

Check out What's happening in Saskatoon Silver Springs and throughout the Province!



## Provincial Point of View

**January 7, 2015**

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!**



**TO EVERYONE CELEBRATING UKRAINIAN CHRISTMAS**



<u>Ukrainian cyrillic</u>	<u>Ukrainian transliterated</u>	<u>English translation</u>
1. Веселих Свят	1. Veselykh	1. Happy
2. Христос Родився	Sviat	Holidays
3. Щасливого нового року	2. Khrystos	2. Christ is born
4. Свята вечеря	Rodyvsia	3. Happy New Year
5. коляда	3. Shchaslyvoho novoho roku	4. Holy Supper (Christmas Eve)
	4. Sviata Vecheria	5. Christmas carol
	5. koliada	

## **HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2014**

**A BALANCED BUDGET**

**NO TAX INCREASES**

**CONTROLLED SPENDING**

**INVESTMENT IN PEOPLE**

**INVESTMENT IN INFRASTRUCTURE**

Not long ago, Saskatchewan's population was in decline with many of our young people leaving the province to find work and raise families elsewhere. Today, thanks to the hard work and determination of our people, Saskatchewan is strong and has a growing population that's closing in on 1,130,000 - steady growth of nearly 20,000 people per year since 2007.

The steady growth we're experiencing creates both opportunities and

challenges. Despite recent economic volatility in the price of oil, our government remains on track to deliver another balanced budget. This is in part thanks to a diverse economy and sound fiscal management.

Saskatchewan still enjoys the strongest rate of job creation in the country – three times the national average, and we have enjoyed the country's lowest unemployment rate for 24 straight months. A growing population and volatility will present us with challenges, however a robust, diverse economy, continued tax relief for families, and ongoing investments in infrastructure will help us rise to meet these challenges and keep Saskatchewan strong and moving forward.

The Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee Program is an important part of a strong and growing Saskatchewan. Our province recently received a boost in the number of nominations, bringing our 2014 nomination cap to 4,818 – a 218 per cent increase since 2007. This reflects both our government's commitment to welcoming newcomers to Saskatchewan as well as the federal government's recognition of the labour force shortage we face now and in the future. It also reflects the fact that, once the place to be from, Saskatchewan is now the place to be.

We have a strong working relationship with the Government of Canada and we thank them for responding to our needs by increasing allocations and providing more opportunities for immigrants and their families to live, work and invest in our growing province. The nomination cap for 2015 will be increased to 5,500 – a jump of 15 per cent over this year.

There is no doubt that Saskatchewan people are Saskatchewan's greatest strength. When I think of the values that built this province, I think of neighbours helping neighbours and even strangers helping strangers, particularly in a time of need. These acts of kindness are part of who we are and are among the many things that make us proud to be from Saskatchewan.

## **ECONOMIC PROGRESS IN 2014**

## RECORD-BREAKING 2014



**1,129,899**

Record population as of October 2014



**24 consecutive months**

Lowest unemployment rate in Canada

Dec. 2012-Nov. 2014



**15,300 more people working**

2.8% job growth - highest in Canada!

Nov. 2014 over Nov. 2013



**\$14 billion** in manufacturing shipments

Up 5.9% over the same period last year

Jan. 2014-Oct. 2014



**\$21.6 billion** record wholesale trade

Up 4% over the same period last year

Jan. 2014-Oct. 2014

As we begin a new year, we reflect on the economic progress of our province in 2014. Saskatchewan's economy will likely set records for population growth, jobs created, manufacturing sales and wholesale trade.

"There were major forces at work in 2014 that impacted economies all over the world," Economy Minister Bill Boyd said. "In spite of those pressures, several economic indicators surpassed 2013 levels as a result of our diversified and resilient economy."

Saskatchewan's population hit a record 1,129,899 on October 1, 2014, up 1.63 per cent over October 2013, which is the second highest growth rate among the provinces.

The unemployment rate in the province remained low at 3.4 per cent in November 2014. Saskatchewan has had the lowest unemployment rate among the provinces for 24 consecutive months. In the January-November period, Regina had the lowest unemployment rate (3.4 per cent) among major Canadian cities, while Saskatoon had

the second lowest rate (4.1 per cent).

Saskatchewan's job growth remains positive, with November 2014 recording 15,300 new jobs held when compared to November 2013, an increase of 2.8 per cent - more than triple the national average. This was the trend for the year with the first 11 months of 2014 recording an increase in employment of 10,500 people in the province, up 1.9 per cent over the same time period in 2013. Saskatchewan had the second fastest rate of job growth among the provinces.

“Job growth continued to be strong in 2014,” Minister responsible for Immigration, Jobs, Skills and Training Jeremy Harrison said. “We made significant investment into Adult Basic Education programming as well as training and apprenticeships to ensure our work force remains strong.”

Manufacturing sales totalled a record \$14.0 billion in the first 10 months of 2014, a 5.9 per cent increase over the same period last year. Wholesale trade totals for the first 10 months of 2014 were a record \$21.6 billion, up by 4.0 per cent over the first 10 months of 2013.

“Looking back at 2014, it was a fairly good year for Saskatchewan,” Boyd said. “As for 2015, forecasters predict the price of oil and our economy will bounce back – and we’ll return as one of the top economic performing provinces in Canada.”

