

SAPRAE CREEK NEWS



September 2020

Councillor Update

Happy September everyone!

This is my favourite time of year because the vegetable gardens are almost ready for harvesting, the evenings are cooler and finally, the mosquitos (who love me to pieces) will be gone soon.

School will be starting soon, and you parents have an unusually difficult decision on whether to allow your children to physically attend classes. I feel for all of you as I think that school may be forever changed. Only you know what's best for your kids. My belief is that no one is entitled to know the reasoning behind your decision. Do what's best for you and yours.



I attended the District 4 meeting in Rycroft on August 14, 2020. The RMWB brought forward three resolutions to be brought forward and voted on at the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) conference in November. The resolutions are as follows:

1. That the RMA advocate for the federal and provincial governments to maintain the disaster relief funding.
2. That RMA advocate to the provincial government to lower the taxation class for rural small businesses so that they aren't taxed the same as the oil sands.
3. That the RMA advocate for the tax incentive that the early childhood educators had to attract and retain qualified workers. This grant is an Alberta funded one and is not the Northern Living allowance which is federal. We'll see in November if the rest of the rural Albertans will vote to pass these resolutions.

I also spoke on the possible impacts to the region if the Alberta government passes the proposed changes to the Assessment Model. The Assessment Model provides a way to assign an annual value to all properties in Alberta for the purpose of property taxes and municipal grants. The proposed changes will lower the values on industrial properties which, in turn, will lower the tax revenue for the municipality. Although the RMWB doesn't have many pipelines and oil wells, this is only the first phase of the proposed changes. The second phase will have a greater impact on us as tax paying residents.

At the September 15, 2020 council meeting, there will be an update from all the open houses and the one-on-ones regarding the flood mitigation and possible buyouts of properties. I will post an update on the Draper Facebook page shortly after that meeting. Draper residents, please reach out with any concerns regarding the presentation on September 15th.

Saprae Creekers: I have emailed our DCAO, Matthew Hough, on when the repairs on Highway 69 will be starting. As of today, the information I've received is that the contract has been awarded with a start date of August 31st and a completion date of September 20th, weather permitting. Here's hoping for sunny days and warm nights!

That's it for now. Stay safe and take care of each other.

Sheila

Covid-19

Stay Informed

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo continues to monitor the on-going COVID-19 pandemic and follow the direction of Alberta Health Services (AHS) and the Chief Medical Officer of Health.

For regular updates, please visit [Alberta.ca/COVID19](https://alberta.ca/COVID19).

For municipal information related to COVID-19, visit rmwb.ca/COVID19.

Engineering/Construction Updates – Sapræe Creek Estates

H. Wilson is currently completing the underground infrastructure upgrades on Sol Park Drive and Weiss Drive as well as minor construction activities including ditching and roadwork in other areas of the community. Access to residences will be maintained through detours, where applicable for the duration of the construction period.

Chandos Construction is completing work at the new sewage lift station at the Sapræe Creek Estates Firehall property. Heavy Equipment operations to be expected. Demolition and installation work in the Annex building is still in progress. Earthworks behind the Firehall is substantially completed and the construction work area will be restored with gravel where required. Commissioning activities have begun and are ongoing for the months of July and August. The Contractor is anticipating completion of the deficiencies and seasonal work to occur prior to the end of the construction season.

Minimal disruption to residents is expected from these improvement projects.

In keeping with Alberta Public Health Officials' guidelines, Municipal Contractors are advised to follow COVID-19 health and safety requirements during construction for the safety of workers as well as the community.



Property taxes are due Sept. 30, 2020

Don't forget to pay your 2020 Property Taxes by September 30, 2020 to avoid late penalties. On October 1, a 3% late penalty will be applied to outstanding balances from the current year and a 2% late penalty will be applied to outstanding balances from previous years.

Your Property Tax Notice was sent in May. If you did not receive it or have questions, please **call Pulse at 780-743-7000 or 1-800-973-9663.**

How to pay your property taxes:

- Tax Installment Payment Plan
- Online at pay.rmwb.ca
- Through your bank or financial institution
- Mail a cheque to:
 - The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo
Assessment and Taxation Office
3rd Floor - 9909 Franklin Avenue
Fort McMurray, AB, T9H 2K4

The Tax Installment Payment Plan (TIPP) allows you to pay your property taxes in convenient monthly payments. You must register to access this program.

Property taxes are normally due at the end of June. To support community members affected by COVID-19 and the April flood, property tax payments could be deferred until Sept. 30, 2020.

For more information, including payment options and to register for TIPP, visit rmwb.ca/taxes

Plan for regular transit service this September



Ride safely.
Find out how at
rmwb.ca/transit.

WOOSH  A RIDE
WORTH
TAKING

Transit Services resumed regular service with some updates to schedules on Aug. 28. School service is included in the updates with schools now resuming in-person classes.

Plan ahead

Before your next trip into Fort McMurray, take a few minutes to check out the updated schedules to plan ahead. Schedules can be found at rmwb.ca/transit.

Covid-19 precautions

Masks are recommended for use in situations where physical distancing cannot be maintained.

Riders using buses and bus shelters should use caution and use these amenities responsibly. Anyone using these spaces must follow public health guidelines, including:

- **Staying home** if you feel sick.
- **Washing your hands** frequently.
- **Refraining from touching your face** with unwashed hands.

