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ISSUE 382 5/18/2016

CRA Decisions Put Camping In Canada At Risk

On the eve of launching the 2016 camping season, family-run campgrounds across Ontario are receiving surprise tax bills that put the entire Canadian camping tradition at risk

The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) has decided that some campgrounds are too small to qualify for the small business tax deduction, demanding tax payments at rates that are greater than those of billion-dollar businesses.

"Camping is about celebrating the great

outdoors and is an integral part of our nation's history and our identity as Canadians," said Alexandra Anderson, Executive Director of Camping In Ontario.

"Nearly 5.8 million Canadians go camping each year, along with numerous international visitors who want to

experience the natural wonder of our country. We don't want to believe that it is the CRA's intention to destroy family-run campgrounds, but that's exactly what will happen if their decisions are not reversed."

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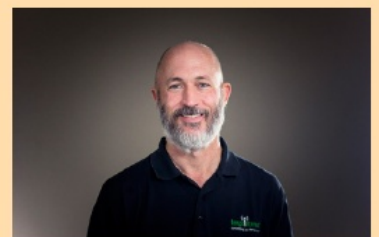


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Campgrounds in Ontario have begun receiving calls and letters from CRA warning them of reassessments in part because they are deemed not to qualify for the small business tax deduction since they employ fewer than five people.

Many family-run campgrounds are seasonal businesses that must close during the winter to meet their municipal by-laws and consequently easily fall below the five full-time equivalent (FTE) employee threshold.

"My husband's family has been operating our campground since 1968. It's just the two of us and we work long hours each camping season to provide our campers with a great experience. We pay our taxes on time, we do our paper work properly, but according to CRA we now have to pay tens of thousands of dollars extra," said Terrie Sage of Sage Campground.

Another campground owner, who did not

wish to be identified, said "I actually thought this was a scam when I first received the letter from CRA. Instead, I now have a tax bill for approximately \$250,000 extra. This will wipe out our savings which we were going to use to upgrade the septic system and roads in our park. This decision severely hurts us."

Camping in Ontario – which represents 440 privately-owned campgrounds in Ontario – is working with the Canadian Federation of Independent Business to push the Department of Small Business and Tourism, Finance Canada and the CRA to implement changes that ensure campgrounds are

recognized as small businesses and pay the same taxes as other small businesses.

The camping industry is also launching a campaign to educate all Members of Parliament, Ministers and the CRA on the issue and on the importance of Canada's camping community.

Canadians can sign an online petition at Change.org <http://tinyurl.com/h8awjgt>, join our Facebook group <https://www.facebook.com/CanadiansForCamping/> and Tweet their support for camping in Canada @CdnsForCamping.

"CRA is punishing these hard-working, middle-class small business owners by



taxing them more than three times the rate of other small businesses – rates higher than even the largest corporations," said Dan Kelly, CFIB president.

The camping community supports 15,000 jobs across the province, contributing \$1 billion to Ontario's economy and generating \$294 million in tax revenues. Campgrounds in particular are a source of employment and economic activity in Ontario's north and rural communities in the province.

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Source:
Press Release