

ONKWE'TÀ:KE

THE MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE NEWSLETTER

Volume 14 Issue 4

FREE

Onerahtókha/April 2025

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ACFS SURVIVAL SKILLS CAMP RETURNS



In March, the ACFS Traditional Support Unit proudly welcomed back the highly anticipated Survival Skills Camp for Akwesasronon! Participants gained hands-on experience in essential land-based survival skills including fire-starting, water purification, and shelter building. Read more on page 22.

UPCOMING MCA MEETINGS & SPECIAL DATES:

APRIL GENERAL MEETING

April 24, 2025 · 6 p.m.

Kawehno:ke Recreation Center

The MCA General Meeting will be a hybrid event (in-person and virtual).

To receive the Zoom link, please email
meetings@akwesasne.ca

MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE 2024-2027

- Grand Chief Leonard Lazore
- Kana:takon District
 - Chief Fallon David
 - Chief Cindy Francis-Mitchell
 - Chief Theresa Jacobs
 - Chief Teresa Oakes
- Kawehno:ke District
 - Chief Vanessa Adams
 - Chief Lisa Francis-Benedict
 - Chief Lacey Pierce
 - Chief Vince Thompson
- Tsi Snaihne District
 - Chief Scott Peters
 - Chief Tesha Rourke
 - Chief Sarah Lee Sunday-Diabo
 - Chief JoAnn Swamp
- Administration
 - Shannon Roundpoint A/Executive Director
 - Heather Phillips Director
 - Dept. of Finance & Administration
 - Leslie Papineau Director
 - Dept. of Infrastructure, Housing & Environment
 - Cactus Cook Sunday Director
 - Dept. of Justice
 - Valerie Cree-Cook A/Director
 - Dept. of Community & Social Services
 - Tessa Jocko A/Director
 - Department of Health
 - Donna Lahache Director
 - Akwesasne Mohawk Board of Education
 - Ranatiostha Swamp A/Chief of Police/Director
 - Dept. of Public Safety
 - Kylee Tarbell Director
 - Dept. of Economic Development

WAT'KWANONHWERA:TON/GREETINGS

She:kon and welcome to the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne's community newsletter, Onkwe'tà:ke, which means "For the people." The primary goal of this publication is to deliver MCA's news and updates straight into the hands of community members. Should you wish to stay connected in other ways, the following channels are provided:

- Contact: If you have any questions about MCA departments and services, please email info@akwesasne.ca or call 613-575-2250.
- E-newsletter: Register for a weekly e-newsletter delivered straight to your email inbox. It's a great way to quickly stay up to date! Sign up by visiting www.akwesasne.ca/signup.
- Social Media: Visit us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat!
- Mobile/Cell Text Alerts: Receive urgent or important messages right to your cell phone. Sign up by visiting www.akwesasne.ca/textalerts.
- Website: News and general information can be found on our website at www.akwesasne.ca. This includes job postings and Council contact information.
- Local Media: Find our news and information in Akwesasne's long-serving local media, CKON 97.3 Radio.

FIVE THINGS OUR MONTHLY LIST OF FACTS, REMINDERS & IMPORTANT MESSAGES

- 1 The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne has published the 2025 MCA Service Directory, providing an overview of MCA's departments, contact information, program descriptions, and more! Please refer to page 3 for more information and how to get your copy today!
- 2 The Alzheimer's Society of Cornwall & District is hosting a workshop on April 17 from 1-3 p.m. at the Tri-District Elders Lodge on Kawehno:ke for those caring for someone with dementia. To learn communication strategies and access local support resources, reserve your spot by contacting Josée at 613-932-4914 ext. 202 or josee.desrochersleduc@alzheimer-cornwall.ca.
- 3 Unsure whether your child is a member under the Akwesasne Membership Code? Do you have questions about Indian Status and Akwesasne Membership? Visit page 14 for important information on your child's eligibility and membership details.
- 4 Get ready for a day of culture, community, and celebration! The Native North American Travelling College (NNATC) invites you to the Akwesasne Children's Powwow on Saturday, April 19, at the A'nowara'ko:wa Arena from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. (registration begins at 10 a.m.).
- 5 Calling all skater girls! Get ready for an unforgettable day at the Akwesasne Skatepark's Girl's Skate Day on Saturday, May 10. Whether you're a pro or just starting out, come out and enjoy a day full of skating, music, art and awesome prizes. Mark your calendars and don't miss out!

NEWS

KING CHARLES III CORONATION MEDAL CEREMONY RECOGNIZES AKWESASRONON HONOREE



On Saturday, March 22, a ceremony was held to present the King Charles III Coronation Medal to individuals recognized for their leadership, perseverance, and contributions to their communities. Among the recipients was Akwesasronon Feryn King, who was nominated for the honor by Member of Parliament Eric Duncan.

King was recognized for her dedication to youth and the arts. A talented hoop dancer, she has shared her skills with many young Akwesasronon through classes and performances. Her passion for her craft also led her to perform with Cirque du Soleil.

Congratulations to all recipients for their dedication and impact!



NOW AVAILABLE: MCA SERVICE DIRECTORY

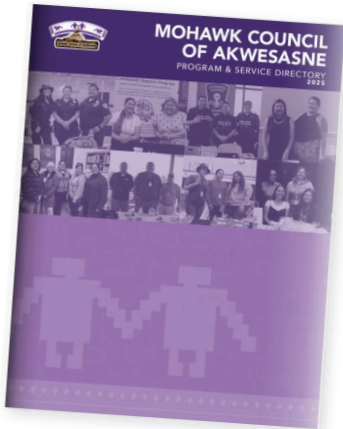
Looking for information on programs and services available in Akwesasne? The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne's Programs & Services Directory is now online!

This comprehensive guide provides an overview of MCA's departments, including health, education, public safety, social services, economic development, and more — all in one place. Find contact details, program descriptions, and resources to help you navigate available services.

View it online: www.akwesasne.ca/mca-service-directory

Prefer a printed copy? Physical copies are available at MCA offices across Akwesasne, the AMBE Administration Office, Bank of Montreal (Kawehno:ke location), Native North American Travelling College, and the Akwesasne Cultural Center Library. Copies will also be available at MCA District & General Meetings for distribution.

Stay informed, stay connected — MCA is here to serve you!



AKWESASNE IS A PARTNER, NOT A PROBLEM
FROM THE OFFICE OF THE GRAND CHIEF

Akwesasne has long been a key partner in cross-border collaboration, working alongside governments and agencies to address shared concerns. However, recent discussions about border security in our territory have raised issues regarding decisions being made without our direct involvement.

As a sovereign Mohawk Nation, Akwesasne must be included in any discussions that impact our people. We are not a problem to be “dealt with,” but a partner in finding meaningful solutions. Akwesasne has always been a vital member of joint task forces and remains committed to the safety of our communities.

To ensure that Akwesasne’s leadership is included in these discussions, the Grand Chief has scheduled a meeting with the Deputy Minister of Public Safety Canada to address these concerns and is open to dialogue with agencies on both the U.S. and Canadian sides.

Akwesasne will not be sidelined in discussions about our future. MCA will continue to protect our rights, jurisdiction, and people. Our sovereignty is non-negotiable.

STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS: MCA MEETS WITH MINISTER LAFRENIÈRE

On March 21, MCA welcomed Ian Lafrenière, Quebec’s Minister Responsible for Relations with the First Nations and the Inuit, to the Kana:takon Recreation Center. While he is no stranger to Akwesasne, this visit marked his first official meeting with the newly elected 2024–2027 Council.

MCA’s Grand Chief and District Chiefs provided updates on our community’s advancements, needs, and priorities, highlighting key areas such

as healthcare access, border safety, economic development, and conservation efforts. Discussions reinforced the importance of strong partnerships to ensure Akwesasne’s concerns are heard and addressed at the provincial level.

Nia:wen to Minister Lafrenière for meeting with Council — we look forward to continued collaboration and meaningful progress for Akwesasronon!



MCA ADDRESSES CONCERNS OVER BILL 84

The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne (MCA) is aware of the concerns surrounding Bill 84 and its potential impact on Indigenous rights. This proposed law aims to enforce a single culture, language, and set of values in Québec, which has raised questions about how it may affect First Nations communities.

MCA has been actively working with Québec’s Minister Responsible for Indigenous Affairs, Ian Lafrenière, to ensure that Akwesasne is not affected by this legislation. Steps have been taken to address these concerns, and further action is ongoing. Council will also be meeting with Minister Lafrenière again in the near future to further discuss this matter and reinforce our position.

Québec-Labrador (AFNQL) regarding Bill 84. This issue has been discussed in meetings, and the AFNQL has formally requested clarifications to ensure that First Nations are explicitly excluded from the bill’s definitions. The AFNQL has also emphasized the need for clear legal language to prevent First Nations from being subject to this law.

MCA recognizes the importance of continued dialogue with both Québec and Indigenous leadership to protect our rights and interests. One of the ways we are addressing this issue is through ongoing discussions on the Québec Protocol, ensuring that our community’s unique jurisdiction is recognized and respected.

We will continue to monitor the situation closely and keep the community informed.

In addition to our work with Québec officials, MCA is also engaged with the Assembly of First Nations

ACFS PREPARES FOR SKA’NIKÒN:RA SYSTEM LAUNCH


Akwesasne Child & Family Services (ACFS) is excited to announce that its new case management system, Ska’nikòn:ra, is anticipated to go live on June 1, 2025.

This innovative software will enhance record-keeping and reporting to the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, Indigenous Services Canada, and other funders. It will also provide valuable statistical data to support ACFS in advocating for increased funding for programs and services benefiting Akwesasne children and families.

A key feature of Ska’nikòn:ra is its ability to incorporate Kanien’kehá:ka language, culture, values, and beliefs while also analyzing service data to evaluate and improve community programs.

