



2020 STRATHMORE PERFORMANCE REPORT



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EPCOR
STRATHMORE
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EPCOR has been maintaining the Town of Strathmore’s water and wastewater infrastructure for 21 years.

ABOUT US

EPCOR has been providing quality drinking water and essential wastewater services for more than 100 years. We serve more than two million people in over 85 communities and industrial sites across western Canada and the southwest United States.

Our full spectrum of services includes wastewater treatment, water distribution and wastewater and storm water collection. We recently renewed our fixed-price, performance-based utility management agreement with the Town to continue providing services until 2027. The Town sets the utility rates and retains ownership of the water works related assets on behalf of the citizens of Strathmore.

Managing the water and wastewater operations safely, reliably and efficiently requires certified frontline operators, specialized technical experts with in-depth knowledge of water and wastewater processes, and significant capital investment in research and development, as well as tools and technology.

EPCOR has consistently exceeded all operating requirements for the water distribution and wastewater collection and treatment system. We have quickly responded to operational upsets and utilized our utility management professionals and EPCOR’s Southern Alberta resources to deliver innovative solutions for the Town of Strathmore.

We are accountable to deliver service that meets key measures for Customer Care, Safety, Quality Assurance, Operational Excellence and Capital Programs. EPCOR and the Town of Strathmore have developed 10 Performance Standards, which are included in this report with the performance summarized below

| KPI 1 | KPI 2 | KPI 3 | KPI 4 | KPI 5 | KPI 6 | KPI 7 | KPI 8 | KPI 9 | KPI 10 | Total |
|--------|-------|--------|--------|--------|-------|--------|--------|-------|--------|-------|
| (100%) | (90%) | (100%) | (100%) | (100%) | (97%) | (100%) | (100%) | (75%) | (100%) | (96%) |

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

EPCOR AND COVID-19

As the water and wastewater provider for the Town of Strathmore 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:

- Implementation of employee health screening programs that include health screening questions and a no-contact thermometer reading to detect possible fevers. In some cases, a similar process has been implemented for our contractors. We've also contracted an Occupational Physician to support all EPCOR sites with the implementation of this program and provide trusted advice on matters of personal health and well-being.
- 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 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

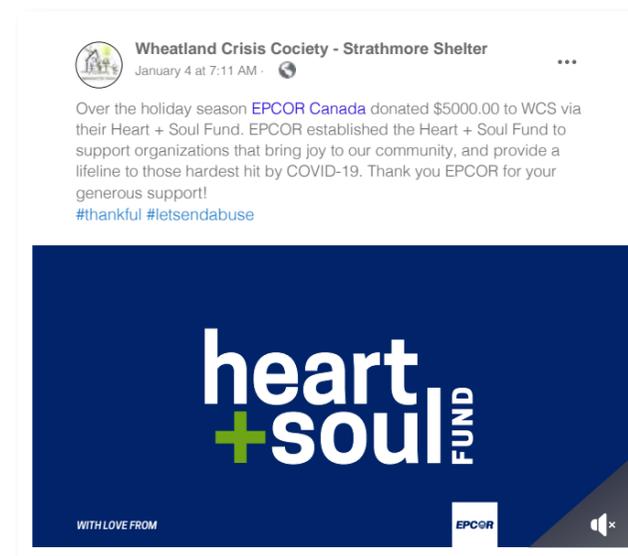
We established the Heart + Soul Fund by EPCOR to support organizations that bring joy to our community, and provide a lifeline to those hardest hit by COVID-19.

"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 Strathmore and our local employees, we were proud to support the following organizations that provide essential services to the community:

Wheatland Crisis Society: \$5,000 donation to help provide safety, shelter, food, clothing, crisis counselling, referral and advocacy for those impacted by family abuse or in crisis.

Wheatland Food Bank: \$3,000 donation to help provide food hampers for families in need, food for mothers at risk and local schools with food for children in need.



"The Wheatland County Food Bank would like thank EPCOR for their generous donation. We anticipate the coming year to be very busy at the Food Bank and these funds will help to provide fresh produce, eggs, meat and dairy items for our hampers. Happy Holidays from all of the staff and volunteers to EPCOR."

– Lynette Aschenbrenner,
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 and clean drinking water to the Strathmore community.

We monitor 75 water quality parameters and conduct more than 2,300 tests each year so we can provide our customers with high quality drinking water, taking into account safety, colour, smell and taste.

KPI 10 measures the number of months EPCOR met approvals for each parameter it measures.

| KPI 10 - Approval Limits | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| WWTP Effluent | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total Suspended Solids | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| cBOD | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Total Phosphorus | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Total Ammonia Nitrates | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| pH | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| WWTP Bacteriological | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Treated Effluent | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Pump House | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Approval Limits Met | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

EPCOR met all its approvals in 2021 and scored 100% on this KPI.

