



NEWS RELEASE - July 4, 2011

Saskatchewan Information and Privacy Commissioner 2010-2011 Annual Report

Saskatchewan's Information and Privacy Commissioner, Gary Dickson, has submitted his office's 2010-2011 Annual Report to the Legislative Assembly. The document is available at www.oipc.sk.ca.

Dickson stated: "Saskatchewan has a golden opportunity to use modern technology to achieve greater transparency to the citizens of the province and hence, improved accountability. Our Government should consider how it can encourage participation by the public by means of proactive disclosure of government information. This proactive disclosure needs to be done in open, accessible and reusable formats and at minimal cost. Requiring citizens to make a formal access request by hard copy under our 19 year old legislation in many cases is the most cumbersome, costly and inefficient way of getting information to our public."

Dickson noted that other governments have already embraced the concept of Open Government including the Government of Canada, the Province of British Columbia, the cities of Toronto, Vancouver and Edmonton, the federal government in the United States as well as the United Kingdom, Australia and Mexico. We have seen the success in other jurisdictions where citizens can request access to government information online, can obtain the information online and in much less than the 30 day period now mandated by *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Public expectations have changed significantly since our first generation access and privacy law was developed. In 2011 Saskatchewan residents are increasingly communicating and doing business electronically. Residents expect information about their provincial or local governments to be available in a format that suits them in a timely way.

The Commissioner also expressed concern about a number of public bodies that are not responding quickly enough when their decisions to deny access to records is appealed to the OIPC. In his next Annual Report, if there is no improvement, he will specifically identify those public bodies that need to improve their performance.

-30-

To obtain a copy of the 2010-2011 Annual Report, contact:

Saskatchewan Information and Privacy Commissioner

503 - 1801 Hamilton Street, Regina, SK S4P 4B4

Phone: (306) 787-8350, Toll free: (SK only) 1-877-748-2298, Fax: (306) 798-1603

Email: webmaster@oipc.sk.ca Website: www.oipc.sk.ca