

DIGITAL EDITION

JUNE 2, 2020

# **THE** **VEGETATION MANAGER** *magazine* **2020**

## **QUARANTINE ISSUE**

**A SAFETY TALK ABOUT COVID-19 &  
WORKING**

**MASK USE & MAINTENANCE**

**ALBERTA DUTCH ELM DISEASE  
AWARENESS WEEK JUNE 22- JUNE 28**

**PVMA AWARD & SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS**

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# PRESIDENT'S REPORT



## - CODIE ANDERSON, PRESIDENT PVMA



Like many of our members, I have had the privilege of working from my home office for the past 2 months. Doing work in a line of business deemed to be essential has had its challenges, but the challenges pale in the face of those faced by our member-colleagues who have been unable

to conduct business in the face of the current situation. I look forward to a time in the very near future where business can safely resume, and our industry can leverage the remainder of an already short season.

As an association, we have been spared the brunt of the impact so far. The timing of the pandemic presented only minor challenges for our spring meetings, and even though there is cause for optimism for a fall event, we are well-poised to withstand a necessary cancellation should it occur. This means that we can have resources available to lend assistance to members where appropriate. Inquiries to regulators and the industry, review and revision of materials, and the ever-present network of colleagues and volunteers. If there is something you are working on that you think could be made better, faster, or easier with the support of your association, please reach out.

Necessary reductions in office hours and projects have come at a time when activity slows for the season, and our office is in capable hands. We have been putting effort in where we can at this time, disseminating updates and sharing relevant material, responding to member inquiries, and

working to increase our online offerings. The temporary closures have had an impact on the UTT/UTW program, but that impact is expected to be a recoverable one, and a project is underway to implement an online renewal program that will offer reliability and convenience into the future.

I am proud to represent our association and our industry, and I look forward to seeing you all again very soon.

Be safe, be well.

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Utility Tree Worker and Utility Tree Trimmer certifications are valid for 5-years and expire on June 30 of the 5-year anniversary of registration. Register in this course if your Professional Vegetation Management Association (formerly Industrial Vegetation Management Association of Alberta - IVMAA) certificate expires in 2020.

## PROGRAM DATES:

**Intake #1: Tuesday November 17 - Wednesday November 18, 2020**

**Intake #2: Thursday November 19 - Friday November 20, 2020**

**Costs:** Tuition \$440 (subject to change). See [www.pvma.ca](http://www.pvma.ca) for the Professional Vegetation Management Association application fee for

certification. Credentials: See [www.pvma.ca](http://www.pvma.ca) for certification registration requirements and details.

Email [val@pvma.ca](mailto:val@pvma.ca) or call 1.877.249.1508 for more details.

**Length of Program:** 2 Days @ 8 am - 5 pm

**Delivery:** Olds Campus

**Admission Requirements:** Previous successful passing of full course.

**NOTE:** This is a recertification only.

VISIT: [WWW.PVMA.CA](http://WWW.PVMA.CA)

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER.

# A SAFETY TALK ABOUT COVID-19 AND WORKING

- BY WADE SMITH, SOUTHBROOK SAFETY AND CONSULTING LTD.

We are now making history by trying not to repeat the mistakes of the past. We will need to be patient, inventive, diligent, generous, and understanding. In times of stress and when people do not feel that they are in control of their destinies, they can turn to hateful thoughts and actions. Don't buy into the conspiracy theories and the hate propaganda. We all need to be above that. The truths will come to the surface over time and there is absolutely nothing we can do to change the past.

COVID-19 is here now and there is no turning back. We need to minimise the damage by protecting ourselves and society in general. Talk to your co-worker, agree to keep each other safe. This includes both at work and off work as both of your actions affect the safety of both of you 24/7-365. Be respectful as not everyone has the same opinion. Talk with your supervisor as well.

Alberta Health Services should be your go-to source for Covid-19 information as it is for this article. As we progress through the three stages of getting our economy close to where it was pre-March 2020, we need to keep the basics of Covid-19 safety in our actions and minds. Wash your hands often, don't touch your face and maintain social distancing. When in situations where social distancing cannot be guaranteed, wear a mask and wash your hands more often.

Remember to do your hazard assessments and include Covid-19 in each and every one of them. The Alberta Construction Safety Association have produced two articles that are a great help for us. AHS says that soap and water works the best so having dish soap and water in a spray bottle is a great idea. Hand sanitizer works well and now is much easier to get, be careful around open flames. Most of us have a bleach solution to clean tools or spray tips. Do not mix bleach with alcohol or ammonia, they will react to each other and the results can be very toxic.

