

New boiler means smooth skating at ESRC



Burnett says a boiler is essential for top quality ice.

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Among the many unsung heroes of the ice rink is the ice plant boiler – it resides out of sight and out of mind, doing its part to make skaters and pucks glide across the ice surface with the greatest of ease.

And if the boiler breaks down, so too does the ice surface.

The East Selkirk Recreation Centre needed a boiler replacement this season and the Selkirk and District Community Foundation came through with a \$10,000 grant to keep the 2020-21 season on ice.

“A boiler is very important. Without it, we could still make ice, but it would hinder the quality of our ice,” says Blake Burnett, Facility Manager at the East Selkirk Recreation Centre.

“It’s essential to our business. Hockey players know that when they go on the ice and it’s rough, there’s a reason and the reason is you’re using cold water to flood.”

The boiler heats water that is applied to ice by the Zamboni and without that hot water, the ice surface would be bumpy and uneven.

Burnett says when you shave the ice, you get ice crystals, and those crystals need to be melted and that’s where the hot water comes in.

Aaron Martyniw, President of the SDCF, says helping groups like the ESRC is what the Foundation is all about.

“These are the kinds of things we love to be a part of, knowing that kids are going to have quality ice to skate on is what it’s all about,” Martyniw says.

“When you hear how important a boiler is to the quality of ice, you realize how important it is, so we’re happy to help out with things that really benefit the community.”

What the 2020 season will look like is in large part dependent on COVID-19, but right now, Burnett says Phase 2 of Hockey Manitoba’s three-phase-plan is in action and the ESRC is preparing for an October opening when games will start.

The Lord Selkirk Hockey Association is currently holding tryouts at the Selkirk Rec Complex.

The Foundation grant is much appreciated, Burnett says, as the cost to replace the unit is substantial.

“It’s more than a \$10,000 touch to a community club like ours so it would take a lot of rentals to pay for something like that, so for that reason alone we appreciate the grant so much,” he says.

“It’s one of those costs that nobody thinks about, they think hot water, big deal. But you can’t replace the boiler for cheaper, the type of system that it is, with the heat recovery that’s required in such a short period of time and the amount of water that the Zamboni requires, it’s important. The cost to a non-profit club like ours is just out of our reach.”

The fall grant application deadline is just around the corner on Sept. 30. For more details go to sdcf.ca; email selkirkfoundation@shaw.ca; or phone 204-785-9755.

The Selkirk and District Community Foundation is a charitable organization that provides financial support to charitable causes and agencies in the region, which includes Selkirk, St. Andrews and St. Clements. Gifts from donors enable the Foundation to support countless groups and individuals in our community. The Foundation has given in excess of \$2.7 million to more than 125 local charities and community organizations during its 25 years. For more details contact SDCF Executive Director Bev Clegg at 204.785.9755.