exciting path we are on developing a Government of Alberta certified trade for UTT/UTW's. Speakers will also include Laura Stewart with FireSmart, Nicole Kimmel with Alberta Invasive Species Council and Shane Hedderson with CleanFarms.

Joanne Ireland – Committee Chair

- UTW-UTT COMMITTEE

Changes to the Alberta Electrical Utility Code involving the management of the Limits of Approach had the PVMA joining with other stake holders to write a letter to the government to get some clarity. This issue is ongoing, and we will keep the industry updated as we learn more.

We have currently established a steering committee that is looking at what it would take to obtain Trade Recognition for the UTT/UTW program. This is exciting as we have a great program base already in place that was established by the hard work of pioneers in this industry 40 years ago and the longevity of this program has been based on industry experts sharing their time and efforts to keep improving it.

Taking the steps towards Trade Recognition may well be the next step for us to set the path for the next 40 years of this program to ensure that longevity and involvement from the industry is maintained and that our representation is strong.

Things we are currently considering.

- What does a unified industry look like? What does "representation" look like?
 - What other industries and associated have an interest?
- What is the current state of the industry? What is the outlook?
- What is the desired scope of a new trade or education program?
- What are the education/training needs? And/or regulatory needs?
 - What currently exists?
- What are the benefits to industry, employers, practitioners, Albertans, and the province?

New Business

- We are currently aligning our efforts with the UVMA to ensure as we move forward, we are as consolidated across the industry in our efforts.
- We are currently moving forward with doing a curriculum review to ensure with the implementation of the new work Standard CAN ULC S801-14 that our material is current and up to date.

Bob Gordon, Director in Charge

NATIONAL PESTICIDE APPLICATOR PROGRAM STATUS UPDATE

PVMA reached out to Alberta Environment to get a status update on the National Pesticide Applicator Program at Lakeland College. The following information was provided to us by Devon Smiegielski, Pesticide Certification Specialist with Alberta Environment and Protected Areas.

Stats were collected by Alberta Environment using the Lakeland College Reporting year of July 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023. They provided a snap of updates from that period.

PESTICIDE APPLICATORS

Certification Class	New Applicators	Recert	No Renewal	Total Certificates Issued	Total Current Applicators	New vs No Renewal
Industrial	41	74	98	115	1008	-57
Landscape	54	104	87	158	1229	-33
Aquatic Vegetation	1	5	5	6	50	-4

REGARDING PESTICIDE SERVICE REGISTRATIONS (PSRS): Currently there are a total active 417 PSRs. For the Industrial class in 2023, our department received 15 new applications and 25 renewal applications this is a slight increase from the five-year average.

EXAM PROCESS TO REMAIN AT PROCTOR LOCATIONS

Review of exam process return to proctor locations has proved beneficial. Applicators haven't experienced previous issues of lockouts or exam re-writes (for technical issues). Additionally, this process has cut processing time in half for administrative resources at the Lakeland Office as significant time was spent walking applicators through the exam process and troubleshooting issues. New Proctor locations have been added and more are being explored.

CHANGES TO THE RECIPROCITY EXAM PROCESS

Alberta Environment and Protected Areas (EPA) recognizes reciprocity for pesticide applicators from all provinces. The change on using BC exams occurred when it came to our attention that the BC pesticide applicator exams and answers were leaked and therefore compromised. In response to this issue, as of May 15, 2023, EPA requires Alberta residents to write Alberta exams. Our exams are secure, and we have greater confidence that applicators can have their actual knowledge assessed to obtain a certificate.

MATERIAL DEVELOPMENT

The National Industrial Vegetation Manual was completed. Minor edits were done in office to make it Alberta Specific. Lessons 201, 202, and 203 were updated.

Fees for manual purchase have been assessed and no proposed increase is required.



UTW-UTT

40

YEARS

ANNIVERSARY

(1984 - 2024)

***- Utility Tree Workers (UTW) and Utility Tree Trimmers (UTT)
certification program launched at Olds College in 1984 -***

UTILITY TREE WORKERS (UTW) AND UTILITY TREE TRIMMERS(UTT) CELEBRATING 40 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

- SUBMITTED BY BY NEIL THIESSEN & JOHN MOIR

It seems like yesterday that a few of us with the major Utilities sat in a meeting to discuss the issue of standards and safe work practices in the Utility tree work programs. Within the Utilities, Alberta Power, TransAlta and several of the larger REAs, tree work was being performed with different standards and rules. Even within a Utility, where most programs at that time were decentralized, there were as many variable programs as there were District Managers who oversaw the work.