ACFS staff recently completed Train-the-Trainer sessions, ensuring they are prepared to train front-line staff. Additional testing and training sessions will take place to ensure a smooth transition.

Stay tuned for more updates as we approach the go-live date!




**COUNCIL
TRAVEL REPORTS**

Curious about where Council has been and what they’ve been working on?

Explore their latest travel reports and updates here:

www.akwesasne.ca/council-reports



COUNCIL AND MOHAWK GOVERNMENT

COUNCIL WEEKLY MEETING REPORT

SUBMITTED BY: GRAND CHIEF LEONARD LAZORE



March 3, 2025

Discussion Items:

- Council Discussed changing their portfolio/committee selections.
- Council discussed the change of the Admin. 1 boardroom setup for Governance Committee.
- Council discussed the AFNQL attendance and voting update.
- The Grand Chief updated council on the CIRNAC Duty to Consult & Accommodate event.
- The Grand Chief provided an update on the IFN event.
- The Grand Chief updated council on the COO FNCFS Reform & Trilateral event.
- Council discussed the General Meeting Petitions.
- Council discussed a revamp of the General Meeting Agenda.
- Council discussed the General Meeting Community Member Concerns.
- Council discussed the Fort Chambly Iroquois bone recovery.

Presentations:

- Canada Post staff introductions

MCRs: *ISC Amendment No. 155 to Funding Agreement No. 1920-ON-000024, Audit of the Tsiionkwanonhso:te Residents' Trust for Calendar Year 2023; CSP Client*

Increase Under Income Assistance to continue to the end of FY 2025-2026; OPSEU Negotiations Changes 2025; Temporary Care Assistance Program under Income Assistance; Council Meeting Minutes – January 27, 2025; Council Meeting Minutes – February 18, 2025

March 10, 2025

Discussion Items:

- General Meeting Agenda – March 27th
 - » Council added items to the General Meeting agenda.
 - » Council discussed changing the format of the meeting.
- Nation Building
 - » Council would like to add a presentation to the upcoming General Meeting.

Presentations:

- Fishing Regulations Presentation
 - » Local fisherman had a meeting with SRMT to close American waters after a certain day due to the overfishing by non-natives
 - » Non-natives are arguing with locals and trespassing on reservation water
 - » Non-natives know they can fish without licenses because of a lack of enforcement
 - » Asking to close certain areas early (October 10) during fishing season

MCRs: *DIHE On Call Policy, Ministry of Transportation QC Roads Subsidy Expense Report 2023-2024 and April 2024-December 2024; Service Provider Contract Renewal 2025-2026; Contract Renewal 2025-2026, Resignation of committee member from the Oversight Committee on Legislative Development; Onkwehonwehneha Program Development – Section 84 Contract; Akwatsire Program – Civil and Family Mediation; Allotment – Lot 209 Cornwall Is-*

land; Allotment – Lot 213 Cornwall Island; Allotment – Lot 266 Cornwall Island; To approve all addendums to Lease for 2025 for MCA owned lands; Allotment – Lot 210-1 Cornwall Island

March 17, 2025

Discussion Items:

- Roundtable Updates: Council provided updates regarding meetings and travel they have recently attended.
- General Meeting Agenda (March 27): Council discussed further amendments for the General Meeting in March.
- Ottawa Leadership Cohort Tour of Akwesasne: Council directed the ED to coordinate Directors to participate in this event.
- IFN Banks by S. Munch Presentation: Council recommended the banker professional for IFN make a presentation to Council.
- Transport Canada Land Deposition Meeting: Council recommended that the PAT team be assigned to attaining this land.
- Onkwe – Nation to Nation Food Sustainability Conference: Council had a discussion on the agricultural future of Akwesasne.
- Conservation: Council had a conversation on the dog issue within the territory.
- Meeting with Cornwall Community Hospital: Council raised community concerns on the Cornwall Hospital treatment of Akwesasne residents – meeting will occur soon with Board of Directors and Council.
- Press Conference: Council had a discussion on the recent press conference in Albany about Akwesasne.

Presentation:

- PCB4 Presentation: Explanation on the

COUNCIL AND MOHAWK GOVERNMENT

rising PCB4 contamination across the Reserve

MCRs: *Assignment of Lease – Lot 3 Block B and Lot 2-2 Block B Hamilton Island; Contract 2025-2026; Rescinding of MCR 2023-24 #430 IIF IV Northern Landscapes; Emergency Council Meeting Minutes (January 30, 2025); Emergency Council Meeting Minutes (February 18, 2025); Council Meeting Minutes (March 3, 2025); Emergency Council Meeting Minutes (March 6, 2025); ISC Amendment No. 156 to Funding Agreement No. 1920-ON-000024; ISC Amendment No. 157 to Funding Agreement No. 1920-ON-000024; ISC Amendment No. 158 to Funding Agreement No. 1920-ON-000024; Fuel Charge Proceeds Funds for Indigenous Governments; 2025-26 MCA Operating Budget with OLG & 2025-2030 Multi-Year*

March 24, 2025

- Introductions the new Associate Director of Mental Health and Addictions were provided. Council discussed ways to collaborate.
- Council reviewed the presentation that was provided on PCB4 and will forward the information to departments.
- Letter received from CBSA representative; this will be discussed further at an upcoming Public Safety meeting.
- Cairn Island event will be brought back to ARRO Portfolio.
- ACJP Gladue Unit Services support letter was discussed.
- Letter from the Deputy Minister of Public Safety Canada.
- AHDC/CHDC: Meeting will be scheduled internally to discuss the Port Lands.
- Governance Committee provided an update on the progress they have made regarding the live Council Meeting format as well as the Portfolio TOR.
- Chiefs Meeting Request for Change was discussed and agreed to not change or cancel meetings based on one Chiefs availability.

• SIBC Toll Report was provided by the Economic Development Director.

- An incident from the Cornwall Community Hospital was discussed.
- Presentations were held on the Tsiakwawennatonhe'ts. Council will follow up.

MCRs: *MCR #421 Fence and Gate Replacement; MCR #422 Rescind Lot 1-4 Clark Island; MCR #423 Down Payment - Demers Ambulances*

March 31, 2025

Discussion Items:

- Admin. #1 Boardroom Layout: Council has decided on a room layout and will be having DIHE come soon to implement.
- Water Connection to SRMT: Council discussed the logistics on connecting to the SRMT waterline.
- Akweksko:wa Port Lands: Council discussed the next steps on the remediation plan for the Port Lands.
- Jay Treaty/FASFA: Council discussed creating an info session to educate the community on the education situation on needing Green Cards to go to college. Council also discussed a strategy to fight for our students.
- Canada Post Office: Council discussed the Canada Post Office requiring proof of address.
- Educational Commitment: Council discussed pursuing post-secondary education while serving as District Chief.
- Bill 84: Council discussed the Mohawk Council of Kahnawake Facebook post on Bill 84.
- Carbon Tax: Council discussed a community request to reimburse carbon taxes to community members.
- Special Needs: Council discussed the logistics of a special needs program.
- Community member email: Council discussed a community member email regarding seized assets by AMPS.

• Police Class Action Lawsuit: Council requests a presentation by Legal Counsel on the Lawsuit.

• Tracking Record of Motions: Council discussed where the record of all the motions by Council members is located.

• OPG Settlement Agreement: The Grand Chief discussed OPG employment and contracting opportunities for Akwesasne residents.

• Executive Job Posting: Council discussed the Executive Director Job posting.

• Chief Travel Monthly Cost: Council discussed the logistics of putting monthly travel costs in monthly reports.

• Residential School Survivors: Council discussed creating a new committee or working task group for the annual Orange Shirt Day event.

Presentations:

- Residential School Survivors Presentation
 - » Concerns over Canada cutting funds to residential school survivor funding
 - » They are looking for funding avenues
 - » Orange Shirt Day logistics
 - » Asking MCA to create a committee with Tribe to benefit and recognize the survivors

MCRs: *PAT Composition; AMBE Award Fuel Tender; Service Contract for Family and Child Services Consultant; Program Funding Agreement April 1st, 2025 – March 31, 2030; DOH Lease Agreement 24 Frank Benedict Memorial; To Approve all Addendums to Lease for 2025 for Locatee Lands; Amendments #2 to the First Nations and Inuit Policing Program; ISC Amendment No. 159 to Funding Agreement No. 1920-ON-000024; Ontario Transfer Payment Agreement Indigenous Victim Support Worker 'Special Funding'; Court Worker and Gladue Writer Services for Quebec; Indigenous Initiatives Fund (IIF IV) Northern Landscaping*

KAWEHNO:KE DISTRICT CHIEF LISA FRANCIS-BENEDICT UPDATES



Portfolios:
Ahkwesahsne Mohawk Board of Education (AMBE), Akwesasne Justice Dept., Dept. of Infrastructure, Housing & Environment (DIHE), Entewatathá:wi/ Nation Building

Selected Committees:
CBSA, Governance, Iroquois Caucus, Youth, Elders, Culture and Language (YECL)

External: Chiefs of Ontario First Nations Women's Council, Chiefs of Ontario Chiefs & Technical Committee on Languages and Learning, COO Ontario Bilateral Education and Learning Table

MY FIRST SIX MONTHS AS DISTRICT CHIEF:

As I have been stating in my monthly reports, I am still “learning the ropes” serving as District Chief. Attendance at my Portfolio Meetings fills up the calendar. As an example, for the DIHE Portfolio there are three (3) separate meetings that includes Infrastructure, Housing and Environment. There are several different meetings of Entewatathá:wi/ Nation Building Portfolio as well. There are also the Committee meetings. While in attendance at the committee meetings of the COO, I find there is information that is beneficial for myself and the departments. I am also trying to schedule some one-on-one meetings with the Directors of my portfolios to discuss and gather additional information on their programming. So yes, there is a lot of learning going on, and work to be done. I believe Council should have had a strategic planning session at the beginning of the term to set out priorities that align with the strategic plan of the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne (MCA). A date is presently proposed to possibly take place at the end of Onerahtókha/April. I look forward to this as it will assist me to identify what my goals and tasks will be over the course of my term. Of course, there are also other challenges faced, on top of time and stress management. It is also important to take care of my mental health, as there are challenging decisions to be made at the

Council table. There will be discussion on portfolios at the Council Meeting of Onerahtokha/April 7, 2025. I would like to continue with the Portfolios and Committees that I presently sit on. I am still learning and may consider a change up for the next review of portfolio selections. Other areas that I want to make a difference in is in “language and culture”. I look forward to continuing to learn and hoping that I can continue to be efficient in my work and make a change that everyone has stated they want to happen.