ACSA Pandemic Planning links

<http://albertaconstruction.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/PANDEMIC-PLANNING-FOR-THE-CONSTRUCTION-INDUSTRY.pdf>

<http://albertaconstruction.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/PANDEMIC-PLANNING-FOR-THE-CONSTRUCTION-INDUSTRY-4.0.pdf>

Here are some ideas to help you with your Covid-19 Safe Work Practices:

## REQUIRED:

- No hand shaking or physical contact with co-workers or landowners.
- When meeting landowners on the job site maintain 6 feet of distance or more. No one is permitted in any landowner dwellings.
- MAINTAIN 6 foot distance, at minimum from co-workers.
- Have Lysol wipes (or a similar product) on the job site. Wipe down cabs and equipment daily.
- Have hand sanitizer on the job site (or something similar like soap and water).
- **SELF CHECK.** If you are not feeling well employees are to stay home or off the job site. Call 811 for health guidance in Alberta. Call 1-877-308-9038 for health guidance in Manitoba. Call 1-866-797-000 for health guidance in Ontario.
- **AT WORK:** No landowners, co-workers or other people are permitted into your work vehicle.

**PUBLIC PLACES:** Example: Gas Stations. Use throw away gloves while operating the gas pumps. (To save on first aid gloves use something like the little bags you use for picking up dog feces). DO NOT use your work gloves as these will collect and hold germs/bacteria.

- Air travel should be avoided.
- Sit down meals in restaurants should be avoided. Pack a lunch, Use take out, Use room service, etc.

## HIGHLY ENCOURAGED / RECOMMENDED:

- Limit public interaction.
- If possible/feasible schedule work in more remote or rural areas.
- Limit the number of passengers per vehicle. Goal of one person per vehicle. Exceptions to be those of you that work and live together anyway. Exceptions to those of you on longer termed planned shifts. i.e. 21 days.
- Limit hotel usage.
- When staying in hotels, seek rooms with kitchenettes.
- **HOTELS:** Goal of no shared rooms. Work with your General Foreman or Powercrew Foreman. Exceptions to be those of you that work and live together anyway. Exceptions to those of you on longer termed planned shifts. i.e. 21 days.
- **OFF DUTY:** It is essential that we all follow the government recommendations of physical separation. We are to remain house bound when off duty.
- Have a bottle of premixed soap and water in the vehicle. Gas stations, Spray the pump handle and buttons plus your hands. Use the spray to wash your hands before entering the vehicle. Dry using paper towel at pump station.

The following steps are recommended by Alberta Health Services to prevent the spread of common respiratory illnesses (such as influenza) as well as COVID-19 whether at home or while travelling:

- use good hygiene practices, such as frequent handwashing
- cough or sneeze into your elbow or a tissue. Dispose of tissues immediately and wash your hands
- avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
- stay at home and away from others if you are feeling ill
- don't share items that may have saliva on them such as drinking glasses and water bottles
- clean high touch surfaces such as taps, doorknobs and counter tops frequently
- drink plenty of water, stay hydrated
- contact your primary health provider or Health Link by calling 811 if you have questions or concerns about your health.

Be kind to the people that work in the service industry, they don't make a lot of money and they are scared, tired, distrustful just like you. We challenge you to make at least one person a day smile and feel good about themselves.

It is not ok to sneeze or cough in public anymore. It is now ok however to fart inside of a vehicle or in line at safe social distancing. I am being sarcastic, mind your manners. Made you smile.

Our world has changed. Let's all make it for the better.

Things are changing rapidly as new information becomes available so please follow AHS recommendations.

# PVMA AWARDS



PVMA 2019 Scholarship Award winner Lindsey Zeyha was invited to the 2020 Spring Seminar and a formal presentation was made.



Brandon Tupper was presented with the Past-President's Award (engraved gavel) by Vice-President Laura Hammer at the PVMA 2020 Spring Seminar



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# MASK USE AND MAINTENANCE

- BY WADE SMITH, SOUTHBROOK SAFETY AND CONSULTING LTD.

“NOW THAT IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT WE USE MASKS WHEN IN PUBLIC WE SHOULD DO SO. MAYBE WE SHOULD HAVE BEEN DOING SO MUCH EARLIER, BUT IN REALITY THERE WAS NOT ENOUGH INVENTORY. THE RESULT WOULD HAVE BEEN DISASTROUS.

It is not part of our culture to wear masks and if you are like me I find them uncomfortable, hot, restrictive, and itchy, plus my glasses would fog up sometimes. In a short time I have overcome these objections with a “Suck it Up Buttercup” attitude and some experimentation plus some reading.

At the beginning of April it was almost impossible to find masks. By April 15 there was a cottage industry in most neighborhoods, if you knew your neighbors. We were given instructions on how to make our own from T shirts, dish cloths and whatever 9 ounce poly-cotton material we had in the house. In May we can find pallets of masks in retail outlets, along with an abundance of hand sanitizer. I have purchased four different types of masks. Here are some things that I have learned so far.

I have a big head so some masks will not fit comfortably without pulling on my ears. After I washed my hands, what I did was make an extension to the elastics thanks to a short piece of string and simple knots. If you have a 3D printer you can get the pattern for the “as seen on the TV news” plastic holders off the internet.

Depending on the humidity my glasses can fog. A friend suggested that I move the mask up more on my face so that my glasses are not at the edge of the mask. It works, problem solved.

