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A new initiative to prevent trespassing: SARM joins Saskatchewan tech startup to help rural landowners manage property and reduce unsolicited visitors & trespassers

“The SaskLander platform concept is simple. Post the land you own and then deny or give permission to those who request to enter onto it. The general public can request the required permission from landowners for hunting or recreation. The app works for rural municipalities because it gives the public access to a rural map and identifies the parcels of land and the listed no trespassing locations. It truly is a must-have resource for our 296 RMs,” explains Ray Orb, Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM) President.

Amendments to the Trespass Act require the general public, such as hunters and recreational users, to gain permission to enter onto private lands, whether the land is posted or not. It is currently illegal for a member of the general public to access private land that has been posted with “no trespass” notifications for recreational purposes. The legislation amendments will transfer the onus of responsibility from the landowner to those wishing to access the land by requiring them to ask for permission before entering. SaskLander is an opt-in service that lets landowners add land and set their permissions by activity, in effect posting land digitally.

“One of the issues has always been that the general public, when seeking to access private land, wouldn’t always see a no trespassing sign. They might not know who the landowner is or how to contact them. SaskLander platform has bridged that gap, it’s as quick as opening the website and looking at the parcel of land you plan to be on and sending a message to the landowner,” adds Orb.

The SaskLander platform has 268 landowners registered online, accounting for 730 parcels. Usage of the platform spiked during hunting season in 2021, with notable and ongoing growth from recreational interest. In December, SaskLander noted increased signups as well, attributed to snowmobile season and the Trespass Act starting enforcement January 1, 2022. SaskLander is in early access and free to try.

Trespassing presents a threat not only to feelings of personal safety for rural municipality landowners, but also the livelihood of the landowner. Unfortunately, livestock has been lost to hunting accidents or because gates have been left open as a result of trespassing incidents. Additionally, the potential is high for the spread of noxious weeds, invasive species, and soil-borne diseases, like clubroot. This concern alone presents a serious biosecurity threat to Saskatchewan’s agricultural economy.

SARM sees the SaskLander app as a solution for landowners and recreational users to obtain permission to enter private lands and help diminish the risk of land trespassing.

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Background: *SARM is the independent association that represents its membership of rural municipal government in Saskatchewan and is the principal advocate in representing them before senior governments.*

SARM's 117th Annual Convention is March 15-17, 2022, at the Queensbury Centre in Regina. We invite provincial news agencies to join us as representatives from rural Saskatchewan municipalities converge to discuss and debate key, timely topics, among them, the critical issue of trespassing on private land in rural municipalities and potential solutions involving the SaskLander platform.

The Trespass to Property Amendment Act, 2019, and The Trespass to Property Consequential Amendments Act, 2019 enforce, as of January 1, 2022

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