Council participated in Governance Training on Enníska/February 4-6, 2025. Training took place at the Kawehno:ke Recreation Center and facilitated by Carol Hopkins, Lenape Nation of Moraviantown, Ontario. This training should have taken place closer to the start of the term. The areas covered included: Basics of Governance, Fiduciary Responsibility, Governance Challenge, Managing Change, Responsibilities and Roles. As a Council, we are responsible for “acting in the best interests of the community, rather than for personal gain or for the benefit of other organizations, groups or individuals.” One clear message that I received was that “not one Council member will make a decision on behalf of Council.” This is also my belief, and I will work toward a team approach in my work and decision making.

GENERAL MEETING OF ENNISKÓ:WA/MARCH 27,2025:

The meeting started at 6pm and ended at 8:30pm. There were approximately 40 community members in attendance.

- Youth Council Introductions** — Youth Council members were introduced. Congratulations to the newly formed Youth Council. On Enníska/ February 21, 2025, a swearing-in ceremony took place to welcome the members. The Youth Council will consist of five (5) members. The vacancy will be filled soon. Members include: Cayde Lazore, Starlyn Mason, Iiokonhaes King, andTaylor Day.
- Entewatathá:wi “We Will Govern” | Nation Building** — The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne’s Entewatathá:wi (Nation Building) is looking for the community’s input. They are conducting a survey to better understand the best way to educate the community about the Entewatathá:wi Self-Government Agreement. Survey is open until Onerahtohkó:wa/May 8, 2025. Weekly prize draws for participants! Staff will be conducting surveys in the community, be sure to participate!
- Chief Electoral Officer Update** — CEO was unavailable. Executive Director provided an update and confirmed that the petition

submitted at previous meeting calling for an amendment to the Akwesasne Election Law Section 16 accordingly. The petition was verified and the process to begin work for amendment is underway.

- Business From the Floor** — Staffing at MCA, Akwesasne Review Commission (Board, Commissions, Authorities, etc., Members’ List), Council Strategic Planning, Data on Stats from ACFs, Governance Documents of Council, Recommendation ~ Kawehno:ke Recreation Building Working Task Group, Special Needs Concerns
- General Meeting Minutes dated Enníska/ February 27, 2025** — Minutes were accepted.

Next General Meeting is scheduled Onerahtókha/ April 24, 2025, at 6pm at the Kawehno:ke Recreation Center. The Audit and Budget will be presented.

WEEKLY COUNCIL MEETINGS:

Weekly Council Meetings are scheduled to review Mohawk Council Resolutions (MCRs), hear presentations and discussion items. Action items from previous meetings and information on Council Invitations are also reviewed. I attended meetings on Enniskó:wa/March 3, 10, 17 and 31, 2025. I was not in attendance at the meeting on Enniskó:wa/ March 21, 2025 (not feeling well).

- Presentations made throughout the month of Enniskó:wa/March included: Canada Post, Fishing Regulations, PCB4, Residential School Survivors.
- Some key issues discussed over the course of the month included: COO First Nations Child and Family Services Reform, Duty to Consult and Accommodate, Onkwe Nation to Nation Food Sustainability Conference, Dog Issues, Meeting with Cornwall Community Hospital, Transportation Canada Land Deposition Meeting, Ottawa Leadership Cohort Tour of Akwesasne, Jay Treaty/FAFSA (funding), Water Connection to St. Regis Mohawk Tribe (SRMT), Akwekso:wa Port Lands.
- Weekly updates are provided from the Governance Committee on the progress of moving the weekly Council Meetings to a live format. The projected date is Ohia:ri:ha/June. The boardroom also needs to be reconfigured to accommodate the required equipment, etc. MCA Communications Unit and IT staff are diligently working out the bugs to assist with the implementation date.
- Executive Director also provides weekly updates.

KAWEHNO:KE DISTRICT CHIEF LISA FRANCIS-BENEDICT UPDATES

MONTHLY DISTRICT MEETINGS:

I did not attend the monthly District Meeting held on Enniskó:wa/March 24, 2025 (not feeling well). The next meeting is scheduled for Onerahtókha/ April 14, 2025.

OTHER MEETINGS ATTENDED:

On Enniskó:wa/March 6, 2025, I attended a meeting at the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe Re: FAFSA (funding) Guidance and Information on the Immigration and Nationality Act, Jay Treaty and Rights American Indians Born in Canada. Presentation on New FAFSA Guidelines, Overview of Creation of Record Process. Council members are scheduling community sessions, dates to be determined.

PORTFOLIO UPDATES:

Ahkwesahsne Mohawk Board of Education — AMBE holds monthly Public Meetings. The first part of the meeting is reserved for parents, community members, and Totas to participate. **Next meeting is scheduled for Onerahtókha/April 15, 2025, on Kawehno:ke (Building Blocks Office) starting at 5:30 pm.** Get out and meet members of the Board of Trustees to discuss concerns, receive updates, etc.

Portfolio Meeting was held on Onerahtókha/April 4, 2025. Updates were provided by the Director of Education and Portfolio Chiefs. Presentation was made on the Akwesasne Education Agreement. *Education agreements are tailored agreements that outline the design, implementation, and management of education systems, particularly for First Nations. They ensure that base education funding is comparable to provincial systems while considering factors like remoteness and socio-economic conditions. As of April 2024, 10 education agreements have been signed, with discussions ongoing for more agreements to advance education goals. These agreements are administrative in nature and do not confer law-making powers or remove First Nations from the provisions of the Indian Act. AMBE will be moving in this direction.*

Have you seen or used iMohawk yet? iMohawk is AMBE’s interactive website where you can learn Kanien’kéha anywhere and at anytime. Click the link <http://imohawk.ambe.ca/> and use password: skah123 to log in.

Enniskó:wa/March 31 is recognized as National Indigenous Languages Day and an opportunity for Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada to recognize and celebrate the very rich and diverse heritage of Indigenous languages. Indigenous languages embody Indigenous cultures and histories. AMBE offered varying events in the

school that involved and promoted the language.

Be sure to check out the Facebook page Ahkwesashne Mohawk Board of Education for additional information on events, activities, etc.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

Kawehno:ke District: Kathleen Papineau (Chair), Kuy Chaussi (Co-Chair). **Kana:takon District:** Cecelia King, Elizabeth Sawatis. **Tsi Snaihne District:** Josephine Herne, Mary Terrance.

Nation Building/Entewatathá:wi — What is the purpose of the Entewatathá:wi Self Government Agreement (ESGA)? The purpose of ESGA is to achieve legal recognition by the Government of Canada of the jurisdiction, authority, and institutions of the Mohawks of Akwesasne. Once the ESGA is ratified, Parliament will adopt legislation that will give ESGA the force of law. The legislation will be binding on the Government of Canada and the provinces. The legislation will terminate the application of many of the provisions of the Indian Act which represents a colonialist vision of limited self-government that is inconsistent with the inherent jurisdiction of the Mohawks of Akwesasne.

- All working tables are on hold until the election is completed due to the upcoming federal election. The federal government is in “caretaker” mode during the election campaign. It will remain in this mode for weeks following. This means public servants must act in a mutual way and all government activities related to policies are on hold until the caretaker mode is lifted.
- The team will focus on the **community survey**. There will be in-person survey sessions, meetings with groups. The survey will be launched at this month’s General Meeting up to Onerahtohkó:wa/May 8, 2025. There will be weekly prize drawings. Your input is valued, be sure to participate in the survey.

CONFIDENTIALITY CLAUSE: *The Mohawks of Akwesasne and Canada acknowledge that the draft Akwesasne-Canada Entewatathá:wi Self-Government Agreement is still under negotiation and therefore, is of a confidential nature. This information is shared by Mohawk Council of Akwesasne for the sole purpose of allowing Akwesasne members to participate meaningfully in community consultations and shall not be disclosed outside of the membership.*

ELDERS ADVISORY COUNCIL:

Bernice Lazore, Laura Francis, Nadine Jacobs, Lucy Papineau

Akwesasne Justice Department — The Akwesasne Justice Department (AJD) is recognized as a first in Canada as a justice system that is based on customary laws which incorporate traditional restorative principles in the three (3) main responsibilities of government: Law Making, Adjudication and

Enforcement.

- Portfolio Meeting took place on Enniskó:wa/ March 13, 2025. Updates were provided on department funding, strategic planning, service overview, legislative services. The department will be conducting surveys to gain input on what type of services the community would like to see. More information will be announced. The Department is presently reviewing and developing a strategic plan. The next meeting is scheduled for Onerahtókha/April 10, 2025.

- Attend meetings of the Oversight Committee on Legislative Development (OSC). The next meeting is scheduled for Onerahtókha/April 10, 2025, at 4pm. The Committee will be reviewing the Terms of Reference of the OSC.

- As part of the OSC, I sit on the Eniethihswanon:na Child’s Rights Law and Fire Law Working Task Groups (WTG). The working task groups review and discuss the development of community laws and meet every two weeks.