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, 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.

Last year, EPCOR had a plan in place to determine lead levels at the tap of representative properties in Strathmore; however, due to COVID-19, the plan has been rescheduled to begin May 2021.

As part of EPCOR's program to meet the new Guideline, we have completed a Risk Matrix and identified the key target areas for testing. We have developed a plan to sample 90 properties in Strathmore, 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 media and through digital advertising informing residents how they can test their home for lead service lines and sharing good water quality practices. Strathmore is well on its way to meet this new initiative.

Responding to Outages

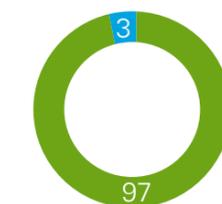
Our crews work quickly and safely to restore service when an outage occurs.

In 2020, EPCOR responded to one water outage and restored service within 24 hours.

KPI 6 measures EPCOR's customer service and the per cent of residential operator callouts in which initial contact with the customer was within 60 minutes.

Of the 88 callouts, EPCOR responded to 85 within 60 minutes for a KPI score of 97%.

KPI 6 - Residential Callouts



■ Within 60 Minutes
■ Not Within 60 Minutes

Customer Service and 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.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, our operators were able to participate in local elementary school classroom programs and conduct tours for non-profit and industry organizations. Due to the 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.

| Activity | Actual Values | | | | | |
|---|---------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
| % Service Outages restored in <24 hours | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| Community Events | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | NA |

KPI 7 measures the number of hours EPCOR participates in stakeholder engagement. In 2021, EPCOR participated the minimum required 10 hours and achieved a score of 100% for this KPI.

KPI 7 - Stakeholder Engagement



Customer Satisfaction Survey

In 2020, EPCOR also completed a customer satisfaction survey. From late November 2019 to March 2020, Strathmore 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 was offered in the form of a contest entry 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 Strathmore, 89% of respondents are satisfied with EPCOR's service, and 27% are completely satisfied.
- Overall satisfaction with water quality is 81% in Strathmore. Reliability and consistency of supply is the most positive aspect with 88% satisfaction. Taste, however, is of some concern with 26% unsatisfied with the taste of their water, and 21% are unsatisfied with the odour.
- Half of respondents (51%) indicate they know who to contact if they have an issue or concern. Among those who feel they know who to contact, 'my municipality' is indicated most often (75%).
- Respondents cite they are aware EPCOR supplies tap water in Strathmore (45%) but are less aware of wastewater collection and treatment (32%) and stormwater collection (21%). The majority cited the Town as the provider of these services. Opinions of those who are aware of EPCOR as the provider is positive (83% favourable). Strathmore residents indicate EPCOR is a reliable, competent (well run), and trusted supplier.
- The majority of Strathmore customers (73%) recall some form of communication by EPCOR in the past six months. Bill inserts, social media and building and vehicle signage are recalled most often.

Based on these findings, EPCOR continues to work on providing water education to customers, including the source of Strathmore's drinking water supply, and increasing awareness on the services EPCOR provides so customers know who to contact during a water or wastewater issue.

Proud Sponsor of Strathmore's New Sports Centre

In 2019, EPCOR was pleased to announce to local media, Mayor and Council our 15-year agreement to sponsor the Strathmore Motor Products Sports Centre. As title sponsor, EPCOR is proud to use this opportunity to provide education on the water cycle, sustainability measures and ways to reduce risk to the infrastructure.



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.

Attaining ISO 14001:2015 Certification

In 2019, EPCOR's Strathmore team achieved a significant certification in our commitment to environmental management. The team attained ISO 14001:2015, which 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 was not part of EPCOR's contractual requirement with the Town of Strathmore. Instead, EPCOR committed to this as part of our efforts to drive continuous improvement, particularly in safety and environmental performance.

To obtain certification, the team had the extensive task of:

- Developing, reviewing and approving Operational SOPs, Maintenance SOPs, Standard Work Practices and an Environmental Aspects registry.
- Creating an integrated management system for both safety (Certificate of Recognition for Safety) and environmental systems (ISO) and establishing a SharePoint directory that housed all related HSE files, as well as all procedures, policies and regulations.
- Producing an ISO training presentation to prepare employees for the auditing interviews. They compiled sample audit questions into eight categories for training and delivered the presentation to staff two to three times. Everyone was eager to participate in the internal ISO training and did a great job during the interviews.
- Meeting regularly with EPCOR's Environmental group in Edmonton. Their support was instrumental in helping Strathmore get through the process so smoothly.

Since achieving certification, the team has noticed an improvement in tracking procedures and documents. They have also improved their onsite recycling program and now order compostable and recyclable products wherever possible.

In 2020, the site continued to maintain its ISO 14001 certification by completing both an internal audit by our Environmental Technologist, as well as a surveillance audit from an external auditor. The site passed both audits successfully.

