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## ***DIRECTIVE 071:*** **PUBLIC SAFETY A TOP PRIORITY**

**PUBLIC SAFETY TRUMPS EVERYTHING** as the ERCB drafts energy regulations and conducts its day-to-day business. For that reason, updates made to *Directive 071: Emergency Preparedness and Response Requirements for the Petroleum Industry* in 2008 were an ERCB priority.

The ERCB has always maintained a stringent regulatory framework governed by principles designed to protect the public and environment from harm through responsible petroleum operations.

*Directive 071*, first issued in 2003, was a result of recommendations from the Provincial Public Safety and Sour Gas Advisory Committee to develop clear, complete, and concise guidelines and requirements for emergency response plan development and implementation. This directive consolidated many previous ERCB requirements and industry best practices into one comprehensive document.

The directive is aimed at ensuring that appropriate emergency response plans (ERPs) are in place to respond to incidents that present potential hazards to the public and the environment, that there is an effective level of preparedness to implement ERPs, and that the capability exists to carry out an effective emergency response to incidents in terms of trained personnel and equipment.

The updated directive was the result of extensive feedback from stakeholders, including first responders, the public,

Alberta Health and Wellness and regional health authorities, Municipal Affairs, the Alberta Emergency Management Agency, and the energy industry. The key changes to *Directive 071* include the following:

- The ERP application process now includes a pre-approval stage and post-approval audits.
- Requirements for companies to provide information regarding public protection measures to people living within emergency planning zones (EPZs) are more stringent.
- Companies must ensure that 24-hour phone numbers are posted at energy facility locations by way of a conspicuous sign.

The ERCB's Emergency Planning and Assessment (EPA) team is responsible for ensuring that companies meet requirements set out in *Directive 071*. Upon issuance of the revised directive, the EPA team created new processes that went into effect in September 2008.

In conjunction with the release of the directive, the ERCB launched ERCBH2S, a state-of-the-art software program used to calculate EPZs. Use of this new tool is mandatory and allows for more effective emergency response planning.

All of the changes contained in *Directive 071* significantly enhance Alberta's already strict emergency preparedness and response requirements. The ERCB will continue to enhance emergency preparedness and response requirements as necessary to ensure that regulations are technically sound, reflect the needs of all Albertans, and serve the public interest. ✦