- The next meeting of the Eniethihswanon:na WTG was held on Onerahtókha/April 1, 2025. The WTG will be reviewing and making the effort to learn the Kanienké’ha words that are included in the law. The Law will be going into the next phase of law development that will include community consultation. The process is defined in the Akwesasne Law Enactment Procedure Regulations (ALEPR). Stay tuned for dates for community consultation. A copy of the ALEPR can be found on the MCA website ~ History and Resources ~ Akwesasne Law Registry. Copies of all Laws can be retrieved as well.

- The Fire Law WTG will require the participation and input from a local Fireman. Individual to be confirmed then a meeting will be scheduled.

OSC COMMUNITY MEMBERS:

Kawehno:ke District: Gary Cole. **Kana:takon District:** Doris Cook. **Tsi Snaihne District:** Vacant.

Department of Infrastructure, Housing & Environment — Portfolio Meeting ~ Environment Sector took place on Enniskó:wa/March 20, 2025. Claire McFaul A/Manager provided updates on the following: flood mitigation, aquatics, waste management, environmental assessments, staff training, terrestrial, outreach, remedial action plan, funding. The next portfolio meeting is scheduled for Onerahtókha/April 17, 2025.

To view District Chief Lisa Francis-Benedict's full report, please visit our website:
www.akwesasne.ca/mohawk-council/council-reports/

SOCIAL MEDIA CONNECTION



FACEBOOK STATS

Facebook Posts with the Most Likes in March

- 1. Back to the Land: Survival Skills Camp (Video)
- 2. Community Social (Video)
- 3. King Charles III Coronation Medal Ceremony Recognizes Akwesasronon Honoree
- 4. Press Release: Akwesasne is a Partner, Not a Problem
- 5. Pawsitively Adorable: Iakhihsohtha Lodge Celebrates National Puppy Day

Facebook Posts with the Highest Reach in March

- 1. Press Release: Akwesasne is a Partner, Not a Problem — 26,426 Reached
- 2. Back to the Land: Survival Skills Camp (Video) — 22,620 Reached
- 3. Community Social (Video) — 17,568 Reached
- 4. King Charles III Coronation Medal Ceremony Recognizes Akwesasronon Honoree — 13,000 Reached
- 5. Happening Today: Cornwall & Area Job Fair — 10,815 Reached



X STATS

Top Post in March

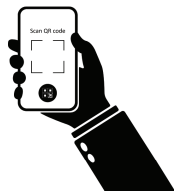
MCA welcomes Ian Lafrenière back to Akwesasne



YOUTUBE STATS

Highest Viewed Video on the MCA YouTube Channel for March

MCA General Meeting — February 27, 2025



Scan QR Code
to view video!

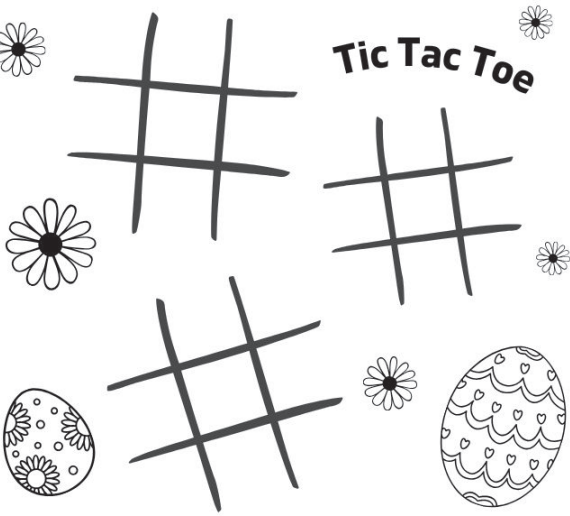
To view more videos, please visit:
www.youtube.com/MohawkCouncilofAkwesasne

CHILDREN'S PAGE

Connect the dots



Tic Tac Toe

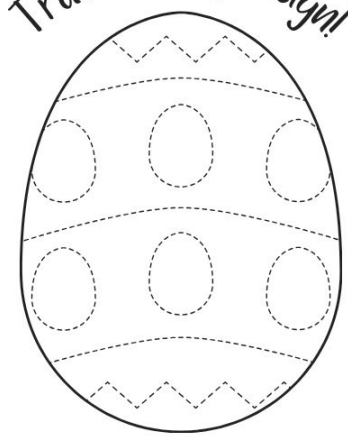


Word Scramble

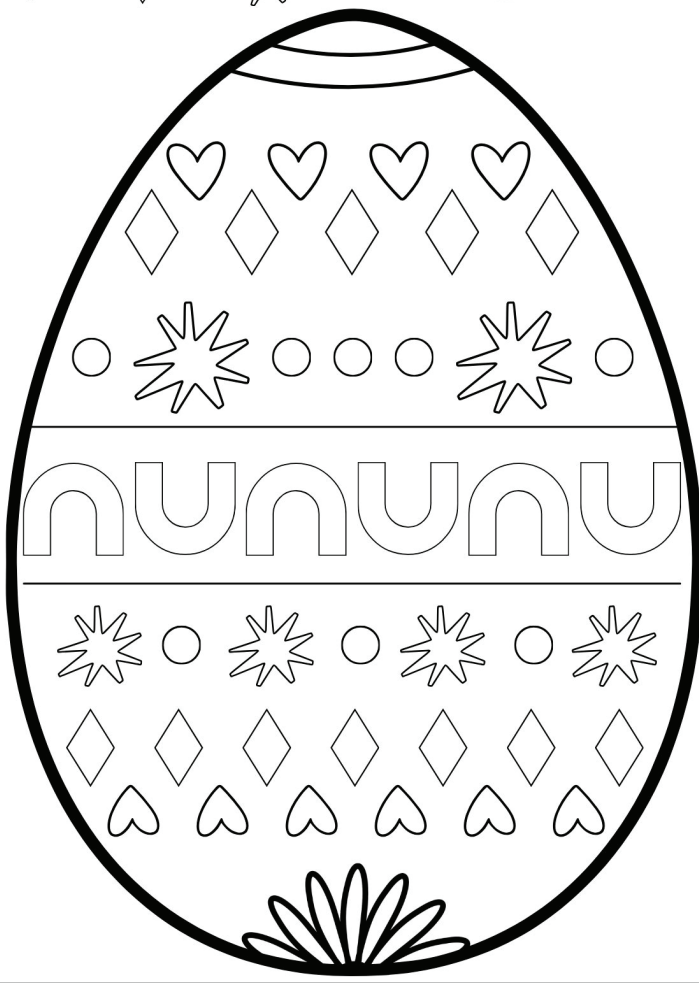
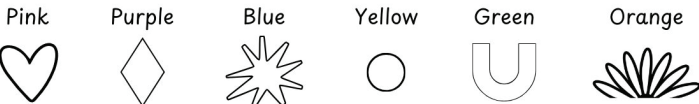
erlowf _____
unbny _____
etbaks _____
andcy _____
sgeg _____
grnisp _____

EGGS CANDY FLOWER SPRING BUNNY BASKET

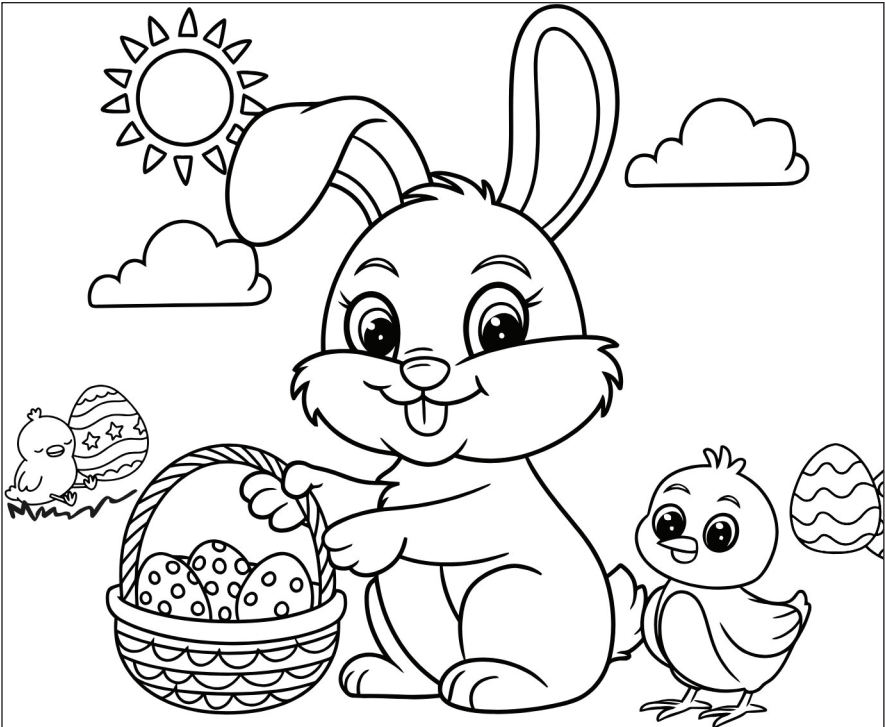
Trace the egg design!



COLOR THE SHAPES IN THE EGG!



COLOR THE BUNNY!



YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME!

What did the tree say when spring finally arrived?
What a re-leaf!

How does the Easter Bunny stay in shape?
Egg-cercise.

Why don't you tell jokes to Easter eggs?
Because they might crack up!

AKWESASNE RIGHTS & RESEARCH OFFICE

ARRO FIELD TRIP TO THE CANADIAN MUSEUM OF HISTORY

The Akwesasne Rights and Research Office recently had two of their researchers, Adam and Theresa accompany archaeological consultant Francis Scardera to the Canadian Museum of History in Gatineau, QC on March 19th to view the George Gogo archaeological collection.

Who was George Gogo?

