



New Ice Plant Being Installed at Ponoka Arena Complex

(February 1, 2021 – Ponoka, Alberta) – A new ice plant is being installed at the Ponoka Arena Complex following Town Council’s approval at its regular meeting last week to award the contract to CIMCO Refrigeration. The new ice plant will replace the Arena’s existing ice plant, which is 35 years old and at the end of its life cycle.

The new ice plant offers many advantages. Its increased efficiency will allow the Town to expand its regular ice season and offer ice during summer months to sport user groups. “The new plant will allow us to host summer training camps in Ponoka which is an exciting opportunity for our community,” said Andrew Jones, Recreation Coordinator for the Town of Ponoka. He notes the old ice plant couldn’t keep up with ice making in warm weather due to its age and inefficiency.

The new ice plant also offers major safety advantages because it will be housed in an exterior building outside of the Arena and requires significantly less ammonia to operate than was required by the old ice plant.

Arena Ice to be Removed This Week

With the Arena having been shutdown for the past two months due to provincial health restrictions which aren’t expected to be lifted before the end of the regular ice season, Town staff will begin removing the ice from the Arena this week. “This will allow us to accelerate the installation of the new ice plant and the removal of the old one so we can be ready to reopen the Arena to ice users by August 1 – more than a full month earlier than we normally reopen. This will provide our sport user groups with considerably more ice time at the start of the next season,” said Jones.

He notes other communities have also begun removing ice from their arenas due to the cost of maintaining the ice while the facilities are closed to the public. “We’ve consulted with our ice user group representatives and they’ve told us they understand our decision to begin removing the ice this week. Many have also told us they’re excited by the opportunities that the new plant offers to expand our season and provide extra ice time in August,” said Jones.

He adds that while the new ice plant is being installed, the Arena will undergo annual maintenance improvements and repairs, including:

- Plexiglass replacement around the ice surfaces;
- Painting beams above the ice;



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- Board repairs;
- Board advertising touch ups and replacements; and
- Concrete slab repairs.

The new ice plant is a mobile system that can easily be moved as needed to service a new recreation multiplex (Community Wellness Centre) in the future.

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