

**Ministry of Agriculture,
Food and Rural Affairs**

Office of the Minister

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**Ministère de l'Agriculture, de
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December 21, 2020

Craig Davidson
CAO/Treasurer
Municipality of Temagami
craig.d@temagami.ca

Dear Mr. Davidson,

I am writing today to let you know about upcoming updates to the Ontario Wildlife Damage Compensation Program (OWDCP). The OWDCP provides financial assistance to owners whose livestock, poultry and honeybees have been damaged or killed by wildlife.

These updates are the result of concerns raised by farmers, their organizations and other stakeholders regarding the timeliness of payments for approved claims. We are also providing administrative flexibility if program timelines cannot be met in exceptional and extenuating circumstances such as COVID-19.

Key program changes will include:

- Notifying municipalities of an applicant's fully approved claim and initiating the payment process when the approval decision is made rather than after the appeal period ends; and,
- providing to the Administrator authority to waive deadlines if there are unforeseen issues or extenuating circumstances affecting program timelines.

OWDCP program updates will take effect for any applications with a kill (or injury) date on or after **January 1st, 2021**.

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By notifying municipalities and initiating the payment process for fully approved claims upon approval rather than at the end of the appeal period, it is estimated that over 80% of successful claims will be paid out up to 20 business days earlier. In the event an issue with the claim approval is discovered, all applicants retain the ability to appeal within 20 business days of the date indicated on their decision letter. These payment process changes will only apply to claims with an injury or kill date on or after January 1, 2021.

In addition, allowing the Administrator to waive certain deadlines in extenuating circumstances is another way the government is providing flexibility in these uncertain times. This change will help ensure that applicants' claims will be considered if deadlines are missed for exceptional reasons outside their control.

Please visit the OWDCP website for details of the program updates at:
www.ontario.ca/predation

For further information, please contact my ministry's [Agricultural Information Contact Centre](#) at 1-877-424-1300.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ernie Hardeman', with a large, stylized loop at the end.

Ernie Hardeman
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

COVID-19 Reminders

- Practise physical distancing – stay 2 metres away from others in public
- Wash your hands – with soap and water thoroughly and often
- Get the facts - www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-stop-spread