Fees will continue to be waived and rear door entry will continue on all RMWB transit buses. Increased cleaning and prevention measures remain in place. Please stay up to date on our COVID-19 measures at rmwb.ca/COVID19.

More information

Residents can call or email Transit Services for more information or to provide feedback about the updated schedules at 780-743-7931 or transit@rmwb.ca.



**For any questions, please
contact Pulse!**

Residents in rural communities can contact the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo 24/7 by contacting Pulse via the following:

- 780-743-7000
- 1-800-973-9663 (toll-free)
- www.rmwb.ca/pulse



Do you own a small business in a rural community within the RMWB?

You may be able to save money on your taxes by applying for the rural non-residential small business tax rate.

Your current tax bill doesn't reflect this rate and you must apply every year to receive it. Eligibility requirements and criteria are available online.

Applications are being accepted until Dec. 31, 2020.

Regardless of the status of your application, property taxes are due Sept. 30, 2020.

If you qualify for the rural non-residential small business tax sub-class after you pay your taxes, you will receive a credit on your account or receive the funds via cheque.

To apply and learn more, visit rmwb.ca/taxes



Fees for disposing of non-commercial waste reinstated Sept. 1

Fees for disposing of non-commercial (residential) waste have now been reinstated at the Municipal Landfill.

In May, fees for disposing of both commercial and non-commercial waste were waived to help support the community in flood recovery efforts after the April 2020 flood. Fees for disposing of commercial waste were re-instated July 1 and fees for disposing of non-commercial waste have been re-instated as of Sept. 1.

The landfill is open Monday to Sunday from 8:15 a.m. until 5:45 p.m.

For more information on landfill fees, please visit rmwb.ca/landfill or contact Pulse.



Community Investment Program now accepting applications

The application period for the 2021 Community Impact Grant and the 2021 Games Legacy Grant is now open. Application forms and all required attachments must be completed in full and received before **4:30 p.m. MT on Friday, September 18, 2020**. Late applications will not be processed.

New this year – One-on-one support!

Staff are available to help navigate the CIP application process and answer any questions you may have. This year, applicants can take advantage of one-on-one support available through virtual meetings or over the phone. To schedule your one-on-one meeting, contact Pulse at 780-743-7000 or toll-free number at 1-800-973-9663.

Visit rmwb.ca/CIP for more details.

Non-profit organizations
property tax exemption
program



If you're a registered non-profit organization that owns or occupies property, you may be eligible to receive a **property tax exemption**.

You must **apply every year** to receive the non-profit organization property tax exemption. Applications for the 2021 taxation year are currently being accepted and **must be received by Oct. 1, 2020**.

Non-profit organizations that may be eligible include:

- Art and cultural organizations
- Child care and supervision
- Organizations promoting language
- Sports and recreation organizations
- Social support services

To learn more and apply, visit rmwb.ca/taxes

VULNERABLE PERSONS REGISTRY (VPR)

The VPR is a free, voluntary and confidential service aimed at improving the safety of residents living at home who would be at a greater risk during emergencies.

The VPR is available to residents in the region who:

- Experience severe difficulty with mobility, vision or hearing
- Have developmental/intellectual, cognitive or mental health challenges
- Require electricity for life-sustaining equipment such as life support, oxygen, dialysis etc.

To register, go to rmwb.ca/VPR or call Pulse at 780-743-700 or toll-free at 1-800-973-9663.



Community Conversation on Flood Risk



VIRTUAL OPEN HOUSE

Continue the conversation on flood risk mitigation online in our virtual open house at participate.rmwb.ca



Be *BearSmart* at home

- Never leave food out for wildlife.
- Always keep your garbage in a garage or in a bear-resistant container until it can be removed from your property.
- Remove bird feeders from your yard between April and October. Clean up spilled bird seed regularly.
- Store pet food indoors and bring in pet dishes overnight.
- Thoroughly clean barbecues after each use and store them in a garage.
- Cover compost piles with soil or lime or use an indoor compost.
- Ensure that all fruit and berries are removed from trees and shrubs as early as possible.
- Talk to your neighbours about being BearSmart at home.
- If there's a bear in your community, call the nearest Fish and Wildlife office at 310-0000 or, after business hours, the Report a Poacher line at 1-800-642-3800.



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Photo Credit: Mike Ewald (bear image)
Travel Alberta (border image)

**Government
of Alberta** ■



IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

PULSE (MUNICIPAL SWITCH BOARD)	1-800-973-9663 780-743-7000	PULSE@RMWB.CA	RMWB.CA/PULSE
COMMUNITY CONTACTS:		SOCIAL MEDIA:	
RCMP	780-788-4000	 @WOODBUFFALORURALCOMMUNITYCONNECTION  @RMWOODBUFFALO  @RMWOODBUFFALO	
FISH & WILDLIFE	780-743-7200		
HEALTH LINK	811		
ALL EMERGENCIES	911		

To submit information to the newsletter please email:

koralee.samaroden@rmwb.ca

Deadline for October newsletter submissions:

September 24, 2020

SEPTEMBER 2020

COMMUNITY EVENTS & PROGRAMS CALENDAR

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4 	5
6	7 Labour Day	8	9	10	11 	12
13	14	15	16	17	18 	19
20	21	22	23	24 Newsletter submissions due.	25 	26
27	28	29	30			