

2012

# EverGreen

Party of Alberta

2012 Platform



[www.evergreenparty.ca](http://www.evergreenparty.ca)

# The EverGreen Party of Alberta

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Our policy is created with the guidance of four concepts: Vision, Hope, Compassion and Honesty. The platform of the EverGreen Party of Alberta is a vision of hope for a better future. We will start with compassion from where we are, understanding that everyone is doing the best they can and we can ease into a sustainable society. The party will campaign in an honest way, attempting in all our endeavours to be open and transparent.

The EverGreen Party of Alberta supports the principles of the Charter of the Global Greens. These key values are:

- **Ecological Wisdom:** we acknowledge that human beings are part of the natural world and we respect the specific values of all forms of life.
- **Social Justice:** we assert that the key to social justice is the equitable distribution of resources to ensure that all have full opportunities for personal and social development.
- **Participatory Democracy:** we strive for a democracy in which all citizens have the right to express their views, and are able to directly participate in the environmental, economic, social and political decisions which affect their lives; so that power and responsibility are concentrated in local and regional communities, and devolved only where essential to higher tiers of governance.
- **Non-Violence:** we declare our commitment to non-violence and strive for a culture of peace and cooperation between states, inside societies and amongst individuals.
- **Sustainability:** we recognize the limited scope for the material expansion of society within the biosphere, and the need to maintain biodiversity through the sustainable use of renewable resources.
- **Respect for Diversity:** we honour cultural, linguistic, ethnic, sexual, religious and spiritual diversity within the context of individual responsibility toward all beings.



## Why Alberta Needs a Green Party

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Quotes from our members:

L.A. "Green principles and policies, environmental, economic and social, are designed for fair, equal and non-discriminatory treatment of all people."

M.O. "The EverGreens will promote long-term, mutually supportive relationships between the economy, the environment and social justice for all Albertans."

S.S. "The other parties have shown at best a tepid commitment to environmental issues and climate change in particular. It is the EverGreens who recognize the profound implications of continuing environmental neglect and will force significant issues into prominence when other parties lack the fortitude to do it."

D.P. "With one of the oldest and most successful Green parties, Germany has among the best environmental policies in the world. Alberta needs such policies."

N.B. "The EverGreens stress the need to use Alberta's riches for the future enrichment and wellbeing of all Albertans, not only those dedicated to extracting our resources and leaving behind the mess."



# Environment

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All the Earth's ecosystems are interrelated and all species of animals and plants must co-exist. The future of all life on the planet is endangered by our disregard for the health of the environment. We must preserve the Earth's natural balance to sustain our own wellbeing.

At a time when other countries, territories and municipalities are committing to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, Alberta has failed to take a proactive approach. While there is still time to avoid and address the increasingly catastrophic damage, it is vital that our province addresses climate change, not only for future generations, but also to protect our ecosystem and ensuring the economic feasibility of our transition to a low-carbon economy.

*Our natural environment is the source of our wealth and our health.* (Green Party of Canada)

## Embracing Our Ecosystem

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- **Green Jobs.** We will invest in a province-wide, localized, green energy production and green retrofit program that will create thousands of new, quality, well paying jobs. We will assist labourers, researchers and innovators through education, development, and the production of a self-sufficient regional economy, centered upon local ownership and operation.
- **Energy Efficiency.** We will support the research and development of energy-efficient homes, businesses and government buildings. We will promote energy conservation. We will increase the energy efficiency standards of buildings, transportation and appliances.
- **Air, Water and Land.** We will study ways to improve indoor air quality standards to ensure our health. We will encourage conservation and reduction of water usage, and prevent the sale or export of water. We will support a long-term resources management program, and protect and preserve land necessary for the survival of the diversity of plants and animals.



- **Toxins and Waste.** We will investigate the ecological impacts of toxins and warrant manufacturers and suppliers to be more responsible for the costs of waste disposal, and elimination. We will subsidise the reuse of recycled materials rather than the consumption of raw resources.
- **Carbon Emissions.** We will honour and pursue the goals laid out in the Kyoto protocol and encourage the pursuit of a new international agreement. We will evaluate, set and enforce emissions reductions standards, and sustain a financial model that supports the transition to renewable green energy.
- **Transportation.** We will ensure regular affordable mass transit throughout Alberta, with links to established transit within cities, which will reduce the costs of roads and highways. We will support development and creation of an Edmonton-Calgary high speed rail line. We will support municipal development of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.
- **Hydrocarbons.** We will delay expansion of the oil sands until further studies have established the cumulative impacts the oil sands have on the environment and society. Future expansion must proceed in a sustainable way, with greater monitoring and regulation.
- **Nuclear Power.** We will oppose the development of nuclear power generation in Alberta.



