

April 22, 2022 1930h



Alberta Rivers and Parks River Forecast Centre Update

Ice Jam Watch remains in place – Issued April 20, 2022
Ice Run now downstream of Fort McMurray

The River Forecast Centre (RFC) issued an Ice Jam Watch for the Athabasca River from upstream of Fort McMurray to downstream of Fort McKay yesterday.

Highlights and What is Expected Next:

- AEP conducted an ice observation flight today from 16:00 to 17:00 MDT
- The ice jam that formed in Fort McMurray yesterday is still in place. It has shortened by 0.9 km since forming and is now 11.9 km long
 - *The forecasted warm and sunny weather over the next few days is expected to continue to melt the ice jam*
- Water levels have fallen ~30 cm since their peak last night.
- Downstream of the ice jam the river is largely open to ~75 km downstream of Fort McMurray
 - There are sections with some patchy ice, and some places where the ice sheets have accumulated, particularly beside islands.
- The Clearwater River is breaking up and melting
 - There are 2 places where short “baby” ice jams have formed in bends
 - *This is a normal breakup process and doesn't pose a flooding risk to Fort McMurray.*
 - As the ice shifts and moves, water levels on the Clearwater River can rise or fall rapidly and without notice
- There may still be ice jams far upstream (~200 km) of Fort McMurray. Our next observation of these will be on Sunday, when we are expecting a satellite image to be taken (which we will receive late in the evening)
 - If these ice jams release, the ice will flow towards Fort McMurray, but it is expected to be significantly melted and broken by the time it arrives.
 - *This is not expected to pose a flood risk to Fort McMurray, but may temporarily raise water levels on the Athabasca and Clearwater Rivers (our estimate is this won't raise water levels by more than 1.5 to 2 m.)*

Why isn't River Breakup declared yet? While it's true the river “breaks” when ice begins moving through town, River Breakup is not declared until the risk of flooding has passed.



River BREAKUP

Regional Emergency Coordination Centre (RECC) Update



Small ice jam on the Clearwater River (flow from left to right) at km 16. Photo taken April 22, 2022 courtesy AEP



Open water on the Athabasca River (flow from right to left) at Fort McKay (approximately km 239). Photo taken on April 22, 2022. Photo courtesy AEP



Head of ice jam on the Athabasca River through Fort McMurray (flow from right to left) at km 294.1. Photo taken on April 22, 2022 courtesy AEP.



Open water at Fort McKay. Photo taken on April 22, 2022 courtesy AEP.

36 Hour Forecast for Wood Buffalo, AB

[Wood Buffalo, Alberta 36-Hour Weather Forecast - The Weather Network](#)

| Fri Evening | Fri Overnight | Sat Morning | Sat Afternoon | Sat Evening | Sat Overnight |
|-------------------------|------------------|----------------|--------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| A mix of sun and clouds | Partly cloudy | Mainly sunny | Chance of a shower | A mix of sun and clouds | Partly cloudy |
| | | | | | |
| 10° | -2° | 1° | 13° | 9° | -1° |

Helpful Links:

[Flood Mitigation - Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo \(rmwb.ca\)](#)

[Be prepared and stay alert as river breakup approaches - rmwb.ca](#)

Emergency Management, Regional Emergency Services

9909 Franklin Avenue, Fort McMurray, Alberta, Canada T9H 2K4 [rmwb.ca](#)

