



# 2020 CANMORE PERFORMANCE REPORT





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**EPCOR Canmore**  
102B Bow Valley Trail  
Canmore, AB  
T1W 3B7





**EPCOR has been providing water and wastewater services to the Town of Canmore for 21 years.**

# ABOUT US

**EPCOR has been providing quality drinking water and essential wastewater services for more than one hundred years. We serve more than one million people in over 85 communities and industrial sites across Western Canada and the United States.**

Our full spectrum of services includes water and wastewater treatment, water distribution, wastewater collection, storm drainage, meter reading, customer billing and account management. We have a fixed-price, performance-based utility management agreement with the Town of Canmore to continue providing services until 2030. The Town sets the utility rates and retains ownership of the water works related assets on behalf of the citizens of Canmore.

This report is part of our commitment to accountability and transparency.

We are accountable to deliver service that meets key measures for Environment, Customer Care, Safety, Quality Assurance, Operational Excellence and Capital Programs.

## Committed to our Customers and Community

Before the onset of COVID-19, a resident called the wastewater treatment plant on a weekend about an overdue notice on their utility bill as they were concerned their service would be shut off. It was not clear from the conversation if the overdue notice pertained to the Town of Canmore water utility bill that EPCOR administers but as the resident seemed distressed, our site manager offered to help review the notice at the resident's home.

Once there, our site manager determined that the resident, a retiree, had missed payment on a utility bill and had accidentally paid another utility bill twice, none of which were water utility bills. The resident was not comfortable using online banking so our site manager drove downtown and found a financial institution that was open and arranged for the resident to pay the missed bill in person.

The site manager followed up later that evening to check in on the resident who was grateful to receive the extra assistance in resolving this matter.

# EPCOR AND COVID-19

**As the water and wastewater provider for the Town of Canmore and many communities across Canada, consideration of public health is central to the work we do. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, EPCOR activated our Emergency Coordination Centre and Emergency Operations Centres in all business units and regions to ensure the health and safety of our employees and customers and the continued delivery of reliable services.**

Some of the emergency response measures we implemented in 2020 that are still in effect include:

- Development of the EPCOR COVID Health Outlook app as part of our daily health pre-screening for employees who report to an EPCOR site.
- Providing guidance documents and recommendations at [epcor.com/buildingwaterquality](https://epcor.com/buildingwaterquality) to address the risk of lower water quality now and upon re-entry in commercial buildings with low occupancy.
- Participation in regular updates with Alberta Environment, involvement in emergency operations centres and our business continuity plans to work collaboratively in our response across all EPCOR operations.
- Work from home arrangements where possible and changes to shift schedules to better promote physical distancing among employees who are still being asked to come to work, including staggered shift starts and shift rotations.

We continue to operate, whether it's from our homes, facilities, plants or the field. We're here to answer calls, complete repairs and conduct ongoing maintenance. Because now, more than ever, our communities are counting on us.

We are committed to supporting pandemic response efforts that are helping make sure the communities we operate in remain vital and vibrant places to live and work.





## EPCOR's Heart + Soul Fund


We established the Heart + Soul Fund by EPCOR to support organizations that bring joy to our community, and provide a lifeline to those hardest hit by COVID-19.

"We don't just operate the water utilities in communities," said Christian Madsen, Director, Regional Water Operations. "These are the places our employees call home and where family and friends reside. We're proud to support organizations that are important to our communities and to our employees."

With input from the Town of Canmore and our local employees, we were proud to support the following organizations that provide essential services to the community:

**Canmore and Area Health Care Foundation:** \$5,000 contribution towards the Foundation's Mindfulness and Meditation Program that helps participants to manage stress and improve overall health.

**Bow Valley Christmas Spirit Campaign:** \$5,000 donation to help provide food hampers for people in need, as well as seniors who are alone at Christmastime.

 **Canmore & Area Health Care Foundation**  
December 29, 2020 at 8:05 AM · 🌐


We are overjoyed to announce that **EPCOR Canada** has just contributed \$5,000 to the Foundation's 2021 Mindfulness and Meditation Programs via their Heart + Soul Fund.

EPCOR established the Heart + Soul Fund to support organizations that bring joy to our community, and provide a lifeline to those hardest hit by COVID-19.

Communities count on EPCOR to keep their utilities working, and to be there during difficult times. EPCOR believes in supporting the many organizations and volunteers that are working so tirelessly to offer vital social services, improve our quality of life and foster vibrancy in our communities.

