

NEWS & VIEWS



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A MESSAGE FROM THE REEVE



Doug Drozd

Reeve

Division 1 Councillor

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It is a great pleasure to bring Seasons Greetings on behalf of the Council and Staff of the County of Barrhead.

We all wish you the very best for the Festive Season, and hope you enjoy the time spent with family and friends.

2021 was a challenging year for the Council and Staff of the County of Barrhead. We thank our dedicated staff for providing the excellent services we enjoy as County of Barrhead residents.

Municipal elections this fall saw our friends Dennis Nanninga and Darrell Troock retire. Council wishes them a long and happy retirement and a big thank you for their dedication and years of service given to the residents of the County of Barrhead. All the best gents!

With retirements come new faces on Council, congratulations to Jared Stoik and Paul Properzi. County residents can rest assured that they are in capable hands.

Council is looking forward to 2022. Our local economy is strong and there are some exciting developments on the horizon. Council and Staff are working hard for the betterment of the entire community.

On behalf of the Staff and Council of the County of Barrhead,

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year to all.

Best Wishes,

Douglas Drozd

Reeve, County of Barrhead



RURAL ROAD SAFETY:

During Winter Months



Be Prepared for Winter!

County Snow Plow Program

This winter take advantage of the County's Snow Plow Program! By purchasing and displaying a snow flag at the end of your driveway you notify our graders that you want your driveway plowed.

Flags can only be purchased at the County office for \$35 each. Flags cannot be purchased directly from patrol operators.

When snow falls, the County's top priority is public roads; therefore, we kindly ask that residents be patient.

Clearing Snow on Private Property

Public Works is asking residents to be cautious when removing snow from private driveways and yards. It is important that snow **not** be pushed across public roads, rather it must be kept on private property.

Pushing snow across public roadways creates hazards that could potentially result in vehicle and property damage and/or bodily harm.



Winter Driving **Safety** Reminder

Hazards such as black ice, fog, high winds and white out conditions can impair visibility and hinder driving. Safety tips include slow down, don't tailgate, turn headlights on, and don't brake while turning. Stock an emergency kit and blankets, check tire treads and wiper blades, and ensure all vehicle lights are working.

Put a Freeze on Winter Holiday Fires



Keep candles at least **12 inches** away from anything that burns.



Read manufacturer's instructions for the number of light strands to connect.



Make sure your tree is **at least 3 feet** away from heat sources like fireplaces, radiators and space heaters.

Did you know?



A heat source too close to the Christmas tree causes **1 in every 4** winter fires.



A dry Christmas tree can burn very hot and very fast.



Christmas is the peak day for candle fires.



Think about using **battery-operated** flameless candles.



More than 1/3 of home decoration fires are started by candles.

Fire Services

The County and Town of Barrhead partner to provide fire/rescue services to the region. The Barrhead Regional Fire Service operates out of the Emergency Response Centre located in the Town of Barrhead.

For emergencies call 911.



Ice Safety



Living in Canada means experiencing all four seasons. County of Barrhead has many natural bodies of water that attract sledders, ice fishers, skaters and so much more during winter months. We hope residents and visitors can enjoy many outdoor activities each and every season. However, we want to ensure outdoor enthusiasts remember to be cautious around frozen bodies of water.

Although fun and exciting, working or playing near bodies of water is especially hazardous during winter months. Every year, people die from drowning or hypothermia after falling through ice.

