



News Release

Provincial Auditor

Auditor calls on Government to better protect children in its care

For release after the Report has been tabled.

REGINA, December 4, 2008—Provincial Auditor Fred Wendel today called on the Ministry of Social Services to improve how it looks after children. Children who are wards of the Minister are the legal responsibility of the Minister. The Minister has all the responsibilities of a parent with respect to these children. However, the Ministry does not have adequate processes to know how many children are wards, who they are, and where they live. “The Ministry needs to do a much better job of ensuring that these children live in an abuse-free, affectionate, and healthy environment,” said Wendel.

The Auditor also highlighted inadequate protection of information stored in computer systems at many government agencies. For example, the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency does not have adequate processes to secure the information on its computers. The Agency needs to follow policies it has established, protect information on its wireless computer network, and ensure that the Ministry of Health adequately protects the systems and data it manages for the Agency. “Without adequate security, there is more risk that sensitive or personal information could be inappropriately accessed or modified, or could be unavailable when needed,” said Wendel.

The Regina Qu’Appelle Regional Health Authority and the Saskatoon Regional Health Authority need to do much more to reduce workplace injuries to health care workers. The Auditor examined the causes of workplace injuries at these two regional health authorities in 2003 and returned again this year to look for progress. With injury rates of 7.7% at Regina Qu’Appelle and 7.1% at Saskatoon, these regional health authorities have almost twice the number of injury claims as the Saskatchewan average. This is not good progress, according to the Auditor. “The Government—as an employer—should be a leader in protecting its own workers from workplace injuries.”

The Auditor’s comments accompanied the release of his 2008 Report – Volume 3. The Report covers 134 government agencies. The rest of the Government’s approximately 270 agencies are covered in Volume 1 of the Report, released May 27, 2008. Volume 2, released September 4, 2008, describes the state of the Government’s finances.

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The *2008 Report—Volume 3* is available on the Internet at www.auditor.sk.ca.

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