

September 12, 2025

For Immediate Release

FROM INCIDENT TO IMPROVEMENT: THE TOWN OF HINTON STRENGTHENS RECREATION CENTRE SAFETY

Hinton, AB - What began as an alarming situation at the Dr. Duncan Murray Recreation Centre is a reminder about the importance of preparation, teamwork, and forward planning.

Late on September 9, 2025, an ammonia leak resulted in the closure of the Recreation Centre. At the time, there were minimal users in the facility. Those present were evacuated quickly by staff onsite, whose efforts were supported by ongoing training by the Recreation Administration to prepare user groups accordingly.

Because of this preparation and well-coordinated response, there were no injuries, minimal disruption to users, and the ice surface was preserved. Arena staff have been working tirelessly to restore the ice to pristine condition, and programming was restored quickly. There are no ongoing safety concerns for patrons visiting the recreation centre.

This effective response was made possible by strong community partnerships. Hinton Fire Rescue, together with mutual aid partners at Mondri, responded swiftly and effectively. Mondri played an instrumental role by providing hazmat protective equipment that allowed crews to safely shut off the valves in a timely manner. Their support demonstrates the critical role of collaboration in keeping our community safe.

The Town has also been taking long-term steps to improve safety at the Recreation Centre. As part of the 2025 Budget process last year, Council approved \$1.743 million for the Arena Plant Upgrades Capital Project to replace the arena refrigeration unit. Following a competitive bid process, the Town awarded the ammonia plant replacement project to CIMCO. The new plant will be housed in a separate accessory building located behind the Steve Hotchkiss Arena, eliminating the risk of a chemical release inside the Recreation Centre.

Work on this project is already underway. The Town is currently securing permits for the project, with the concrete pad foundation expected to be poured this fall. The new plant will be built by CIMCO at its shop and delivered to Hinton by February 2026. To avoid disrupting the ice season, the new plant will be tied in and the old one decommissioned in spring 2026.

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Photo: Dr. Duncan Murray Recreation Centre



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