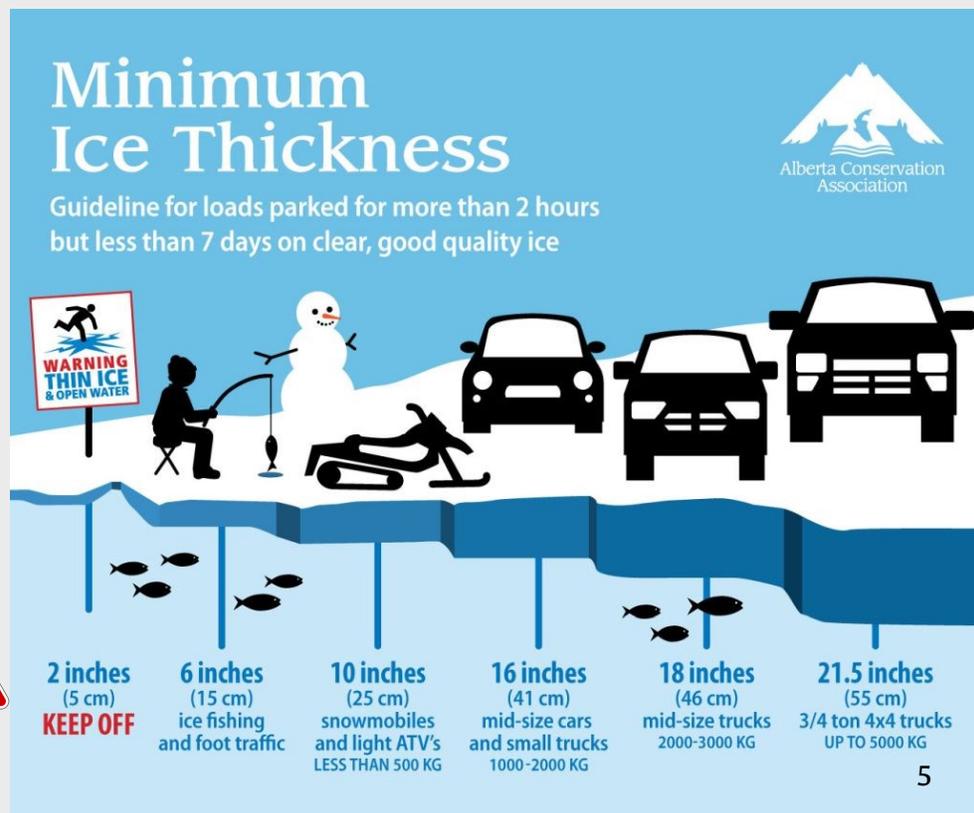
Load bearing capacity of ice depends on:

- Quality of ice
- Thickness
- Ice and air temperatures,
- Solar radiation

Look closely before setting foot on or near ice.

Due to aeration activities taking place on Peanut lake, it is highly recommended to stay off the ice. Aeration has made the ice extremely thin.

see next page for more details on the project!



Combating Winter Kill at PEANUT LAKE



This November, the County of Barrhead, in collaboration with Alberta Conservation Association, Alberta Environment & Parks, and Fortis, commenced aeration activities at Peanut Lake.

Central Alberta lakes, such as Peanut Lake, are prone to winterkill. Winterkill is caused by eutrophic conditions which take up all the available oxygen in the lake, killing the fish.

Aeration helps decrease winterkill by increasing the available oxygen, leading to increased survival of fish populations and increased biodiversity.

In addition to decreasing winterkill, this technique aims to provide Albertans with diverse recreational angling opportunities in areas, such as Peanut Lake, where such opportunities would be otherwise limited.

Watch this video featuring Michael Short of Let's Go Outdoors!

https://youtu.be/hL8D70IKW_Q

December 17, 2021— County of Barrhead and Alberta Conservation Association constructed a fence around the aeration activities



2022 Shelterbelt Tree Program

Every year, the County of Barrhead offers residents a chance to buy a variety of shelterbelt trees. Residents order the trees and pick them up from the Agriculture Service Department yard site

Shelterbelt Tree Program offers many benefits, including decreasing soil erosion, reducing wind damage to crops, increasing pollinator and wildlife habitats, improve safety in winter travel due to reduced snow drifting, rural beautification, and much more.

For a full list of tree availability, tree descriptions, and order forms, please visit the County of Barrhead website (www.countybarrhead.ab.ca) in early 2022.

Limited stock is available. Please order early to avoid disappointment.



Environmental Farm Plans



WHAT IS AN ENVIRONMENTAL FARM PLAN (EFP)

Environmental Farm Plans or EFP's, are a self assessment tool used to identify environmental risks on your farm and help to provide solutions to mitigate those risks.

Main goal of an EFP is to showcase and prove your farms commitment to environmental sustainability.

An EFP will identify what you are already doing well and pinpoint where improvements can be made. By addressing these risks you increase operational efficiency while reducing farm costs, which results in increased profit for you. With your EFP completion certificate, you become eligible for funding under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP).

Pairing environmental stewardship with agricultural production is also crucial in the marketing of your products.

EFPs are also a great way to unite generations on the farm to assess the efficiency of the operation, identify areas of improvement, set goals and plan for the future.