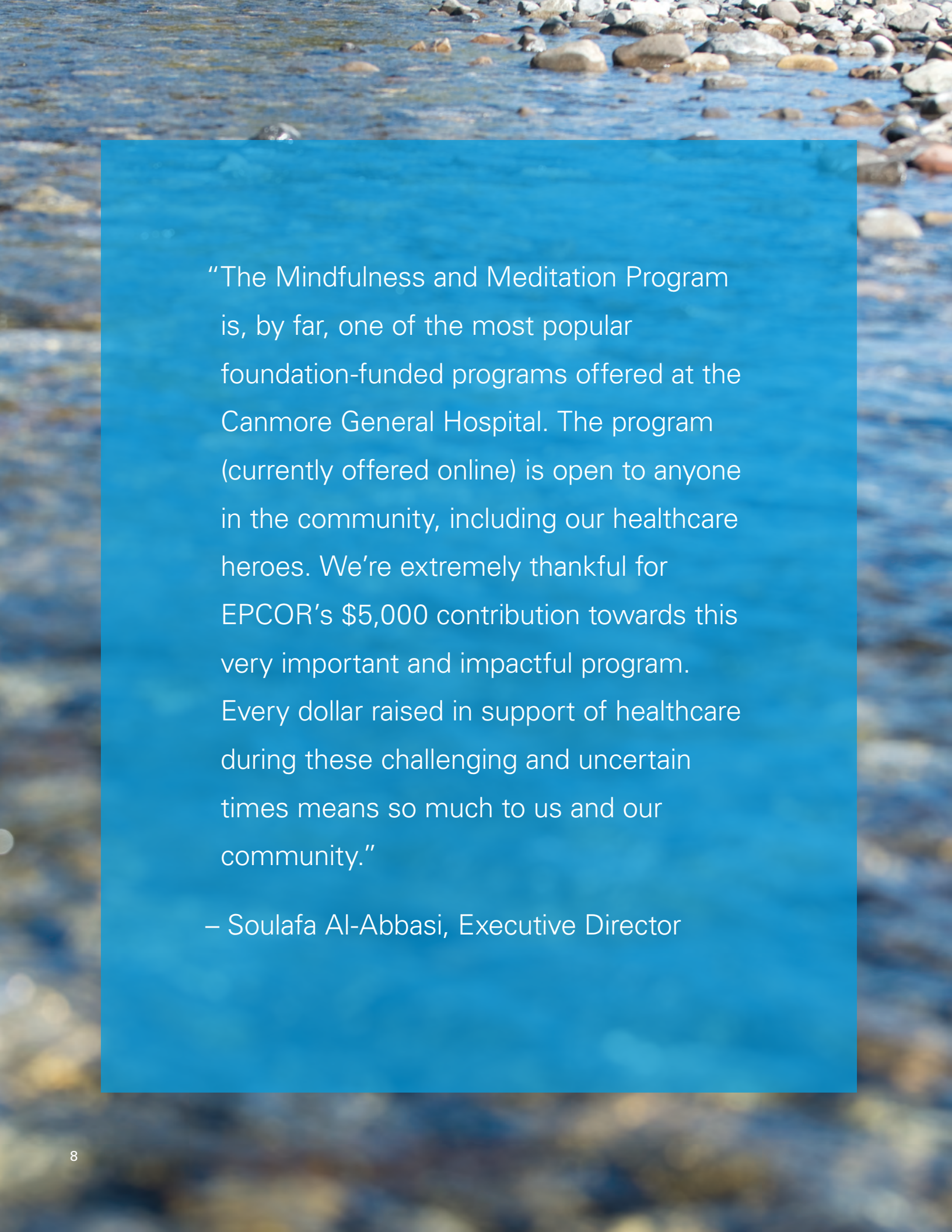
"The Mindfulness and Meditation Program is, by far, one of the most popular foundation-funded programs offered at the Canmore General Hospital. The program (currently offered online) is open to anyone in the community, including our healthcare heroes. We're extremely thankful for EPCOR's \$5,000 contribution towards this very important and impactful program. Every dollar raised in support of healthcare during these challenging and uncertain times means so much to us and our community," says Soufafa Al-Abbasi, Foundation's Executive Director.

To learn more about the program, click here: <https://canmorehealthfoundation.com/mindfulness-program>



"In a year where so many people are struggling, donations like EPCOR's allow the Bow Valley Christmas Spirit Campaign to help more individuals and families and brighten their holiday season."

