

RVDA OF ALBERTA E-NEWS

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2021 Monthly E-News

Welcome to the new revised format of the RVDA of Alberta's Monthly newsletter. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact [Karen Renaud](#) or call (780) 455-8562.

Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and tweet events and pictures, as we will retweet and share posts to support our members.

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Here's What's Happening

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Industry Events Updates

Small & Medium Enterprise Relaunch Grant - SMERG

Our association has been involved in several zoom meetings and webinars regarding the tourism industry and we wrote to the Premier and Minister Doug Schweitzer of Jobs, Innovation & Economy to recommend the government commit to enhancing the SMERG to include dedicated tourism and hospitality stream that doubles the grant from \$20,000 to \$40,000 and increases the eligibility threshold from 15% to no less than 30% of a business's pre-COVID-19 monthly revenue. Below is the response letter from Minister Schweitzer.



March 4, 2021

AR 81216

Dan Merkowsky

Dear Dan Merkowsky,

Premier Jason Kenney and I thank you for your email regarding the expansion of the Small and Medium Enterprise Relaunch Grant (SMERG). As the Minister of Jobs, Economy and Innovation, I appreciate this opportunity to respond on behalf of the Government of Alberta.

While many sectors of Alberta's economy have been challenged by ongoing public health recommendations, the tourism industry has been hit exceptionally hard. I understand that this is a difficult time, especially for small and medium-sized businesses in the tourism and hospitality sector.

Thank you for your recommendation to create a dedicated tourism and hospitality stream within SMERG. We appreciate the Recreational Vehicle Dealers Association's commitment to strengthening Alberta's tourism industry.

On February 17, 2021, Alberta's government announced the new Enhanced COVID-19 Business Benefit. Businesses that can demonstrate a revenue reduction of 60 per cent or more will be eligible to receive 15 per cent of their monthly revenue, up to a maximum of \$10,000. The challenges associated with COVID-19 are ongoing, and this additional payment will provide even more immediate relief to Alberta's small businesses. Payments under the Enhanced COVID-19 Business Benefit will be available in April 2021 following the conclusion of the Small and Medium Enterprise Relaunch Grant program. Detailed information on program guidelines will be available closer to the launch date in April. For updates, please follow www.alberta.ca/biz-connect.aspx.

Thank you again for taking the time to share your thoughts, I appreciate hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Classification: Public

Doug Schweitzer, Q.C.
Minister of Jobs, Economy and
Innovation

cc: Honourable Jason Kenney
Premier of Alberta



Bill 47: Another Safety Law for Alberta

Late last year the Alberta government passed Bill 47 which will create a completely new occupational safety act, the 2nd rewrite in under three years. So, what will change and how will it affect most Alberta businesses? We had a look at Bill 47 and created a summary of key changes that may affect our clients when the changes come into force on Sept 1, 2021:

1. **Key changes to Employer obligations:** while the Act still holds employers responsible for all people on their sites, the new Act clarifies that this obligation now applies only to hazards that are identifiable and controllable.
2. **Changes to Safety Committees:** this is an area of significant change. While employer with 20 or more workers on site will still require a committee and the committee still requires at least 50% worker participation, much of the formality of this process has been removed and will be more flexible:
 - i. Size of the committee (likely to be a minimum only)
 - ii. Duties: will be limited to oversight of hazard assessment, inspections and investigations (not doing it all themselves)
 - iii. Removal of required training (and the need to pay for it)
3. **Changes to Stop Work Orders:** the obligation to pay workers while a site has been closed to deal with a Stop Work Order has been removed.
4. **Worker Obligations:** more emphasis has been placed on the worker to participate in training and to refuse work that they have not been trained for.
5. **Work Refusals:** this process has been refined and emphasis has been placed on the requirement for there to be an “undue hazard” or simply put: something that is very dangerous and outside normal expectations for the job.

There are also several proposed changes to the WCB regulations in Alberta that will affect employer premiums in the next few years:

- Reinstatement of an earning cap for injured workers – savings of \$33 Million in 2021
- Reducing presumption of psychological injury coverage to emergency personnel only (others must be diagnosed to be covered) – estimated savings of \$230 Million over the next 3 years
- Decoupling the cost of living index from the Alberta Consumer Index, will now be calculated by WCB – estimated savings of \$240 Million in future liability

If you are interested to discuss how these changes may affect your business, you can contact us at info@safe2day.ca or find more information at www.safe2day.ca.

Canadian Association of Exposition Management - Trade Show Industry

The CAEM is trying to garner support from many MP's to get their support in regards to financially supporting the Trade Show industry and facilities and all the employees affected by COVID closures.

MP Uppal was very receptive to our concerns and our request of his support.

