



AB Today – Daily Report October 1, 2019

Quotation of the day

“Alberta will remain an energy superpower, but it will be a superpower in geothermal and solar and wind.”

*Green Party of Canada Leader **Elizabeth May** pitches a transition to sustainable energy for oil workers left jobless in her party’s climate change plan.*

Today in AB

On the schedule

The house reconvenes on Tuesday, October 8.

Premier watch

Premier **Jason Kenney** was scheduled to make an announcement with Transportation Minister **Ric Mclver** on Highway 1A, but the event was cancelled due to a snowstorm. (Justice Minister **Doug Schweitzer** also cancelled a stop on his rural crime tour because of bad weather.)

Per the *Globe and Mail*, Kenney [will spend the weekend campaigning](#) for the Conservative Party of Canada in the 905, the vote-rich region outside Toronto that could make or break the federal election. While in federal politics, [Kenney was](#) the Conservatives’ point man on wooing the area’s various multicultural communities.

Today’s events

October 1 at 8:30 a.m. — *Calgary*

The UCP cabinet will meet in the McDougall Centre.

October 1 at 11 a.m. — Edmonton

Seniors and Housing Minister **Josephine Pon** will make an announcement about a tool to make financial assistance programs for seniors more accessible while cutting red tape.

October 1 at 12:20 p.m. — Calgary

Premier **Jason Kenney** will give a keynote address to the Calgary Chamber of Commerce at The Hudson Loft.

Topics of conversation

- The impact of the 2014 recession on Alberta cost Canada's GDP \$130 billion, according to [research](#) by University of Calgary economist **Trevor Tombe**.
 - Had Alberta followed the same economic trend as B.C. between 2014 and 2019, the national unemployment rate would be 4.9 per cent, rather than the 5.7 per cent it clocked in at in August.
 - Tombe also predicts the federal deficit would be nearly wiped out at \$13 billion lower.
- The government [released](#) its Q2 Opioid Response Surveillance Report, which shows 305 people died of accidental opioid poisoning in the first half of 2019, an average of two per day.
 - There were 153 deaths in the second quarter of the year, compared to 135 during the previous three months.
 - Fentanyl and non-fentanyl opioids were involved in 81 per cent of all drug and alcohol poisoning deaths, both accidental and suicide.
 - In the second quarter, from April to June, there were 94,214 visits to supervised consumption services and a monthly average of 2,120 unique clients and 801 overdoses at the sites.
 - Earlier this year, the provincial government [pledged \\$140 million](#) to fight the ongoing opioid crisis.
- Premier **Jason Kenney** [repeated](#) his promise to introduce an Alberta version of Clare's Law after a Calgary woman, **Dianne Denovan**, [shared](#) her story of a near-death beating at the hands of an ex-boyfriend who had a violent history.
 - Clare's Law — named for U.K. woman **Clare Wood**, who was murdered by her partner, whose violent past was unknown to her — allows people to request a criminal record from police about their partner.
 - **Christine Myatt**, spokesperson for the premier, told CTV the law will not be ready for the fall session, but the government is drafting the bill and plans to fulfil its campaign commitment.

- University of Alberta university relations vice-president **Jacqui Tam** announced her resignation from the institution following outrage over billboards that said with climate change will come “[beefier barley](#).”
 - The billboards, part of the university’s ongoing “[Truth Matters](#)” campaign that highlights the institution’s research, drew ire ahead of Friday’s Global Climate Strike because they appeared to portray climate change in a positive light.
 - “Research is always complicated; the problems and issues being explored are complex and multifaceted,” Tam wrote in a blog post where she took responsibility for the ad. “By asking why, and what, and how, our researchers follow where the evidence leads. Different, even divergent, approaches are pursued by researchers across the University of Alberta; this is necessary work, even when it challenges expectations and assumptions.”

- An Edmonton-made Twitter bot, ParityBOT, uses artificial intelligence to offer a positive counter to negative attacks against female politicians and candidates. CBC [has the story](#).

- A fresh poll has Premier **Jason Kenney** in the top three in its ranking of popular premiers.
 - An Angus Reid survey of Alberta residents shows Kenney with 60 per cent approval amongst Albertans.
 - Quebec Premier **François Legault** topped the list with 64 per cent approval, in a statistical tie with Saskatchewan Premier **Scott Moe**.
 - The Angus Reid Survey results were similar to a nation-wide [poll](#) from DART, where Kenney had approval from 55 per cent of respondents.

- An updated global economic outlook from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development projects Canada’s real GDP will grow by 1.5 per cent this year, while Alberta’s growth will top out at 0.8 per cent. Alberta’s forecast is rosier for next year at two per cent, assuming pipeline access.

- Both West Texas Intermediate and Western Canadian Select crude prices are [lower](#) than last year.
 - In August, WTI averaged \$54.81 per barrel, down 19.2 per cent from the same month last year, while WCS averaged \$43.10 per barrel, 11.2 per cent lower than the same month in 2018.
 - However, the differential averaged at \$11.71 in August, a far cry from the nearly \$46 per barrel differential in November last year.

- Green Party Leader **Elizabeth May** [told](#) CBC’s *Cross Country Checkup* that Alberta would remain an energy superpower under her party’s climate change plan. May’s

platform outlines huge spending for building retrofits and green energy infrastructure, which she says would employ out-of-work Alberta tradespeople.

- “We know that there's a sustainable future for every single worker in the oilsands,” May said.
- The Green leader also reiterated her commitment to ending the import of foreign oil, instead urging Canada to rely on the oilsands and other domestic energy sources “for as long as it takes to get off fossil fuels, which is as rapidly as possible.”

News briefs — Governmental

Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

Agriculture and Forestry Minister **Devin Dreeshen** put his official stamp of approval on the Alberta Forest Products Association’s “LoveABForests” advertising campaign.

“It’s time to set the record straight. Albertans should feel pride in knowing their forests are maintained with world-class forest-management practices,” Dreeshen said. “The Alberta government is fighting for our forestry industry and the 40,000 hard-working Albertans it employs by endorsing the AFPA in their efforts to share the healthy, environmentally sustainable work that Alberta foresters do every day.”

The campaign officially launched last week. Alberta Forest Products Association president and CEO **Paul Whittaker** called forests “Alberta’s best kept secret,” despite 60 per cent of Alberta being forested, according to a government news release.

The forestry sector is Alberta’s third largest industry.

“We have some of the best managed forests in the world — bar none,” Whittaker said. “LoveABForests is about getting the message out about our forests and talking about the role that forest companies play in keeping Alberta’s forests sustainable for generations to come.”

Appointments and employments

Alberta Legislature Press Gallery

- *AB Today’s* **Catherine Griwkowsky** was elected president of the Alberta press gallery, effective Monday. CBC’s **Michelle Bellefontaine** was re-elected vice-president, *Star Edmonton’s* **Kieran Leavitt** was elected secretary and the *National Post’s* **Tyler Dawson** was elected treasurer.