Not all masks offer the same protection, but the original intention was to block you from transferring the virus to others, not stop them from giving it to you. Although all masks will offer some protection, there is a risk that you might touch a contaminated surface then transfer those viruses to the mask. Then you remove the mask and put it in your pocket with your keys, wallet, cellular phone etc. contaminating everything. Then you transfer that to your face later in the day. You must wash your hands with soap and water or with hand sanitizer before touching the mask, then wash your hands again after touching the mask.



Once used you must store the mask in a container or paper bag. All masks are single use, so you will need to plan ahead and have spares throughout the day. Store them in a zip-seal bag or container. Wash or disinfect your hands before and after touching new or used masks.

Medical N95 masks have their own standard and should be reserved for our frontline workers. Other masks use a layering system. They are usually made of a type of paper cloth and are intended to block your coughs from reaching others. They are often disposable.

Some poly-cotton masks are treated with SRF-594-Siliade 100, which is an Antimicrobial. They can be washed 30 times in warm water but without bleach. Do not iron and do not dry with the sun. Another mask is 65/35 poly cotton that is a Biosmart™ material, which stores chlorine bleach in the material that releases during use. It can be washed 75 times in a household washer with bleach. Both of these have a 99.77 % rating if used correctly. You must read the directions on the package for your own safety.

When washing your masks it is suggested that you should machine wash them. You may want to use a delicate garment bag. They can be washed by hand but you need to keep them in the soap and water long enough to kill the virus. How long is long enough you ask? Some say 15 minutes others suggest 30 minutes. I timed my washer and it has a 48-minute cycle. I have travelled quite a bit so I have had to hand wash clothes in the camp sink or hotel bath tub. You can use a detergent pod and rubber gloves. Add clothes and soak for 10 minutes, swish, swirl, twist then soak 10 minutes more. Remove and twist, drain the

tub and rinse it out. Add a few inches of lukewarm water, add clothes, swish, swirl and soak for 10 minutes, twist and hang to dry. This has worked for me in the past. Here is a news broadcast from CBC about disinfecting masks.

<https://www.msn.com/en-ca/video/news/how-to-disinfect-a-mask/vi-BB13leCC>

Unless the mask manufacturer specifically requires that you use bleach it should be avoided. Only apply the bleach as required by that manufacturer. The danger is that the bleach does not get rinsed in the correct way. Both alcohol and ammonia will react with bleach and we are exposed to other products that use alcohol type solvents as a carrier i.e. Bug Spray and Sun block. Note, not all bug repellents or sun blocks use solvents. Read your labels and SDS forms.

We are on a big learning curve here and as the economies are opened up, best practices are going to change. New products are going to become available. The product you are using now may disappear because it was batch produced and imported. Your local area may sell out their inventory yet elsewhere in the Province or Canada there might be too much inventory still in stock, so another batch will not be ordered. Don't box yourself into one idea, be open for change. Remember to clean and disinfect your glasses as well. Wash your hands before and after.

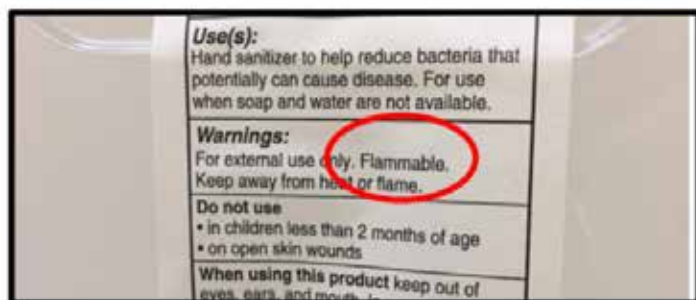
Thanks for taking the time to read this article.  
Above all please follow the Provincial Health Guidelines.

**What Happened:** A [REDACTED] employee used alcohol-based hand sanitizer as recommended during the Corona pandemic. The person touched a metal surface before the liquid evaporated. Due to static electricity, the vapor from the hand sanitizer ignited with an almost invisible flame on both hands. The person quickly managed to get to a sink to extinguish the flames

**Consequence:** First and second degree burns, see photo of injury.

**Actions taken:** Warning signs indicating flammable liquids are posted on all hand sanitizing dispensers [REDACTED]

**Advice:** Everyone should wash their hands with soap and water if possible. If only alcohol-based hand sanitizers are available, make sure all liquid is evaporated before touching any surfaces.



# LISA RYBCHUK : INDUSTRY SERVICE PROFILE



Growing up in Calgary, Lisa attended the University of Calgary before moving to Edmonton to study Biological Sciences at NAIT. From there Lisa moved to Peace River to begin operating the SPCA. Lisa's start in the vegetation management industry began organically, literally, by starting a residential yard-cleaning business. It wasn't long before homeowners began asking questions about lawn care, tree pruning, weed control, and other landscape-related questions that Lisa discovered there was a much greater business opportunity on the horizon.

But first, she needed to learn the answers to their questions; so off to Fairview College (now GPRC). she went to study Horticulture, returning to start her own landscaping and weed control company in 2004.

Business was steady, as was the level of interest from homeowners in learning how to maintain their own landscapes. Lisa began creating and instructing short courses through Adult Learning agencies on many different landscaping and gardening topics. In 2006 Lisa was offered the opportunity of a lifetime; to instruct courses in the Turfgrass Management program in Fairview (now run by NAIT).