Recognizing the issues and safety concerns, this small group of Utility program leaders and major contractors, met to determine what changes had to be made. Utilities started to centralize their UVM programs which helped considerably to standardize practices. The result was the offering of the Utility Tree Workers (UTW) and Utility Tree Trimmers (UTT) certification program at Olds College in 1984. The IVMAA owned the program and contracted Olds College to facilitate the two-week training program. Most of the training personnel were provided by industry experts such as Ross Williamson, Al Luey and many others. This entire program over the years was only possible by a tremendous effort by dozens of people.

Many of the first-year class were experienced tree workers and trimmers and many were grandfathered for their required work hours for full certification. However, they all had to complete the training program at Olds.

CERTIFICATE #1 WAS ISSUED TO JOHN MOIR of Big Axe Clearing Ltd. Here is what John has to say about the training, experience, and effect on the UVM industry.

“Thanks Neil. How on earth did that happen, 40 years??!!

The first course was an interesting one. Some of the students were also instructors. The Association has always used the expertise of the industry to provide the training for the students.

There have been some major changes in the electric energy industry over the past 40 years. It has been a fascinating time. The vegetation management industry has also seen changes.

To really see what changes have occurred as a result of the initiation of the UTT/UTW program, one doesn't need to look far. These specialized workers who conduct tree work around energized electrical facilities are surely subjected to work that can be as hazardous as any other industry. These folks work around energized lines, at heights, sometimes on a rope, while working with chainsaws and conductive objects (trees) falling in proximity to the energized lines all day long.

Along with developing a competency-based certification program, the association worked with the Provincial Government to bring in new regulations designed to provide proper work limitations and protections for the workers.

Different provinces have brought in programs like the UTT-UTW program. Some other provinces don't have their own programs, but the electric utilities do require Alberta's certification for this, or an equivalent training program. The UTW-UTT program became a Canadian Standard in many areas.

Having had the opportunity to work in Management with a multi-national company, I was frequently exposed to standards and procedures within the industry south throughout North America. It became obvious to me that the training and competency verification required to be certified as a UTT or UTW in Alberta certainly added a great deal of professionalism and safety awareness.

UTT/UTW RE-CERTIFICATION COURSE DATES

IN-PERSON SESSIONS: **APRIL 10-11, 2024 & APRIL 17-18, 2024**

ONLINE (SELF-DIRECTED) SESSIONS:

MARCH 11-22, 2024 | APRIL 8-19, 2024 | MAY 13-24, 2024

STUMP TREATMENT: TBD

CONTACT OLDS TO GET REGISTERED

UTT/UTW CERTIFICATION COURSE DATES

TO BECOME A CERTIFIED UTILITY TREE WORKER OR UTILITY TREE TRIMMER, YOU MUST SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE THIS PVMA-SANCTIONED SAFETY COURSE. PRE-APPROVAL BY THE PVMA OFFICE IS REQUIRED. APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE PVMA OFFICE NO LATER THAN MARCH 14, 2024.

2024 SPRING PROGRAM DATES:

APRIL 8-18, 2024 | APRIL 15-25, 2024

I participated in, and read, incident reviews from all over North America where I continued to be surprised by the lack of experience and training on crews completing the same work. It's interesting based on the types of safety incidents that were occurring, that workers in Alberta were far more professional and safety conscious than many other jurisdictions.

Utility management began to trust the competency of workers who were certified, and those certified workers became competent trainers for future generations of tree workers around energized powerlines.

There is no doubt the Alberta certification of employees has influenced the industry across Canada and has facilitated significant improvements in safety awareness and professionalism throughout the past 40 years”.

THE PVMA OFFICE MANAGER,
VAL EICHELT, REPORTS THAT THERE
HAVE BEEN A TOTAL OF 715 UTT
CERTIFICATIONS AND 415 UTW
CERTIFICATIONS COMPLETED AS OF
THE END OF 2023.

THE VEGETATION MANAGER *magazine*

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- PUBLICATION SCHEDULE

Deadline for submission

January 18, 2024

May 2, 2024

Sept 19, 2024

Distribution Date

February 28, 2024 (Print)

June 4, 2024 (Digital)

October 24, 2024 (Digital)

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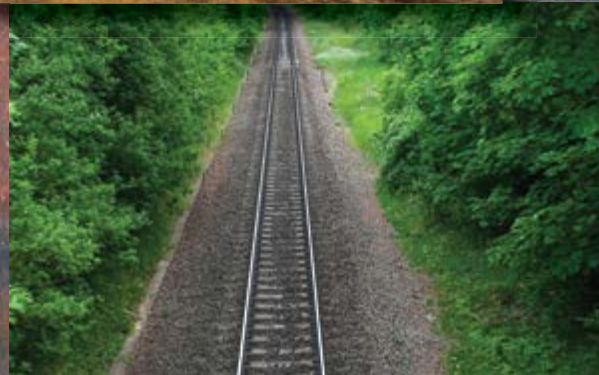
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