



News for rural residents

Volume 11, Issue 2, Fall/Winter 2010

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Abandoned items on your property? SCRAP 'em

The majority of the residents of Strathcona County are genuinely concerned with the environment and the effects of unnatural material on the landscape. A significant concern that has been raised is the increasing amount of natural land in the County that is covered by abandoned or accumulated metal materials, both in the urban and rural areas of the County.

The Strathcona County Reduction of Abandoned Products (SCRAP) Program, the first of its kind in Canada, is a County-wide program to encourage the removal of abandoned products from private properties for proper disposal or recycling.

The SCRAP Program

- is a flexible program that helps residents to organize the removal of abandoned products on their own initiative
- offers information on how to safely dispose of or recycle abandoned products, including available removal services
- educates residents on the problem of environmental contamination of various wetlands within Strathcona County
- formalizes partnerships with industry and Strathcona County residents to sustain this education and awareness program

Strathcona
County

TRANSPORTATION &
AGRICULTURE SERVICES

SCRAP'em continued



Examples of such abandoned products that have been seen all over the County include:

- vehicles
- farm and industrial equipment
- household appliances
- pipe
- oil drums
- scrap metal

Many of these items contain petroleum-based products such as oil, gasoline, diesel, grease, antifreeze, hydraulic fluid, brake fluid and battery acid that will eventually leak from their respective reservoirs and containers.

These contaminants have the potential to leech into the soil, and in many circumstances could find their way into the surrounding wetlands, watercourses, lakes and groundwater. This has direct impacts on water treatment costs, biological health and diversity of species in the County, and overall public health.

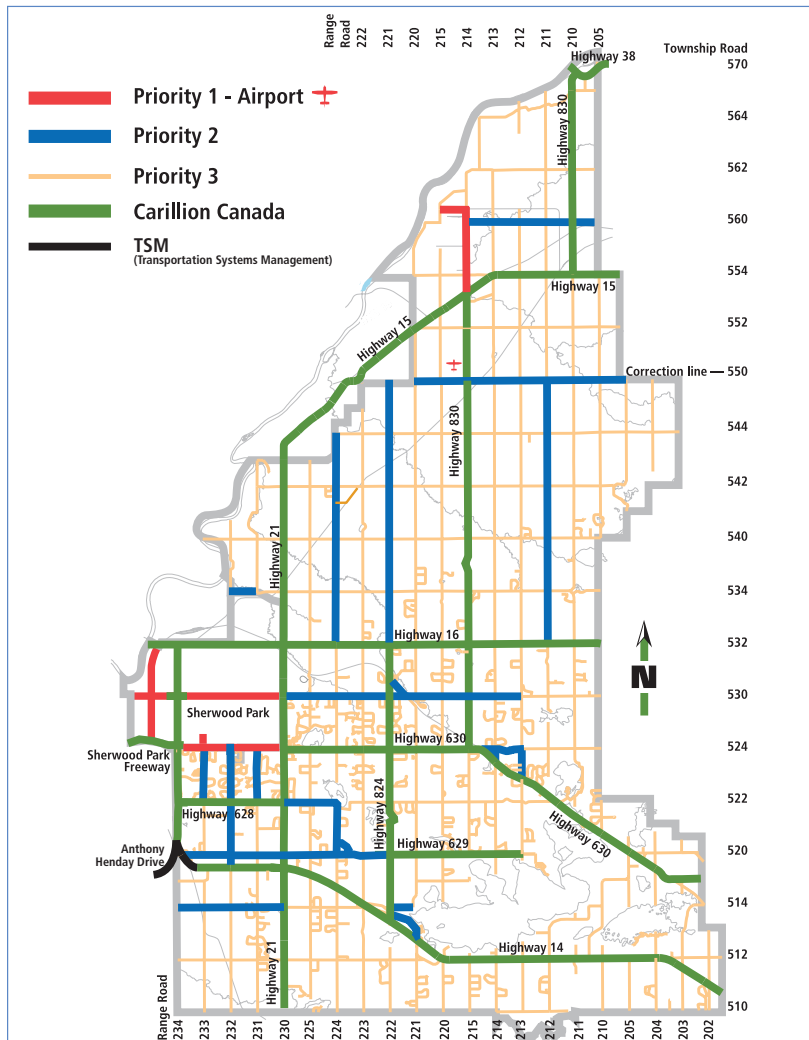
Do you have items on your property that you would like to 'abandon?'

To learn more and find a list of companies that can remove items from private property, visit www.strathcona.ca/SCRAP

Further information

Utilities
780-449-5514
greenroutine@strathcona.ab.ca

Ready for winter on our roads



Strathcona County's road maintenance crews are ready for ever-changing conditions as the cold weather arrives. Here are some frequent questions about winter maintenance.

Who do I call to report a problem?

