SAPRAE CREEK NEWS





February 2025

Join the Volunteer Fire Department

We need paid on-call members!





What we do:

We respond to fire emergencies, helping people and protecting property.

What you have:

- Valid Class 5 license. (Q endorsement is even better)
 - Time for weekly training and ability to respond
- Contact: Regional Emergency Services: 780-792-5500

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





Some municipal service fees and rates are increasing April 1

In November, RMWB Council approved increases to several user rates and fees as part of the annual update to the user fees, rates and charges bylaw. These include:

- Utilities (water, sewer, garbage + curbside)
- Transit
- Landfill
- Cemeteries
- Development and building permits and services

The increases will help offset the cost of delivering these services.

Rural transit fare increasing April 1, 2025

Rural transit cash fares for adults and children are increasing by 11%, effective April 1.

- Adult fares (ages 13 64):
- Current fare: \$12
- New fare: \$13.50 (11% increase).
- Child fares (ages 5 − 12):
- Current fare: \$6
- New fare: \$6.75 (11% increase).

Utility rates increasing by 10-15%

Utility rates for municipal water, wastewater, and certain solid waste services are increasing by 10 to 15%. The changes vary depending on the size of the property's water meter and between rural, urban, and commercial services.

New fee structure in place for some administrative services

Additional new fees cover certain ambulance services and community backyard rink applications.

To view the updated rates and learn more about user fees and charges, visit rmwb.ca/userfees



Candidate nominations open for 2025 municipal election

New rules in place for campaigning, find more information at rmwb.ca/elections

Candidate nominations are now open to all eligible residents interested in running for the position of RMWB mayor, councillor or school board trustee.

New rules are in place for 2025 municipal election

Changes to the Local Authorities Elections Act require candidates to submit a notice of intent to appear on the official register of candidates before accepting campaign donations and incurring expenses. In addition, all candidates must complete the nomination process to appear on the ballot.

The general election for the RMWB and all municipalities in Alberta will be held on Oct. 20, 2025.

Call for candidate nominations

Nominations are now being accepted from candidates for the upcoming 2025 municipal election. Prospective candidates must file their notice of intent and complete the nomination process by **noon on Monday, Sept. 22, 2025**.

Find the notice of intent form, nomination forms, required documentation and additional information for interested candidates at rmwb.ca/elections.

Potential candidates with questions or in need of assistance, can contact the Elections Office through Pulse at 780-743-7000 or email <u>elections@rmwb.ca</u> and a Legislative Services staff member will assist.



Budget 2025 approved by RMWB Council

2025 Budget Highlights	Capital Projects	Parks, Fleet, Transit & Roads	Police & Bylaw Services
	\$166.2 million	\$80.2 million	\$58.7million
Operating Budget	Fire & Ambulance	Environmental Services	Community Investment Program
\$476.2 million	\$46 million	\$79.2 million	\$43.5 million

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (RMWB) Council approved a \$645.6 million 2025 Municipal budget on December 4, 2024.

The budget outlines a comprehensive plan that balances delivering safe, reliable services with strategic long-term capital investments to support the region's continued growth and sustainability.

The budget is comprised of \$476.2 million for operations and \$169.4 million to be transferred to reserves. The capital budget is \$166.2 million with funding from grants and 2025 revenues.

The overall increase in the budget from last year is due to the increasing costs of material and supplies across Alberta and all of Canada.

To learn more visit rmwb.ca/budget



COMMUNITY NOTICE



Remove curbside collection bins from the

street after pick-up

With winter in full swing, streets must be kept clear for snowplows and equipment to plow and remove snow. There have been recent incidents with garbage and recycling bins left on the street being damaged by equipment. This can be avoided by following the bylaws and requirements for curbside collection.



Remove bins from the street

Your curbside collection bins cannot be left on the street. Bins must be placed on the curb by 7:30 a.m. on your collection day and removed from the street the same day. Bins need to be stored on your property when it's not your collection day.

Winter bin placement

We need your help to ensure garbage and recycling bins are picked up safely and efficiently.

