



AnimalKind

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UTILIZING TOOLS TO IMPROVE ANIMAL WELFARE

Understanding the roles and responsibilities when it comes to domestic animals in our province, and who to call to deal with emerging issues, is no easy task. Albertans can be forgiven for being confused. When it comes to investigating animals in distress, Peace Officers like those employed by the Alberta SPCA, have authority to enforce the *Animal Protection Act*.

Each municipality has the ability to license and regulate animals within their boundaries, and pass bylaws that stipulate animals need to be controlled. If pets are wandering in the community, municipal bylaw officers and community peace officers have the ability to enforce the jurisdiction's bylaws, and pickup and hold free-roaming animals until they can be reunited with their owners. However, while municipalities have the authority to pass and enforce bylaws, many choose not to.

Employing staff empowered to enforce bylaws, and ensuring animals while in custody are appropriately cared for, can be quite expensive. Facilities that house animals must have oversight to ensure animals are housed safely, have access to food and water, medical care if necessary, ongoing supervision, enrichment, and security. Paying officers and animal care employees is not cheap, and many municipalities, when having to choose between raising taxes to manage animals under their bylaws, or just not implementing bylaws, choose the latter. Unfortunately, this leaves people and animals at risk.

When a municipality chooses not to pass a bylaw and allow free-roaming animals in their community, the population of animals can balloon. Cats in particular can see their numbers increase exponentially, and residents are justified in their concern both for the welfare of the cats and how they can negatively impact the neighbourhood.

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FOCUSING ON ALBERTA DOGS

Late in 2022, Alberta SPCA Peace Officers began investigating a dog breeding operation as a result of a call to our Animal Distress Line. Our Peace Officers found there were approximately 60 dogs on the property with varying degrees of health concerns and distress. While Peace Officers identified numerous reasons why the breeder was having difficulty managing their animals, one clear trend was the operator's inability to place their normally highly adoptable puppies. This coupled with continued breeding, despite an inability to place current litters, contributed to the high numbers of dogs. It seems families who hoped to add a puppy were choosing to back out, likely due to the challenging financial times. It's fair to say there are more dogs available for adoption in Alberta than families who can add a canine friend. Sheltering agencies are reporting they are full, with long wait lists of people looking to surrender their beloved pets.

In some cases, families may find they can no longer care for a dog they adopted citing economic hardship and the poor economy.

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YEAR IN REVIEW

New Investigations return to pre-pandemic levels in 2022.

Alberta SPCA Peace Officers were very busy in 2022, investigating 2,548 complaints of animals in distress. This represents a 15% increase in complaints over our four-year average. And while there are a number of factors that likely played a role in the spike, the difficult economy is certainly a defining one.

The most glaring number from our 2022 figures is the number of complaints received about dogs. Our Peace Officers addressed 880 calls about dogs being potentially neglected or abused. That's a 28% increase over the previous four years. And a significant number of those investigations would have involved multiple dogs alleged to be, or in distress. Unfortunately, the number of complaints related to cats and cattle also increased, while horse files remained consistent with the previous four-year average.

While our investigation numbers and associated statistics provide some interesting trends we are not able to define a root cause for these trends. Anecdotal, our Peace Officers are reporting they're encountering a significant increase in individuals unable to appropriately care for their pets due to the high costs of maintaining the animals, despite their deep desire to do so. What this means is that our Animal Protection Services staff members are busy, and early indications are our Peace Officers will remain busy once again in 2023 as many Albertans continue to struggle to care for their animals.



COLIN EDGE

On September 26, 2022, Colin Edge of the Rochester area pleaded guilty to a charge under the *Animal Protection Act* (APA) of allowing animals to be in distress 2(1). The Alberta SPCA's Animal Protection Line received a public complaint in November of 2021 alleging cattle were in distress due to a lack of feed. During the investigation, an Alberta SPCA Peace Officer found three dead calves and 25 dead chickens. A number of other cattle were deemed to be in distress due to a lack of food and water, and were seized to relieve their distress.

Mr. Edge was charged with three offences under the APA for allowing animals to be in distress 2(1), for failing to provide adequate food and water 2.1(a), and for failing to provide appropriate medical care to an animal that is sick or wounded 2.1(b). Mr. Edge was convicted on a single count of allowing animals to be in distress while the other charges were withdrawn. He was fined \$3,500.