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 had one contravention. While a contractor was conducting a capital project at the effluent pump house, they disconnected power to the effluent flow meter. Without backup power, the flow was not measured for a 22-hour period as required by our Approval to Operate. This did not affect the water quality and all effluent parameters were met during this time. This event was reported to the Regulator on behalf of the Town of Strathmore and reviewed extensively with the team and contractor to ensure they learned from the incident.

| Activity | Actual Values | | | | | |
|----------------------|---------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
| Releases | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Contraventions | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Regulatory Reporting | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Adding to the Town's Infrastructure Records

EPCOR works closely with the Town of Strathmore Public Works division. Over the past few years, our Operators have been working to help update and improve the infrastructure maps of the Town.

Since EPCOR began completing locates, we have collected many data points to add to the maps (e.g., curb stops, valves, etc.) and corrected inaccurate features, such as the location of valves, manholes and mainlines.

Maintaining accurate maps benefits the Town by having the right information to share with contractors regarding capital project work and to be able to collect better data on their system for future use. It also benefits EPCOR in enabling quicker access to infrastructure when dealing with water issues and ensuring all infrastructure is captured during maintenance programs.

We complete more than 2,400 tests annually on Strathmore's wastewater effluent.

EPCOR MAINTENANCE AND CAPITAL PROGRAM

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

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.

Water and Wastewater Operations

EPCOR maintains and evaluates infrastructure throughout the Town on a four-year basis (25% target each year). The below table summarizes EPCOR's KPI activities, targets, and performance.

| KPI | Activity | YTD | Target | KPI Result |
|-----|---------------------------------------|--------|--------|------------|
| 1 | Sanitary Manhole Inspection | 243 | 214 | |
| | Number of Manholes: 857 | 28% | 25% | 100% |
| 2 | Sewer Line Cleaning | 22,389 | 17,925 | |
| | Meters of Sewer Main: 71700 | 31% | 25% | 90% |
| 2 | Sewer Line CCTV | 9,940 | 17,925 | |
| | Meters of Sewer Main: 71700 | 14% | 25% | 90% |
| 3 | Valve Maintenance | 469 | 256 | |
| | Number of Water System Valves: 1023 | 46% | 25% | 100% |
| 4 | Uni-Directional Flushing (UDF) | 20,395 | 19,975 | |
| | Meters of Water Main: 79900 | 26% | 25% | 100% |
| 5 | Hydrant Maintenance | 628 | 157 | |
| | Number of Fire Hydrants: 628 | 100% | 25% | 100% |

EPCOR achieved results of 100%, 90%, 100%, 100% and 100% for KPIs 1 through 5 respectively.

2020 Completed Capital Projects

Strathaven Lift Station Upgrade: Several components of the Strathaven Lift Station were found to be at their end of life. The upgrades to the lift station decreased the risk of future breakdowns, such as sewage backups, wet well overflows or damage to the lift stations that could result in increased operating costs and disruptions to residents.

This project was completed under budget at \$37,195 out of a planned budget of \$40,000.

Sixth Avenue Water Loop: Looping the water main section along 6th Avenue reduced complications for operations and maintenance and improved water quality for residents in the area.

This project came in on budget at \$42,619 out of a planned budget of \$42,000.

EPCOR achieved over \$100,000 in savings on 2020 Capital Projects

Lift Station PLC Upgrades: Certain lift station programmable logic controllers (PLC), which automatically control components of lift stations, had come to their end of life and required replacement in 2020. If a PLC failed, the entire lift station would have to be operated in manual mode, which would require additional operational assistance to operate the lift station continuously. Unplanned failure of the equipment may result in increased operational costs, sewage backup and/or wet well overflow. EPCOR upgraded the PLC controllers at Aspen Creek, Strathmore Lakes, West Strathaven Storm, Strathaven, Pink Palace and Hillview lift stations.

This project was completed under budget at \$351,326 out of a planned budget of \$355,000.

Lift Station Radio Communication Upgrades: The current lift station radio communication system had reached its end of life in 2018 and poor performance levels were being observed. This created potential for lift station malfunction and possible sewage backup and/or wet well overflow. EPCOR replaced the radios at numerous lift stations.

This project was completed under budget at \$129,172 out of a planned budget of \$200,000.

Bioreactor Aeration System Upgrades: As components of the aeration system age, there is a potential for breakdown of the aeration system and regulatory approval violations. In addition, end of life components such as membrane disks have reduced oxygen transfer efficiency, reducing the treatment efficiency of bacteria and in turn causing blowers and other components to work harder, reducing the length of their lifecycle. Replacing these key components reduces the risk of the aeration system failing, extends the life of other components and reduces the potential for regulatory approval violations.

This project came in under budget at \$125,986 out of a planned budget of \$150,000.