- Place your garbage and recycling bins in front of windrows (snowbanks). Do not place bins on top or behind windrows.
- Clear the snow away from the curb where you place your bins. If bins are blocked by snow, they
 may not be collected.
- Keep one-foot in-between bins and 3 feet away from vehicles.
- · Ensure lids are firmly closed.

Thank you for your support following these requirements. To learn more about curbside collection, visit rmwb.ca/garbage.

For questions, contact Pulse at 780-743-7000, 1-800-973-9663 or online at rmwb.ca/pulse.

9909 Franklin Avenue, Fort McMurray, Alberta, Canada T9H 2K4 | rmwb.ca



Construction underway on Fort Chipewyan Winter Road

Municipal contractors are starting to build the Fort Chipewyan Winter Road. Construction work will continue throughout December, with a target opening date before Dec. 25. As always, the opening of the winter road is dependent on weather and the progress crews make, ensuring the road is safe for vehicles.

Crews preparing for La Loche Winter Trail construction

Crews are preparing for construction of the La Loche Winter Trail. The route will open when it is safe. Please follow the winter road safety tips and look for updates at rmwb.ca/winterroads.

Slow down! Winter road safety tips

Before travelling on the winter road, please review the Winter Road Safety Tips. Drivers are reminded to:

- Remember that travelling on the winter road when it's closed is strictly prohibited and extremely dangerous.
- Drive to conditions and stay on right-hand side of the road (especially on hills).
- Reduce speed to 30 km/h when passing equipment in the sandhills.
- Stay on the designated route. Travelling off road is extremely dangerous as there may be thin ice in areas surrounding the road.
- Prepare for emergencies ahead of time. There are no regular services like road patrol, gas stations or reliable cell phone coverage.
- Always inform someone of your travel plans before leaving.
- Make the drive using high clearance 4x4 vehicles (recommended)

Don't miss a winter road update

Further winter road updates will be provided as they become available. Check the following sources for the latest information:

- Winter Road Hotline (recorded message) 866-743-6111
- Winter roads webpage <u>rmwb.ca/winterroads</u>
- Sign up for email updates at subscribe.rmwb.ca
- RMWB Facebook and Twitter accounts
- Contact Pulse at 780-743-7000, toll free 1-800-973-9663 or online at rmwb.ca/pulse





What is it?

- A voluntary program that offers a safe, respectful way to promote healing after harm has occurred.
- Allows offenders to take responsibility for their actions and allows the community to see its role in contributing to reconciliation.
- Provides an opportunity for everyone involved to have a voice and determine actions and outcomes to ensure accountability.

Learn more:

Restorative Justice Contact Information:

Phone: 780-788-4253Toll Free: 1-888-788-4250

• Email: restorative.justice@rmwb.ca

Get involved.

We need committed volunteers to help! Please contact us.



Community Policing - presentations available

The Wood Buffalo Community Policing Unit has a great list of presentations they can bring to communities when requested.

Available presentations

- A Career in the RCMP Gr 7-Adult
- ATV Safety Gr 10-Adult
- Being a Good Citizen ECDP-Gr 6
- Being a Mountie ECDP-Gr 6
- Bicycle Safety ECDP-Gr 6
- Bullying (includes Cyberbullying) ECDP-Gr 9
- Consent Gr 7-Adult
- Crime Scene Investigations ECDP-Adult
- Drug Awareness
 - For Teens (cannabis, alcohol, vaping and opioid awareness) Gr 7-12
 - For Adults (includes clandestine drug labs, methamphetamines, opioids)
- Fraud & Identity Theft Adult
- Halloween Safety ECDP-Gr 6
- History of the Force Gr 4-Adult
- Online Safety (includes Cyberbullying) ECDP-Gr 6
- Online Safety (include Cyberbullying, Social Media & the Law) Gr 7-Adult
- Personal Safety ECDP-Adult
- Police & Canadian Law (for New Canadians) Gr 10-Adult
- Property Crime Prevention Adult
- Restorative Justice Gr 9-Adult
- Senior Safety Adult
- Sexting Gr 7-Adult
- Traffic
 - Impaired Driving (Alcohol & Drugs) Gr 9-Adult
 - Distracted Driving Gr 9-Adult
 - Winter Driving Gr 9-Adult
- Unhealthy Relationships/Dating Violence Gr 7-Adult
- Youth Criminal Justice Act Gr 7-Adult

Want a presentation? Contact us if you'd like a presentation for your group, class or community at communitypolicing@rmwb.ca or call 780-788-4040 and ask for the Community Policing Coordinator.





