

For Immediate Release:
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PROVINCIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND SOUR GAS RELEASES REPORT: EVALUATION OF EUB'S IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS TO APRIL 2003

(Calgary, Alberta, July 3, 2003) The Advisory Committee on Public Safety and Sour Gas today released its report entitled *Evaluation of EUB's Implementation Progress to April 2003*.

The Alberta Energy and Utilities Board (EUB) formed the *Advisory Committee on Public Safety and Sour Gas* (the Advisory Committee) in January 2000 to review the regulatory system for sour gas as it relates to public health and safety. The Advisory Committee includes representation from all major stakeholders. During its review, the Advisory Committee conducted an extensive outreach program and received considerable input from persons living in sour gas areas or involved with sour gas in some other manner.

In December 2000, the Advisory Committee issued a report entitled *Findings and Recommendations* that contained 87 detailed recommendations directed toward improving the sour gas regulatory system, and reducing the impacts of sour gas on public health and safety. The EUB immediately allocated resources to implement all 87 recommendations, and committed to publicly report the implementation progress, each calendar year quarter, until all of the recommendations were addressed. The Advisory Committee also committed to meet on an annual basis to review the progress made on the recommendations.

On June 4, 2003, the Advisory Committee met to discuss implementation progress following publication of the EUB's second *Annual Progress Report* (issued April 2003). The Advisory Committee's subsequent observations and comments/recommendations to the EUB are contained in a report titled *Advisory Committee on Public Safety and Sour Gas Evaluation of EUB's Implementation Progress to April 2003*. This report, issued June 30, 2003, is available on the EUB's website at www.eub.gov.ab.ca.

Upon review of the EUB's implementation progress to date, Advisory Committee Chair Gerry DeSorcy reported that committee members were very pleased with the overall implementation progress. He commented – "Committee discussion on the overall implementation progress was extremely positive. Committee members acknowledged the huge challenge placed before the EUB and commended the EUB on its commensurate dedication to the task of implementation." Included in the many noteworthy achievements raised by Advisory Committee members were improvements in the number of new resources available to the public on the hearing process, the positive steps taken by the EUB in building Aboriginal relationships and the variety of communication tools developed for helping Albertans understand sour gas and the role of the EUB.

Notwithstanding, the Advisory Committee encourages the EUB to identify and resolve some delays in the current implementation program. Most noticeable are delays in the Health Effects area and in some areas where the recommendation scope, intended by the Advisory Committee, has been broadened to include non-sour gas issues. These recommendations and others are discussed in detail in the Advisory Committee's

Evaluation of EUB's Implementation Progress to April 2003 report. Additional topics discussed in the report include:

- Improvement in the area of performance measures,
- Increased attention in setting completion and target dates for implementation work, and
- Continuing the high priority attention to advancing work on recommendation 5, improving coordination between subsurface and surface planning and development.

In addition, the Advisory Committee suggested that the EUB consider substituting a semi-annual report for the present quarterly reports on implementation progress. As conceived, this new mid-year report would have more detail than the current quarterlies do.

The Advisory Committee observes that a crucial time in the implementation scheme has been reached with a large amount of implementation work underway. Therefore the Advisory Committee has agreed to meet again later this year, to evaluate the implementation progress and publish the results, following publication of either the EUB's second quarterly progress report or the newly recommended semi-annual report. This mid-year meeting will be in addition to the Advisory Committee's annual meeting. During the intervening time, Advisory Committee members will continue individually to monitor the implementation progress through direct stakeholder involvement in many of the implementation tasks underway and by remaining in contact with the EUB on matters as they arise. The Advisory Committee continues to be available for involvement in the implementation work of any of the recommendations at the request of the EUB or the public.

The Advisory Committee's *Evaluation of EUB's Implementation Progress to April 2003* report is available on the Advisory Committee's website at <http://www.publicsafetyandsourgas.org>, or by contacting the Advisory Committee at:

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For further information, please contact the Advisory's Committee's Chairman Gerry DeSorcy by e-mail at desorcyg@acncanada.net.

The EUB's *Annual Progress Report*, and the Advisory Committee's *Findings and Recommendations Final Report* are both available at the EUB's Calgary Office and Field Centers, and on the EUB website at www.eub.gov.ab.ca.