For further information or assistance with the Environmental Farm Plan process, please contact our conservation Coordinator:

lisa.card@hwy2conservation.com

Snowmobiling on Private Property



No Trespassing:

County of Barrhead is reminding snowmobilers to be respectful of private property. When riding, keep a look out for “No Trespassing” signs, and stay off any property displaying these signs.

In order to reduce the risk of property damage and to avoid having riders crossing their land the County recommends that landowners have their property clearly marked.

Regardless of signage, snowmobilers are encouraged to remain on designated trails or obtain permission from property owners.

Smart Riding Tips:

- Ask permission from landowners before coming onto land
- Close any gates behind you
- Never cut fences to gain access
- Refrain from operating equipment while under the influence of drugs or alcohol



‘Tis the Season for Scams”



Although scams occur throughout the year, fraudulent activity ramps up during the holiday season.

More than ever, it’s important to remember the phrases “buyer beware” and “you don’t get something for nothing” whether by phone, online or being approached at your door. Outside of common holiday scams, you’ll even see COVID-19 related fraud occurring.

At any time of year, parents and grandparents are approached that a family member is in trouble and/or misleading service promotions are offered. Numerous other scams include medical, charity, romance, prizes, investment scams and money transfer requests.

If you believe you’ve fallen victim to a scam, report the incident to the police. This will help stop the cycle of fraud.

Top Scams of 2021



1. Misleading Social Media Ads

- Customers pay for items they never receive

2. Alerts about Compromised Accounts

- These warn that your bank account or other accounts that have been compromised when in fact they haven’t.
- Thieves then get access to personal and financial information.

3. Fake Charities

- Tough times have many charities asking for donations online. Scammers prey on the urge to give and therefore you need to research if the charity is legitimate.

4. Fake shipping notifications

- With more consumers making purchases online, scammers use the surge to send phishing emails with links allowing unwanted access to personal/financial information.

WHO and WHAT is B.A.R.C.C.?

B.A.R.C.C.

Barrhead & Area Regional Crime Coalition

Barrhead and Regional Crime Coalition (B.A.R.C.C.) is a regional partnership between the County of Barrhead, the Town of Barrhead, Woodlands County, the RCMP and Barrhead & District Rural Crime Watch Association to address crime.

Purpose of the coalition is to take a collaborative approach to make our communities safer. Through coordinated efforts in education and awareness of crime prevention and reporting suspicious activities, B.A.R.C.C. is taking an active role in reducing crime.

B.A.R.C.C Connect is a communication tool that was launched in October 2018. Our communication system will keep you informed on the following:

- Community notices
- Emergency alert messages from Alert Ready (Canada's nation emergency alerting system)
- RCMP Information, Alerts & Updates
- Upcoming events



www.barcc.ca

B.A.R.C.C.
Barrhead & Area Regional Crime Coalition

Receive the
ALERTS you

NEED



via the device you
WANT

Local alerts **YOU**
choose

- Crime near you
- Fire bans
- Emergencies
- Road Construction
- Service Interruptions
- News & Events

PUBLIC WORKS

2021 Projects

Department of Public Works is responsible for the repair and maintenance of all County infrastructure including water and wastewater systems, roads, sidewalks and trails, County owned properties, parks, playgrounds and campgrounds, fleet maintenance, and supporting recreational, cultural, and sporting events through the year.

Public Works is also responsible for a variety of capital projects such as road reconstruction & improvement projects, water meter replacement, lagoon construction and equipment purchases.



Culvert Replacement



Thunder Lake Chip Seal

Annual Road Maintenance Program is one of the most significant Public Works projects.

In 2021 this included:

- 10 kms road reconstruction
- 580.5 kms of road re-gravelling
- 12.8 kms of MG30 dust control plus a total distance of 4.23 kms of individual private dust control
- 4.5 kms MC250 oil road rejuvenation
- 21.6 kms of shoulder pull
- 2.52 kms chip seal coat
- 3 bridge file projects
 - BF78992 – stringer replacement, subdeck and wingwall repair
 - BF73616 – bridge culvert replacement
 - BF72371 – bridge replacement with bridge sized culvert

Lake Management Plan and Parks & Open Spaces



Lake Management Plan Survey

County of Barrhead is inviting all permanent and seasonal residents of Thunder Lake and Lac La Nonne to complete a Lake Management Plan survey early in 2022.

The survey will provide meaningful opportunities for lake residents to share their concerns and recommendations regarding community issues. Feedback gathered will help the County develop a comprehensive Lake Management Plan.