SAPRAE CREEK ESTATES SEWER PROGRAM

The 2024 construction season has wrapped up, but you can still **get your Rural Water and Sewer Services (RWSS) application started over the winter**. This will help ensure your home is ready to start being connected next construction season and you take advantage of the significant savings offered through the RWSS program.

214 homes in Saprae Creek Estates have already connected to piped sewer services through the RWSS program.

The end of next construction season is the deadline to connect your home

The Municipality will cover a large portion of the cost to connect your home to piped sewer services up to the end of the 2025 construction season for Saprae Creek Estates.

After this deadline, you will be responsible for the full connection cost, which can be anywhere between \$40,000 to \$110,000 as opposed to the lower cost of \$10,000 with 0% interest available now. The full cost of trucked sewer pickups will also be your responsibility if your home isn't connected by the deadline.

How do I start my application over the winter?

- Review the RWSS Homeowners Guide and important information at rmwb.ca/rwss.
- Contact a certified contractor to discuss what the work connecting your home will entail. A
 contractor quote must be submitted in the spring to the Municipality for approval as part of your
 application. While quotes won't be approved over the winter, contractors can still prepare everything
 so work can begin next construction season. A list of certified contractors is available on the RMWB
 website.
- You're in control of the entire application process, but your contractor can take the lead on everything if you prefer.
- Your Municipal tax and utility accounts must be in good standing. Outstanding balances must be paid before your RWSS application can be approved.

Need help?

Connecting your home to piped water and sewer may seem complicated, but we're here to help guide you through the process. Call 780-743-7000 to learn more, ask questions and get help starting your application.

Find everything you need to know about the Rural Water and Sewer Servicing Program, including more details on how to apply at rmwb.ca/rwss



What will my utility bill look like once I connect to piped sewer services?

Below is an example of what your bi-monthly utility bill will look like once your home is connected to piped sewer services.



9909 Franklin Avenue, Fort McMurray, AB, T9H 2K4

UTILITY BILL REPRINT

DOE, JOHN ACCOUNT#

SAPRAE CREEK ESTATES BILLING PERIOD: 2024/04/30

TO: 2024/06/30 BILLING DATE: 2024/06/30 PENALTY DATE: 2024/07/39

SRV ADDR: 062-LONG BRIDGE LANE INV #: 5000001

DATE	DESCRIPTION	CODE	READING	CONSUMPTION	AMOUNT
2024/06/30 2024/06/30 2024/06/30 2024/06/30 2024/06/30 2024/06/30	GARBAGE COLL SAPRAE C RURAL WATER AND SEWER SEWER CONSUMPTION FIXED CHARGE SEWER WATER CONSUMPTION FIXED CHARGE WATER	A A A A A	3311 3311	70 70	66.72 65.00 17.64 28.86 29.96 56.28

264.46 AMOUNT DUE

Please Note: All charges/payments shown are up to and including the 'Billing To Period' date of this invoice.

Your bill explained

- Includes curbside collection, waste disposal, recycling fees.
- RWSS Program Bi-Monthly Connection Fee
- 3 \$0.63/m3 variable rate based on the same water consumption, at a reduced rate
- 4 Fixed rate for sewer (\$14.43 per month) x 2 months
- 5 \$1.07 /m3 variable rate based on water consumption on water meter.
- 6 Fixed rate for water (\$28.14 per month) x 2 months

These are 2024 rates from the Council approved Fees, Rates and Charges Bylaw.

This Bylaw is updated annually and its customary to see increases to utility rates as part of the updates.