CURTIS RING

Curtis Ring pleaded guilty on August 16, 2022 for allowing an animal to be in distress under the *Animal Protection Act* (APA) 2(1). In January 2022, the Alberta SPCA's Animal Protection Line received a public complaint about a steer that appeared lame on a property in the County of Foothills. An Alberta SPCA Peace Officer attended the property and found the animal with what appeared to be a broken leg. When the owner refused to humanely euthanize the steer despite a recommendation from a veterinarian, the animal was seized by the Peace Officer who authorized the vet to euthanize the animal.

Mr. Ring was subsequently charged with allowing an animal to be in distress, APA 2(1) and for failing to provide care to an animal that is sick or wounded, APA 2.1(b). He pleaded guilty in Provincial Court to a single count of allowing an animal to be in distress. Mr. Ring was fined \$1,500.

CHEYENNE BEIERBACH

On October 4, 2022, Cheyenne Beierbach of Barons, Alberta was convicted in Provincial Court of causing an animal to be in distress under the *Animal Protection Act* (APA) 2(1). Ms. Beierbach was charged in December 2020 with causing an animal to be in distress (a dog) and for failing to seek care for an animal that is sick or wounded 2.1(b) under the APA.

As part of her sentence, Ms. Beierbach is prohibited from possessing, having custody or control of, or residing in the same residence as an animal for 15 years. The only exception to the prohibition is that Ms. Beierbach is permitted to possess, have custody or control of, and reside in the same residence as two dogs in her possession at the time this order was made. As part of the order, Ms. Beierbach shall, once a year, take each dog for a checkup to be performed by a licensed veterinarian and provide a letter prepared by the veterinarian in respect of the health and well-being of the animals in her custody as per the order. The prohibition order expires on October 4, 2037.

KARLI SITTING EAGLE

Karli Sitting Eagle pleaded guilty to the *Animal Protection Act* (APA) charge of allowing an animal to be in distress, 2(1) on December 1, 2022. In October of 2021, the Alberta SPCA received a public complaint about a kitten potentially in distress on a property South of Gleichen, Alberta. An investigation was initiated and the Alberta SPCA Peace Officer observed a kitten that appeared to have a broken leg. When the owner failed to take the animal to a veterinarian, the kitten was seized by the Peace Officer and transported to a veterinary clinic for treatment.

Ms. Sitting Eagle was subsequently charged under the APA for allowing an animal to be in distress 2(1) and for failing to provide care to an animal that is sick or wounded 2.1(b). Ms. Sitting Eagle pleaded guilty in Provincial Court to a single count of allowing an animal to be in distress and was fined \$400.

Utilizing Tools...

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Often, residents will call their municipality about concerning situations only to be advised to phone the Alberta SPCA. However, Alberta SPCA Peace Officers do not have authority to enforce municipal bylaws; our authority is to relieve distress in animals as per the *Animal Protection Act*. Furthermore, some of the Alberta SPCA's investigation files where there was considerable animal distress involved owners who had well over the number of animals as stipulated by their municipality. This means that if the bylaw had been enforced, the number of animals and level of distress found may have been avoided.

Managing animals within a community is important, both for the residents and the animals. We believe residents expect their civic leaders to accept this responsibility and manage issues the same way municipalities invest in community safety and road maintenance; it's important. We also believe residents will understand if their mill rate is increased to pay for this service. While raising taxes is never ideal, communities have many options for managing the animals in their community in a cost effective way, including utilizing veterinary clinics or boarding kennels to house animals until they are reunited with their families. Ignoring the issue should not be an option.

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To find out more about the work we do for animals across Alberta, visit our website at albertaspca.org. The mission of the Alberta SPCA is to protect, promote and enhance the well-being of animals in Alberta.

Not all the opinions expressed in AnimalKind are necessarily those of the Alberta SPCA.





AB. STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN 12 DAYS OF KINDNESS

More than 300 Alberta students spread kindness this past December, participating in the 12 Days of Kindness. During the two-week period students completed small acts of kindness towards self, others, animals and the environment. Activities included daily tasks such as tidying up the school, learning about the five needs of animals, practicing mindfulness and reducing waste.

