

## SMITHERS CURLING CLUB UPDATE

As a result of the tragic Fernie Accident, the Smithers Curling Club was required to complete many upgrades and new safety features, and we hope to have the ice installed and curling to start by 31 October.

On 17 October 2017, three workers tragically lost their lives in Fernie BC when there was an ammonia leak in an arena refrigeration plant. As a result of this accident WorkSafeBC carried out emergency inspections of all ammonia refrigeration plants in the province. On 20 December the Smithers Curling Club Refrigeration plant was inspected by WorkSafeBC.

As a result of this inspection WorkSafeBC issued eight Orders to the Smithers Curling Club. This included installation of an emergency wash station, new ammonia sensors, a new emergency exhaust system, emergency stop features and implementation of numerous procedures.

The Smithers Curling club is run 100% by volunteers. We receive no taxpayer money. Twenty years ago we took out a loan from the town of Smithers and the Bulkley Valley Credit Union for a new Chiller and we have never missed, nor been late on a loan payment. We will make the last payment this year. The total cost to address these WorkSafeBC orders was approximately \$72,000. This was money that the Smithers Curling Club did not have.

As a result, the club applied to the Regional District of Bulkley Nechako for a grant under the Federal Gas Tax Program. It is hard to put into words how thankful we are for the outstanding support we have received from the Regional District of Bulkley Nechako. From the very first meeting with Director Mark Fisher and his staff, their attitude has been: "How can we help you?". Under the Federal Gas Tax Initiative they provided two grants totalling close to \$72,000, which allowed us to address all eight Orders from WorkSafeBC.

As of 14 October 2018, we have completed the work on the last order from WorkSafeBC. We are now in full compliance and able to restart our refrigeration plant and start making ice!! This work has resulted in a much safer Curling Club for both the members and the community of Smithers. This also ensures the Curling Club will continue to be a valuable community resource for the region.

Our hope is to have the ice installed and the curling league play to commence on 31 October, Halloween!! So come on out on Halloween and trick or treat at the Curling Club! Help us celebrate our new and improved curling club! Sign up individually or as a team. Curling is affordable and great fun for all ages! We have a mixed league, men's league, drop-in and a Friday night fun league! You can also rent the curling club facility and bring your group out for a fun time and try curling! Instructors can be provided upon request. Check out our website [curlsmithers.com](http://curlsmithers.com) for more detail.

Sincerely  
Klaus Kraft, President