Over the years, Lisa continued to operate her landscaping and vegetation management company while working assorted positions to fill in the off-season. This included becoming a Research Extension Specialist with the NAIT Boreal Research Institute, followed by the roll of General Manager for the Weberville Community Model Forest. Eventually, the pull to the Oil & Gas

industry allowed Lisa to work for an oilfield service company full-time, managing the Vegetation Control department during the summers and the Safety department during the winters. The roll of Safety Manager expanded to include achieving her National Construction Safety Officer (NCSO) designation, followed by becoming certified to instruct H2S Alive, Ground Disturbance, Fall Protection, Confined Space, and First Aid courses.

In 2018, Lisa left the Peace Country to return to the Calgary area where she worked as a Programmer for Continuing Education at Olds College, coordinating the Horticulture, Land, and Environment courses. Now in 2020, Lisa is focusing solely on her own vegetation control and safety training business, under the name of Woodchuk Enterprises Ltd. As a Licensed Pesticide Applicator, Lisa provides weed control services in Landscape, Industrial, Forestry, and Industrial settings. She also teaches the Authorized Assistant course and provides tutorials for those preparing to write their Pesticide Applicator or Commercial Dispenser exam.

Wanting to become more involved with the PVMA Lisa joined the seminar committee in the fall of 2019. She assisted with finding speakers and was a presenter herself at the PVMA 2020 Spring Seminar. She was also elected to the Board of Directors at the AGM. Lisa is the new Director in charge of the Editorial Committee.

When not teaching or spraying, Lisa spends time with her horses and family in the Carstairs area.



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# PVMA SPRING SEMINAR 2020

- BY VAL EICHELT, PVMA OFFICE MANAGER

For this year's spring seminar, the PVMA office staff became more involved with the booking of speakers and final planning. In order for us to lineup several knowledgeable speakers we needed to make a slight adjustment to our meeting date. A date move resulted in a change of meeting room at the Red Deer Radisson, which turned out to be a good thing. The larger room was beneficial, as we had several exhibitors set up booths and we had a sizable number of attendees for both the Seminar and Annual General Meeting. Attendees earned applicator credits in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and BC, as well as ISA credits for all 4 sessions.

After a short welcome, we started the day with our first speaker, Vivianne Servant, who did a presentation on Agricultural Health Study. After a short coffee break Vivianne returned to the podium to talk about the Benefits of Notification. Vivianne has a science degree and teaching certificate in Adult and continuing Education and holds both an applicator & Pesticide applicator trainer certificate. She recently retired from Alberta Environment and Parks after several years as an inspector, investigator, Pesticide Certification Specialist and pesticide subject matter expert, so she has a wealth of knowledge and experience to share.

After enjoying a delicious buffet lunch, we moved into our Annual General Meeting. Updates were provided on the finances, as well as the work being done at the board level and within the committees of the PVMA. An election was held and PVMA welcomed 2 new board members, Holly Moffet and Lisa Rybchuk. Brandon Tupper was recognized for his long service on the PVMA Board and in his role as President for the majority of them. Brandon will be taking a break from the board, but he will continue to be involved at the committee level. Candice Manshreck was also thanked for her years of service as she also takes a break.

The afternoon sessions began with a presentation on Migratory Birds. Theo Charette, along with Samatha McKay co-presented training on the importance of conducting bird nest sweeps and how. Theo is a Biologist & co-founder of CPP Environmental, and Samantha is an instructor at Lakeland college and recently joined CPP as a team lead.

Our final presenter of the day was Lisa Rybchuk. Lisa runs her own vegetation control and safety training business, under Woodchuk Enterprises Ltd. She is a National Construction Safety Officer and certified instructor of multiple safety courses, including First Aid. Lisa provided valuable information on First Aid for Pesticide Exposure.

There were opportunities throughout the day for attendees to browse the Exhibitor booths and gather information and advice. We would like to thank all our exhibitors: Univar Environmental, Corteva Agriscience, AdvantageVM, Wright Tree Service, Arborist Supply, Bayer Crop Science and STOPPED.

Thank you to Candice Manshreck for lining up the venue. Thank you to Lisa Rybchuk for her help with finding presenters, as well as both Lisa and Holly Moffet for introducing our speakers at the seminar. Thank you to the staff at the Red Deer Radisson who were excellent to work with and so accommodating to the changes. Thank you to my administrative assistant, Nicole, for all her help with registrations, name tags, set up and take down. Thank you to all those who attended the seminar, we hope you found the information beneficial, the venue comfortable and the food tasty. Thanks for the feedback provided by way of the survey. Your feedback helps us know if we are meeting your needs and expectations and helps us plan informative future events.

Lastly, I would like to thank our sponsors. It is with your support that PVMA can offer educational opportunities like these for vegetation management professionals.



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## Vegetative Filter Strips

Vegetative filter strips are a tool to protect surface waters from pesticide runoff. Learn about the construction, maintenance and use of vegetative filter strips, and the difference between a vegetative filter strip and spray buffer zones.