– Hannah De Soto,  
Board Member



“The Mindfulness and Meditation Program is, by far, one of the most popular foundation-funded programs offered at the Canmore General Hospital. The program (currently offered online) is open to anyone in the community, including our healthcare heroes. We’re extremely thankful for EPCOR’s \$5,000 contribution towards this very important and impactful program. Every dollar raised in support of healthcare during these challenging and uncertain times means so much to us and our community.”

– Soulafa Al-Abbasi, Executive Director



# EPCOR AND THE COMMUNITY

**Our customers push us to achieve the highest customer standards possible. We understand the importance our customers place on reliable water and wastewater services. It's why we work hard to provide our customers with great service.**

## Extensive Water Quality Testing

At EPCOR, our employees are proud to deliver safe, clean and great tasting drinking water to the Canmore community.

Throughout the water treatment process, drinking water takes 12 hours to be clarified, filtered and disinfected. We monitor 75 water quality parameters and conduct more than 5,000 tests each year so we can provide our customers with high quality drinking water, taking into account safety, colour, smell and taste.

## Testing for Lead in Drinking Water

In March 2019, Health Canada announced a revised Guideline for lead in drinking water. In addition to reducing the maximum acceptable concentration for lead, the Guideline requires lead testing to be taken at the tap from within a resident's home or business and takes steps to recognize that premise plumbing is an important source of lead in drinking water. Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP), our water regulator, is requiring drinking water utilities across the province to address the issue of lead and meet the revised Health Canada Guideline by 2024.

When drinking water leaves EPCOR's water treatment plant and is in the distribution system, it contains no measureable level of lead, and we do everything in our power to make sure it remains that way.

Last year, EPCOR had a plan in place to determine lead levels at the tap of representative single family and multi-residential dwellings in Canmore. Due to COVID-19, the plan has been rescheduled to begin June 2021.

As part of EPCOR's program to meet the new Guideline, we will be sampling 60 properties in Canmore, which is a representative sample as set by Alberta Environment and Parks. Customers will receive the results of their sampling and recommendations based on whether their results are above or in line with the Guideline.

In addition, we will provide educational content in the local newspaper and through digital advertising informing residents how they can inspect their home for lead plumbing fixtures and sharing good water quality practices.



"I had water pipe freezing issues last winter and EPCOR tried really hard to fix the problem...It was the staff that was exemplary."

– verbatim response in Customer Satisfaction Survey

## Responding to Outages

Our crews work quickly and safely to restore service when an outage occurs. **In 2020, EPCOR responded to six water outages and restored service within 24 hours.**

## Community Engagement

We endeavor to be neighbours of choice wherever we operate by proudly supporting local non-profit and charitable organizations through donations, sponsorships and employee participation in community events.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, EPCOR was unable to participate in annual local events. Instead, we focused on producing educational social media messaging throughout the year to inform customers about ways to conserve and use water more efficiently, as well as actions to protect the utility infrastructure and environment.



## Customer Satisfaction Survey

In 2020, EPCOR also completed a customer satisfaction survey. From late November 2019 to March 2020, Canmore residents were polled to share their thoughts on their water utility service. In the past, EPCOR had been tracking community satisfaction with their water quality and service on a bi-annual basis, though one full year was missed, putting the last tracking study in 2016.

The survey was promoted through utility bill inserts, social media advertisements, newspaper advertisements and an incentive in the form of a contest where customers had the chance to win a \$100 Visa gift card by participating. This was the first time the customer satisfaction survey was conducted online.

### Highlights of the survey include:

- Across all services EPCOR provides in Canmore, 92% of respondents are satisfied with their service, and 32% are completely satisfied.
- Overall satisfaction with water quality is exceptionally high in Canmore (93%). In particular, reliability and consistency (98%), clarity (97%) and safety (95%) are highly regarded.
- Just over half of respondents (55%) are aware EPCOR provides their tap water and meter reading service, though fewer are aware EPCOR manages stormwater and wastewater collection.
- Of those surveyed, 58% of participants stated they know who to contact if they have an issue. Among those who feel they know who to contact, 56% cited “my municipality” and 50% named EPCOR.
- In the past six months, 63% of respondents recall some form of communication from EPCOR. Building and vehicle signage, bill inserts and social media are recalled most often.

Based on these findings, we will continue to provide water education to customers and increase awareness of the services EPCOR provides so customers know who to contact during a water or wastewater issue.