Emergency Social Services (ESS)

ESS provides individuals or families with supports when they are displaced due to an emergency. Registration centres or other evacuation sites are set up to register evacuees and provide immediate basic needs. This support is available to provide a safe place for evacuees to plan their next steps as they transition to recovery.

Registration centres may provide the following services:

- Food/water
- Shelter
- Clothing
- First Aid/emotional support
- Family reunification
- Animal care and rescue assistance



To learn more about ESS, or to join the ESS Team, scan the QR code below:

VPR

Emergencies happen. If you are a vulnerable person Living in the region, you may be at greater risk during an emergency.



The Vulnerable Persons Registry (VPR) is a service that improves the safety of vulnerable residents living at home.

This is done by communicating directly with registrants during emergencies and by sharing key information to first responders about individuals on the VPR. Click here to find out more about the VPR.

MAERS

The MyAlberta Emergency Registration System is available to all residents of Alberta as a tool to assist during an evacuation or emergency. Albertans can register themselves and their family members in advance of an emergency using their MyAlberta Digital ID. Click here or scan below to pre-register today.





NOTICE TO RURAL RESIDENTS Water and septic service reminders

To allow water and septic delivery trucks access and to provide continuous service for all residents, please follow to the requirements below:

- 1) Basement water tanks or water tanks that are not visible: All customers must have their volume posted in a visible place so water delivery contractor can see proper date and amount of water required (displayed in litres).
- 2) **Hanging branches and wires on driveways:** Make sure that delivery vehicles have a minimum 15 feet of clearance. All low hanging branches must be trimmed to prevent damage to trucks, and low hanging wires are to be raised.
- 3) Provide clear access: All vehicles/obstacles must be removed on driveways during the delivery schedule and the ensure the water delivery vehicle is able to drive within 15.24 meters of the delivery point for water.
- 4) **Ensure pets are contained:** For the safety of contractors and pets, all dogs are to be tied up or inside your home, for service provider to access your property.
- 5) **Keep access points clear of snow and ice:** During winter months, keep driveways and pathways to water and septic hook ups, clear of snow and ice and thaw receivers and caps for hose access.
- 6) **Maintain cam-lock/hoses:** The winterization and maintenance of the cam-lock fitting and hoses is the responsibility of the home-owner. All cam-locks and hoses are to be drained and water to be removed to prevent freezing and breakage of cam-lock.
- 7) **Safety of septic tanks:** All septic tanks will be equipped with a "stinger" and an approved lid on the tank.
- 8) **Driveways:** If your driveway is soft (spring thaw), it is the homeowner's responsibility to contact the RMWB to suspend delivery or to add a proper hose with the required cam-lock and extend down driveway to location of delivery.

For more information:

refer to the Water Utilities Management Bylaw (Bylaw No. 07/035) Part X
If you have questions or require any additional information, call the Pulse Line at 780-743-7000



Accessibility around the RMWB



Did you know we recently developed accessibility checklists for buildings and events in collaboration with community stakeholders? These tools allow residents, businesses and RMWB staff to identify areas where accessibility can be improved to meet community needs.

Learn more at rmwb.ca/Accessibility.

Why is accessibility important?

It's inclusive and gives equal access to all.

As part of the RMWB Commitment to Equity and Inclusion, we consulted with residents to better understand the prevalence of disabilities across demographics and the types of barriers being experienced. The RMWB What We Heard About Accessibility 2022 report found that 58% of survey participants reported having a physical disability. It is important to acknowledge that residents also indicated facing mental, cognitive and sensory disabilities.

It removes barriers, and it's the right thing to do.

Accessibility is about eliminating barriers so that everyone can fully participate in society. The goal of the Accessible Canada Act is to achieve a barrier-free Canada by 2040. A barrier is anything that hinders the full and equal participation of a person in Canadian life. Barriers can be physical, architectural, technological, informational, or attitudinal.

It benefits everyone. Accessibility is better for society, businesses and everyone.

Great societies become even greater when there is equal access, full engagement, and capacity to reach full potential. When accessibility is not prioritized, people are excluded from participation and that leads to lost potential for individuals, families, businesses, communities, and our economy.