New Format Proves Successful

This year the activities were designed in the style of an ‘advent calendar’ with a new activity revealed each day. A grade 1/2 teacher from Stony Plain said, “Students were so excited to open the next window and see what we would do and learn!” An online version of the tracker was also available for teachers who wanted to go paperless.



Feedback from teachers who participated in the 12 Days of Kindness has been overwhelmingly positive. A grade 3/4 teacher in Manning commented, “I think it’s an awesome activity to get kids thinking about kindness every day. And I love how it covers kindness not only to other people and animals, but also the environment. I think that is [so] extremely important in this day and age.”

Grade two students from Manning, AB collected paper recycling from every classroom in their school on one of the 12 Days of Kindness.

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INCORPORATING INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE INTO HUMANE EDUCATION

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s Calls to Action include calls to build student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy and mutual respect. The Government of Alberta has committed to including First Nations, Métis and Inuit content for all students in the province to learn more about diverse Indigenous Peoples and how they are integral and contribute to a vibrant Albertan and Canadian society. To help teachers integrate some Indigenous teachings into their classroom, we collaborated with Tammy Johnston, M.Ed of Birch Tree Education Consulting Services. As a Métis woman with over 30 years of experience in the education field, and a deep connection with nature and animals, Tammy was well positioned to provide perspective and expertise on humane education classroom resources.

With help from Tammy, we developed a resource that explores the Seven Sacred Teachings. These teachings originate from the Seven Grandfather Teachings from the Anishanaabe people that focus on the relationships we have with every living thing and the Earth we share, along with offering advice on how to treat others with respect. These teachings have been adopted by many First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples. Our resource, a two-week exploration of the Seven Sacred Teachings, draws from Indigenous ways of knowing, aligns with our character education resources and connects to the curriculum.

Aimee Movold, an Indigenous artist, Cree from Samson Cree Nation and Métis from Fishing Lake created the artwork for this resource. Aimee draws inspiration from nature and storytelling and is passionate about learning and celebrating her culture to share with her kids and community.

The two-week exploration of the Seven Sacred/Seven Grandfather Teachings is available on our website: everylivingthing.ca/7sacredteachings.



ONE FAMILY WELFARE

PETS IN OFW PROGRAMS CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS

Cathleen was referred into our Pet Safekeeping Program from a local women’s shelter. She had recently fled an abusive relationship and went to a shelter with her two young children after enduring years of emotional, and eventually physical abuse. The family had a large breed puppy that was left behind; a dog Cathleen quickly became worried about after her partner began sending threatening text messages. She knew she couldn’t go back to her abusive partner, but was worried the six-month old dog, Snoopy, would become a target of abuse. Cathleen submitted an application to enter our program and then worked with her support worker and police to safely bring Snoopy from the property into our care.

Unfortunately, Cathleen was not able to obtain permanent housing before the Christmas season. While she and her children remained in a shelter over the holidays, Snoopy’s stay was extended in our program. Snoopy enjoyed some extra puzzle toys and special Christmas treats while he anxiously awaited his turn to go home. Snoopy remained in our care into the new year, but was able to be returned once Cathleen found a home for the family shortly after the holiday season had passed.

While we always hope pets in our program are able to return home for Christmas and be a part of making positive, family memories, they often require our care throughout the holiday season. It’s common for individuals in crisis to face delays when it comes to accessing important services during the holiday period, something as easy as meeting to sign a lease may be delayed. Our staff have learned to anticipate this and make adjustments to accommodate these delays. With Christmas comes extra expenses for our organization for boarding. We also set aside a few extra dollars to provide special snacks and activities for those pets who are away from their families, ensuring the pets in our care get to celebrate the special day regardless of where they are.



These 2 dogs were among hundreds of animals in OFW programs in 2022



Economic Challenges Lead to More Calls for OFW Staff

While the number of clients in our Pet Safekeeping and Crisis Care programs remained consistent last year, the volume of calls to the department increased 18% in 2022. Unfortunately, the current economic challenges seems to be to blame.