KPI 8 - Capital Planning

| Project Name | Capital Budget | Completed | Completion | Completion Cost | On Budget |
|---|------------------|-----------|------------|------------------|-----------|
| WWTP Aeration System | \$150,000 | ✓ | Q4 | \$129,172 | ✓ |
| Strathaven Lift Station EoS | \$40,000 | ✓ | Q4 | \$37,195 | ✓ |
| Lift Station Radio Communication Upgrades | \$200,00 | ✓ | Q4 | \$129,172 | ✓ |
| Lift Station PLC Upgrades | \$355,000 | ✓ | Q4 | \$351,326 | ✓ |
| 6th Avenue Water Loop | \$42,000 | ✓ | Q2 | \$42,619 | ✓ |
| | <u>\$787,000</u> | | | <u>\$686,298</u> | |

KPI 8 requires EPCOR's Capital project costs to meet the Council approved budget. The Capital project costs totaled \$686,298 out of the \$787,000 approved budget. EPCOR has fully achieved KPI 8 with a rating of 100%

2021 Planned Capital Projects

In 2021, EPCOR will execute the following projects on behalf of the Town of Strathmore:

- Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Aeration System Upgrades
- WWTP Lagoon Refurbishment
- WWTP Geotube Removal
- WWTP Ammonia and Phosphorus Instrumentation Upgrades
- Lift Station Upgrades & Maintenance
- Brentwood Reservoir Decommissioning
- WWTP Laboratory Equipment Replacement

EPCOR AND OUR EMPLOYEES

Our employees are at the heart of our operations in Strathmore. We are committed to ensuring their safety and providing them with opportunities for professional development. Making sure our employees and contractors get home safely after work is a top priority for EPCOR.

Achieving Safety Milestones

Our team in Strathmore has now operated safely for six years without a lost time injury occurring. Every member of the team has had a role to play in maintaining a safe workplace and ensuring everyone has gone home safely each night. Safety is a continuous process and the result of a shared commitment amongst the crew and maintaining a “Mind on Task” outlook so they focus on the task at hand to ensure the day, week, month and year are injury free.

EPCOR puts continuous emphasis on safety training for existing staff, new employees and contractors.

KPI 9- Safety Index

KPI 9 measures EPCOR’s safety performance and measures the number of WCB recordable incidents. EPCOR had one recordable incident resulting in a rating of 75% for this KPI.

In 2020, EPCOR had one recordable safety incident. A lab technician was unloading the dishwasher when a graduated glass cylinder dropped and broke. The technician cut her finger when trying to grab it. She required one stitch and returned to work without restrictions.

WCB Reportable Claims



Developing Water Professionals

In 2020, operations employees completed 37 training courses covering 49 training hours on various topics, including Hazardous Energy Isolation, Confined Space Entry, Safe Driving and Construction Safety, just to name a few. The team also regularly participate in emergency response plan practices; in 2020, those included Hazardous Chemical Spill and Confined Space Rescue practices.

There were also preventative activities carried out, including regular safety meetings, site inspections, safe work plans, Safety Training Observation Program (STOP) cards and hazardous energy isolation permits.

| Activity | Actual Values | | | | | |
|---------------------|---------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
| Training Hours | 137 | 34 | 52 | 223 | 258 | 181 |
| Lost Time Incidents | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

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, all nine operators and the site manager are certified by Alberta Environment & Parks for the water distribution, wastewater collection and wastewater treatment services that are conducted in Strathmore. There are five levels of certification, from Small Systems to Level 4.

| EPCOR Position | Water Treatment | Water Distribution | Wastewater Treatment | Wastewater Collection |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| D&C Lead Hand | Level 1 | Level 3 | Level 1 | Level 3 |
| Operator | Level 1 | Level 3 | Level 2 | Level 3 |
| Operator | Uncertified | Level 2 | Level 1 | Level 2 |
| Operator | Uncertified | Level 1 | Level 1 | Level 1 |
| Wastewater Lead Hand | Level 1 | Level 3 | Level 3 | Level 3 |
| Operator | Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 2 | Level 2 |
| Operator | Uncertified | Level 1 | Level 1 | Level 1 |
| Operator | Level 2 | Level 1 | Level 3 | Level 1 |
| Operator | Level 2 | Level 2 | Level 4 | Level 2 |
| Site Manager | Uncertified | Level 2 | Level 4 | Level 2 |

EPCOR ADVANTAGE

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

EPCOR is not a Consultant but an Operator of Choice with a focus to drive the long term value for money, while ensuring the Town's reputation and assets are upheld, public health is maintained and environmental watersheds are protected.

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 Strathmore are satisfied with their water and wastewater services. A complete look at our specialized resources in Western Canada is shown in the adjacent image.



We understand the environmental sensitivity of the Bow River 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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