The CAEM and the RVDA of Alberta will be reaching out to many local MP's to get their support to allow trade shows to open up sooner versus later.

Education & Training



SAIT – Certified RV Technician Program

Period 1 class is currently in session with 24 students. To allow for more distancing for the technicians, they have split the shop portion of class in half. Travel bursaries were issued the week of March 8th to those technicians qualifying who just completed Period 2. Going forward, the textbooks have been changed and are now offered as Level 1 which consists of 7 books for Period 1 and Level 2 with another 7 books that are good for Periods 2 & 3. The new Level 2 textbooks will not be available until September and your technicians will be able to order them through our office by contacting karen@rvda-alberta.org or calling 780-455-8562.

For information on the technician program visit <https://tradesecrets.alberta.ca/MyTradesecrets/> and for employer and apprenticeship financial assistance programs [Click Here.](#)



Stephen Hockridge (SAIT instructor) and Dan Merkowsky (EVP) presenting gift cards.

The RVDA of Alberta is recognized by SAIT as one of the most supportive industries for their technicians, than any other trade that attends SAIT.



L -R – Stephen Hockridge, Dan Merkowsky, Warren Thunstrom



SAIT – Pre-employment Program

On March 5th, Dan Merkowsky had a meeting with Jason Purdy, Academic Chair for SAIT and a few other members who have a passion for education and helping individuals gather more understanding of specific industries. SAIT is looking to implement a new program commencing in the fall for individuals who may want to take a sampling of education to determine if they want to follow a specific apprenticeship after. The cost of this program will be fully paid by the individuals who register. Our Association is hoping this program will spark interest for more individuals to take the RV Technician apprenticeship program. More details of this program will be available closer to the fall.

Industry Network Meetings Letter from Minister of Advanced Education – Demetrios Nicolaidis

Dan Merkowski sent a letter to the Continuing Education Minister expressing our displeasure with the support our industry has received from Alberta Industry and Training. He also told him how disappointed we were that there has not been a LAC or PAC meeting for as long as three years.

We have been contacted by the AIT contacts since telling us that we did not have enough people available for the LAC and PAC committees (which was news to us). Since then, we have reached out to our membership and have filled all but two of the positions so we will see how quick they are to setting up a meeting for both committees.

Below is a reply from the Minister of Advanced Education Demetrios Nicolaidis regarding our concerns.

Thank you for your letter sharing concerns about a lack of opportunity for the recreation vehicle repair industry to participate in local and provincial apprenticeship committees. I know that your industry has been exemplary in its support for apprenticeship in the past, and I appreciate the opportunity to respond.

I have inquired with department staff about your local and provincial apprenticeship committees. Staff confirmed that personnel changes and restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic have created challenges for your committees. I have asked John Brosda, Director of Industry Programs and Standards, Apprenticeship and Industry Training, Advanced Education, to contact you directly to explore options for overcoming these challenges and rebuilding your role in the industry network. If you would like to contact Mr. Brosda, please email him at john.brosda@gov.ab.ca.

I would also like to take the opportunity to make sure you are aware of the Skills for Jobs Task Force. Appointed in September 2019, the task force recently delivered its final report and recommendations on ways to address Alberta's skill gaps, strengthen and improve apprenticeship education, and modernize skilled trades. The final report is posted at <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/skills-for-jobs-task-force-final-report>. The Alberta government is currently reviewing the report and exploring opportunities to implement recommendations.

Thank you again for writing and for sharing your concerns.



NTP STAG BURSARY PROGRAM

Application is open for the 2020-2021 NTP-Stag Canada RV Industry Personnel Bursary Program.

NTP-Stag Canada has been a strong supporter of and a staunch proponent of continuing education in the Canadian RV Industry. With their gracious support, RVDA of Canada is able to offer two bursary programs in 2021 to RV Service Technicians and RV Fixed Operations Personnel.

A total of \$12,500 will be awarded to eligible technicians and fixed operations personnel such as service writers, service advisors, and parts and accessories sales staff. RVDA of Canada's national Education and HR Committee is extremely pleased to be able to continue to offer these bursary programs to encourage continuing education and professionalization in the RV industry.

RV Service Technicians and Fixed Operations Personnel that have successfully completed training between August 1, 2020 and May 31, 2021 are eligible to apply for the bursaries. For the RV service technician, seven bursaries valued at \$1,000 and one bursary valued at \$1,500 are available. For the RV fixed operations personnel, eight bursaries valued at \$500 are available.

Click here for more information on the [RV Technician Bursary](#) application and the [Fixed Operations Personnel Bursary](#) application.

RV Learning Weekend

The Board of Director's at their March meeting made the decision to cancel RV Learning Weekend for 2021, as gatherings are it was unknown as to when restrictions will ease off to allow gathering large enough to make the event feasible. They felt it was best to cancel and bring all RVing enthusiasts a full-scale event in 2022.