Pet owners who are struggling are also finding that many social services cannot help them, and they’re turning to our One Family Welfare team instead. This means our staff are fielding significantly more calls from people who are facing both financial and mental instability. Unfortunately, many pet owners had to be turned away from our Crisis Care Program because their situation was not due to a life-changing event that impeded their ability to care for their animals; the definition required to have pets enter the program.

While the number of clients utilizing our Crisis Care Program decreased, unfortunately the number of calls for our Pet Safekeeping Program from people facing family violence spiked. These are priority calls for us as we work diligently to get pets to a safe place so other family members can quickly and safely move into a shelter.



DEVELOPING A LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Alberta SPCA serves communities across the province and aims to continue building knowledge, understanding and relationships with people who live here and care for animals. This includes Indigenous Peoples who have lived and continue to live on these lands where we work to carry out our mission to protect, promote and enhance the well-being of animals in Alberta. Part of creating connections, building respectful relationships and moving towards reconciliation, is acknowledging the land and the people who have been here since time immemorial.

To create a meaningful acknowledgment, we sought guidance from Nahayawin, an Alberta-based agency that works with organizations, including not-for-profits, to “reinvigorate the spirit of Treaty into their organizations.” After learning more about treaties, land acknowledgments and allyship, our staff created an acknowledgment that also recognizes our shared values with many Indigenous Peoples.

The Alberta SPCA respects the deep foundational connection Indigenous Peoples have had to animals and this land, now known as Alberta, for thousands of years.

We are grateful to continue to work towards the humane treatment of all animals in all areas of the province on the traditional territories encompassed by Treaties 6, 7, 8, 4, & 10 and the Métis Homeland.

We are inspired by how many Indigenous Peoples recognize animals, people and the environment are interconnected and that respecting these relationships is fundamental to the well-being of all living things and the earth that we share. As treaty people, we also strive to listen, respect, care for, and live in harmony with one another, animals and the natural world.

This acknowledgement is evergreen; it will be revisited and updated as we learn more and continue our journey into reconciliation.

Alberta Dogs...

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Others may choose to not add a dog to their family because they can't justify adding an expense during times of rising costs. The dog population in Alberta may have reached its critical mass.

While Alberta's sheltering organizations struggle to find homes for the dogs in their care, there are still dogs arriving in Alberta from other jurisdictions. Some animal organizations have traditionally brought dogs to Alberta for adoption because our province had the capacity to find homes for them. However, that is no longer the case, and imported dogs are taking up space in shelters that could be used by Alberta dogs who need to find a home. Alberta SPCA Peace Officers have been told by several placement partners they cannot take in dogs that we have seized because they are full with no available capacity.

This is why the Alberta SPCA is encouraging animal welfare groups to focus their energies on Alberta's dogs, and to no longer bring in canines from out-of-province. Every dog who comes to our province from neighbouring jurisdictions is likely taking a spot away from a local dog that needs a home, at a time when finding homes is not easy.

The Alberta SPCA also encourages breeders to recognize demand for dogs is low, and to limit the number of litters their dogs have to prevent finding themselves overwhelmed with too many dogs and not enough families to adopt them.

Kindness...

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While the challenge is over, students are taking what they learned and while the challenge may be over, students are using their knowledge to ensure others, including animals, are treated with kindness and respect. A grade four teacher from Manning shared that after learning about the importance of dust baths for chickens, one student is building a dust bath for his chickens!

Every class that participated in the 12 Days of Kindness was awarded a certificate and was added to the Kindness Map. To see all the ways students are building compassion and empathy towards animals, people and the environment, visit the Kindness Map, everylivingthing.ca/kindness-map/.