### Vegetative Filter Strips vs. Spray Buffer Zones

A vegetative filter strip and a spray buffer zone are different ways to protect the environment. However, they are complimentary to one another and can be used together to protect non-target habitats.

#### Vegetative Filter Strips

A vegetative filter strip is a permanently vegetated strip of land. It sits between an agricultural field and downslope surface waters. Vegetative filter strips reduce the amount of pesticide entering surface waters from runoff by slowing runoff water and filtering out pesticides carried with the runoff. Certain pesticide labels will require a vegetative filter strip, other labels will recommend a vegetative filter strip as a best management practice. Read the label for specific instructions on vegetative filter strips.

#### Spray Buffer Zones

Spray buffer zones are required at the time of application between the area being treated and the closest downwind edge of a sensitive aquatic or terrestrial habitat. Spray buffer zones reduce the amount of spray drift that enters non-target habitats. The size of the spray buffer zone depends on the product used and the crop. Read the pesticide label for the specific spray buffer zone size.

***Always read the pesticide label before handling.***

### Construction and Maintenance of Vegetative Filter Strips

#### Vegetative Filter Strip Construction

- A vegetative filter strip is constructed along the downslope edge of an agricultural field where it meets a surface water body.
- It must be at least 10 m wide from edge of field to the surface water body (see diagram on back).
- It must be composed of grasses, but may also contain other vegetation (shrubs, trees, etc.).
- Vegetation should be:
  - perennial
  - long-lived
  - hardy
  - stiff stemmed
  - deep rooted
  - native (when possible).



#### Vegetative Filter Strip Maintenance

- The strip should be mowed occasionally, with grass being at least 15 cm high to maintain effectiveness.
- Avoid soil compaction, do not drive heavy machinery over strip.
- The filter strip should be checked regularly for bare spots, especially after heavy rainfall, irrigation and snowmelt. Damaged areas should be repaired.
- Built up soil should be removed from the strip.

#### For more information

**Environmental Risk Mitigation:** <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/consumer-product-safety/pesticides-pest-management/growers-commercial-users/environmental-risk-mitigation.html>.

OR search for **PMRA pesticide environmental risk mitigation** using your preferred search engine.





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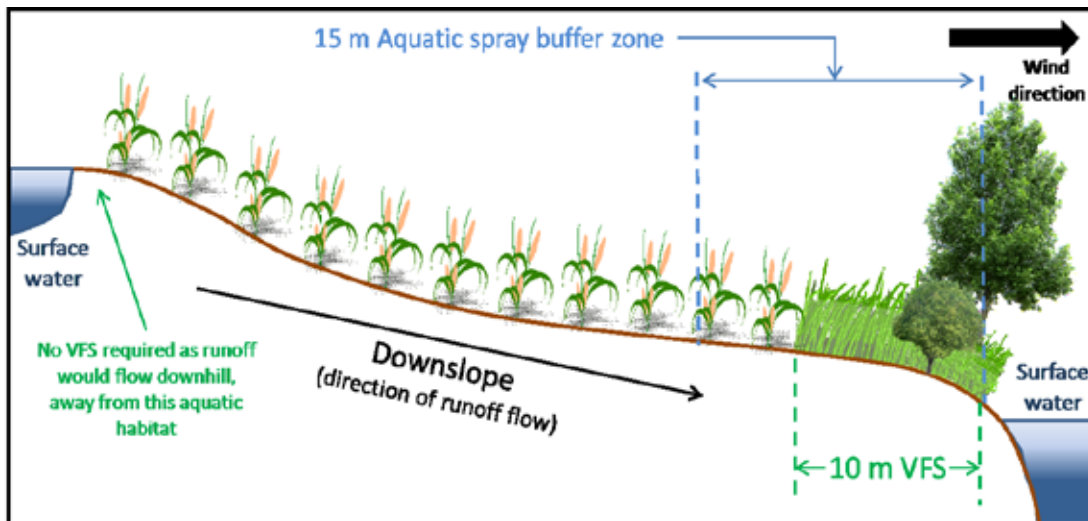
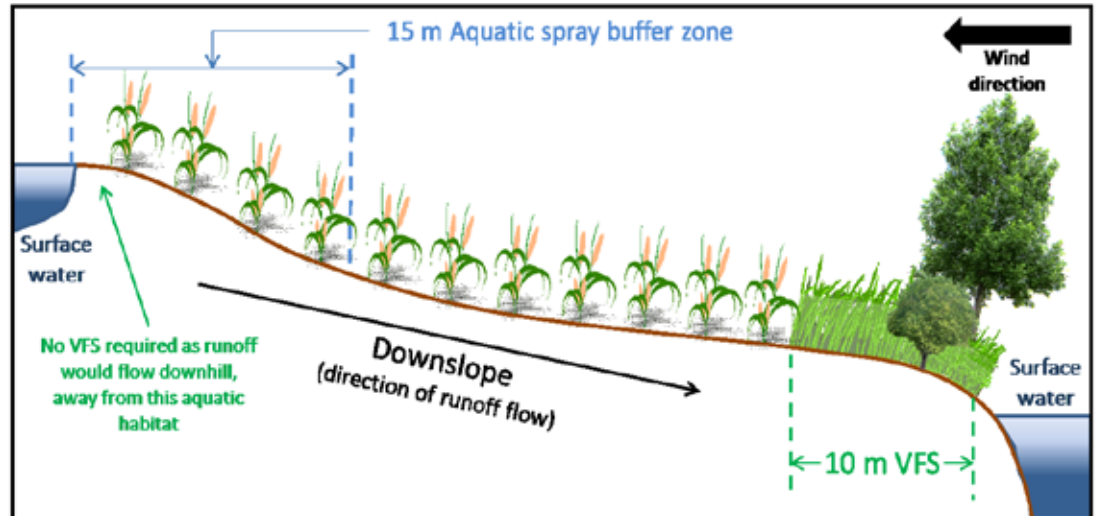
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## Examples of Vegetative Filter Strip and Spray Buffer Zone Use

