

Alberta Environmental Monitoring Agency Operational



With the coming into force on April 28, 2014 of its empowering legislation, the Protecting Alberta's Environment Act ([found here](#)), the province's new environmental monitoring agency, the Alberta Environmental Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Agency, or AEMERA, is now open for business.

As set out at its website ([found here](#)), AEMERA has been established to monitor, evaluate and report on key air, water, land and biodiversity indicators to better inform decision-making by policy makers, regulators, planners, researchers, communities, industries and the public. Its mandate is to provide open and transparent access to scientific data and information on the condition of Alberta's environment, including specific indicators as well as cumulative effects, both provincially and in specific locations.

AEMERA is responsible for monitoring provincial air and water quality, and ambient monitoring of biodiversity, previously managed by Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development. It is also leading the province's involvement in the Joint Oil Sands Monitoring project, working with the federal government and stakeholders in the oils sands region to coordinate and enhance environmental monitoring activities in the area.

Over the next six months, AEMERA will expand to include additional environmental indicators for air, water, land and biodiversity in all regions of the province, and over the next year will evolve further to fulfill its mandate to provide open and transparent access to scientific data and information on the condition of Alberta's environment, including specific indicators as well as cumulative effects, both provincially and in specific locations.

Building on Alberta's Integrated Resource Management System, AEMERA will largely comprise one of three pillars identified by the Alberta Government to administer this system, the Comprehensive Environmental Monitoring System (which will integrate with the other two pillars, being the Land-Use Framework, and the Enhanced Energy Regulatory Process).

As we opined in a prior article pertaining to AEMERA ([found here](#)), in our view there are a number of keys in order for the program to be successful, the first being its independence, both actual and perceived. We expect that the success of the program will largely depend on the scientific reliability of the data made publicly available

by AEMERA, public buy-in and clear sources of sufficient and ongoing funding.

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