

MARCH/APRIL 2024

COUNTY CURRENTS

Published March 1, 2024



Photo Credit: Hannah Lahey

Greetings, County of Vermilion River residents! As we bid farewell to the cozy embrace of winter, it's with great anticipation that we welcome the imminent arrival of spring. Please enjoy the latest edition of the County Currents newsletter. Here, you will find information on community events, important dates regarding roadside vegetation management and wildfire awareness tips to be proactive ahead of spring season.

Council and Staff are looking forward to hearing your ideas, thoughts, and concerns and the **Open House**. Get updates on projects, initiatives, and developments. The RCMP and Rural Crime watch will also be in attendance to share information and answer questions. This is also a great opportunity to mingle and connect with neighbours. The Open House is March 5, 2024 at the Kitscoty Hall, 6:00 - 8:00 PM.

SAVE THE DATE

June 11, 2024

Watch for more information on our Community Event to Celebrate 60 Years of the CVR and 45 Years of Natural Gas Utility

Events Calendar

Dewberry Jamboree
MARCH 2

County of Vermilion River
Open House
MARCH 5, 2024

Office Closed
MARCH 29 & APRIL 1

Drought & Livestock
Water Management
Workshop
MARCH 13, 2024

County of Vermilion
River Crime Watch AGM
APRIL 17, 2024

If you would like your community event highlighted in the newsletter, please email communications@county24.com

Council Corner

It is time to gear up for Spring even though we have not had much of a winter so far. The concern with drought grows each week as warmer temperatures keep snow at bay. It is our hope that we will see the Spring rains come sooner rather than later.

Council and staff would like to invite you to come out to the 2024 Spring Open House at the Kitscoty Community Hall on March 5, 2024 between 6 and 8 PM. We have made a few changes to our Open House format this year as our Agriculture Department will be hosting an informational session on Agriculture Funding Opportunities including the Resilient Agriculture Landscape Program and ALUS-Vermilion River.

Also in attendance at the Open House will be representatives of the Vermilion and Kitscoty RCMP Detachments and also Rural Crime Watch representatives. They will be there to answer any questions and provide information. As well each of the County departments will be available at the Open House to answer questions as well in the areas of Natural Gas, Public Works, Finance, Planning and Community Services and Protective Services.

Council and staff are in a busy season as we meet with the CAO, Directors and staff to discuss financial direction and strategies for the 2024 Budget.

The 2024 County of Vermilion River Corporate Plan, which is now available on the County Website and at the County office, has helped to guide Council through some of the complicated issues we are facing in our economy. As Council continues to strategically look for ways to meet the current financial crunch it does so with all of our friends and neighbours in mind as we know everyone is feeling the financial pressures of our current realities.

Over the past year a priority for Council has continued to lobby government regarding Oil and Gas assessments in the County of Vermilion River. Council is actively seeking out and exploring solutions as well as meeting with government officials on a regular basis to keep this issue in the forefront.

Council conducts its Regular Meetings and Policy and Priorities Committee Meetings in person and through ZOOM webinars. We encourage residents to register ([see the link on our webpage](#)) to attend these meetings. It is encouraging to note some residents have adjusted to the virtual council meetings and are participating and joining in on a regular basis.

Should you have any concerns or compliments, please let us know via office@county24.com or by phone at 780-846-2244.

Reeve Marty Baker



[Visit our website to view Council highlights and register for upcoming Council meetings](#)

**Regular Meeting of
Council**

**MARCH 12 & 26
APRIL 9 & 23**

**Policy & Priorities
Committee Meeting**

MARCH 5 & APRIL 16

Roadside Vegetation Management for 2024

Roadside Haying

Any landowner(s) wanting to harvest hay along County roads must be completed by July 15. The County will begin roadside mowing after July 15.

If you wish to have herbicide application by the County delayed so it can be hayed, please apply for a [hay agreement](#) on our website by May 31.

Important Dates

- **May 31 - Deadline to apply for Hay Agreement**
- **May 31 - Deadline to complete No Spray Agreement**
- **July 15 - ALL roadside haying by landowner completed**

Roadside Spraying

Roadside spraying controls weeds, brush, tall vegetation, and volunteer Canola and brassicas (for clubroot management). The County will be blanket spraying roadsides in [Spray Area 3](#) (southern third of the County) in 2024.

