

# The Kincardine INDEPENDENT



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## CRA decision puts squeeze on family-run campgrounds

By Barb McKay

Small, private campground owners received a shock when they opened their tax bills this year. The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) has removed the small business tax deduction for many, indicating that they are too small to qualify.

According to CRA criteria, to receive the tax deduction businesses must employ more than five people. Family-run campgrounds generally operate seasonally, closing in the winter, and are unable to meet that employment threshold. As well as not qualifying for the tax deduction, the campgrounds are required to pay thousands of dollars in back taxes.

Last month, the Ontario Private Campground Association launched a petition calling on the Minister of Small Business and Tourism, Bardish Chagger, to intervene and allow private campgrounds to be taxed the same as other small businesses. The fear is that the amount of additional corporate taxes that campground owners will have to pay will drive some out of business.

“Camping is about cel-

brating the great outdoors and is an integral part of our nation’s history and our identity as Canadians,” Alexandra Anderson, executive director of the association said in a media release. “Nearly 5.8 million Canadians go camping each year, along with numerous international visitors who want to experience the natural wonder of our country. We don’t want to believe that it is the CRA’s intention to destroy family-run campgrounds, but that’s exactly what will happen if their decisions are not reversed.”

The Ontario Private Campground Association says the CRA is beginning to view the campground industry as specified investment business, which includes businesses with a primary purpose of generating income from property. This would include rental apartment buildings, land lease communities and mobile home parks.

In Kincardine and the immediate surrounding area, there are several family-run campgrounds. Jim Boyer operates Aintree Trailer Park on Concession 12. Its proxim-

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## Three men and a bear

There was plenty of excitement in the south end of Kincardine last Wednesday when this black bear was spotted on Adelaide Street early in the morning and then on Kincardine Avenue. South Bruce OPP officers and conservation officers from the Ministry of Natural Resources captured the bear in a tree near the dog park off of Bruce Avenue shortly before noon. They were assisted by Municipality of Kincardine fire chief Kent Padfield, right, and municipal emergency management co-ordinator Frank Merkt (not shown, to Padfield’s left). The bear was tranquilized and relocated to the Bruce Peninsula where he was released. (Barb McKay photo)

## Energy Ministry official puts natural gas rumour to bed

By Barb McKay

A representative from the Ontario Ministry of Energy was in Kincardine last Wednesday to reassure the municipality that the province is not abandoning natural gas.

Mississauga MPP Bob Delaney, parliamentary assistant to Energy Minister Bob Chiarelli, met with Kincardine deputy mayor Jacqueline Faubert, municipal treasurer Roxana Baumann and EPCOR executives at the municipal administration office prior to the municipal council meeting. EPCOR CEO Stuart Lee addressed council and the media to say that Delaney’s visit, as well as a discussion with Finance Minister Charles Sousa, left him feeling confident that natural gas will be a part of Ontario’s energy mix for years to come.

“Last week’s announcement set us back a little,” Lee said of the article that appeared in the *Globe and Mail* on May 16, reporting that the province’s draft Climate Change Plan called for an end to natural gas as a heating source in new home builds, beginning in 2030.

Lee said the board was initially concerned as EPCOR will be investing \$100 million to bring natural gas to the Municipalities of Kincardine and

Arran-Elderslie and Township of Huron-Kinloss if the project receives approval from the Ontario Energy Board (OEB).

“Both (Delaney and Sousa) were very reassuring that the leak is nothing to be concerned about, that the province still believes in natural gas as a long-term solution in Ontario, and we think so too.”

Lee said the fact that the Ministry is putting the natural gas rumour to rest is a particularly important message to relay to homeowners in the region.

“We are relying on a significant number of people to convert and they won’t feel confident purchasing a new furnace if they think they will have to convert back to electricity in 10 or 15 years.”

Lee said the recent OEB generic hearing to review natural gas regulations and rate setting set the southern Bruce project back about a year, since EPCOR had expected to have shovels in the ground later this year. However, he stressed, the company has its rate-setting application before the OEB and expects to hear back this fall after the board makes its decision.

Lee called the joint municipal approach to acquiring natural gas service leading edge and thanked Kincardine council for its continued support.

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