In these examples, it is assumed that the pesticide being applied requires a spray buffer zone of 15 m to protect sensitive aquatic habitats and a mandatory vegetative filter strip. The spray buffer zone is only required at the time of application between the area being treated and the closest downwind edge of a sensitive habitat.

**Diagram 1** – wind direction is blowing to the left:

- A 15m aquatic spray buffer zone is at the top of the hill, protecting the aquatic habitat to the left of the field.
- A spray buffer zone would not be required on the right hand side as the wind is blowing to the left.
- A 10 m wide vegetative filter strip is needed on the downslope edge of the field next to the water body.



**Diagram 2** – the wind direction is blowing to the right:

- A 15 m aquatic spray buffer zone is on the right hand side, protecting the aquatic habitat to the right of the field.
- A 10 m vegetative filter strip is needed on the downslope edge of the field next to the water body.
- In this example, as the 10m vegetative filter strip is within the 15m aquatic spray buffer zone, only 5m of the crop would need to be left unsprayed to comply with the requirement for a 15 m spray buffer zone.

The current PMRA recommendation is that terrestrial buffer zones do not apply to vegetated filter strips unless there is a pre-existing sensitive terrestrial habitat within them. However, care must be taken when applying herbicides to adjacent fields.

To Find the Most Current Labels: <http://pr-rp.hc-sc.gc.ca/lr-re/index-eng.php>

OR Search the words **PMRA Label Search** using you preferred search engine

Download the app: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/consumer-product-safety/pesticides-pest-management/registrants-applicants/tools/pesticide-label-search.html>

The **FREE Pesticide Labels App** is available for iOS, Android & the Amazon App Store for Blackberry or scan the QR code from your device.





## NOTICE TO ALL PVMA UTT-UTW CERTIFICATION HOLDERS, TRAINEES, EMPLOYERS & UTILITIES

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting health measures in place, including school closures, the UTT-UTW Certification and Re-certification courses to take place this Spring were cancelled.

Re-certification courses have been re-scheduled for November 2020.

UTT-UTW's expiring this year should contact Old's College to register as soon as possible.

Keep checking the [pvma.ca](http://pvma.ca) website for updates on possible full course dates in the Fall.

All UTT-UTW Certifications **expiring June 30, 2020** have been automatically **extended until December 31, 2020**. Confirmation of this extension is also posted on the [pvma.ca](http://pvma.ca) website



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Visit [PestWeb.ca](https://PestWeb.ca) or [Veseris.com](https://Veseris.com) to learn more.







## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### - CASINO COMMITTEE

PVMA has received this communication regarding our next casino, which was slated for the fourth quarter:

On March 17, the government of Alberta declared a public health emergency due to the COVID - 19 pandemic that resulted in various measures, including the closure of all casinos. Please note the following impacts on your casino event.

- The random draw to assign specific charitable casino dates for the fourth quarter (October 1 - December 31, 2020) will not proceed as scheduled. The fourth quarter draw is postponed until further notice.
- All charities currently slotted for casino events will be moved back to later dates in order to accommodate and reschedule charities with canceled casino events due to casino closures.
- Though casino events are disrupted, Alberta Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis (AGLC) will ensure that charities are rescheduled fairly when casinos open.
- When casinos re-open, it will take time for AGLC to reschedule all charities.
- Currently we do not know when casinos will re-open.
- We will provide specific details regarding the rescheduling of charitable casino events to charities when a plan is in place.
- AGLC is operating with minimal staff and responses to requests may take longer than usual.

AGLC have also relaxed some of the spending restrictions due to Covid-19, which will allow us to use gaming funds to cover more daily operation expenses during this leaner time.

*Laura Hammer – Director in Charge*

### - EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

On April 30, 2020, the Editorial Committee met 'virtually', as is the new norm. The brainstorming session provided many ideas for the upcoming Vegetation Manager issues. Not surprisingly, the need to address the Covid-19 crisis and the associated impacts to the industry was of utmost importance. It is a different world we are living in and early adoption of the heightened sanitation and safety protocols will go a long way to demonstrating social responsibility within the industry.

