

## Federal Food Subsidy Has Negative Impacts

On December 2, the KRG Council adopted a resolution calling for the postponement of Nutrition North Canada. Transitional measures to the new program are already putting elders, low-wage earners and families in a more critical financial position.

In its resolution, the KRG Council stated that the timing of the announcement of the program and its transitional implementation have not allowed Nunavik retailers enough time to adapt their warehousing practices. The Canadian government has, moreover, made no effort to concretely document the potential impacts of the new program on the socio-economic situation of Nunavimmiut.

A revised list of eligible food and non-food items took effect on October 3, 2010, leading to substantial price increases in the communities. Nutrition North Canada



Source: Sarah Rogers, Nunatsiag News

*Regional retailers were invited to explain how Nutrition North Canada will impact on product pricing. Shown in photo: Eric Pearson of Newviq'vi.*

is slated to be fully introduced at the beginning of April 2011.

Although the new federal food subsidy program has a number of positive components (including emphasis on nutritious foods), the Canadian government has failed to properly take into account the impact of the program on the overall high cost of living in Nunavik.

It is important to recall that the prices for all categories of consumer goods and services are roughly 60% higher in Nunavik than elsewhere in Québec. As well, the proportion of expenditures connected with food purchases represents more than 40% of household budgets in Nunavik compared with 13% in the Quebec City area.

The KRG Council pointed out that up-to-date, concrete data on retail prices for essential food and personal items needs to be collected. This data could then be used to determine the real impact of the Nutrition North Canada program on Nunavik's cost of living.



Early this month, \$500 assistance cheques were paid to over 650 elders who were aged 60 or older on or before December 1, 2010. This is the fourth consecutive year of implementation of this cost-of-living measure funded by the Québec government.

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# Drinking Water Responsibilities and Management

At its last sitting, the Municipal Public Works Department presented to Councillors important information about drinking water management in the communities. The presentation:

- underlined the role played by each municipality in ensuring safe drinking water;
- talked about the cooperation that needs to exist between municipalities and their residents to ensure the effective operation of drinking water systems;
- explained the kinds of support that can be provided by the KRG for this purpose.

The same presentation has already been delivered to municipal officials throughout the region, generating positive feedback. Upcoming presentations on the same topic will deal with drinking water treatment, the health risks posed by bacteria and monitoring methods, among others.



*The KRG Municipal Public Works Department wants to foster safe drinking water in the communities by increasing awareness about the delivery of this municipal service.*

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## Fire Safety: Québec Approval Next Step

The KRG has transmitted the draft *Nunavik Fire Safety Cover Plan* (FSCP) to the Minister of Public Security, Robert Dutil. As soon as the Minister approves the

document, the KRG and the Northern villages will be enabled to foster increased awareness of fire risks and prevention, as well as to upgrade related human and equipment resources.



*In 2009, eight Nunavimmiut (in uniform) were certified to deliver the volunteer fire-fighter training contemplated under the draft Nunavik FSCP.*

For its part, the KRG Council gave a green light to the draft document at its last sitting, following the completion of public consultations in every community between September and November. It should also be noted that, in the fall, two more related funding agreements with the Québec government were signed. These concern the implementation of the draft FSCP and part of the costs for delivering training to the region's volunteer fire fighters.

The KRG is hopeful that the draft Nunavik FSCP will be approved quickly by the Minister of Public Security. Quick approval is necessary to allow equipment and infrastructure investments to move ahead with the 2011 summer sealift.

# Youth Protection, Criminal and Rehabilitation Processes

The KRG Council recently devoted time to reviewing youth protection concepts, the youth criminal justice process, as well as youth rehabilitation services and needs.



*Parental responsibility is a fundamental notion of youth protection.*

First and foremost, it was explained that every child has a basic right to “protection, security and attention” under the Québec *Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms*. The *Youth Protection Act* is only applied when parents or extended family are unable to ensure this basic right.

For its part, the youth criminal justice process is applied only when youth, between the ages of 12 and 17, commit offences under the *Criminal Code of Canada*.

The KRG Council was also informed about the different levels of rehabilitation resources for Nunavik youth

in need. These resources include the group homes in Kuujuaq and Puvirnituk, the Sapummivik and Ulluriaq rehabilitation centres in Salluit and Montreal, as well as the Batshaw Youth and Family Centres in Montreal, for youth with more serious behavioural problems.

Finally, it was pointed out that current resources are not meeting all needs. For example, a dedicated rehabilitation centre for teenage girls is lacking, as are more foster families that can offer specialized care and more community workers and educators.

Over the last few years, all regional organizations in their respective spheres of activity have been attempting to focus special efforts on youth. For its part, the KRG operates different programs aimed at keeping youth active and engaged.