A Lake Management Plan will not only address the issues identified, but will also provide the County with guidance to support informed decision making on the short- and long-term development of our lake communities. The overall intent of the Plan is to protect the physical, environmental, and social values of the lakes and surrounding communities.

For further information on either of these projects please contact the Planning Department at 780-674-3331.

Parks & Open Spaces Master Plan

Over the summer the County worked to collect inventory of the parks and open spaces within the County of Barrhead. The data will be used to support public engagement and help develop a Parks & Open Spaces Master Plan in 2022.

A Parks & Open Spaces Master Plan will guide the future development of the County's open spaces and recreation areas, while considering inventory of existing spaces.

The plan will support informed decision-making by providing a comprehensive look at aligning expectations and budgeting for priority projects.



2022 Budget Survey



The budget process is underway. Given the complexity of the budget process, a considerable amount of time is spent by Council and Administration in preparing the budget and associated financial plans.

Annually, Council must approve a budget. The budget is a document that creates linkages to the Strategic Plan, establishes a level of service, incorporates a long-term perspective, all while maintaining fiscal responsibility and a reasonable mill rate.

Once the budget is approved, Administration is tasked with delivering the services and programs outlined in the budget, evaluating the results of the program, gathering feedback from residents, and continually scanning the municipal environment to inform the next year's budget cycle.

In order to balance the budget, a careful analysis must be done regarding the level of service required to meet the expectations of the community balanced against realistic taxation and user fee levels.

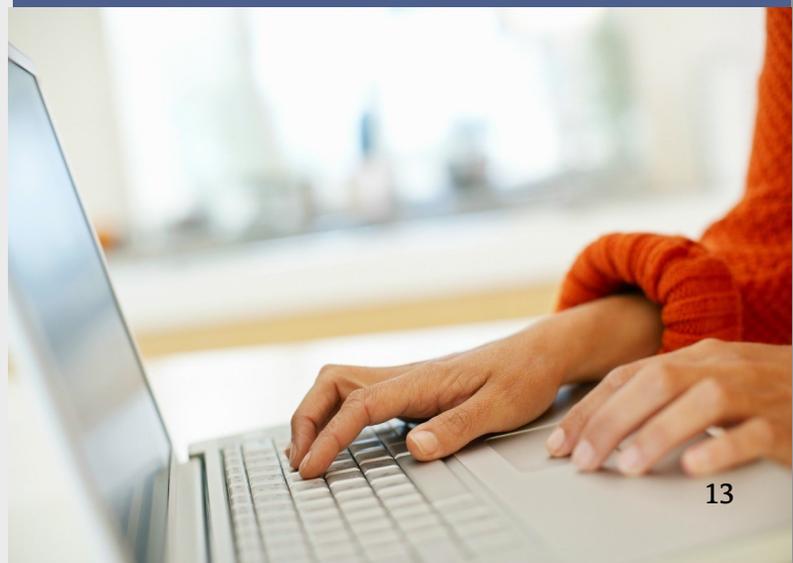
Council approved an Interim Operating Budget on December 21, 2021 which leaves time for further refinement of the budget based on public input, actuals from the previous year, and provides increased certainty with respect to grants and assessment before passing a final budget in April 2022.

Budget 2022 Priorities & Public Engagement

County of Barrhead conducts regular citizen engagement surveys designed to garner public input that can be utilized to inform the budget process. The surveys are a key method for public participation.

Stay tuned for the upcoming 2022 Budget survey at the end of January!!

Check the County website (www.countybarrhead.ab.ca) for past Budget Survey "What we Heard Reports."



Understanding Property Assessment



Property assessments are completed annually based on the previous year's market values. The assessment determines the amount of municipal and education tax each property owner pays.

Property Assessment: Process of assigning a dollar value to a property for taxation purposes. Municipal assessments are audited by the Provincial government to ensure that proper valuation practices have been followed. Your 2022 residential assessment is based upon market conditions as of July 1, 2021 and physical characteristic date of December 31, 2021.

Municipal Property Tax: Property taxes are a primary source of revenue for municipalities and are used to finance local programs and services including the general operation of a municipality. Property taxes are not a fee for service, but a way of distributing costs fairly throughout a municipality with the amount of tax paid based on the value of the property.

Education Property Tax: All property owners (with some exceptions) pay the education property tax which is collected by the County on behalf of the province. The tax supports all public and separate school students by helping to pay for instructional costs including teacher salaries, textbooks, and other classroom resources.

