Syncrude aims to earn and maintain public confidence through effective engagement with stakeholders and communities of interest. We seek ideas, input and feedback on our plans in a manner that fosters cooperation and trust. We are committed to ensuring our employees fully understand our goals, plans and performance, and the role they play in our success. We also contribute to projects that promote growth and well-being, and enhance the quality of life where we live and work.

STAKEHOLDERS AND COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST

- Academia
- Employees
- First Nations - Local
- Governments - Local, Provincial and Federal
- Industry Associations
- Métis Locals
- Suppliers and contractors
- Wood Buffalo residents and other Albertans
COVID-19 COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The pandemic, combined with the spring flooding in downtown Fort McMurray and overall economic downturn, created significant stress on non-profits in the Wood Buffalo region. Syncrude demonstrated extensive support with total donations of $5.5M, including a United Way contribution in the Fort McMurray region of $2.3M. In fact, the Syncrude employee United Way campaign exceeded its fundraising goal despite not being able to engage face-to-face with the workforce. Significant investment in local mental health initiatives provided additional community support during the pandemic.

Investment goes beyond just dollars and, throughout the pandemic in 2020, it was important to demonstrate both corporate and community leadership. One way was through a local social media and advertising campaign, Standing Together, to inform local residents about our efforts to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and to promote health and safety in the community. This included newspaper, billboards, radio and our social media platforms. In addition, Syncrude and Suncor released a joint letter to the community outlining our safety protocols and steps being taken to keep people, facilities and the region safe.

Engagement also occurred with the provincial and local governments to inform them of our actions and to advocate for effective public health measures. This included a public presentation to the municipal council advocating for a mandatory mask bylaw in the Wood Buffalo region. We also collaborated with other regional operators to ensure a coordinated approach to worksite safety measures and to address other issues of common relevance.

RESPONSE TO LOCAL FLOODING

During spring 2020, an ice jam on the Athabasca River caused flooding throughout the lower town site of Fort McMurray. Water levels rose 4.5 to six metres and forced the evacuation of about 13,000 residents. For a week straight, Syncrude teams helped respond to the crisis by deploying and operating our own pumps, including two Hytrans trailer-mounted submersible fire pumps. In one area alone, our teams pumped out 26,500 gallons of water per minute over a 36-hour period. Employees also paired up with water rescue crews from the local fire department to rescue over 200 people and pets stranded in flooded areas. In addition, Syncrude loaned a Safety Codes Officer to the local municipality to help facilitate faster return of residents into their damaged homes.
Syncrude made community donations totaling $5.5 million in 2020. The funds supported our objective of enriching the lives of our employees and the communities where we do business. Donations were directed toward organizations and endeavours in the Wood Buffalo region and Edmonton, focused on education, Indigenous-related initiatives, healthcare, education, sports and recreation, arts and culture, and safety, health & environment. A specific focus was also placed on supporting mental health initiatives.

Overall donations were lower than prior years due to many organizations canceling events or being unable to execute programming due to the pandemic. Although the sudden collapse in commodity prices also reduced our community investment budget, we were still able to redirect a significant portion toward assisting many of our local partners who were impacted by the spring flooding.
Among the organizations which received funding from Syncrude in 2020:

- Alberta Conservation Association
- Alberta Emerald Foundation
- Canadian Mental Health Association
- Compassion House Foundation
- Fort McMurray Boys and Girls Club
- Hub Family Resource Centre
- Keyano College
- Norfort Gymnastics
- Northern Lights Regional Health Foundation
- Pastew Place Detox Centre Society
- United Way of Fort McMurray and Wood Buffalo, Edmonton and Calgary
- Waypoints Emergency Shelter
- Wood Buffalo Community Fund
- Wood Buffalo Food Bank
- YMCA Northern Alberta daycare facilities and programming

RECOGNIZING EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERS

Our Good Neighbours Program encourages employees and retirees to give to and volunteer for the organizations that matter the most to them. In 2020, $208,000 was donated to 48 various registered non-profit or charitable organizations and initiatives, recognizing 5,551 volunteer hours. An additional $74,000 was donated to non-profit organizations to assist in recovery efforts and sustainment funding related to impacts from the spring flood.

Organizations are eligible to receive up to $750 once an employee or retiree volunteers a minimum of 40 hours within the calendar year. Employees who volunteer for local sports or recreation teams may also apply to receive a busing grant of $2,500 to help offset the cost of travel outside of the community for tournaments or competitions. Syncrude will also match contributions made to eligible educational institutions, to a maximum of $500 per calendar year per employee or retiree.

Pre-COVID, an estimated 270 employees and retirees participated in the Good Neighbours program. However, the pandemic presented local organizations with unprecedented restrictions associated with safely accommodating volunteers and the coordination of programming. To help them weather these challenges, Syncrude provided financial support to 16 community-based not-for-profit, youth and sports-oriented organizations in the Wood Buffalo region.

GAUGING EFFECTIVENESS

The effectiveness of our stakeholder relations is stewarded at the executive level and assessed through internal and external audits. In addition, we are informed by the Mining Association of Canada (MAC) Towards Sustainable Mining protocol for Indigenous and Community Relationships. This includes an internal assessment of our performance each year, and external third-party verification, including stakeholder interviews, of this assessment every three years. Results are published annually on the MAC website.
As an active member in the Oil Sands Community Alliance, Syncrude continued in 2020 to support this industry-funded group in its work to manage the socio-economic impacts of oil sands development. OSCA focus areas include Indigenous Community Relations, Community Well-Being, Infrastructure and Workforce. Work is stewarded by the OSCA Steering Group, and by committees and task groups that focus on community well-being and Indigenous community relations, as well as various infrastructure matters. Syncrude employees serve at each level.