



## **Aging AGT Community Centre needs major ice surface repairs**

Eston and area have been lucky over the past 30 years to have the multi-use AGT Community Centre as the centre for recreation in the area.

Over the years the recreation committee has worked hard to keep the centre in top working condition.

At 30 years old, the Ice plant at the AGT Community Centre has past its operational life expectancy and is showing its inefficiencies in the ice plant. Money has been spent to keep us operational to date, but an immediate significant outlay of funds will be required in to address current problems.

Members of the local recreation committee briefed councilors about the situation at the Community Centre recently at a joint meeting of the two councils.

The second problem that we are unfortunately faced is that the ice plant compressors have been overworked over the years. There is now a drastic difference in ice levels on both the skating and curling surfaces due to shifting and concrete breaking. This has increased upkeep and maintenance costs.

This has been getting drastically worse over the past few years and it's just a matter of time until the plant fails completely, according to the experts the recreation committee has contacted. To prevent this, the community is faced with a significant outlay of funds, more than one million dollars, in the very near foreseeable future.

Following is a breakdown of the issues affecting the skating and curling surfaces:

- o The ice surfaces are no longer level with a difference of up to six inches in some areas.
- o There is stress on the refrigeration system from the shifting; this has led to the skating rink gates no longer closing properly and the glass being wired together.
- o The curling club had the past two seasons cut short due to plant and facility failures.

To date, the recreation committee has carried out due diligence, having several companies look at the facility, checking their credentials and reaching out to other communities that have used their services. These communities report significant cost and time savings after the work has been completed.

Technology has changed over the years and is becoming more efficient, resulting in money and time savings. For instance, with the proposed changes the time to make ice would be reduced from twenty- one days to two to five days.

While the needed repairs will cost a significant amount of money, they will ensure the longevity and operational savings of the AGT Community Centre for future generations.

At present, recreation committee members and the two councils are looking at ways to fund the needed work. Both the Town of Eston and RM of Snipe Lake No.259 have reserve funds earmarked for such a purpose. They are also looking at available grants and possible fundraising projects. More information will be forthcoming as it is available.