All activities associate with property assessment and taxation are governed by the Alberta *Municipal Government Act (MGA)* and its regulations.

For additional details, and explanation about your assessment, please contact 780-674-3331 or email info@countybarrhead.ab.ca

Sign up now for the Property Tax Monthly payment plan.

This is a great way to spread out the cost over the year, with no interest or penalties. Call our Tax Department at 780-674-3331 for more information.

Tax Instalment Payment Plan
TIPP

Has your Address Changed?



If you have moved or changed your address, you need to update your contact information.

Contact the County Office or Land Titles to complete a
“Notice of Change of Address for Service.”

NOTE: This form must have an original signature in **BLUE** ink.

Thinking about building.....

a home, garage, shed, etc.?



Development permits and approvals need to be obtained for new construction, renovations, and changes to how a building or land is being used.

County staff must review the application to ensure it complies with the County's Land Use Bylaw which outlines the types of development allowed in each land use district and the rules and regulations governing those uses.

For further information regarding the County's Land Use Bylaw, development permits / applications and subdivision applications please visit the website www.countybarrhead.ab.ca/p/development or call the County Office during regular business hours at 780-674-3331.

Where Does My Post-Christmas Trash Go?



County of Barrhead is served by a Regional Landfill Site and Transfer Stations which are conveniently located throughout the County for residents. The Regional Landfill is a partnership between the County and Town of Barrhead. Although located in the County, day-to-day operations are managed by the Town. A recycling station is located at the regional landfill.

Recycling Station

- Most wrapping paper
- Cardboard
- Paper boxes
- Tin cans (cleaned, rinsed and labels removed)
- Plastics (no plastic bags or plastic wrap)
- Electronics
- NO GLASS

Landfill

- Foil
- wrapping paper
- Boxes with plastic coating
- Burnable items (ex. Christmas tree)
- Metal (ex. Metallic ribbons/bows)
- Christmas lights
- Empty oil jugs
- Propane bottles
- Appliances
- Household garbage
- Empty paint cans
- Tires

Transfer Stations

Hours of Operation: 1:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Site	Days Open	Legal Land Location	Rural Address
Tiger Lily	Monday	NW 31-60-5-W5	60528 Hwy 763
Meadowview	Tuesday	NW 3-58-5-W5	58027 Hwy 764
Manola	Wednesday	SE 29-59-2-W5	59416 Rge Rd 24
Vega/Neerlandia	Thursday	NW 20-62-3-W5	62317 Rge Rd 35
Thunder Lake	Sunday	NE 20-59-5-W5	59332 Rge Rd 54
Dunstable	Sunday	SW 25-57-2-W5	57403 Rge Rd 21

Closed: New Year's Day, Easter Sunday, Christmas Day and Boxing Day

County Office Update



Holiday Closure

County Office will be closed
December 24 — January 2, 2022.
Regular office hours will resume
Monday January 3, 2022.

All essential services will be maintained during
office closure

Hours of Operation

Monday to Friday:

8:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.

Closed over lunch hour

1:00 p.m.—4:00 p.m.

Saturday to Sunday:

Closed

*Council Meetings take place every
1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month in
Council Chambers at 9:00 a.m.

COVID-19 Protocols

Public health measures remain in place at the County office. Masks are required to be worn in County facilities. Other protective measures include:

- Plexiglass barriers
- Increased cleaning and sanitization
- Capacity limits
- Social distancing

The County appreciates your cooperation during these challenging time.

All County services continue to be delivered; however, alternate contact and payments methods are encouraged.

Contact:

- **Phone:** 780-674-3331 (Admin)
780-674-2619 (Public Works)
- **Email:** info@countybarrhead.ab.ca
- **Fax:** 780-674-2777 (Admin)
780-674-9653 (Public Works)
- **Mail:** County of Barrhead

Payment:

- **Online Banking**
- **E-transfer** (payments@countybarrhead.ab.ca)
- **Cheque** (Mail/drop off)

Vision:
“To Foster a Strong, Healthy and Proud Rural Community”

We would love to hear from you!

If you have any questions or would like more information, contact the County of Barrhead at:

Phone: 780-674-3331

Email: info@countybarrhead.ab.ca

For information on programs, upcoming events or local notices visit the website at:

countybarrhead.ab.ca