George Gogo was local to the Glengarry Township with his father serving as the local lawyer and was an unsuccessful candidate for the Liberal party in Stormont. George notably served in the Royal Canadian Medical Corp in Europe during WW2 and settled in Summerstown. He was seen as eccentric by taking daily walks to Cornwall, wandering the countryside, and had no employment.¹

Between 1959 and 1964, Gogo visited various disturbed and undisturbed sites to collect artifacts, finding remnants of Loyalist settlers and Indigenous inhabitants as far back as the Archaic period. As a hobbyist, Gogo's actions, though well-intentioned, failed to fully appreciate the cultural and historical significance of these artifacts to the Mohawk community from whom they originated. By collecting and removing items from the Akwesasne territory without the informed consent of the Mohawk people, Gogo's expeditions did not respect the sovereignty and cultural heritage of Akwesasne, inadvertently severing the connection between the community and its ancestral objects.

In 1970, Gogo gave his collection to the Archaeological Survey of Canada, part of the Museum of Man (now the Canadian Museum of History), totaling 75,000 pieces gathered from various sites. In hindsight, his decision to transfer his extensive collection of over 75,000 pieces to the Archaeological Survey of Canada in 1970 raises important concerns. While Gogo's dedication to preserving and cataloging these artifacts may have been sincere, his actions were carried out without the essential involvement of the Mohawk people to whom these objects truly belonged. This oversight underscores a broader pattern of colonial practices within the field of archaeology, where Indigenous voices were frequently marginalized, and their cultural heritage was often removed or disregarded in the name of "preservation."

The Gogo Collection

Along with the MCA archaeological consultant Francis Scardera, ARRO researchers viewed some of the pieces that were collected by Gogo in the Lake St. Francis area. The pieces collected ranged from pottery, flint arrowheads, and animal bones and teeth. It was an impressive collection of artifacts that gave a glimpse of the daily activities of those who travelled through Lake St. Francis.

The impact of Gogo's actions cannot be undone, but there is a positive development in this story: the artifacts that were once

collected and separated from their rightful cultural contexts are now being safeguarded and respected by the Canadian Museum of History. The museum's role in preserving these artifacts provides an opportunity for continuity, not just of the objects themselves, but of the deeper connections to the Indigenous communities they represent.

The museum's evolving approach includes a more inclusive and respectful collaboration with Indigenous groups, including the Mohawks of Akwesasne, in the care and interpretation of these pieces. This shift allows the museum to return the artifacts to a more culturally sensitive context, ensuring that the Mohawk community's voice is heard, their heritage is respected, and their rightful place in the history of these items is acknowledged. In this way, the issue of continuity is being addressed — through reconciliation, cooperation, and a deeper commitment to preserving not just the artifacts, but the stories and relationships they represent.

Acknowledgements

ARRO thanks Laurie Beaudoin, Selina Kemp, and Pierre Desrosiers from the Museum of History for their hospitality in sharing the collection with us and giving us a tour of the various labs in the Museum that handle various artifacts and items.

¹(Dictionary of Glengarry Biography, 2025)



Photos used with permission from the Canadian Museum of History.

ENTEWATATHÁ:WI - "WE WILL GOVERN"

ENTEWATATHÁ:WI

NATION BUILDING

WE WILL GOVERN.



FOLLOW US ON
FACEBOOK



facebook.com/Entewatathawi

Why Follow Us?

By following our page, you can stay up to date on:

- Key updates about the Entewatathá:wi Self-Government process
- Upcoming community survey and newsletters
- Opportunities to have your voice heard

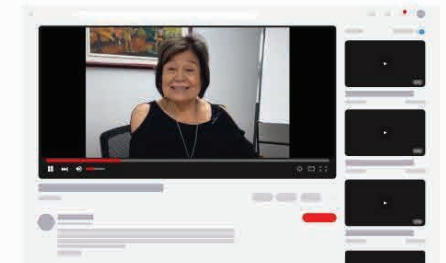


EXPLORE OUR
YOUTUBE
CHANNEL



youtube.com/@EntewatathawiNationBuilding

**Stay informed, learn about our
Community Advisors, and more!**



MISSION STATEMENT

To negotiate a self-government agreement with Canada that recognizes expanded jurisdiction and authority; and protect the aboriginal rights and title for the Mohawks of Akwesasne.

VISION STATEMENT

To implement the inherent right of self-government of the Mohawks of Akwesasne through the Akwesasne-Canada Entewatathá:wi Self-Government Agreement.

CONTACT ENTEWATATHÁ:WI/NATION BUILDING:

Telephone: 613-575-2250

Address: MCA Admin. #1 Building, 12 Akwesasne St. (Kana:takon, QC)



OFFICE OF VITAL STATISTICS

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT AKWESASNE MEMBERSHIP FOR YOUR CHILD

Do you know if your child is a member under the Akwesasne Membership Code?

If your child was born after April 17, 1985, and one of the following applies:

- The child's other parent is non-native, or
- The child's other parent is from another First Nation in Canada, or Tribe in the United States, or
- There is no father indicated on your child's birth certificate,

Your child is not a member and is not eligible for some services.

What's the difference between Indian Status and Akwesasne Membership?

Indian Status makes you eligible for benefits such as non-insured health benefits and some tax exemptions.

Akwesasne Membership rights and benefits include those listed above as well as land ownership, voting privileges, and post-secondary education assistance.

Does it matter WHEN I apply for my child?

Yes. You **must** apply before your child is 18 years old to avoid the probationary period. **Keep in mind that it could take up to 2 years for your application to be processed.**

Approved applicants aged 18 and over, will be a Probationary Member for 5 years and will **not** be eligible for the Membership rights and benefits during this time.

How do I apply for Akwesasne Membership for my minor child?

Applications can be obtained from the Office of Vital Statistics, Cornwall Island Administration Building #3 (CIA #3) on Kawehno:ke. They can be contacted at 613-575-2250 ext. 1013 or at ovsclerk@akwesasne.ca.



OFFICE OF VITAL STATISTICS

HELP US KEEP YOUR RECORDS CURRENT







 Birth Certificates	 Amended Birth Certificates
 Marriage Certificates	 Death Certificates
 Divorce Decrees	 Guardianship & Power of Attorney Documents

Contact the Office of Vital Statistics (OVS):
☎ 613-575-2250 ext. 1013 ✉ ovsclerk@akwesasne.ca 📍 CIA #3 Building, Kawehno:ke

OFFICE OF VITAL STATISTICS

OFFICE OF VITAL STATISTICS

Services provided by OVS:

-  **Indian Status** 
-  **Lands**
-  **Estates**
-  **Membership/Residency**
-  **Leasing**



CIA #3 Building
101 Tewesateni Road (Kawehno:ke)
Akwesasne, ON K6H 0G5

Tel: 613-575-2250 ext. 1013
Email: ovs.office@akwesasne.ca

AHKWESAHSNE MOHAWK BOARD OF EDUCATION

AMBE REGISTRATION FOR 2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR

The Ahkwesáhsne Mohawk Board of Education is informing families that student registration for the 2025–2026 school year is currently open and will close on May 30, 2025. Parents and guardians can enroll children in K4 through Grade 8 at any of the three district schools: Ahkwesáhsne Mohawk School (AMS), Kana:takon School, and Tsi Snaihne School.

Registration packets will be available at each district school and the AMBE Board Office, located at 169 International Road, Akwesasne, ON. At this time, online registration is not available.

To enroll in K4, children must be four years old by

September 30, 2025, and fully potty trained.

When submitting a registration, families will need to provide:

- 2025–2026 Registration Form
- Child’s immunization record or waiver
- Child’s birth certificate
- Child’s Certificate of Indian Status (Status Card)
- Child’s health card

For more information, please contact AMBE at 613-933-0409.

2025 FALL PROGRAMS AT IOHAHI:IO

Ready to take the next step in your education or career? Iohahi:io Akwesasne Education and Training Institute is now accepting applications for the following Fall 2025 programs:

General Construction Carpentry Techniques
(1-Year Certificate)

Leadership Development (1-Year Certificate)

Pre-Health Sciences (1-Year Certificate)

Early Childhood Education (2-Year Diploma)

Social Services Worker (2-Year Diploma)


Apply today! Scan the QR code below or visit the Iohahi:io Facebook page.

Scan the QR code with your smartphone to apply now!



Application Deadline: June 28, 2025 at 4 p.m.

If you have questions or would like more information about a program, please email info.iohahiio@ambe.ca.



AHKWESAHSNE MOHAWK BOARD OF EDUCATION


Office: 613-933-0409 or 613-575-2250 ext. 1400

Ahkwasasne Mohawk School
613-932-3366

Tsi Snaihne School
613-575-2291

Kana:takon School
613-575-2323

Iohahi:io Akwesasne Education & Training Institute 613-575-2754 or 613-575-2250 ext. 4100



Contact Us!

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

DEPARTURE OF DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne is announcing the departure of the Director of Health Amber Montour, due to personal family reasons.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Amber Montour for the kindness and passion she demonstrated to the community and staff during her tenure, and we acknowledge the positive changes she led in the delivery of health services. Her dedication and commitment to improving healthcare in Akwesasne

have left a lasting impact. We wish her and her family all the best.

Amber Montour’s departure was effective as of March 17, 2025. Tessa Jocko will serve as the acting Director of Health until the position is posted and filled.

Thank you for your patience and understanding during this transition.

ELDER SERVICES GEARS UP FOR EXPANDED SUPPORT

The MCA Department of Health’s Elder Services Program is excited to showcase their newest addition — a fully equipped pickup truck with a snowplow and spreader, ready to serve the community with care and dedication! Through their Minor Home Maintenance Program, Elder Services continues to assist clients with light chores around the home, while now offering exciting new services, including snow removal during the winter months and basic lawn care throughout the summer season.

Elder Services remains deeply committed to enhancing the quality of life for community members by ensuring their homes are safe, comfortable, and well-maintained. These services are available to elders ages 60 and older, with an exception for individuals ages 55 and older who have a medical disability. Intake sessions will be conducted for those interested in accessing these services.