Other roadside areas within the County may be spot sprayed for noxious weed or brush control, when necessary. [No Spray Agreements](#) are available on our website if you do not wish to have herbicides applied to the municipal road right of ways (ROW) adjacent to your property, or for those ratepayers who agree to, themselves, control weeds and vegetation.

We will not spray municipal road ditches within 30m (100 ft) adjacent to visibly maintained yard sites, tame shelterbelts, or dugouts. If weed issues arise in these areas, we will obtain written permission from the owner/occupant maintaining the area.



COMMUNITY CLEAN UP & PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

As we embrace the arrival of spring, it's the perfect time to ensure our communities remain vibrant and inviting places for all. We want to encourage everyone to take advantage of the spring weather to maintain their properties in accordance with our Bylaws. Here's a rundown of key provisions to keep in mind:

General Unsightly Property Provisions

Property owners or occupants are responsible for preventing and addressing nuisances on their properties. This includes maintaining a tidy exterior and addressing issues such as excessive accumulation of materials, unsightly vegetation, and offensive odours.

Structures Deemed Unfit

Structures deemed unfit for human habitation must be repaired or demolished within a specified time period. Owners bear the cost associated with repairs or demolition.

Sidewalk Maintenance

Property owners or occupants are responsible for clearing snow, ice, and debris from adjacent sidewalks within 48 hours.

Drainage, Fire Hydrants, and Outdoor Lighting

Property owners or occupants must ensure proper drainage to prevent damage or danger to adjacent properties or public places. Fire hydrants must be kept clear of obstructions. Outdoor lighting should not interfere with traffic safety on roadways.

For more information, you can find all of the Protective Services Bylaws on our website.

WILDFIRE AWARENESS

As we welcome the arrival of spring, it's essential to keep in mind that along with the beauty of the season comes an increased risk of wildfires. Here are some important tips to help prevent wildfires and ensure the safety of our communities:

1. Clear Vegetation: Take the time to trim back overgrown vegetation and remove dead plants from around your home. This proactive step creates a defensible space, significantly reducing the risk of fire spreading to your property.



2. Practice Safe Outdoor Burning: Remember that fire permits are required year-round in the County. However, please note that during a fire ban, these permits will be suspended. You can easily request fire permits online or by contacting Protective Services.

3. Ensure Proper Extinguishment: If you had a fire permit during the Fall/Winter season, it's crucial to ensure that any remaining fires are completely extinguished. Burn piles can continue smoldering for months, and flare-ups are significant contributors to spring wildfires. Make sure recreational fires are also fully extinguished when finished.



4. Be Careful with Outdoor Equipment: Exercise caution when using equipment like lawnmowers, chainsaws, ATVs, farm equipment, or grills outdoors. Sparks from machinery or hot surfaces can quickly ignite dry vegetation, leading to potentially devastating fires.

5. Report Suspicious Activity: If you observe any suspicious or potentially dangerous behaviour, such as illegal burning or fireworks, don't hesitate to report it.



REMEMBER, PREVENTING WILDFIRES IS A COMMUNITY EFFORT. BY TAKING SIMPLE PRECAUTIONS AND STAYING VIGILANT, WE CAN REDUCE THE RISK OF WILDFIRES AND PROTECT OUR HOMES AND ENVIRONMENT. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT THE ALBERTA WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS PAGE

Lea Park Golf Club 2023 Recap

The 2023 season was another great one for the Lea Park Golf Club! Every year we strive to make improvements so your experience with us can be that much better. Here is a list of what we accomplished thanks to help from our board & local community members:

- created a punch card program for our frequent golfers to use to get a discount on green fee's
- broke ground on a new water system for watering the golf course
- made a signage board for companies to advertise their businesses at Hole #1
- \$500 donation was given to the Marwayne foodbank on behalf of the Lea Park Golf Club
- Launched new packages such as: corporate sponsors/memberships, hole, and score card sponsors.
- hosted another successful night golf event - this year using LED golf balls!
- Added another new member to our Board of Directors.

FUNDING IS AVAILABLE



Access farm stewardship funding through the ALUS and RALP programs

- riparian area management
- rotational grazing
- fencing and alternative watering
- cropland conversion
- grass waterways and salinity
- shelterbelts
- ecobuffers
- pollinator habitat

Contact Chris Elder for help with funding options, project design, and application support
celderecounty24.com 780-853-7844