# Economy

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With the looming threat of another global recession, Alberta's almost total reliance on high energy prices and exports leaves the province very vulnerable in an economic downturn. With small economic growth projections, many small businesses and industries are struggling with day-to-day activities. We believe that an economic system must be built upon sustainable practices, where there is an understanding of our ecological boundaries. We must eliminate our structured deficit.

Envid by other provinces and the international community, Alberta has the greatest opportunity for creating a sustainable and regenerative economy to meet our long-term needs, while preserving our ecosystems. Education and investment in our most sustainable resources, wind and solar, can make Albertans international leaders in wind and solar energy technology and production and support the transition to a low-carbon economy.

*Our generation has the potential to capitalize on the single biggest business opportunity in human history – the shift to a low-carbon economy.* (Green Party of Canada)





## Building a Green Economy

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- **Green Jobs.** We will support a self-sufficient regional economy, centred upon local ownership, operation and production. We will reduce the export of raw materials, and encourage the production of value-added goods.
- **Green Innovation.** We will support provincial researchers, universities and other organizations' research and development of innovative technologies and practices that reduce our environmental impacts.
- **Green Economic Stimulus.** We will finance an "Alberta Green Retrofit Loan" program to encourage households and businesses to upgrade and install energy retrofits such as solar panels or solar water heaters.
- **Fair Taxes.** We will reevaluate our provincial tax system to ensure that wealthy individuals and corporations have a fair responsibility for the economic well being of the community. We will eliminate subsidies that are wasteful or harmful to the environment.
- **Balanced Budget.** We will implement a balanced budget through the efficient use of resources in healthcare, education and social services. We will transition into a full cost accounting practice that includes economic, environmental and social costs and benefits.
- **Agriculture.** We will support the transition away from industrial farming. We will promote regional food production and processing, and encourage buying local. We will encourage research into production methods and technologies that promote smaller farm size with greater production efficiency.
- **Industry.** We will support the development and expansion of sustainable sectors with localized value-added production, while ensuring the long-term sustainability of Alberta's natural resources. We must manage all sustainable and non-sustainable resources in an integrated manner, recognizing the interconnectedness of agriculture, energy, water and the economy.



# People

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We have an ethical responsibility to create a community that guarantees the well-being of all people. This includes the encouragement of self-determination by education and employment and the discouragement of oppression of any kind. All life is valuable and vulnerable to the actions of human beings; therefore, we have an obligation to treat all living creatures humanely and with respect.

*Vibrant communities are places where... people know their neighbours, streets are safe and friendly, and volunteering for the public good is common, leading to feelings of affiliations, belonging, and empowerment.* (Green Party of Canada)

## Health Care

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It is essential that all Albertans have equal access to health care services. Our ideal health care program also advocates for the prevention of illness, which will be more efficient and cost effective than a system that emphasizes illness and technological intervention.

- **Equal & Fair Access.** We will maintain a high quality public health care system that provides essential healthcare to all Albertans.
- **Investment.** We will immediately address the rising cost crisis and long waitlists, and ensure long-term funding to fully make use of existing facilities. We will incorporate low technology interventions that serve large numbers of people, and increase the role of clinics in the health care system.
- **Education.** We will mandate a public campaign on how to be healthy, and provide incentives for people to be healthier.
- **Prevention.** We will introduce preventative medicine, a long-term strategy to achieve better health through illness prevention, and address rising costs. We will promote stress reduction, alternative care methods and the elimination of environmental pollutants.





- **Seniors.** We will support home care programs that allow for more effective interaction between family doctors, home care workers, other community agencies and the senior clients they serve. We will fund family care workers to facilitate more home based services. We will fund additional long-term care beds and also hospice beds to ensure that all Albertans can die with dignity and without undue pain.
- **Consultation.** We will work with governments, businesses and citizens to create a long term plan to address healthcare issues. We will provide an anonymous whistle blower program to facilitate reporting on release of toxins and other violations of public safety regulations.

## Education

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The more educated people we have working in Alberta, the greater the wealth of our society. People should be able to obtain education based on merit and not on wealth.