This purchase was made possible through funding from Ontario Health East. To learn more or to schedule an intake session for snow removal or lawn care, please contact MCA Elder Services at 613-575-2341 ext. 1626.



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CELEBRATES DR. HORN FOR 10 YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE



Dr. Horn's tireless efforts and dedication have not only enhanced the well-being of our community members

The Department of Health would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Horn for her remarkable 10 years of dedicated service to our community. Over the past decade, Dr. Horn has exemplified unwavering commitment, compassion, and excellence in her work, making a profound impact on the lives of her patients.

but have also fostered a spirit of compassionate care that resonates throughout the Primary Health Care Team. Her contributions have been invaluable, and her legacy of service continues to inspire us all within the Department of Health.

Through Dr. Horn's work with medical students and residents, the Department of Health now has two other Indigenous Physicians that work within the Primary Health Care Team.

As we celebrate this significant milestone, we express our deepest appreciation to Dr. Horn for her unwavering dedication to the health and wellness of the community. Nia:wen (thank you), Dr. Horn, for your exceptional service and for being a beacon of hope and care in our community.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH ANNOUNCES NEW COMMUNITY PARAMEDIC INDIGENOUS PATIENT NAVIGATOR PILOT PROGRAM



The Department of Health would like to notify the community about the new Community Paramedic Indigenous Patient Navigator. Daryl Diabo will fill the role of this new program.

Daryl brings over 35 years of experience as a paramedic, having served for many years with the Akwesasne Mohawk Ambulance Service.

The Community Paramedic Indigenous Patient Navigator (CPIP) program is a pilot program that aims to bridge some of the gaps in Primary Care by bringing forth some primary care services into the home setting. The goal of this program is to reduce patient exacerbations and crisis which would require paramedic response. The program

also aims to reduce emergency room visits and hospital admissions.

Through this new program, the CPIPN will collaborate with potential client's family doctors, which will reduce the need for clinic visits while assisting community members with navigating Quebec Health services and healthcare system and advocating for their healthcare needs.

The CPIPN will work with clients by providing in-home chronic disease management, including preventative care and education. The CPIPN will be working collaboratively within the Clinical Care Services sector.

This new pilot program was launched on April 2, 2025. Community members interested in becoming clients of the Community Paramedic Indigenous Patient Navigator can self-refer or be referred to the program by their healthcare providers or a nurse.

For more information, please call 613-575-2341 ext. 3247.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

MEASLES AWARENESS FROM COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES

The Community Health Services Infection Prevention and Control Program (IPAC) is providing important information about measles.

What is measles?

Measles is a severe illness caused by a virus. It spread easily and is highly contagious.

What happens when you have measles?

Symptoms of the measles, including a high fever, cold-like symptoms, pink-eye, and a bad cough start 7-21 days after infection. Koplik spots (tiny blue-white spots inside the mouth and throat) can also appear but may not always be present. This is followed by a red, blotchy rash on the face that spreads down the body. There can also be severe complications from having measles.

Those who are most at risk of severe complications are:

- Non-immune children under five
- Non-immune adults over 20
- Pregnant women
- People who are immunocompromised

Symptoms of measles:

- Fever
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Body aches
- Rash
- Diarrhea
- Red eyes
- Feeling irritable or unwell

Complications of Measles:

- Severe bronchitis, ear infections, diarrhea
- Pneumonia (1 in 10 cases)
- Seizures
- Swelling of the brain (1 in 1,000 cases - of these cases, 15% die and 25% have permanent brain damage)
- Death (1-2 in 1,000 cases)

How does measles spread?

Someone with measles can spread it when they cough, sneeze or talk. A person with measles is contagious four days before, and four days after their rash starts. Measles is highly contagious and can be spread by just being in the same room as an infected person. It can remain in the air for up to two hours after the person leaves. Nine out of 10 people who are not immune to measles will catch it if exposed.

How do you protect yourself from measles?

Immunization is the best way to protect yourself, your family, and your community. The MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccine is readily available and a part of regular childhood routine vaccination. *Pregnant women are unable to get the MMR vaccine and must wait until the baby is born.*

What do you do if you think you have measles?

If you or your child develop measles symptoms, isolate at home and call your healthcare provider immediately.

For more information, please contact the Community Health Services Infection Prevention and Control Program at 613-575-2341 ext. 3220.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Akwesasne Non-Insured Health Benefits:
613-575-2341 ext. 3340

Community Health Services:
613-575-2341 ext. 3220

Jordan's Principle:
613-575-2341 ext. 2652

Addiction & Mental Health Services:
613-575-2341 ext. 3115

Land-Based Healing:
613-575-2341

Sahatiha'hará:ne Detox Center:
613-932-5050

Traditional Medicine:
613-575-2341 ext. 3100

Akwesasne Medical Clinic:
613-575-2341 ext. 3215

Kawehno:ke Medical Clinic:
613-932-5808

Home & Community Care:
613-575-2341 ext. 1618

Elder Services:
613-575-2341 ext. 1661

Iakhihsohtha Lodge:
613-575-2507

Tsiionkwanonhso:te Long-Term Care:
613-932-1409



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH THANKS DR. SAYLOR FOR HIS MANY YEARS OF SERVICE



On Thursday, March 27, 2025, Dr. Saylor concluded his services with the Department of Health. Dr. Saylor has provided paediatric services to the community of Akwesasne for over 10 years.

Dr. Saylor has been an integral part of the Department of Health's

Primary Care Team since January 2012, in which he provided outstanding paediatric care to the Akwesasne community. His compassionate approach and unwavering commitment has significantly impacted the health and well-being of our children and youth.

We extend a heartfelt nia:wen (thank you) to Dr. Saylor for his years of dedicated and compassionate service. His presence, kind demeanour, and caring heart will truly be missed. The Department of Health wishes Dr. Saylor all the best in his future endeavours.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH HONORS JANET BRANT, NP, FOR 10 YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE



The MCA Department of Health is delighted to honor Janet Brant, NP, for her 10 years of exemplary service and unwavering dedication to the health and wellness of our community. Janet's commitment to providing compassionate care and her tireless efforts to improve the lives of

those she serves have made a profound impact on countless individuals and families in the community of Akwesasne.

Over the past decade, Janet has consistently demonstrated exceptional professionalism, empathy, and expertise in her role as a Nurse Practitioner. Her dedication to her patients and her passion for promoting health and wellness have earned her the

respect and admiration of her colleagues and the community.

Janet's contributions extend beyond her clinical duties. She has been an advocate for health education, a mentor to aspiring healthcare professionals, and a trusted resource for those seeking guidance and support. Her positive influence and unwavering commitment to excellence have set a standard for all to follow.

As we celebrate this significant milestone in Janet's career, we express our deepest gratitude to her for her many years of dedicated service. Her unwavering commitment to the well-being of our community is truly inspiring, and we are honored to have her as a part of our Primary Health Care team.

Please join us in congratulating Janet Brant, NP, on her 10 years of outstanding service and in thanking her for her continued dedication to the health and wellness of our community.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

INSIGHTS AND HOPE: STEVE KELLER'S IMPACTFUL PRESENTATION ON THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC

In a time when communities are grappling with the harsh realities of substance use and addiction, the recent presentation by Steve Keller from Drug Free Kids Canada was a beacon of hope and knowledge. Held in our local community center, the event drew a diverse audience eager to engage in dialogue surrounding the pressing issues of the opioid epidemic, stimulant use, vaping, coping strategies, and the stigmas associated with substance use.

Understanding the Crisis

Steve Keller, a passionate advocate and educator, began his presentation by outlining the stark statistics surrounding the opioid crisis. He emphasized that opioid overdoses have become a leading cause of death in Canada, affecting not only individuals but entire families and communities. The presentation provided a sobering reminder that addiction does not discriminate; it affects people from all walks of life.

Keller also shed light on the rising use of stimulants, including methamphetamines and cocaine, which pose a significant threat, particularly among youth. His insights into the dangerous interplay between prescription medications and illicit drugs were eye-opening, prompting many attendees to reflect on the broader implications of substance misuse.

Coping Skills and Resilience

One of the most valuable segments of Keller's talk focused on coping skills. He shared practical strategies that individuals, families, and communities can adopt to combat the pressures that lead to substance use. Keller emphasized the importance of fostering resilience in young people, equipping them with the tools to navigate life's challenges without turning to drugs or alcohol.

His approach was both compassionate and pragmatic, encouraging open discussions about mental health and the importance of seeking help. Attendees left with a renewed sense of hope, empowered by the idea that with the right support, individuals can overcome adversity.

The Vaping Dilemma

Keller also addressed the growing concern of vaping, particularly among adolescents. He outlined the misconceptions surrounding vaping and its perceived safety compared to traditional smoking. By presenting the facts, he highlighted the potential health risks and the addictive nature of many vaping products. This section of the presentation sparked a

lively conversation among parents and educators, who are increasingly concerned about the prevalence of vaping in schools.

Challenging Stigma Through Language

A significant part of Keller's message was centered around the language we use when discussing substance use and addiction. He urged attendees to reconsider the words we choose, advocating for a shift from stigma-laden terminology to more compassionate and understanding language. By reframing the conversation, we can create an environment that encourages individuals to seek help without fear of judgment.

Keller's emphasis on language resonated deeply, as many participants shared personal experiences and reflections on how stigma has impacted their lives and the lives of their loved ones. This open dialogue fostered a sense of community and solidarity, reinforcing the idea that we are all in this together.

Conclusion: A Call to Action

In conclusion, Steve Keller's presentation was not only informative but also transformative. It served as a crucial reminder of the ongoing struggles surrounding substance use and the need for community engagement, education, and support.

