

## **Maintenance Turnarounds at Industrial Facilities**

*April 2012*

Industrial facilities as large and complex as those in Alberta's Industrial Heartland require regular maintenance for safe and efficient operation. Maintaining these local facilities is a necessary and beneficial investment to ensure they are reliable and in great condition for the future.

In many facilities, maintenance tasks cannot be performed while the plant is operational. Similar to changing the oil in your vehicle while it is parked and the engine is off, industrial facilities also require scheduled 'shut down' periods for maintenance.

A shut down or turnaround is a planned event where production is suspended or decreased for a specific time period in order to perform maintenance tasks. This involves equipment inspections and, if necessary, repairs, replacements, and technology upgrades. Depending on the size of the facility and extent of the maintenance, planning for a turnaround can begin several years prior to the actual event. This is necessary to ensure the appropriate personnel, equipment, processes, and community awareness is in place.

The duration of a turnaround can vary – several days for a minor annual turnaround to several months for a major turnaround occurring only every few years. During this time, a variety of skilled tradespeople perform a wide range of maintenance activities throughout the industrial facility. Upwards of several thousand contract employees may be needed. In some cases, the turnaround staff can even far outnumber the permanent staff at a facility.

The impact of a turnaround on the local community differs with each type of facility. Some generate increased flaring and additional noise, while others produce no noticeable effect. A large contract workforce may result in increased traffic to the site. Economic contributions can exceed millions of dollars and include spending on parts and services, as well as food and hospitality. Local communities also benefit from increased efficiency and environmental performance as companies invest in technology for their operations by upgrading to the newest and best equipment during a turnaround.

Several turnarounds are scheduled for 2012 at facilities in Alberta's Industrial Heartland. The largest of these include Agrium's Fort Saskatchewan and Redwater sites, Dow Chemical's Fort Saskatchewan site, Sherritt, and Shell.

If you have questions or concerns about activities at an industrial facility prior to or during a turnaround, contact the company directly for additional information. Alternatively, if you are curious about anything you see, hear, or smell, call the UPDATEline at 1.866.653.9959 to access pre-recorded messages about industry activity 24 hours a day.

*Brought to you by **Life in the Heartland**, a partnership aimed at improving access to information, resources, and contacts for residents in and around Alberta's Industrial Heartland. For more information, visit [www.lifeintheheartland.com](http://www.lifeintheheartland.com), email [info@lifeintheheartland.com](mailto:info@lifeintheheartland.com) or follow us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/LifeintheHeartland](https://www.facebook.com/LifeintheHeartland).*