Learn more at rmwb.ca/Accessibility.



Embrace the magic of winter at WinterPLAY, Feb. 21 to 25



WinterPLAY at the Snye is happening Feb. 21 to 25 with lots of free winter activities for you to enjoy!

Get ready for ice slides, leisure skating, horse-drawn wagon rides, and of course, the annual Shootout on the Snye four-on-four pond hockey tournament.

Boost your cause with WinterPLAY fundraising opportunities

To make WinterPLAY an event to remember, organizers are seeking support from **local community organizations and groups** with paid fundraising opportunities during the five-day winter festival at the Snye.

Consider applying for one of the following fundraising opportunities by Feb. 10:

- Filling a general event support shift. Groups will receive \$500 per four-hour shift.
- Serving one of two **community pancake breakfasts** on Feb. 22 and 23. Fundraising will be based on the donations received during the events.
- Managing a snack station at the WinterCHALET.
- Refereeing during **Shootout at the Snye**. Referrees will be compensated \$25 per 25-minute game.

Learn more and apply at rmwb.ca/WinterPLAY.

Access to Snye restricted until Feb. 28

As organizers begin to prepare for WinterPLAY 2025, access to the Snye will be restricted until Feb. 28.

For those looking to access the Clearwater River, please use the Tom Weber and Raphael Cree boat launches.

Stay tuned for more information

Learn more about WinterPLAY opportunities, activities and more at rmwb.ca/WinterPLAY.







Winter Maintenance season begins!

Planning to visit Fort McMurray this winter? Now is the perfect time to plan ahead for winter maintenance parking restrictions. All Winter Maintenance Subzones (WMZ) are relaxed until further notice as the program officially begins Oct. 15.

On-street parking restrictions are not in effect when subzones are relaxed but you can still <u>sign</u> <u>up for alerts</u> that will go straight to your inbox!

Subzones will typically be activated on a bi-weekly basis, meaning residents need to move their vehicles off their street once every two weeks. Windrows (snowbanks) created by a plow that are higher than 15 cm will be removed from the end of driveways in active subzones.

Keep up to date on the status of WMZs

- Sign up for WMZ Alerts.
- Watch for updates on the orange electronic signage at the entrance of each neighbourhood
- Follow the RMWB on Facebook and Twitter @RMWoodBuffalo
- Check rmwb.ca
- Contact Pulse at 780-743-7000 or rmwb.ca/pulse



Shape Policing Priorities in Wood Buffalo

Every year, Wood Buffalo RCMP invites residents to share their safety concerns and shape policing priorities for the region. These priorities ensure that officers focus on issues that matter most to your community, alongside responding to calls for service.

How to Participate

Your feedback, combined with local data and crime trends, helps determine focus areas for the coming year.

You can participate in any of the following ways:

- 1. Attend an RCMP Community Open House
 Join an RCMP Community Open House to share your thoughts directly with officers. Visit rmwb.ca/policingpriorities for details.
- 2. **Visit your local Municipal office**Fill out a paper survey and submit it on-site.
- 3. Call Pulse
 Complete the survey over the phone (780-743-7000 or 1-800-973-9663).
- 4. **Online**Visit **rmwb.ca/policingpriorities** to complete the survey online.

Get involved now and stay tuned this spring to see how your feedback will shape policing efforts in Wood Buffalo.



Step up in an emergency

Volunteer with the Emergency Social Services team.

Join a team that helps residents during an emergency or disaster.

- Build your knowledge, confidence, and experience.
- No experience required. Training will be provided.



For more information call:

- 780-743-7000
- Toll Free <u>1-800-973-9663</u>



What we do:

Emergency Social Services provides basic supports for residents displaced by large emergencies or incidents in the Municipality.

Who we are:

Volunteers, community partners, and municipal employees who work together under the guidance of the Emergency Management Branch of Regional Emergency Services.







Join an RMWB board or committee and get involved in your community

Help shape the future of your community while gaining valuable experience by applying to join a Councilappointed board or committee by Feb. 16.

