



# Co-op 2019 Year End Newsletter



2019 is now behind us, and we would like to give each of our members & customers an update of how things are going at our Co-op. The board felt that you, the member, should be updated on what is new, what has changed and what has been upgraded at the La Crete and High Level locations. We trust this newsletter gives you some insight into what has happened over the past year at Co-op. As always if you have any questions please come in, call or email us at [admin@lacreteco-op.com](mailto:admin@lacreteco-op.com) as we value your feedback.

**Hi-Lites** - 2019 certainly was another busy year for Co-op. It was a year of challenges and many successes. While our year end numbers have not been finalized, a high level summary of our financials shows that we had a 6% increase in sales going from \$55.9 million to \$59.2 million. Our petroleum division was up over 4% to go to \$41.7 million in sales and the Food Store and Variety each had a healthy increase of over 9% for a combined total of \$17.5 million in sales.

## Upgrades

**High level Petroleum** –We completed a fairly large expansion to the warehouse in High Level in order to add more storage to help with the increase in sales in oil, DEF and various other products.

**La Crete Food Store** – We added new tills and checkouts to allow us to serve our customers quicker.

## Changes

**High level Petroleum** – We installed an emergency backup generator at the High Level site. In years past if there was any interruption to the power supply we would be unable to serve our customers and members. The generator was particularly vital this year as the Chuckegg Creek fire caused the town of High Level and all the surrounding areas to be without electricity for a number of days. In this time Co-op was still able to serve customers who needed fuel in order to fill their vehicles so they could comply with the evacuation order and move to some other location.



## WILDFIRES AND EVACUATIONS

One of the challenges faced this year was that of wildfires. On May 12 the Chuckegg Creek forest fire started and it quickly grew in size and intensity. By May 19 the 62,500 acre (25,300 hectare) wildfire was about 25 km (16 mi) southwest of High Level. Overnight, on May 19, the fire almost tripled in size to 170,000 acres (68,700 hectares) and on May 20, with the fire within 5 kilometres (3.1 mi) of the town High Level, a state of local emergency and an evacuation alert were issued. While initially estimated to be a three day evacuation it turned into a two week evacuation.

On June 19 an evacuation order was given for the town of La Crete and some of the surrounding area and this lasted for one week. In both cases, and in both communities, neighbors and neighboring towns pitched in to help those affected

and showed the hospitality that the north is known for. During this time Co-op had many employees pitch in and go way above and beyond in order to help those who needed it. We want to say a huge “Thank-you” to our dedicated staff!

On August 23, after 70 days of being out of control, the fire was declared “controlled”. It ended up burning over 864,868 acres (350,000 hectares) of forest and destroying a number of houses, with most of those being within the Paddle Prairie Metis Settlement.

## Memberships

### MEMBERS ARE OWNERS

Once a person has bought a membership they are eligible for a rebate on all their purchases in the form of cash and / or equity. In other words, Co-op offers competitive prices up front on quality products and services plus you can still share in the profits that your Co-op makes - unlike other companies! And unlike a Costco, your Co-op membership fee is a one-time fee and **you get your membership fee** back when your account is closed.

Many companies take their profits out of your local towns but not a Co-op. The profits stay here and with you. For example: ***The average refund over the past five years has been 1.80% in food, 3.60 % in fuel and 4.75% in oil and lubes.*** Now while these rates change and move up and down each year based on the profitability of Federated Co-op and the local Co-op, it just serves to remind how powerful a Co-op membership can be and how much you can save by being a member and by shopping at Co-op. This is the advantage of being a Co-op member.

**How does it work?** You buy a membership for \$500 which becomes your starting equity. Any purchases you make qualify for a potential Patronage allocation (refund) which is comprised of more equity as well as cash paid out once a year. Over the years your equity in Co-op grows and once you retire or move out of our trading area this equity can be redeemed as cash. As an option for making it easier to purchase a membership, La Crete Co-op allows the membership to be paid in installments over one year. We work hard all year so we can share our profits with you!

If you are interested in purchasing a membership please come into the Administration office (open Monday to Friday 9:00am to 5:00 pm) and we can explain all the advantages of being a member of a local Co-op!



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**La Crete Petroleum 780-928-4111**

**High Level Petroleum 780-926-8837**