IN LOVING MEMORY

Lucy Abt, from Malcolm Todd
 All of our beloved pets, past & present, from David & Laura Dear
 All the Dyer Cockers, from Steven Dyer
 Isabella Allen, from Pauline & Derek Hoskin
 Bandit, from Lyn Campbell
 Teddy Bean, from Patricia Drapeau
 Thomas Beck, from Linda Gross
 Biggy, from Terri Sungsook Johnson
 Boomer, from Renee Volman
 Brandy & Darian, from Paula Sawatzky
 Shirley Brogan, from Pamela Chaput
 Buddy, from Terry & Barbara Wildman
 Buddy, from Tracy & Stan Wadden
 Dianne Buller, from Anessa Krysco
 Bunker, from Jennifer Guidinger
 Keith Burmaster, from Phyllis Gallo
 Keith Burmaster & Ruff, from Gwen Kindleman
 Charlie, from Jennie Westcott
 Ted Chrusciel, from Sheila Csaba
 Cisco, from Sharon Fowler
 Claude Claude Marchand & Hercules, from Sharon Weleschuk
 Roxy Corns, from Margaret E. Corns
 Barbara Cotton, from Mary Lister
 Barb Cotton, from Barbara Gerolamy
 Margaret Cox, from Nikki Taylor-Rolick
 Avery-Ann Ida Cunningham, from Caroline Bunton
 Darcy, from Breeda Alvarez
 Patricia Ann Devlin, from Gail Reinhart
 Cassandra Di Timoteo, from Todd Hanlan
 Digger Digger & Silver, from Elizabeth Black
 Charlie Dowler, from Leslie M. & Noel Dowler
 Amanda Ellis, from Ann Clipstone
 Alex Englot, from Anonymous
 Ross Farewell, from Bev Anderson
 Fat Cat, from Mary Moody
 Brody Fearn, from Lorelei Anselmo
 Ferris, from Sue Ann Nodder
 Rae Firth, from Pauline Kostek
 Jodi Forster, from Linnea McKercher
 Linda Foster, from Jorre Walker
 Fred, from Shawna Weaver
 Buddy Frehtich, from Julie Pennock
 Sandra French, from Shelby & Garry Keitges
 Clio Galbait, from Tracey Foster
 Ken Geisler, from Laura Barroll,
 Marketa Canova, Magda & Petr Janovska, Petra & Jirka Dockalova,
 Crystal McNaughton, Sharon Rattai
 Linda Goulet, from Edith & Nolan Thulien
 Bryan William Gray, from Genoa Nicols
 Laurine Gray, from Bob & Jean Brimacombe

Gus, from Brad & Joan Jones
 Gus, from Susan Vogel
 David Hagen from Roy Maxwell, Da Cui
 Keith Hamilton & Cricket, from Alison Davis
 Edmond Henley, from Juliette Henley
 George Hinrichs, from Michelle Hinrichs
 Bob Hori, from Anonymous
 Christopher Hoskins, from Paddy Brine, Michelle Chan
 Linda Hulme, from Jennie Walshe
 Hutch, from Cailin Wolsey
 Jack, from Caron Bright
 Jet, from Rozanne Martin
 Jim, from Heather Roe
 Jixie, from Allen & Sylvia Johnson
 Joey, from Anonymous
 Sasha Jugnauth, from Derek Jugnauth
 Lee Kirchner, from Jeannette Kirchner
 Murray Glenn Knight, from Vivian King,
 John Balsillie
 Merlin D. Kober, from Porter Engineering Ltd
 Rhonda Gaye Kropf, from Karl Kropf
 Keith Donald Leary, from Rustun Ruberry, Jeff Eddington
 Alison Madge Lein, & Mazie, Fred, Rusty, Patches & Diesel, from Morgan Lein
 Bentley MacDonald, from Darlene Gagne
 Macy, from Angelika Matson
 Steve Markus, from Alexander Nagy
 Robin May, from Elaine M. Wood
 George Mayhew, from Elsie Mayhew
 Oliver McPherson, from Michael Oreskovic
 Meeka, from Charissa Cummings
 Thomas Meters, from Frank & Debbie Walther, Jack & Joyce Andrew
 Brian Metke, from Marvin & Marion Stilet
 Milton, from Violeta Mariscal
 Minu, from Jadwiga Windyga
 Molly, from Kris & Sheryl Bay
 Patricia Ann Muirhead, from Mary Lougheed
 Jean Murphy, from Kelly McDermott
 Lorna Grace Nassichuk, from Thomas Frisch, Irene Krouse, Club Fed - friends at GSCC
 Reme Nelson, from Susanna Vose, Gordon Cumming
 William David Odell, from Nancy Clarke
 Parker, from Judy Clarke
 Ollene Pelletier, from Michelle Pelletier
 Richard Freeman Peterson, from Trevor Wolfe