Your skills and experience are needed for important projects and initiatives across the region. Board and committee members work alongside other community leaders and help advise Mayor and Councillors on important decisions and matters that impact your community.

There are 17 openings to apply for on the following Municipal boards and committees:

- Advisory Committee on Aging
- Combative Sports Commission
- Communities in Bloom
- Downtown Revitalization Advisory Committee
- Homelessness Initiative Strategic Committee
- Regional Advisory Committee on Inclusion, Diversity & Equity
- Regional Recreation Corporation Board
- Waterfront Advisory Committee
- Wood Buffalo Housing and Development Committee

Rural and Indigenous residents strongly encouraged to apply

Most board and committee meetings can be attended remotely by video call. Rural board and committee members will also be reimbursed mileage expenses for driving to attend meetings in person.

Access the Boards and Committees portal and submit your application at rmwb.ca/boards

For questions or to get help applying for a vacancy, contact Pulse at 780-743-7000 or toll-free at 1-800-973-9663.



Walking Safety Tips

Walk Facing Traffic: If there is no sidewalk and you must walk on the side of the road, choose the side where you are facing oncoming traffic. This gives you the best chance to see traffic approaching closest to you and take evasive action if necessary.

Cross Safely: Look both ways before crossing any street. Make eye contact with any drivers who may be turning. Give them a wave. Make sure they see you.

Walk Single File: Unless you are on a sidewalk separate from the road, you should walk single file. This is especially important on a road with lots of curves. While is can be enjoyable to walk down the road two or three abreast chatting merrily, drivers don't expect it.

Stay aware of bikes and runners: Share the road and path with bikes and runners. Bike riders should alert you when approaching from behind with a bike bell or a "passing on the left/right." Listen for them.

Be Visible: Wear bright colors when walking in daytime. When walking at night wear light-colored clothing and reflective clothing or reflective vest to be visible.

Hang Up and Eyes Up: Chatting or texting while walking is as dangerous as doing that while driving. You are distracted and not as aware of your environment. You are less likely to recognize traffic danger, passing joggers and bikers or tripping hazards. Potential criminals can also see you as a distracted easy target.

When walking your pet: keep your pet on the side away from traffic so that they don't accidently dart into the roadway.







SNOW SCHOOL 2024/25

Discover Skiing/Snowboarding - Adult lessons \$99

Kinder Kids-ages 8 & under \$75

Group Lessons \$40

Private Lessons \$65

Never Ever Camp-ages 6-10 \$139

Learn to Ride Camp-ages 6-10 \$139

Explorer Camp-ages 10-17 \$199

Registration is available online. A detailed description for each lesson/camp can be found online. *All prices plus 5% GST.





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	c			
FISH & WILDLIFE	780-743-7200	@WOODBUFFALORURALCOMMUNITYCONNECTION			
HEALTH LINK	811				
ALL EMERGENCIES	911	@RMWOODBUFFALO			
		O			
		@RMWOODBUFFALO			

To submit information to the newsletter please email:

ruralnewsletters@rmwb.ca

Deadline for the March Newsletter submissions: FEBRUARY 25TH, 2025



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						Winter Bout Monster Truck VS Drifting Area 63 Motor Park 10 AM
Shootout on the Snye Registration	3	4	Discover Arts Council Wood Buffalo WBRL 6-8 PM	6	7 Trivia Night The Legion 7 PM	Sweet Treat Day SPCA
Sweet Treat Day SPCA	10	ITA Regional Gathering Shell Place 8:30-5:30	12	13 ITA Regional Gathering Shell Place 8:30-5:30	The Wizard of Oz Keyano Theatre 7:30 PM	Wine and Chocolate Heritage Village 7-9 PM
16	17	18	19	Cultural Awareness Training Syncrude Sport & Wellness 9-12 PM	WinterPLAY	WinterPLAY
WinterPLAY Shootout on the Snye	24 WinterPLAY	25 WinterPLAY	26	27	Charity Jam & Silent Auction Suncor Energy Center 6-11 PM	

