



October 9, 2009

Albertans recognize Responsible Gambling Awareness Week, October 19-25

Edmonton... Responsible Gambling Awareness Week, October 19 to 25, focuses on educating Albertans on how to be responsible gamblers and how to access problem gambling prevention and treatment programs. The week's theme is *Play Smart. Gamble Responsibly*.

"This is the third year for Responsible Gambling Awareness Week and this government is committed to providing Albertans with information about how to gamble responsibly," said Fred Lindsay, Solicitor General and Minister of Public Security, responsible for the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission (AGLC). "The week's goal is to promote the various responsible gambling initiatives available across the province as well as to inform gamblers about where to access help if they need it."

The week focuses on educating gambling patrons in the province's casinos, racing entertainment centres, VLT retail outlets and bingo halls. Gambling patrons are invited to drop into open houses hosted throughout the week by AGLC representatives in participating Responsible Gambling Information Centres (RGICs) located in casinos and the Northlands Racing Entertainment Centre.

The kick-off open houses are on October 19, from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. RGIC representatives will showcase several interesting resources, including a video that describes the odds and randomness of gambling, an animated slot tutorial, the cost-of-play calculator and demonstrations that help gamblers assess their relationship with gambling.

Responsible Gambling Awareness Week supports education and industry training programs offered by the AGLC, including *Deal Us In*, *Reel Facts* and *A Good Call*.

Partners in Responsible Gambling Awareness Week include Alberta Health Services, the Alberta Charitable Casino Operators, the Alberta Hotel & Lodging Association, the Canadian Restaurant and Foodservices Association and Bingo Alberta.

For more information on Responsible Gambling Awareness Week and the RGIC open houses, visit setalimitalberta.ca.

- 30 -

Attachment: Information on responsible gambling events and programs

Media enquiries may be directed to:

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To call toll-free within Alberta dial 310-0000



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Events and programs to support responsible gambling

Responsible Gambling Awareness Week, October 19 to 25, highlights programs and initiatives that educate Albertans about responsible gambling.

Open Houses – Responsible Gambling Information Centres (RGICs)

RGIC representatives will host a series of open houses during Responsible Gambling Awareness Week. Gambling patrons are invited to drop into participating RGICs in casinos and the Northlands Racing Entertainment Centre (REC) where open houses are being held, to find out more about responsible gambling, including the odds and randomness of play. Visit the Events section of setalimitalberta.ca for information on dates, locations and times.

RGICs are located in 15 casinos and at Northlands. The centres are staffed by an Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission representative and equipped with a variety of responsible gambling information materials. The representatives are knowledgeable about responsible gambling and can provide players with information on accessing help, if needed.

Setalimitalberta.ca

Visit Setalimitalberta.ca for more information about Responsible Gambling Awareness Week. The site is also a valuable source of information about responsible and problem gambling, with tips, myths and quizzes to help identify personal gambling behaviours.

Responsible Gambling Programs

A number of responsible gambling education and industry awareness programs have been developed by the AGLC in partnership with Alberta Health Services and the gambling industry. From educating and supporting gamblers, to helping casino staff develop the knowledge and skills to assist gamblers, these responsible gambling programs play a vital role in the Alberta government's commitment to responsible gambling and the provision of access to problem gambling treatment programs.

These include:

- *Player Awareness Terminals (PATs)* – PATs are located in RGICs and feature a series of interactive screens offering a self-test, myths and tips to gamblers on how to develop safe, responsible personal gambling guidelines.
- *Self-Exclusion Program* – An option for players who feel their gambling is out of control is to enroll in the AGLC's self-exclusion program. This program enables the participant to voluntarily ban him or herself from all Alberta casinos and RECs, for a self-selected ban period ranging from six months to five years.

- *Smart Responsible Gambling Awareness Industry Training* – This group of training programs helps gambling venue staff encourage gambling patrons to develop healthy attitudes towards gambling and be aware of the signs of problem gambling. *Smart* Programs include *Deal Us In* (casinos and REC staff), *Reel Facts* (VLT retailer staff) and *A Good Call* (bingo hall staff).
- *Responsible Gambling Features on VLTs* – Added to VLTs in 2003-2004, Responsible Gambling Features are designed to help players manage their time and money. Features include an Alberta Health Services Addiction Helpline scrolling banner message, pop-up reminders regarding time (including a query to continue or end play), winnings shown in dollars and credits, and a screen clock.
- *Information materials* – Brochures, posters and self-test cards provide information about gambling responsibly to gamblers in casinos, RECs, VLT outlets and bingo halls. All materials include the Alberta Health Services Addiction Helpline number (1-866-332-2322).

Tips for Responsible Gambling

- Remember, the house always has the advantage.
- Before playing, educate yourself on how the game works.
- Always! Set a limit. Stay within it.
- Do not chase losses; accept them as a cost for the entertainment.
- Take frequent breaks.
- Use only money from your entertainment budget; do not borrow.
- Balance gambling with your other leisure choices.
- Know the warning signs of problem gambling.

- 30 -

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