Tebo Peterson, from Kim Peterson
 Mark Petiot, from Trina Chapman
 Kramer Pezim, from Jutta Pezim
 Piggy & Kat, from Mr Dean Tamerra Rideout
 Rose Pollitt, from David Pollitt
 Pretzel & Bandette, from Dwayne Steil
 Punch, from Gail Cameron
 Quill, from Angela Wu
 Patricia Ragsdale, from Elsie Mayhew
 Rana & Prissa, from Arlene Schmidick
 John R. Reid, from Patricia Reid
 Rex & Tron, from Roy Lee
 Casey Reynolds, from Julie A. Reynolds
 Esta Richardson, from Dell Richardson
 Rosie, from Buffy Afseth
 Samson, Soda & Schneider, from Patty Hicks
 Silver & Jake, from Nonna Roth
 Sketcher, from Joan Mielke
 Sketcher, from Kris & Sheryl Bay
 Skoki, from Maura Binley
 Skye, from Donna & Terry Crowe
 Betsy Smith, from Edna Andrich
 Suzie Spitfire, from Irene Nutbrown
 Stanley, from Sandra Madvid
 Cathie Strong, from Jennifer Strong
 Tofu Tang, from Marline Smith
 Tango, from Amanda Beattie
 Robert W. Thomson, from Joanne Thomson
 Tiki, from Jan & Paul Petersen
 Trifle, from Cara Block
 Trouble, from Barb Anderson
 Bob Turner & Lola, from Debbie Rakos
 Elizabeth Tuxworth, from Josephine Cleopahrt
 Twigg, from Lillian Fesciuc
 Twigg & Raider, from Georgina Sawitsky
 Simon Upright, from Chirag Shah
 Valentine, from Claudette Lachance
 Amber Voice, from Edie Heavin, Don & Elaine McFarlane, Steelers PeeWee Football Team, Glenn Manz
 Oscar Meyer Wade, from Claire Ovenden
 Sadie Wadley, from Donna Wadley
 Wembley, from Eszter Thompson
 Renee White, from Tiara Kinsey
 Betty White, from Anonymous
 Joanne Wiebe, from Jean Matthews
 Winston, Webster & Topaz, from Leona De Boer
 Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, from Coral Lukaniuk & Kim Croisdale



For donations made from Sept 1 - Dec 5, 2022



ANIMALKIND RESPONSE FORM

Winter 2023

If you believe Animal Protection, Education and Pet Safekeeping are vital to preventing neglect and abuse, please support the Alberta SPCA's programs by becoming a member and/or making a donation. Help us help the animals by filling out this form and mailing it to: Alberta SPCA, 17904 118 Avenue NW, Edmonton, AB T5S 2W3, or visit us at albertaspca.org.

Name _____
 Address _____
 City/Town _____ Postal Code _____
 Phone _____ Email _____

Donations and Memberships

Animal Response Team (ART)

YES! I support the Alberta SPCA's province-wide Animal Protection, Education and Pet Safekeeping programs.

- Enclosed is a donation of \$ _____
(Income tax receipts are automatically issued for donations of \$10 or more.)
- I would like to renew my membership or become a member of the Alberta SPCA:
- \$15 student/senior \$20 Individual
 \$30 senior family \$35 family

I'm paying by:
 Cheque Credit card: VISA Amex
 MasterCard

\$ _____ membership + \$ _____ donation = \$ _____ (total)

Cardholder Name _____

Card Number _____

Expiry _____ / _____

Signature _____

I authorize the Alberta SPCA to deduct \$ _____ from my bank account or credit card on the 1st day of each month or the next business day. I understand that I can change or cancel this monthly donation at any time, subject to providing written notice of 15 days or more.

Signature _____

Date _____

Please withdraw this monthly amount from my:

- Bank Account (attach a cheque marked VOID)
 Credit card: VISA MasterCard Amex

Cardholder Name _____

Card Number _____

Expiry _____ / _____

Signature _____

* To view a sample cancellation form or learn more about cancelling a PAD agreement, contact your financial institution or visit www.cdnpay.ca. You have certain recourse rights if any debit does not comply with this agreement. For example, you have the right to receive reimbursement for any debit that is not authorized or is not consistent with this PAD agreement. For more information on your recourse rights, contact your financial institution or visit www.cdnpay.ca.