- **Life-Long Learning.** We will encourage participation in both academic and non-academic learning activities, providing diverse possibilities such as mixed-aged classes, home schooling, self-directed learning and access to public libraries.
- **Curriculum.** We will create programs that recognize the importance of basic skills and include the development of ecological awareness, respect for diversity, equity, social justice, non-violence and democratic decision making.
- **Investment.** We will move to reduce the influence of business interests in our education system. We will ensure equal funding per student throughout the province, with extra funding for special needs programs.
- **Alternative Learning.** We will increase the availability of different methods of learning, such as modular programs, evening and weekend junior and senior high school classes and online instruction.
- **Post Secondary Tuition.** We will implement a tuition price freeze on all Alberta institutions while we investigate a province-wide plan to address the rising costs of tuition.

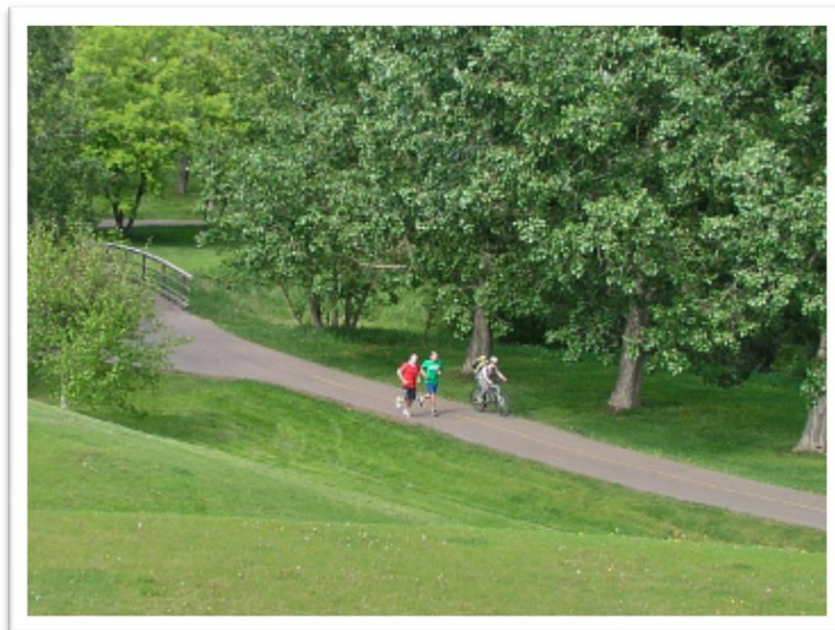


## Our Society

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Recognizing our interdependence within society, we have an ethical responsibility to create a community that guarantees the well-being of all people.

- **Childcare.** We will work towards an accessible universal childcare program, which includes workplace facilities and family day homes.
- **Seniors.** We will provide funding for programs that allow senior citizens to remain in their homes or the homes of family members.
- **Aboriginal People.** We will advocate the right to self determination for First Peoples, and support the rapid and equitable settlement of First Nations' land claims in Alberta.
- **Social Equity.** We will promote pay equity. Women, minorities and the disabled have the right to equal pay for equal work. We will work with communities to develop and maintain low-cost housing alternatives.
- **Arts and Culture.** We will encourage diverse community arts programs and cultural centres that provide community-initiated events.



# Government Reform

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Governments must develop systems that provide all citizens with the opportunity to have input into the decisions that affect their lives. We need to ensure that issues are fully debated and that there is adequate time in question period to allow opposition members to bring forth issues.

- **Legislature Assembly.** Currently, the provincial legislature sits for 47 - 50 days per year. By comparison, the Ontario legislature met for 92 days in 2010, and the federal government met for 119 days. We will require the provincial legislature to sit for a minimum of 75 days per year.
- **Access to Information.** We will ensure that Freedom of Information legislation is extended to most government information, and is more accessible and affordable.
- **Municipalities.** We will increase the power of municipalities to make decisions affecting their jurisdictions, and we will strengthen the capacity of local communities to effectively influence municipal decisions.
- **Electoral Districts.** We will establish an independent process for defining new electoral boundaries, with consideration given to bioregional differences and no more than a 10% variance in population.
- **Proportional Representation.** We will research proportional representation systems and work toward a voting system that fairly assigns seats based on actual voting results.
- **Committees.** We will ensure that seats on legislative committees will be allocated based on popular vote rather than elected seats. Non-elected MLA candidates may be appointed by their parties to serve on legislative committees if necessary.
- **Fixed Election Dates.** We will adhere to fixed election dates.





Front & Back Cover  
Image Credit: David Crowe via Flickr

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