



June 2026

The Russell Inn Hotel & Conference Centre



Congratulations Russell Inn Grads of 2026



Kenneth Jereos
\$2000



Charlie Burton
\$1000



Shanae Sawaryn
\$1000



Kimberly Renz
\$200



Nathan Miller
\$200

Grad 2026 is approaching quickly and this year we are happy to award \$4400 in employee bursaries to 5 very deserving students! These young men and women have dedicated their spare time to us during their school years, and we are very appreciative of them and their work.

We also want to congratulate the parents of our staff who have a graduate this year; Sara Mryglod (Madison), Ryan Ambion (Symonne), Anna Malonzo (Gabriel Patrick), and Rafael Ramos (Rhianna Faith).

Major Pratt School ceremonies will be held at the George P. Buleziuk Centre on Tuesday, June 23 with a town-wide parade to follow. The Russell Banner will have details on the parade route and ceremony times closer to the date.

Congratulations Graduates and we wish you all the very best!

Years Of Service Recognitions

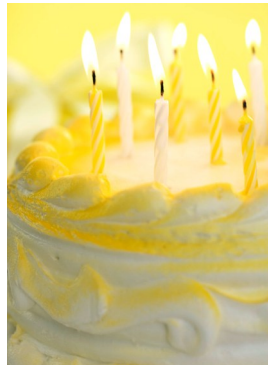
- 1 Year: Jo-Ann Parone (Subway)
- 3 Years: Lara Mercado (Restaurant)
May Reodique (Tim Hortons)
- 4 Years: Pretzel Valdez (Tim Hortons)
- 8 Years: Federico Saguibo (Kitchen)
- 10 Years: Eric Dizon (Tim Hortons)
- 32 Years: Wes Osborne (Kitchen) **WOW!**
Freda Bauereiss (Housekeeping) **WOW!**
- 33 Years: Ed Piontek (Kitchen) **WOW!**
- 44 Years: Angela Huston (Accounts Receivable) **WOW!**



Congratulations and Thank You!

Happy Birthday!

- June 1: Mark Penafiel
Nadiia Ostapchuk
- June 5: Carolina Garunay
- June 8: Freda Bauereiss
Alfred Mendoza
Jay-yel Pimentel
- June 12: Lynn Spurway
- June 15: Chloe Mercer
- June 16: Roselle Camero
- June 19: Ivan Advincula
- June 20: Gladees Cayanan
Pressley Jerome
- June 24: Mark Retotal
- June 25: Jakob Asselstine
- June 28: Jamellee Dela Cruz



A Sign of the Times

On May 11, our iconic "under the big sign" ESSO sign came down. Last May, we lost our sign due to extreme winds, and it stood naked for almost a year while we decided what to do next. Erected in 1988 about 2 years after the C-store opened, it stood tall beckoning customers in off the highway and away from the competition, as the choice place to stop for fuel. This landmark stood about 60 feet tall, purposefully designed as just 5 feet taller would have required a beacon for airplanes! After considering the cost of repairs and sign's visibility today, we knew that we would be able to do more with the space having it removed. A bit surreal after almost 40 years, but a move towards the future indeed. Thank you to Mike and his crew for their work on this project.



Manitoba

Manitoba's only potash mine nears commercial production after nearly 20 years of planning

Facility expects to produce about 30,000 tonnes in 1st fiscal year

 Bartley Kives, Justin Fiacconi - CBC News - Posted: May 08, 2026 5:00 AM CDT | Last Updated: May 8



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Estimated 5 minutes



An aerial view of the potash mine near Harrowby, Man., in the municipality of Russell-Binscarth. The facility expects to begin commercial production in June after nearly two decades of planning. (PADCOM/Submitted)

The only potash mine in Manitoba plans to begin commercial production next month after nearly two decades of development.

The \$30-million facility near Harrowby, a tiny hamlet in the western Manitoba municipality of Russell-Binscarth, will begin producing and stockpiling the agricultural fertilizer in June, said Daymon Guillas, president of the Potash and Agri Development Corporation of Manitoba.

The company is commonly referred to as PADCOM.

The commercial production caps off a 19-year effort by the privately owned company — commonly referred to as PADCOM — to plan, finance and build a potash mine in the face of considerable skepticism within the mineral-extraction industry.