As participants left the event, it was clear that Keller's insights had sparked a renewed commitment within the community to tackle the opioid epidemic and related issues head-on. By fostering open conversations, challenging stigma, and equipping ourselves and our youth with coping skills, we can work towards a healthier future for all.

The journey ahead may be challenging, but with advocates like Steve Keller leading the way, we can approach it with knowledge, compassion, and hope.

If you or someone you love is seeking support on the journey to recovery, MCA's Addiction Services is here to help. Our compassionate team offers guidance, resources, and culturally relevant programs to assist community members in overcoming addiction. To learn more about how we can support you or your loved one, please contact us at 613-575-2341 ext. 3115 or email addictions@akwesasne.ca.



Pictured L-R: Addiction Specialist Tara Garrow-Keysis, Guest Presenter Steve Keller, and Addictions Outpatient Supervisor Mitchell Skidders.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY & SOCIAL SERVICES

MCA ANNOUNCES DEPARTURE OF DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY & SOCIAL SERVICES

The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne is announcing the departure of Director of Community & Social Services Joseph Morin-Lauzon, effective April 1, 2025.

Mr. Lauzon served in this role for three and half years, contributing to the growth of the department's services, especially in the areas of child rights, special needs, and homelessness. His pursuit of partner-

ships, internally and externally, has created and enhanced lasting services that support and improve the lives of our families.

We thank Mr. Lauzon for the years of service he dedicated and wish him the best in the future.

DCSS Associate Director Valerie Cree-Cook will serve as acting director while the position is posted and filled.

BACK TO THE LAND: SURVIVAL SKILLS CAMP

On March 8 & 9, Akwesasne Child & Family Services Traditional Support Unit hosted a survival skills camp, reconnecting participants with the land and traditional knowledge. Led by Angello Johnson and Eric Sunday, the camp covered essential bushcraft skills - building shelters, starting fires, trapping, skinning, and cooking wild game.

In today' fast-paced world, knowing how to navigate the outdoors isn't just a skill - it's a way to build resilience, confidence, and a deeper connection to nature. Niawenhkó:wa to everyone who joined this hands-on learning experience!



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY & SOCIAL SERVICES

NOURISHING KNOWLEDGE, STRENGTHENING SOVEREIGNTY WITH ONKWE

Onkwe held its second annual Nation to Nation Food Sustainability Conference, a powerful step toward reclaiming our food systems and restoring the balance between land, culture, and community.

On March 8 and 9, Akwesasronon and visitors gathered at the Mohawk Nation Longhouse to share knowledge on seed saving, traditional planting, rainwater harvesting, restoring Onkwehonwehnéha ecosystems, and more. Hands-on activities like mushroom cultivation, elderberry propagation, and a community swap provided participants with the

tools to support food sovereignty at home. The event also featured a screening of Tentsitewahkwe, a film by Katsitsionni Fox.

This gathering was made possible thanks to the support of the MCA Department of Community & Social Services and the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe's Agriculture Program. Niawenhkó:wa to everyone who attended, presented, and shared their skills.

By learning from the past and working together in the present, we are planting the seeds for a stronger, more sustainable future!



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY & SOCIAL SERVICES

Akwesasne Family Wellness Program: 613-937-4322

DCSS Administration: 613-575-2341 ext. 3305

Community Support Program: 613-575-2341 ext. 3262

Akwesasne Child and Family Services: 613-575-2341 ext. 3139

ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM

ST. LAWRENCE RIVER REMEDIAL ACTION PLAN UPDATES (CORNWALL/AKWESASNE)

The St. Lawrence River (Cornwall/Akwesasne) Remedial Action Plan is a collaborative restoration initiative between the Canadian and Ontario governments, alongside local communities and stakeholders. Together, we aim to restore and protect the environmental health of the St. Lawrence River between the Moses-Saunders Dam in the west and at the Ontario-Quebec border on the east side of Lake St. Francis, for future generations.

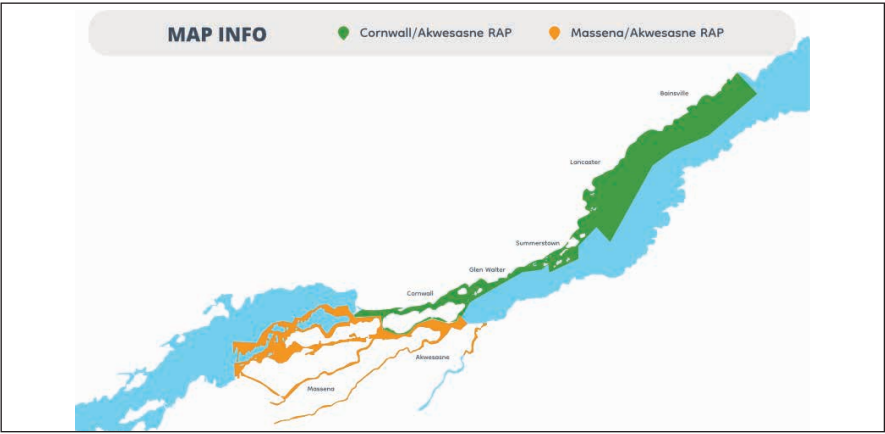
RAP 101

In 1987, as part of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, 43 locations within the Great Lakes were found to be severely degraded by historical human activities. These locations were deemed Areas of Concern, or 'AOCs'. Remedial Action Plans (RAPs) were a strategy created for each AOC to identify environmental issues and their sources, set clear goals and objectives for restoration, and implement and monitor restoration efforts.



Our AOC

The St. Lawrence River at Cornwall, Akwesasne, and Massena was designated as a binational AOC by the International Joint Commission (IJC) under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA), due to the presence of contaminated sediments and



poor water quality resulting from industrial activity in the area.

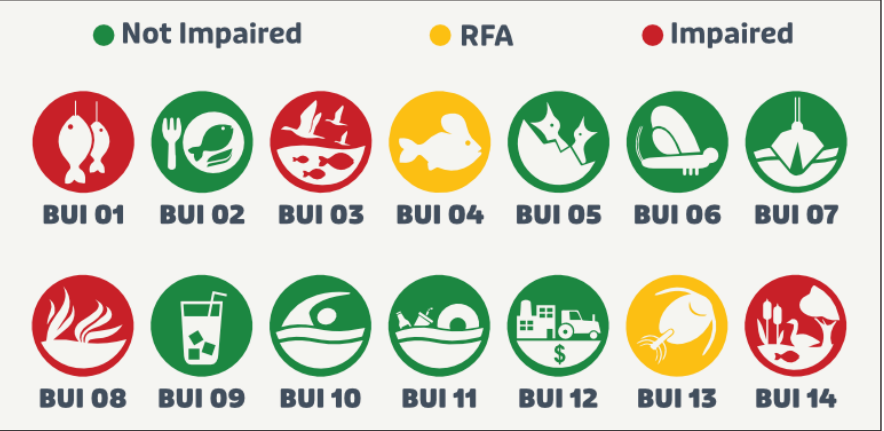
Two separate Remedial Action Plans (RAPs) were created to address the environmental concerns found within the different jurisdictions that fall within the St. Lawrence River AOC, including Canada, the United States (U.S.), Ontario, New York State, and the traditional territory of the Mohawks of Akwesasne.

The Cornwall/Akwesasne RAP is jointly managed by Canada and Ontario, in partnership with the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, while the Massena/Akwesasne RAP is jointly managed by the U.S. EPA, New York State and Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe.

Environmental Issues

In the Great Lakes AOCs, there were 14 environmental issues caused by historical human activities that were selected as Beneficial Use Impairments (BUIs). For the St. Lawrence River Area of Cancer to be "delisted", or removed from the list of AOC's, all BUIs must be designated "Not Impaired".

There are 6 BUIs remaining for the St. Lawrence River (Cornwall/Akwesasne) RAP.



The People Behind the RAP

The St. Lawrence River RAP is managed by the St. Lawrence River Restoration Council (SLRRC), a dedicated team of community members, scientists, and stakeholders working together to restore and protect the St. Lawrence River. The SLRRC was formed in 1998 to oversee and address the Beneficial Use Impairments (BUIs) that were identified in the St. Lawrence River (Cornwall/Akwesasne) Area of Concern.

PROGRESS UPDATES

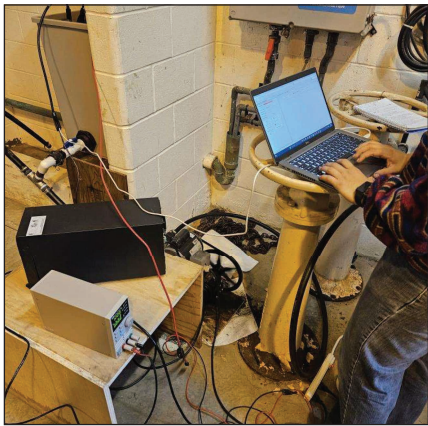
Eel and Sturgeon Project

As part of ongoing efforts to assess the health of the St. Lawrence River ecosystem, 10 American Eels and 10 Lake Sturgeon have been collected and prepared for mercury and PCB concen-

ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM

ST. LAWRENCE RIVER REMEDIAL ACTION PLAN UPDATES (CORNWALL/AKWESASNE)

tration testing, with samples ready for submission to the MECP laboratory. Additionally, 10 eels are undergoing pathology (disease) and histology (structure of tissues) analysis at the Kemptville lab, with final results pending. Through this initiative, a total of 20 American Eels and 20 Lake Sturgeon will have undergone contaminant analysis, and an additional 20 American eels will have undergone pathology and histology analysis. To support tracking and research, 20 eels have been fitted with acoustic tags. This winter (2024-2025), 51 eels were necropsied, providing valuable data on their health and environmental stressors in the region.