[Economic Progress in 2014](#)

## **INDEXATION WILL SAVE SASKATCHEWAN**

### **PEOPLE \$10.6 MILLION IN 2015**

*Saskatchewan Has Highest Tax-Free Income Threshold in Canada for Family of Four*

The annual indexation of the provincial income tax system will save Saskatchewan people an estimated \$10.6 million in 2015.

“All Saskatchewan income tax brackets and tax credit amounts will go up 1.7 per cent in 2015, matching the national rate of inflation,” Finance Minister Ken Krawetz said. “Indexation helps protect Saskatchewan taxpayers from ‘bracket creep’ and is

part of our government's commitment to fairness and competitiveness in taxation."

Individual taxpayers now pay no Saskatchewan income tax on their first \$18,960 of income while a family of four pays no Saskatchewan income tax on their first \$49,155 of income — the highest tax-free income threshold for a family of four in Canada. A family of four with \$50,000 annual income has now seen their provincial income tax cut by more than 95 per cent since 2007 — from about \$2,300 in income tax to less than \$100 in income tax in 2015 -- a savings of more than \$2,200 a year.

"By the end of 2015, a family of four with \$50,000 income will have saved about \$19,000 through our government's various tax reductions," Krawetz said. "Overall, Saskatchewan residents have saved approximately \$490 million through lower personal income taxes."

Since 2008, about 112,000 low-income Saskatchewan residents have been removed from the tax rolls, and various measures to reduce personal income taxes in Saskatchewan have been introduced, including:

- Increasing personal, spousal and child exemption amounts and introducing a new Low Income Tax Credit in 2008;
- Introducing a new Active Families Benefit of \$150 per child for cultural and sports activities in 2009;
- Raising personal, spousal and child exemption amounts again in 2011; and
- Introducing a new First-Time Homebuyers' Tax Credit in 2012 as well as expanding the Active Families Benefit to include all children 17 and under (previously, it only covered ages 6 to 14).

When income tax savings are combined with new tax reduction programs introduced since 2007 (including the refundable Low-Income Tax Credit and the Active Families Benefit), a single person with \$25,000 annual income will benefit from \$888 in lower provincial tax in 2015 than in 2007. A family of four with \$50,000 combined income will see tax savings of \$2,894 and a family of four with \$75,000 combined income will see tax savings of \$2,636, when comparing 2015 to 2007.

[Indexation Will Save Saskatchewan People \\$10.6 Million in 2015](#)

**GOVERNMENT INVESTS IN ALTERNATE FORMAT  
MATERIALS FOR SASKATCHEWAN STUDENTS**

**The Government of Saskatchewan has committed \$750,000 in funding over three years to the Saskatoon Public School Division to support the needs of students who require materials in alternate formats, such as Braille and large text resources.**

**This funding will allow the Saskatoon Public School Division to develop and distribute these materials across all Saskatchewan school divisions and provide school and school division staff with training to access these materials. In addition, it will support the operation of an alternate format resource centre that is also available to all school divisions.**

**“Our government is committed to meeting the needs of each and every student across the province and that means providing materials for students with visual impairments and other disabilities in a way they can use,” Education Minister Don Morgan said. “Students need to be able to access these materials to be engaged, successful and prepared for their future.”**

**“Saskatoon Public Schools works with vision teachers, Braillists and other professionals to ensure that all alternate format resources are curriculum-based,” Saskatoon Public Schools Superintendent of Education Donnalee Weinmaster said. “We produce and purchase alternate format resources that comply with national standards in order to meet the resource learning needs of students with a visual impairment.”**

**In 2013-14, there were a total of 180 students across Saskatchewan requiring alternate format materials.**

**[Government Invests in Alternate Format Materials For Saskatchewan Students](#)**

## **JUST THE LINKS**

- **December 30, 2014 - [Saskatchewan's Highway System – A Year in Review](#)**
- **December 31, 2014 - [New Legislation to Govern Informal Fundraising Efforts](#)**
- **December 31, 2014 - [Changes to Powers of Attorney Rules](#)**
- **January 2, 2015 - [Government Provides \\$1.5 Million in Charitable Gaming Grants](#)**
- **January 7, 2015 - [New Building Canada Fund Infrastructure Application Deadline Reminder](#)**

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

### **Enchanted Forest Holiday Light Tour Presented by BHP Billiton**

**Date:** November 21 - January 11

**Where:** Saskatoon Forestry Farm and Zoo

**When:** 5:30 pm to 11:30 pm

### **Swing With The Stars**

**Date:** January 24

**Where:** TCU Place

**When:** Cocktails 5:30 pm; Dinner 6:30 pm; Competition 7:30 pm

**Check website for information:** <http://swingsaskatoon.ca/>

### **EACCA Program Registration**

**Date:** January 7

**Where:** Dr. John G. Egnatoff School

**When:** 7:00 pm

## **THOUGHT OF THE DAY**

"We will open the book, its pages are blank. We are going to put words on them ourselves. The book is called Opportunity and its first chapter is New Year's Day"

Edith Lovejoy Pierce

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## **KEEP IN TOUCH**

I appreciate the many opportunities to make a positive difference in my constituency. Your phone calls, letters, and emails make a big difference in keeping me informed on the issues that matter to you.

If you would like me to recognize anyone or have your event mentioned in this newsletter, please don't hesitate to call or email me.

*"From a Provincial Point of View"* is a weekly message from Ken Cheveldayoff, MLA Saskatoon Silver Springs. Your opinions are important and your letters, emails, and phone calls on any issues relating to the provincial government are welcomed.



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