"We're the no-name brand. We're not miners. Lots of people laughed at us and said it couldn't be done," Guillas said Thursday in an interview from Asessippi, Man.

"There's a project in Saskatchewan that is name brand. They spent \$300 million, and they haven't produced anything yet. We spent \$30 million, and we're producing."

The Harrowby facility, first envisioned in 2007, extracts potash from below the surface without excavating the massive caverns associated with the largest of Saskatchewan's potash mines.

Instead, the Manitoba facility uses a process called solution mining. Brine heated to 40 C is poured into wells, where the warm, salty water dissolves the potash in the surrounding rock.

WATCH | Potash mine set to begin production in June:



The potash-saturated solution is pumped to the surface and then cooled in outdoor ponds, allowing potash to crystallize back into a solid substance.

Guillas said the company initially installed a mechanical cooling process that did not produce enough potash for the company to become profitable. With the help of Saskatchewan potash-industry expertise, the company switched to outdoor cooling ponds, which it tested out earlier this year.

Message From Daymon...

Congratulations to the Grads of 2026 - this is of course, a monumental day for you as you conclude 12 years of school. Congratulations on your commitment to graduating! There are lots of distractions and risks out there now but you have stayed focused and graduated - well done! But don't rush into adulting - have fun for as many years as you can ☺

It's been a very long Winter/Spring but the weather is now awesome and we hope it continues. It will drive tourism and certainly grow crops for our ag industry.

Thank you to the Municipality of Russell-Binscarth for looking into and solving the water plant problems that have affected us so terribly at Tim Hortons, Subway and The Russell Inn.

We don't talk a lot about Padcom until it's in good shape, but here's a news story enclosed...DG

Guillas said the new cooling system, which required the company to obtain a new environmental licence, was the final technological obstacle the company had to overcome.

The company also faced a fiscal crunch this past winter, when a \$77-million financing deal with a Dubai-based investment firm fell apart, requiring the company to seek more cash from its silent Canadian investors, he said.

"Our potash is Canadian-owned, not foreign-owned. Nobody can tell us what to do with our potash," Guillas said.

The company has one administrative hurdle left to clear. It must complete a mine-closure plan, which Guillas described as an operating manual for all aspects of the mine.

The Harrowby facility is permitted by the province to produce 250,000 tonnes of potash a year. Guillas said he expects the mine to produce somewhere around 30,000 to 35,000 tonnes during its first fiscal year, which concludes at the end of April 2027.

"We get profitable at 15,000," he said.

The mine should be able to scale to 250,000 tonnes by 2028-29 and then expand over a series of years to one million tonnes per year, if the financing is available, Guillas said.

To place that in context, Saskatchewan — the world's largest potash producer — produces 25 million tonnes of the mineral per year.



Most of the company's potash is destined for the export market. The company hopes to reach Europe and South America by using the Hudson Bay Railway and the Port of Churchill.

"We can go to Churchill and back in six days, so it's a short train ride," Guillas said. "So, the Port of Churchill lets us get product to a port and to a vessel in a very affordable way."

Arctic Gateway Group, which runs the northern Manitoba railway and port, said it has the capacity to carry the volume of potash the company initially expects to produce and load it onto ships at Churchill.

"AGG recently added 30,000 tonnes of new bulk storage capacity at the port, which could be used for potash storage," company president Chris Avery said in a statement.

Avery said the port will need more handling facilities to handle larger volumes of potash from PADCOM and the much larger potash mines in Saskatchewan. Arctic Gateway will also need to upgrade the railway to handle heavier loads.

"We believe there is a strong long-term case for Churchill to play an expanded role in getting western Canadian potash to international markets," Avery said.

Guillas said the company is also looking at other rail routes but has not completed the logistics for export shipments if Churchill is not ready.

"We have markets. We have lots of markets, but we don't have a path yet for that," Guillas said.

In the meantime, the company is simply looking forward to commercial production. So is the provincial government, which stands to collect somewhere in the vicinity of \$8 million a year in royalties once the mine produces 250,000 tonnes a year.

- [Manitoba's 1st potash mine readies for market debut](#)

"We look forward to PADCOM becoming commercially operational and to begin delivering economic benefits for all Manitobans this year," Manitoba Business and Mining Minister Jamie Moses said in a statement.

All it took was 19 years to get here, Guillas said.

"You don't need to be a brand-name mining company to do it. You just have to have the guts and the patience to do it."