The REASON (River Environment And Sensor Observation Network) Project

In 2022, a sensor array was deployed at one of the Akwesasne's principal drinking water treatment facilities to collect high-temporal-resolution water quality data year-round. In 2024, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne (MCA) Environment Program conducted weekly data downloads from

the St. Regis Water Treatment Plant to support ongoing monitoring efforts. This data will play a key role in informing long-term water quality monitoring and resource management in Akwesasne, helping to ensure the protection of drinking water for the community.

Eutrophication Monitoring

Work was completed in early 2024 and reviewed by the Water Quality Working Group (WQWG), including water quality monitoring and invertebrate sampling at 14 tributary mouths in South Glengarry and Akwesasne, as well as near-shore and offshore water quality monitoring. RRCA is continu-



ing to develop the Eutrophication Strategy for the St. Lawrence River (Cornwall/Akwesasne) Area of Concern (AOC) and adjacent Watersheds, which not include previous plans for Pattingale Creek and the Shoreline Catalogue, two plans that were originally created to address BUI 14. The Strategy will also be updated to reflect the needs for achieving water quality targets on Mohawk Council of Akwesasne (MCA) lands.

Outreach Events

The RAP team attended many local outreach events this year, including Akwesasne Powwow, Cornwall Ecoday, Family Fishing Day, World Wetlands Day, and the annual River Symposium. At these events, we engaged with community members, through interactive displays and presentations, sharing information about ongoing restoration efforts, and how local residents can get involved with environmental stewardship. Our goal is to foster a deeper connection between the community and the river, encouraging active participation in protecting and restoring the St. Lawrence River ecosystem for future generations.



Funky Fish Guide

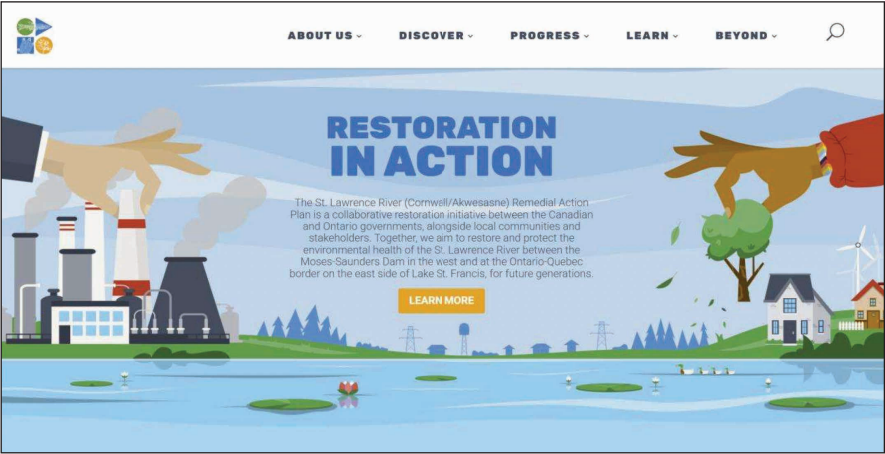
The Funky Fish Guide has arrived! This comprehensive guide is designed to assist you in identifying abnormalities found in and on fish within the St. Lawrence River and its tributaries. Learn about the types of fish commonly affected, understand the causes behind these abnormalities, and gain insight into the health of our aquatic ecosystems. Whether you're an angler, biologist, or environmental enthusiast, the Funky Fish Guide is your essential tool for understanding and addressing fish health issues. The River Institute, MCA, and SRMT handed out hundreds of copies this year! You can find a link to the digital version of the guide at: www.stlawrenceriverrap.ca/funky-fish.

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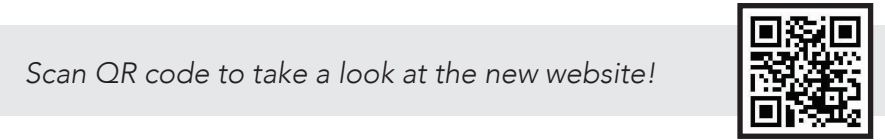
ST. LAWRENCE RIVER REMEDIAL ACTION PLAN UPDATES (CORNWALL/AKWESASNE)

Website Update
The St. Lawrence River (Cornwall/Akwesasne) Remedial Action Plan website has a fresh new look! Designed to be more user-friendly and informative, the updated site makes it easier than ever to explore our restoration efforts, learn about key environmental issues, and stay up to date on RAP initiatives. We also have updated our e-library which houses all sorts of RAP-related documents. Whether you're looking for past reports, community



updates, or ways to get involved, you'll find it all in one convenient place. Visit stlawrenceriverrap.ca to check out the latest updates and discover how we're working together to restore and protect the river!

Visit our website: stlawrenceriverrap.ca



Bicultural Restoration Workshops

Workshop focused on fish, fur bearing mammals, and plants were conducted by MCA Environment staff in 2023 and 2024. These workshops facilitated knowledge sharing through various presentations, demonstrations, and hands-on activities which promoted reconnection to culturally significant species and activities associated with them. The purpose of these workshops was to support and increase in knowledge and/or willingness to engage in safe bicultural and tradi-



tional activities. These workshops were well attended with each one reaching full capacity and participants expressing interest in attending future workshops.

Biocultural Working Group

In an effort to ensure that Indigenous perspectives and concerns are represented and addressed within the Remedial Action Plan and its processes, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne is establishing a Biocultural Working Group. The Working Group will review historical remedial actions and reports to address any gaps in data and knowledge. This will provide insight and recommendations for the Remedial Action Plan from an Indigenous lens and a more accurate representation of the experiences Akwesasronon, as it related to human or ecological use of the ecosystem

that has been lost or impaired as a result of environmental degradation.

Mercury-Isotope Project

In a recent study, researchers from the River Institute discovered elevated levels of mercury in a Cornwall sewer catch basin beneath Brookdale Ave. These findings were similar to another study that found elevated mercury levels in nearby river sediment and young-of-year yellow perch, suggesting that mercury may be entering the river system from sewer outflows. To find out where this mercury is coming from, researchers the River Institute will measure mercury isotope ratios in the contaminated sites. Mercury isotopes, which are variations in the structure of the mercury



atom, can be used to trace whether mercury in the environment comes from natural or industrial sources. This research will also look at how mercury travels through the food web to see how different mercury sources affect the whole ecosystem. This will inform the city how to manage this source of mercury through the Cornwall Sediment Strategy.

To find out more about the Cornwall Sediment Strategy, visit <https://stlawrenceriverrap.ca/css/>.



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

FAMILIES AND FIRST RESPONDERS HIT THE ICE TOGETHER

On March 8, Akwesasne families laced up and hit the ice for the First Responders Family Skate at A'nowara'ko:wa Arena! Officers spent time with families, shared a meal, and even got in on some friendly competition!

AMPS, Akwesasne Child & Family Services, RCMP, and the Customs & Immigration Union joined in for an afternoon of skating, laughter, and connection.

A fan favorite? Sgt. Justice! The kids loved snapping photos and cheering him on in a skating race...though he might need to upgrade his gear next time! No skates = no win!



MARCH 2025 STATISTICS

302	March	41	1013 Community Services	1	206 Assault Weapon/CBH - Level 2
1	040 Theft Under \$5000 - Other	9	1014 Crime Prevention	1	209 Discharge Firearm - Intent
1	041 Possession Stolen Property	2	1016 Domestic Dispute (Non-violent)	1	210 Assault Police
1	061 Bail Violations	2	1018 Escorts - Prisoner	2	212 Assaults - Other
1	068 Obstruct Peace Officer	4	1023 Judge's Order (Court)	1	705 Dangerous Operation MV
2	072 Mischief (Prop. Damage) Under \$5000	2	1023 MVC - Non-Reportable	1	711 Impaired Operation MV
1	073 Criminal Code - Other	1	1025 Property - Seized	1	715 Fail to Stop/Remain (CCC)
1	088 Cannabis - Trafficking	6	1029 Suspicious Persons	1	717 Fail to Stop / Remain (HTA)
2	100 Immigration Act	3	1030 Suspicious Vehicles	1	720 Traffic - Federal Statutes
7	1001 Alarms	21	1031 Suspicious Circumstances	65	721 Traffic - Provincial Statutes
1	1002 Alerts	1	1032 Sudden Death		
12	1003 Assist Other Agencies - Ambulance	4	1036 Warrant - Bench/First		
4	1003 Assist Other Agencies - Cornwall PS	1	1037 Warrant - Search		
16	1003 Assist Other Agencies - Other	1	1040 Traffic Complaint		
1	1003 Assist Other Agencies - Tribal PD	5	1041 Mental Health Act		
40	1004 Assist Public	1	1050 Youth Complaint		
1	1006 Document Service	3	1056 Hazardous Conditions		
7	1008 By-Law - Dogs	7	106 Provincial Statutes - Other		
1	1011 By-Law - Other	8	1063 Marine Patrol		
3	1012 Civil Disputes	2	205 Assault - Level 1		



GIRLS SKATE DAY

1-5PM

NEEDED:

- ARTIST FOR ART WORKSHOP
- WOMEN FOOD / CRAFT VENDORS

PRESENTED BY:

SAT. MAY 10, 2025



2025-2026 SMALL BUSINESS GRANT

To request an application or ask questions about the grants, please email ecdev@akwesasne.ca or contact Business Services Officer Troy Thompson at 613-575-2250 ext. 1803 or troy.thompson@akwesasne.ca.

Criteria:

- Businesses must be located and operating within the jurisdiction of the MCA. (Kawehno:ke, Kana:takon, and Tsi Snaihne)
- The applicant must be a registered Member of the Mohawks of Akwesasne. (OR applicant has 51% ownership in the business if partner is a non-member)



RAMQ CARD RENEWAL

Available at the Tsi Snaihne Medical Clinic throughout the month of April!

Join us from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. on:

- Monday, April 14
- Monday, April 28
- Friday, April 25

QUESTIONS?

Call Community Health at **613-575-2341 ext. 3220.**