Of course, Covid-19 is not the only issue on people's minds, and we will continue to provide timely and informative articles on a wide variety of topics of interest to the PVMA members. As well, you will find lighter reading, such as profile articles to introduce you to some of the new Board members. Your input and suggestions are welcome any time of the year!

*Lisa Rybchuk, Director in Charge*

### - GOVT LIAISON COMMITTEE

Many of our membership will be looking at different options for their own Covid-19 policies and procedures.

Applicators licences are more difficult to acquire with the shutdown of our learning institutes. It is recommended that members contact Lakeland College for the most up to date information. If anyone requires an applicator exam, they can contact Lakeland to either schedule or be put on a wait list for the time when an exam will be made available.

Devon Smiegielski reported to me that the Province is offering the Alberta Reciprocity exam online. This will permit anyone who holds a valid certificate in another province or territory to receive an Alberta Certificate. Further to this, they are actively working along with Sask Polytech to see if we can get some of our essential services exams available. This is a cumbersome project and one she has been working on for the past four weeks. We ask patience of our applicators as we mindfully move to an online system, unfortunately this is not something that will happen immediately but is in the works.

A response came from the Pesticide Policy Specialist regarding the PVMA inquiries on The Environmental Code of Practice for Pesticide review was the following. 'Unfortunately, the Code amendments will not be processed in time for the summer 2020 season. We will continue to press forward for amendments this fall and have the proposed changes in the Code as soon as possible.'

Finally, I am on the review committee for the Canadian Pesticide Education Program – Industrial Vegetation Manual for a nationally standardized version of the course. I am to review and submit comments or changes by June 12th, 2020.

*Geoff Thompson – Director in Charge*

### - MARKETING COMMITTEE

I would like to welcome 2 new members to the Marketing Committee, Terry Sommerville and Orville McLean. I look forward to meeting with them both and working together to advance the areas of website, public relations & marketing for the PVMA.

*Aaron Foster, Director in Charge*

### - MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Most of our memberships have renewed for 2020, with the addition of some new members and some absent members returning this year. Membership numbers have remained steady over the past few years. We thank our members for their continued support..

*Laura Hammer – Director in Charge*

## - SAFETY COMMITTEE

### 2020, Our New Normal Became Dealing with Covid-19

Covid-19 has challenged us all to rethink how we conduct business and how we conduct effective meetings. For many of us we have had to learn how to protect our employee's health along with the public, and remain safe and productive;

We continue to make progress on a number of fronts, the safety committee is strong with a wide range of experience. With that being said we have had some members leaving the industry, we continue to keep our doors open to anyone who has the willingness to get involved.

We have many projects we have been involved in with and some are now rolled out for use by industry.

One project that we have been piloting is the "Hazard Identification for Utility Tree Trimmers". We want to make it into a pocket size flip chart for the UTT and UTW members. It helps the worker identify and make correct decisions for managing hazardous trees. What are they looking at? How should they deal with it? This would include using mechanical solutions as well as manual solutions. Worker exposure and safety is paramount to making the correct decision when considering the following. When to use ropes, how to use ropes and which knots to use and of course which are the recommended industry standard.

The safety committee has also been involved in the development of competency sheets for tree falling, climbing and bucket that have been put on the PVMA website that can be downloaded and used to help you determine your own programs strengths and weaknesses.

We have continued on this path developing competency sheets for other critical tasks within our industry such as brush saw operation and telescoping pole saw operation that will soon be added to the website and made available for our members for download.

The Safety Committee is a strong supporter of the Editorial Committee for the PVMA and continues to provide support to that committee with articles and industry relevant safety information to help our members. Competency Gap is the difference between the current competency level (CCL) of your employees and the required competency level (RCL).

- In other words, the disparity or difference between the existing abilities, skills and competencies of your employees and what are expected of them in achieving the objectives that you want them to achieve is the competency gap.
- "Competency" consists of the skills and knowledge required by employees to effectively perform their jobs or specific tasks assigned to them from time to time. It can include talent or natural skill.
- One other definition of 'competency' is that it is "the ability to do something successfully or efficiently".
- An organization needs information on employees' competencies in order to improve the quality of human resource training and development programs.

Most important is that the worker must be able to identify when they are working out-side of their level of experience.

If you have any ideas or if you want to join our committee, please contact:

**Bob Gordon** [bgordon@asplundh.com](mailto:bgordon@asplundh.com) – Committee Chairman

## - SEMINAR COMMITTEE

Save the date: The 2020 Fall PVMA Seminar will be held on October 21st at the Radisson Hotel in Red Deer. In an effort to deliver additional value to our members, the PVMA will be using gaming funds to cover all fees and registration costs associated with the fall conference, with the exception of a small fee to cover lunch. We hope this will make the seminar accessible to as many members and industry partners as possible. The committee is actively evaluating potential speakers for the event and will provide more details regarding speakers and credits closer to. Should concerns related to second wave COVID-19 restrictions arise, we may need to re-evaluate these plans. That said, in the event we are required to cancel the in-person event, the committee plans to host the seminar virtually. The Spring 2021 Conference is also on the horizon! The event will again take place at The River Cree Resort and Casino, and will run from March 2nd through March 4th. If you are interested in volunteering/assisting with spring conference planning, the committee can use your help! Contact myself (Holly Moffet) if you would like to discuss volunteer opportunities. Looking forward to seeing you all in the fall.