Association News

Member Grievance/Complaint Policy

In case you missed the email blast earlier in March, the Association has now implemented the new Member Grievance/Complaint Policy. The policy has been emailed to all members. If you have any questions, please contact our office.

2021 Campground Grant Program

Applications for the 2021 Campground Grant are now open. Any campground member is eligible to apply; however, preference for funding will be given to those who are expanding with more sites or upgrading their services (i.e. water/sewer/power). Deadline for applications is **Friday, May 14, 2021**. The Committee will review the applications received shortly after and the committee will put their recommendation forward to the board at their June meeting. A reminder email was sent to the Campground members on April 1st.

Stolen RV Report

If your dealership was a victim of a stolen RV, RVDA of Canada and RVDA of Alberta like to get this information out to the members as soon as possible in case the perpetrator(s) are trying to sell/trade the unit or have it serviced. A copy of the 2020 Stolen RV's List will be sent to our members to use in their offices at their discretion monthly. If you have become a victim of theft and require a copy of the Stolen RV Report Form, please contact [Karen Renaud](#) or call (780) 455-8562/1-888-858-8787 as soon as possible. All members must fill out the form, so we have the correct information to notify the members and RVDA of Canada.



iA Dealer Services

iA Dealers Services is our Association's largest endorsing partner and Alberta also receives the highest levels of endorsement from iA Dealer Services Canada wide. Did you know that iA Dealer Services provides innovative products and RV specific marketing materials to the Association's member and RVDA of Canada's members as a benefit? For more information on how iA Dealer Services can assist your business, contact Chase Skakun at chase.skakun@ia.ca or by phone at 403-435-1833.

Key tips to prevent vehicle theft in 2021

Submitted by **Reza Kamrani, Account Representative, Associations** | www.federated.ca

As a key mode of transportation, no one wants their car to be stolen. Unfortunately, vehicle theft is still a prevalent issue. In fact, every year the Insurance Bureau of Canada (IBC), releases a [top 10 stolen vehicles list](#), highlighting which vehicles were targeted that year.

That's why, whether you're thinking about buying a new vehicle or keeping your current one, you may want to consider what steps you can take to prevent theft, and what you can do to ensure your vehicle is easily recovered should it be stolen.

Key vehicle theft prevention tips:

1. Don't leave your vehicle unattended while it's running.
2. Don't give thieves a reason to steal your vehicle by leaving valuables or spare change in your cup holder. If you must leave valuables in your vehicle, put them in the trunk or glove compartment.
3. Don't leave your keys in the ignition or your car's key fob behind when parked.
4. Don't leave spare keys in the glove-box or another compartment. It might be convenient, but it's not worth the inconvenience of having your vehicle stolen.
5. Put on a steering wheel lock. Time is a factor for thieves; if it's going to take them a little longer to steal your vehicle, it may deter them.
6. Park your vehicle in a garage.
7. Park in well-lit places. If possible, try to park in a secured lot with an attendant or security cameras.
8. Roll up the windows and make sure all doors are locked.
9. Arm your vehicle with a security system or buy a vehicle with a security system.
10. Make it harder for thieves to tow away your vehicle by using your emergency brake and turning your wheels to the side.
11. Install outdoor security cameras if you park outside.
12. Install an ignition kill switch if your vehicle doesn't have a mandatory immobilizer.

13. Use a brake lock.
14. Check to see if your vehicle is one often targeted by thieves and if so, take extra steps to protect it.

Ways you can help with vehicle theft recovery:

If your vehicle ever does get stolen the recovery process may be made easier if you've taken some key preventative steps:

1. Have your vehicle identification number (VIN) etched onto your windows. It will be more work for a thief to sell car parts and remove etchings.
2. Use GPS technology to track your vehicle if it does get stolen.
3. Leave a few business cards in your vehicle. It will help police identify who the vehicle belongs to or verify that you're the owner.

What to do after a vehicle theft:

1. Report the theft to the police. The sooner you report the theft, the higher the odds of it being recovered. They'll ask you for details like:
 - The year, make, colour and model of your vehicle
 - License number
 - Vehicle identification number (VIN)
 - Serial numbers of special equipment, if applicable
 - Special markings, like previous damage, dents, and scratches
2. Take note of the police file number. When you make a claim, your insurer will ask for it.
3. Report your claim.
4. Arrange for alternative transportation.
5. Wait for an adjuster to get in touch with you.
6. Pay the deductible. Insurance covers the remaining cost of repairs.

To further ensure your car is protected, make sure your business vehicle is covered with a [commercial auto insurance](#) policy. [Get a quote](#) today or learn more about [why you may need commercial auto insurance](#).

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