## EPCOR and the Community

Activity	Actual Values						Target Value
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	
% Service Outages restored in <24 hours	100%	100%	97%	96%	100%	100%	90%
Customer Satisfaction Survey	N/A	94%	N/A	N/A	N/A	92%	85%
Community Events	13	9	13	14	16	N/A*	9
Communication Reporting	100%	100%	97%	100%	100%	100%	100%

*\*Restricted due to COVID-19 preventative measures*

# EPCOR AND THE ENVIRONMENT

**The health of our water supply affects us today and tomorrow. That's why EPCOR goes above and beyond to protect the environment while ensuring future generations have access to clean and safe water.**

Our Environmental Performance Plan for the Canmore Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) sets the desired environmental outcomes and strategies for watershed protection in the Bow Valley.

EPCOR's reputation for transparency and accurate, timely reporting to provincial and federal regulators brings peace-of-mind to the communities that we serve. In 2020, EPCOR reported one contravention and four releases to regulators on behalf of the Town of Canmore:

- Feb 17—Low chlorine residual at Pumphouse 1 below existing approval limit but above new AEP approval limit
- Mar 19—Potable water release to Spring Creek from leaking residential service pipe
- Jun 27— Wastewater release on 5<sup>th</sup> street from leaking sewer service pipe
- Aug 20—Potable water release to Policeman's Creek from broken water main pipe
- Dec 21—Potable water release to ground near Pumphouse 4 still under investigation



**We complete more than 2,500 tests annually on Canmore's wastewater effluent.**



## Leveraging our Specialized Expertise

In the summer of 2020, there was a substantial increase in visitation to Quarry Lake and the adjoining Rundle Forebay. The Town of Canmore requested EPCOR's immediate assistance to address concerns regarding water quality in the Forebay, which is the water source for part of the Town, as well as public health concerns with the water at Quarry Lake.

Within 24 hours, environmental scientists working for EPCOR in Edmonton and Calgary had determined the relevant risks to water and public health, formulated a customized testing procedure and communicated this information back to the Town. Operators were mobilized and weekly testing began immediately for the duration of the summer with results communicated to the Town, providing the peace of mind that both public health and potable water were not being compromised.

## Ensuring Continuous Improvement

EPCOR is working towards obtaining ISO 14001:2015 certification for its operations in Canmore. This is the international standard developed by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) for the implementation of an Environmental Management System (EMS). It acts as a comprehensive guide for performance, communication, auditing and review. ISO 14001 provides organizations with the elements of an effective EMS and can be integrated with other management requirements to assist organizations in achieving environmental and economic goals.

Achieving certification is not part of EPCOR's contractual requirement; however, it will provide the Town of Canmore with assurance that EPCOR is adhering to recognized, international standards with respect to protecting public health and the environment. EPCOR intends to achieve certification in 2021.

## EPCOR and the Environment

Activity	Actual Values						Target Value
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	
Releases	0	2	1	1	1	4	9
Contraventions	7	11	7	0	3	1	6
Proactive Activities	10	10	14	10	12	10	9
Regulatory Reporting	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

# EPCOR MAINTENANCE AND CAPITAL PROGRAM

**Maintenance and capital programs are critical to delivering operational excellence for the water and wastewater systems in Canmore.**

We proactively manage the water and wastewater infrastructure through regular maintenance, evaluations and improvement programs. Capital programs are also identified by EPCOR's subject matter experts and executed to help ensure the utility can meet existing demand while growing to meet future demand in the valley.

## Improving Efficiencies

EPCOR operations undertook a criticality analysis of flow meters to determine which meters required annual verification and which ones would be adequately addressed through bi-annual verification, reducing maintenance costs. Fuel polishing at all out-building generators was also reduced in line with technical advice to reduce costs. Whenever interior infrastructure lighting requires replacement from safety audits or life cycle deterioration, EPCOR now replaces these with LED lighting to reduce electricity costs paid by the Town.





## Keeping Homes and Streets Clear

For the past three winters, EPCOR has implemented a preventative maintenance program that we estimate has thwarted approximately 12 sewer backups each winter. This labour-intensive program involves chipping out and inspecting manholes and transporting a steam pressure trailer to trouble spots to thaw out manholes that are beginning to freeze.