**Holly Moffet, Director in Charge**

## - UTT/UTW BOARD OF GOVERNORS

I hope that you and your family are safe and healthy during these difficult times. Due to Covid-19 the UTT/UTW certification course and the recertification courses were cancelled this spring. With the physical distancing rules and the cancellation of schools, we were no longer able to run any of the courses. We hope that, once the restrictions for schools and group gatherings are adjusted, we will be able to schedule a new UTT/UTW course later this year. Those working towards a certification are encouraged to keep logging hours and completing proficiencies which will be counted towards your certification once a course can be completed. Keep checking the PVMA website for any updates on course dates.

For those looking for the recertification course, we will be running fall sessions. Currently course dates are Nov 17-18 and Nov 19-20. We are in the process of making this course fully online. This will make the recertification course more compliant with our current physical distancing rules. The online course should be ready for the Fall of 2020. All those with UTT or UTW certifications expiring June 30th of this year will have their certifications automatically extended until December 31, 2020. If you have any questions, please contact the PVMA office.

**Jason McRobert – Director in Charge**

# ALBERTA DUTCH ELM DISEASE AWARENESS WEEK: JUNE 22- JUNE 28

- BY JANET FEDDES-CALPAS - STOPPED EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dutch Elm Disease Awareness Week is recognized annually throughout the province of Alberta from June 22- 28. The intent is to raise awareness on how destructive Dutch elm disease (DED) can be, the importance of elm trees to our communities and landscapes, and that DED can be prevented. The Society to Prevent Dutch Elm Disease (STOPPED) is asking for your assistance to save our beautiful elm trees from this deadly disease and help protect this valuable resource.

At present, Alberta has the largest DED-free American elm stand in the world. However its borders are being pressed from two sides by Saskatchewan and Montana, both of which are battling the disease. Once an elm is infected with DED there is no cure and it must be removed and destroyed immediately.

DED is caused by a fungus that clogs the elm tree's water conducting system, causing the tree to die. The fungus is primarily spread from one elm tree to another by three species of beetles, the smaller European, the native and the banded elm bark beetle. The beetles are attracted to weak and dying trees, which serve as breeding sites for the beetles. Once the beetles have pupated and turned into adults they leave the brood gallery and fly to healthy elms to feed, thus transporting the fungus on their bodies from one tree to the next. Using traps and lures, monitoring for the beetles is done annually in municipalities and camp grounds throughout Alberta by STOPPED. The smaller European elm bark beetles have been found throughout the province in low numbers since 1996. In recent years the banded elm bark beetle has been found, first in the City of Medicine Hat in high numbers and now in more municipalities in southern Alberta.

Leaves on a DED-infected elm will wilt or droop, curl and become brown. This appears in mid-June to mid-July. Leaves on trees infected later in the season usually turn yellow and drop prematurely. Leaf symptoms are accompanied by brown staining under the bark. All DED suspect elms must be tested in a lab. A confirmed DED tree must be removed and disposed of properly immediately to prevent further spread.

During DED Awareness Week, please take a moment and find out how you can help save our elms.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Be aware of the Provincial elm pruning ban between April 1 and September 30. The beetles are most active at this time and can be attracted to the scent of fresh tree cuts, possibly infecting a healthy elm.
- Keep your elm trees healthy, and vigorous.
- Water elms well from April to mid-August. To allow the tree to harden off for the winter, watering should be stopped mid-August followed by a good soaking or two before freeze-up.
- Remove dead elm branches as they can provide beetle habitat only between October 1 and March 31st.
- Dispose of all elm wood immediately by burning, burying or chipping.
- Report all suspect trees to the DED Hotline at 1-877-837-ELMS.

## WHAT YOU SHOULDN'T DO!

- Do not transport or store elm firewood at any time!
- Do not transport elm firewood into Alberta! Firewood is confiscated at all the Alberta-Montana border crossings.
- Do not prune elms between April 1 to September 30.

DED and the beetles are declared pests under the AB Agricultural Pests Act and these prevention measures are enforceable under this act.

To report a DED suspect elm tree or for more information, call the STOPPED hotline at 1-877-837-ELMS or check out the web site at [www.stopped.org](http://www.stopped.org).

Our elms are a treasure that we cannot afford to lose. We must stay vigilant to keep our elms healthy.

## Keep Alberta DED free

- Under the Alberta *Agricultural Pests Act (APA)* "Pest and Nuisance Control Regulation (PNCR)" the Dutch Elm Disease (DED) pathogens, smaller European elm bark beetle, and the native elm bark beetle are named declared pests.
- DED prevention/control measures for Alberta are enforceable under the APA and are found on the STOPPED website.
- Elm trees from a DED infected province cannot be shipped into Alberta.
- Elm Pruning Ban is April 1 -September 30 annually.

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