



Manitoba Keewatinow Okimakanak Inc.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Pimicikamak Families Cannot Face More Displacement

Treaty Five Territory, Thompson Mb - With more than four thousand people from Pimicikamak Cree Nation currently displaced from their homes, concerns are rising that families may soon face a second displacement; this time from the hotels in Thompson, where they are temporarily sheltered. A major hockey tournament scheduled in the city this week has placed additional pressure on already limited accommodations.

Manitoba Keewatinow Okimakanak (MKO) is urging hotel owners and operators in Thompson to ensure that evacuees are not forced out to make room for incoming visitors. MKO is also requesting the Thompson Chamber of Commerce work with its member businesses to help evacuees maintain stability in accommodations until they can return home.

MKO issued a similar statement this past summer, urging the Manitoba Hotel Association and governments to prevent repeated displacements of northern First Nations evacuees during wildfire evacuations. Despite those calls, evacuees continue to face instability during emergencies.

"With hotels in Thompson at capacity, evacuees in this emergency should not be removed from their temporary homes for a sporting event," said MKO Grand Chief Garrison Sette. "Our priority must be the safety, dignity, and stability of the families who have already endured enough."

Pimicikamak Cree Nation Chief David Monias emphasized the emotional and physical toll the crisis has taken on members. "This is our third evacuation since last summer; our people are going through another traumatic experience," said Chief Monias. "They should not have to worry about being displaced again. We need all levels of government and our partners to work together to ensure our families remain safe and sheltered."

Thousands of residents were forced to evacuate their homes in Pimicikamak Cree Nation this winter after a four-day power outage in extreme cold led to frozen pipes, damaged water and sewage systems, and widespread impacts to critical infrastructure. Many homes remain uninhabitable, leaving families reliant on emergency lodging.

MKO is calling for immediate coordination between federal, provincial, and emergency management partners to ensure families aren't forced out in the cold again.

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Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. (MKO) is a non-profit, political advocacy organization that has represented 26 First Nation communities in Manitoba's North since 1981. The MKO represents more than 72,000 First Nations people.

