



For Immediate Release

Concerns on Drug Use and Abuse

First of all, I want to recognize each Ermineskin tribal member for envisioning a healthy community. What does this look like? We must continue to visualize that Maskwacis, but in this case Ermineskin, can be recognized as a place where we will eliminate drug use and addictions as a thing of the past. As a place where we care for our elders, families and children's well-being. There are a number of ways this can be accomplished. I had introduced the idea of random drug testing throughout ECN beginning from leadership down through the organization.

Leadership should lead by example and our Constitution and Code of Ethics can be changed to reflect this direction.

Secondly, my reason for bringing this up is because we are seeing more overdoses and more of our members living in major centres (some that we least expect) not being able to receive help as a result of drugs.

At this time, Treaty 6 has declared a State of Emergency on the Opioid Crisis. Treaty 7 has already assembled a strategy on combatting this and are moving ahead. We have lost many of our members to drugs.

On August 15th, a group of Kokums determined to war against drugs gathered and have declared that they have had enough and want something done in Maskwacis. They want action and have plans to do a walk determined to War against Drugs and on the dealers in our community.

As I come near to finishing my term as Chief, I want to say that this is not only a leadership matter, it is a community matter. Let's do our part and make our community a safe and healthy place.

As always my reminder is to be kind and compassionate to one another.

- Chief Randy Ermineskin