## EPCOR Maintenance and Consumption

Activity	Actual Values						Target Value
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	
Releases	99.5%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Proactive Activities	Below	Below	Below	Below	Below	Below	Below
Regulatory Reporting	Below	Below	Below	Below	Below	Below	Below

## Completed and Planned Capital Projects

### 2020 Capital Projects (Current Status)

- South Bow River Loop Water Main Construction (ongoing)
- WWTP\* BAF & Headworks Lifecycle Replacement II (completed)
- WWTP MCC Lifecycle Phase 1 (ongoing)
- WWTP Primary Clarifier Lifecycle Replacement II (completed)
- Inflow & Infiltration Detection and Repair (2019) (completed)
- WWTP Primary Clarifier Lifecycle Replacement (completed)
- Cube Van Lifecycle Replacement (2019) (completed)
- 2020 Water Pressure Upgrades (substantial completion)

### 2021 Planned Capital Projects

- South Bow River Loop Water Main - Construction, Phase 2
- Utility Master Plan - Update
- WWTP - MCC Lifecycle Phase 2 (2021)
- WWTP - BAF & Headworks Lifecycle Phase 2 (2021)

*\*WWTP: Wastewater Treatment Plant*

# EPCOR AND OUR EMPLOYEES

**Our employees are at the heart of our operations in Canmore. We are committed to ensuring their safety and providing them with opportunities for professional development.**

**Our operations staff and contractors in Canmore have not experienced a single lost time incident since the Safety Index was introduced in 2006.**

These positive results stem from our continual emphasis on safety training for existing staff, new employees and contractors.

In 2020, operations employees received an average of 35.4 hours per employee of training on various topics, including Hazardous Energy Isolation, Confined Space Entry, Safe Driving and Construction Safety, just to name a few. Staff also participate in emergency response plan practices, which in 2020, included Hazardous Chemical Spill and Confined Space Rescue.

There were also 732 preventative activities carried out, including regular site safety inspections, safe work plans and hazardous energy isolation permits.

## Developing Water Professionals

To ensure ongoing operational excellence, EPCOR works with our operators to maintain or expand upon their current level of certification. We continue to cross-train operators to provide them with the experience necessary to increase their certification levels in all four water disciplines.

Currently, 10 of 11 operators are certified by AEP. COVID-19 resulted in temporary delays for course completion but all EPCOR operators in Canmore will be fully certified by the end of 2021.

## EPCOR and Our Employees

Activity	Actual Values						Target Value
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	
Training	31.7	34	33	32.5	32.1	35.4	32
Prevention	412	665	552	645	1257	732	435
Meetings	12	12	12	12	12	N/A*	12
Lost Time Incidents	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

*\*Due to COVID-19, in-person meetings were substituted with conference calls to comply with recommendations from the Public Health Agency of Canada. Operations also shared information through email, as well as via Health & Safety bulletins.*



**Making sure our employees and contractors get home safely after work is a top priority for EPCOR.**



# EPCOR ADVANTAGE

EPCOR provides the Town with support above and beyond the services performed by our qualified water and wastewater staff in Canmore. As one of the largest private utility operators in Alberta, the depth of our expertise stretches beyond basic services.

EPCOR supports the community with value-added programs including stakeholder engagement, community investment, integrated health & safety and supply chain management, among others.

As partners in delivery of essential services to the community, we utilize the critical resources required to ensure that customers in Canmore are satisfied with their water and wastewater services. A complete look at our specialized resources in Western Canada is shown in the below image.

## CORPORATE SUPPORT 10

Legal (1)  
Finance (2)  
Insurance (1)  
Risk Management (2)  
Operational Security (1)  
Human Resources (3)

## ENTERPRISE SYSTEMS 7

IT (4)  
IT Security (1)  
SCADA Control & Automation (2)

## WATER QUALITY & ENVIRONMENT 10

Environmental Services (6)  
Quality Assurance &  
Laboratory Services (4)



## ASSET & PROJECT MANAGEMENT 10

Asset Management Office (4)  
Project Management Office (2)  
Process & Technical Services (1)  
Distribution & Technical Services (3)

## OPERATIONS 28

Supply Chain (4)  
Senior Management (2)  
Maintenance Oversight (5)  
Operational Health & Safety (10)  
Cross Connection Control (2)  
Training & Development Team (2)  
Public & Government Affairs (3)  
Emergency Management (as needed)

## SPECIALIZED SERVICES:

**TOTAL DEDICATED SUPPORT STAFF: 65**  
**CERTIFIED WATER OPERATORS: 130**  
**WATER PROFESSIONALS: 319**  
**EPCOR WATER CANADA STAFF: 777**





We understand the environmental sensitivity of the Bow Valley and watershed, which is crucial to navigating changes in regulatory approvals. We also have an established emergency response approach with the ability to access additional regional resources for operations, communications and quality assurance.



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