

# Successful Siting of New and Expanding Intensive Livestock Operations - The Alberta Experience

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If you are considering developing a new Intensive Livestock Operation (ILO) or expanding your existing operation make sure that you come and take part in this workshop session. We plan to give you insight into the approval processes you will face and give you pointers on how best to prepare yourselves. You will soon see common threads and issues across the Prairie Provinces and hopefully gain a better understanding of some of the complexities you will face in the development approval process.

The continued development of the Intensive Livestock Industry combined with:

- the decrease in the percentage of the rural population as part of the total population,
- an increase in the rural non-agricultural population as a percentage of the rural population, and
- a significant increase in peoples access to information through the Internet and e-mail

have led to some unique challenges facing the developers of new or expanding intensive livestock operations.

In 1997-98 Alberta had 471 intensive livestock applications. 446 (94.7%) of these were approved. This is a significant statistic, however, in spite of this approval rate, there are significant issues facing ILO development in the province.

In 2000 there were several large development applications which received substantial community opposition and generated a lot of media coverage. This wave of opposition continues to affect development applications, to varying degrees, across the province and reflects an increasing trend of the 'countryside' being regarded as a 'common resource' with the public increasingly demanding a say in how it is managed. This trend can also be

seen in changes in landuse bylaws affecting ILO's in more of our municipalities, as well as growing community opposition/intolerance to ILO's and their operation.

The ILO industry is continually evolving with facilities becoming more specialized and generally increasing in size. The hog industry is especially seen as being 'secretive' because of the biosecurity, management and design of the facilities. This leads to further mistrust and misunderstanding by the public.

The main community opposition for hog facilities continues to be due to the negative impact of odours as well as the increasing size of the operations. These impacts are then generally linked to 'quality of life' issues, 'perceived health impacts', and increasingly to the potential for degradation of the environment.

Environmental liability is also increasingly impacting ILO's with financial and insurance institutions more frequently requiring assurance that a development will not adversely impact the environment. Research on the impacts of ILO's, both positive and negative, continue to assist in the development of better technologies and management practices, but the onus still lies with the ILO operator to adopt these new practices.

At the workshop you will hear examples of successful development approval strategies, learn about the more common pitfalls and gain insight into the community issues. If you are part of this industry I strongly encourage you to attend.