

Market Watch

S&P/TSX 21,899.99 -210.12	S&P 500 5,123.41 -75.65	DOW 37,983.24 -475.84	NASDAQ 16,175.09 -267.10	DOLLAR 72.64¢US -0.40¢	OIL per barrel US\$85.66 +\$0.64	Nat. Gas/mmBTU US\$1.77 +\$0.01	GOLD US\$2,374.10 +\$1.40
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Walmart Canada says robots are coming to two Ontario warehouses, but jobs not at risk

TARA DESCHAMPS
The Canadian Press

In a Calgary warehouse almost as big as eight football fields, an army of robots whirl about, carrying massive quantities of merchandise bound for Walmart Canada customers.

Some of the robots zip around the hulking facility transporting pallets of merchandise fresh off delivery trucks. Another resembling a giant arm moves the pallets onto conveyor belts. A third group are labellers.

Together, they shave down the time it takes to get products from trailers into the facility by 90 per cent — and their overlord, Walmart Canada, hopes this is just the start. It plans to bring robots to Mississauga and Cornwall distribution centres over the next five years.

“We’re super excited about what we’ve done in Calgary and we’re super excited to scale that and get it into our other sites,” said Matt Kelly, Walmart Canada’s vice-president of supply chain.

It’s not hard to see why companies including Walmart are enamoured with robots.

Robots won’t grumble about tasks and aren’t subject to union or government policies restricting working hours or the heft of the loads they can carry. Though they can have downtime for upgrades, maintenance and recharging, there’s no need to offer them overtime, vacation or benefits.

Kelly’s staff say robots have sped up their ability to throw freight — warehouse lingo for moving merchandise — and boosted safety and ergonomics by reducing repetitive strain and injuries.

“Every associate within our supply chain has the right to go home to their families at the end of the day with no injuries, no cuts, no grazes, no scrapes, nothing more serious,” Kelly said.



CP PHOTO JEFF MCINTOSH
A robot unloads a pallet of cat food at a Walmart distribution centre in Calgary on March 28. Walmart Canada is planning to bring robots to two Ontario distribution centres.

Liza Amlani, co-founder of the Retail Strategy Group, sees perks for shoppers too.

“Customers today expect a lot more from the brands they buy,” she wrote in an email.

“Implementing the right technology could save the retailer a lot of money which could be passed down as savings to the customer.”

Yet experts have long prophesied the rise of robots puts jobs at risk.

Statistics Canada estimated in 2020 that 10.6 per cent of Canadian workers were at high risk of seeing robots transform their jobs or even replace them in 2016, with 29.1 per cent facing moderate risk.

The risk was even higher for those over 55, without

post-secondary credentials or with low literacy and numeracy proficiency.

Kelly maintains Walmart’s robots haven’t nixed the need for workers. In fact, when it announced plans to build the \$118 million Calgary distribution centre in 2022, it said the facility would create 325 new jobs.

“We need the human element for oversight and from a safety perspective,” Kelly said.

“What we want our associates to focus on is the problem solving and the critical thinking elements that are always there to run a good, safe supply chain.”

Some companies similarly leaning on robots have even increased their ranks. Statistics Canada found firms that invested in robots between 1996 and 2017 employed more, not fewer, workers.

Businesses already invested in robotics include grocer Sobeys Inc., which runs a Vaughan, Ont., facility where robots deliver bins of merchandise to workers who scoop out the right number of products.

Pizza Hut has also dabbled with autonomous robots to make Vancouver deliveries and RC Coffee robots pump out espressos and lattes in under two minutes in Toronto.

Stratview Research projects rising adoption will push the value of the global retail robotics market to US\$105.95 billion by 2029.

Some of that value could be derived from camera-guided drones and smart glasses directing warehouse workers to goods, mused McKinsey & Co. in a 2020 report.

Kelly didn’t say what other innovations are on his radar, but before Walmart implements technologies, it spends months, if not years, rigorously researching and testing devices to ensure they can handle a dizzying array of products.

“(There’s) a lot of different types, shapes, sizes. It comes in different flows,” Kelly said. “It has different temperatures and different regimes that we need to adhere to.”

Even though he insists Walmart doesn’t benchmark its technology to competitors, rivals using robotics loom large.

“Amazon is a great example of being a testing ground for driving efficiencies by leveraging tech,” Amlani said. “Robots are used in warehouses for restocking and inventory management. Drones are being used for delivery and in-store robots are used for product information and discovery.”

With such competition, complacency isn’t an option for Walmart. The company teased more robots will follow its forthcoming Ontario outfits.

PUBLIC NOTICES



**DEVELOPMENT PERMITS APPROVED
APRIL 4 TO APRIL 10, 2024
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**



Scan code to view all development notices online (updated every Friday).



RESIDENTIAL

29 SAUNDERS CRESCENT SE	(Lot 110, Block 5, Plan 8010981) PLDP20240184. Garage.
330 SEVEN PERSONS DRIVE SW	(Lot 60, Block 10, Plan 7711294) PLDP20240196. Detached Garage
5294 SOUTHLANDS DRIVE SE	(Lot 78, Block 4, Plan 1411496) PLDP20240198. Single Detached House.
5294 SOUTHLANDS DRIVE SE	(Lot 78, Block 4, Plan 1411496) PLDP20240199. Detached Garage.
910 PARKER AVENUE NW	(Lot 23, Block 7, Plan 7989HD) PLDP20240204. Single Detached House Addition (Carport To Attached Garage).
145 2 STREET NE	(Lot 38-39, Block 5, Plan 3204M) PLDP20240205. Detached Garage.

COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL/INSTITUTIONAL

1071 ROSS GLEN DRIVE SE	(Lot 2, Block 42, Plan 8610788) PLDP20240051. Restaurants With Drive-Through Services.
1625 30 STREET SW	(Lot 1, Block 1, Plan 7611212) PLDP20240134. Free Standing Sign

HOME BUSINESS

624 POTTERY STREET SE	(Lot 18-19, Block 6, Plan 7670AN) PLDP20240155. Home Business Major. Consultant (Dog Training).
178 8 STREET SW	(Lot 21, 22, Block 9, Plan 2177M) PLDP20240126. Home Business Minor. Online Sales (Soap).
74 MILNE PLACE SE	(Lot 31, Block 2, Plan 7410139) PLDP20240138. Home Business Major. Massage Therapy.
261 SOMERSET WAY SE	(Lot 44, Block 5, Plan 0612243) PLDP20240174. Home Business Minor. General Contractor / Project Manager.
12 SUNSET ROAD SW	(Lot 37, Block 26, Plan 0312828) PLDP20240172. Home Business Minor. Consultant (Commercial Loan Broker / Business Consultant).
58 BRAY CRESCENT SW	(Lot 19, Block 4, Plan 252HD) PLDP20240177. Home Business Minor. Recorded Music/Disc Jockey.
211 11 STREET SE	(Lot 3,4, Block 24, Plan 1132M) PLDP20240189. Home Business Minor. Exempt Professional (Social Worker).
517 CONNAUGHT DRIVE SW	(Lot 29, Block 4, Plan 252HD) PLDP20240194. Home Business Minor. Consultant (Wedding Planner).
31 SUNSET DRIVE SW	(Lot 10, Block 25, Plan 0312828) PLDP20240202. Home Business Major. Alternative Healing/Therapy.

A person claiming to be affected by a decision of the Development Officer or the Municipal Planning Commission may appeal to the Medicine Hat Subdivision and Development Appeal Board by completing and submitting to the City Clerk Department, the required Notice of Appeal form within twenty one (21) days of this publication. Notice of Appeal forms are available from the City Clerk Department, Third Floor, City Hall or on the City’s website at www.medicinehat.ca.

All Development Permits listed are subject to conditions. Further information on any Development Permit may be obtained from the Planning & Development Services Department, Second Floor, City Hall during normal business hours (Telephone 403.529.8374).

www.medicinehat.ca

8AM - 4PM SPECIAL SERVICES

Electric Outages	403.529.8260
Gas Emergency.....	403.529.8191
Water & Sewer Emergency	403.502.8042
After Hours Special Services.....	403.526.2828

FIRE HYDRANT INSPECTIONS & WATER MAIN FLUSHING

Environmental Utilities Maintenance Crews perform regular, routine maintenance to uphold the water quality and system infrastructure by annually inspecting fire hydrants and flushing water mains.

During these operations, there may be some discoloration in the water which is not harmful to consume and will dissipate when flushing is complete. Please note that discoloured water should not be used for laundry and that fluctuating water pressure may also be noticed.

Should discoloration persist beyond three hours, turn on a cold-water faucet or an outside sprinkler and let the water run for several minutes until the water runs clear.

For additional information or to confirm whether crews are working in your zone, refer to the Water Flushing information on the City’s website at www.medicinehat.ca/water or contact Environmental Utilities at 403-529-8176.

WATER CONSERVATION TIPS TO MAKE EVERY DROP COUNT!

Practice conserving water year ’round by following the three “Golden Rules” of water conservation – **Reduce, Repair, Retrofit** – to potentially cut your water use by 50%.

Here are just a few tips to help you conserve water:

In the House

- Clean fruits and veggies in a partially filled sink or container.
- Keep a container of drinking water in the fridge for when you want a cold drink.
- Only flush the toilet when necessary and never use it as a wastebasket.
- Check for and repair leaks on toilets, taps and other water using fixtures to minimize water loss and utility bill costs.
- Use short bursts of water when brushing your teeth, shaving, and washing your face.
- Only operate washing machines and dishwashers when you have a full load.
- Insulate hot water pipes so that the water heats up faster.
- Consider upgrading appliances, like washing machines and dishwashers, to energy efficient models.

In the Yard

- Clean your driveway and sidewalks with a broom instead of the hose.
- Install an automatic timer on sprinkler systems.
- Turn sprinkler timers off during periods of rainfall.
- Minimize evaporation by watering in the early morning or late evening hours when the temperature is cooler.
- Frequently check for water leaks on hoses, faucets, irrigation lines, pools, and ponds to avoid high utility bills and possible property damage.
- Reduce evaporation by covering up pools and hot tubs when not in use. This is also a very important safety tip!
- Set mower blades between 2 - 3 inches and leave the grass cuttings on the lawn to slow water evaporation and to fertilize the grass.
- Slope flowerbeds and place plants needing the most water in low areas.
- Replace portions of your lawn with tiered gardens, rocks, mulch and drought resistant shrubs or trees.

Refer to www.medicinehat.ca/waterconservation or contact Environmental Utilities at 403-529-8176 or eu@medicinehat.ca for more information.

Pembina Pipelines gets OK for solar system at Empress plant in Cypress County

Medicine Hat News

Pembina Pipelines has won approval to build a small solar power system at its Empress LNG straddle plant in northeast Cypress County.

“Project Sunshine” would be a 4.9-megawatt solar panel array built on the plant site and augment a larger power co-generation system at the facility. That also required Pembina to amend its status as a designated industrial system, and includes the potential for a battery storage system to be added.

A decision by the Alberta Utilities Commission published Friday approves both applications.

They state the plant will remain a net importer of electricity but could at times put power on to the power grid if requested by the grid operator.

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