*Youth protection personnel (Kuujuaq employees shown in photo) are called on to assist with the application of alternative measures under the Youth Criminal Justice Act.*

## Plan Nord Moving Ahead

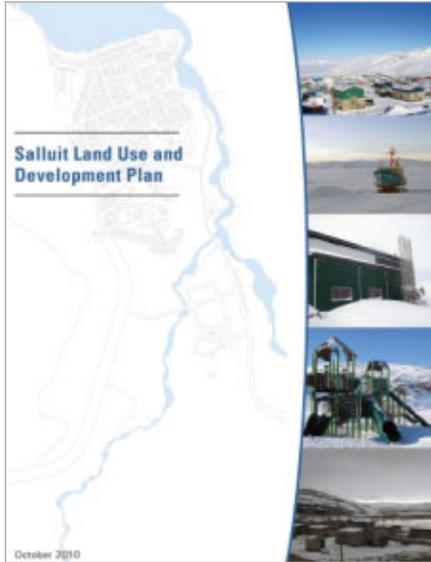
Through the fall, the KRG and the Makivik Corporation have used the Québec government’s Plan Nord project to increase awareness of the region’s problems and development priorities. Attention has, in particular, been focused on seven main issues:

- housing;
- cost of living;
- essential public services such as civil security, telecommunications, policing, municipal services, as well as search and rescue;
- health;

- education;
- the youth protection recommendations made by the *Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse* (human and youth rights);
- self-government.

The KRG would like to see organized in Nunavik in the coming months a public information session. The session could focus on Québec’s and Nunavik’s goals under Plan Nord.

# Climate Change: Awareness and Adaptation



*Salluit is working with a technical committee, which includes the KRG and the Québec government, to adapt community development to climate change.*

pack ice and permafrost melting. It was also indicated that the impacts of these changes could affect when and how Inuit access the land, and lead to food insecurity. Health issues as well as the increased risk of slush flows, landslides and coastal erosion were also discussed.

Awareness of the changes that are taking place will help Nunavimmiut to adapt certain practices and reduce the vulnerability of their communities to climate change.

Also at the Council sitting, a description of the KRG's ongoing climate change research and adaptation projects was given. Among the different projects, the Technical Committee on Climate Change and Soil Instability in Nunavik is currently focused on finding solutions to the infrastructure and development problems facing the community of Salluit.

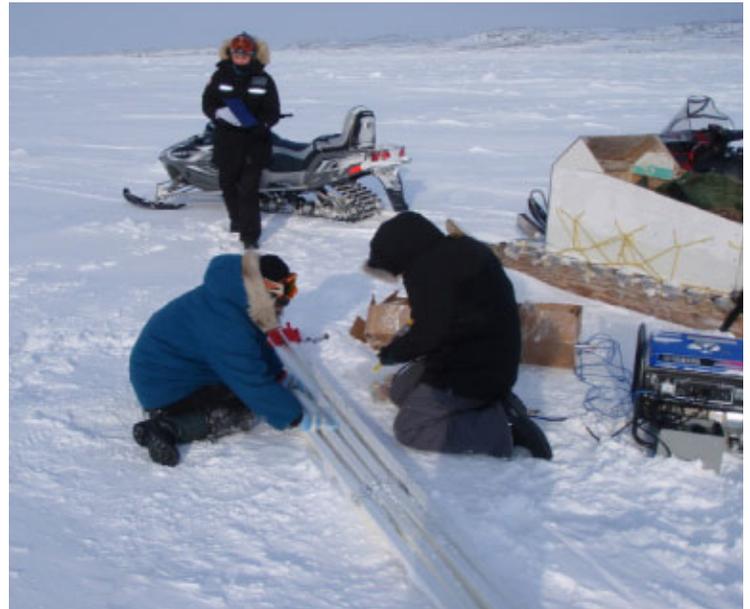
The three climate change and adaptation presentations for Councillors were delivered by representatives of the Québec research consortium known as Ouranos, the *ministère des Affaires municipales, des Régions et*

On November 30, Councillors received up-to-date information on the KRG's climate change activities. Incredibly, on that same day, it was raining in much of Nunavik.

Specifically, Councillors were briefed on past climate data and expected trends, such as increased precipitation, less solid

*de l'Occupation du territoire* (municipal affairs, the regions and land occupancy) and the KRG.

In response to the presentations, KRG Speaker Mary A. Pilurttuut noted that a good deal of material had been provided to help Councillors and Nunavimmiut continue their reflexions on this issue. For her part, KRG Chairperson Maggie Emudluk emphasized the importance of continuing research and disseminating information on climate change and its impacts.



*The KRG works with researchers to study the impacts of climate change on Inuit access to the land and the region's wildlife resources.*

## 2011 Council Sitzings

The four regular sittings of the KRG Council in 2011 are set for:

- February 28 to March 3 (Kuujuuaq)
- May 30 to June 2 (community to be determined)
- September 12 to 15 (Kuujuuaq)
- November 28 to December 1 (Kuujuuaq)