780-417-7100 is Transportation and Agriculture Services' 24-hour number.

Call to let us know about anything that needs immediate attention - for example, icy roads, snow removal, downed traffic signs or traffic lights that are not working. If you phone after hours, you will be forwarded to our 24-hour on-call answering service.

Who maintains highways?

All primary and secondary highways within Strathcona County are maintained by Carillion Canada 1-800-390-2242.

When will my road be plowed?

Strathcona County plows roads and streets in priority according to the amount of accumulated snow and the amount of traffic using the road.

Priority 1: 12 hours to clear, following a 2-5 cm snow fall

Priority 2: 12 hours to clear, following a 5-7 cm snow fall

Priority 3: 72 hours to clear, following a 5-7 cm snow fall

Winter road maintenance updates will be posted at www.strathcona.ca.

For the safety of the travelling public, please do not deposit snow on or across the road when clearing your driveway (Bylaw 33-94 – Deposit of Snow, Ice and Debris on Roads).

Do I need a fire permit?

Strathcona County Emergency Services encourages everyone to use extreme caution when burning. You may require a valid fire permit for certain types of outdoor fires on your property.

Fires that require a valid permit:

- **Open, uncontained fires (e.g. brush and grass)**
These fires are only allowed outside of the Sherwood Park urban service area and outside of all rural area hamlets in Strathcona County. The size of a brush pile should be limited to 3 metres x 3 metres x 2 metres, and if the brush pile is larger, permission needs to be given by the office of the Fire Marshal.
- **Incinerator (burn barrel) fires**
These permitted fires are allowed in rural areas only on lands greater than five acres in size and are used mainly for burning household waste, paper and cardboard.
- **Stubble burning and ground-thaw burning**
Stubble burning fires are rarely allowed (permits are issued by Transportation and Agriculture Services at 780-417-7100). If ground-thaw is required in commercial or residential sites, it is strongly encouraged to use portable hydronic heaters.

Fire permits are free. Applying for one is easy.

You can apply:

- online at www.strathcona.ca/sces. Within 24 hours, you will receive an email confirming your permit or stating why it was refused.
- Fire Station #1 (1933 Sherwood Drive)
8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday
- Fire Station #2, South Cooking Lake,
Wednesdays, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
- Fire Station #3, Ardrossan, Tuesdays, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
- Fire Station #4, Heartland Hall, Monday through Thursday, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

You will need to provide the following information:

- name and civic address of the applicant
- legal land description and civic address on which the applicant proposes to set the fire
- type and description of material to be burned
- distances to water supplies, highways and other combustibles

Fires that do not require a permit include:

Recreational fires (e.g., fire pots, pits and chimineas)

These fires may only be fuelled by dry wood, natural gas, propane or charcoal briquettes.

These fires must be contained in a non-combustible container, covered with a heavy gauge mesh screen having openings no larger than 13 millimetres maximum. Separation from combustibles such as buildings, decks, fences, trees and shrubs must be maintained at a minimum of three metres.

Smudge fires

These are allowed only in rural areas on lands two acres or greater in size.

It is illegal to burn

- manure
- animal carcasses
- treated construction materials
- wire
- insulation
- rubber and plastics
- herbicides and pesticides
- any toxic material which may produce dense black smoke
- paint, stained or pressure treated wood.

Such materials must be disposed of by other means, such as using Strathcona County's Enviroservice events. For more information on recycling, phone 780-449-5514 or visit www.strathcona.ca/utilities

Fire permit information 780-449-9651

winterIZE

Tips and reminders for residents to help Strathcona County serve you this winter



Rural mailboxes

To prevent snow-clearing equipment or plowed snow from damaging mailboxes, ensure your mailbox is positioned with the:

- * supporting post at least one metre (39 inches) back from the edge of the roadway
- * bottom of the mailbox at 1.1 metre (43 inches) up from the ground

Further information

Strathcona Transportation and Agriculture Services
780-417-7100 (24 hour number)
email: info@strathcona.ab.ca

Thank you for your cooperation!

Interested in Bird Watching? What to add to your backyard



Here are some helpful tips on garden planting and what type of feed to provide to attract birds to your yard.

To start out you will need to decide what types of birds you want to attract and how you want to go about it. Do you want to plant your flower beds so that you have beautiful flowers to enjoy and you also draw birds into your yard? Or do you just want to put up a bird feeder(s) and buy some seed? Either way you can draw in a lot of birds and enjoy watching them.

Bird gardening

When planting your bird garden try to think of providing the birds with food year round. Choose species that mature at varying times during the year so there is always bird food available. Also, think local. Choose plants that do well in your area. Garden centres, horticultural societies and the Internet are all good sources of information on plant species and the birds that enjoy eating them.

Bird feeding

What type of seed? What type of bird will you attract?

Black Oil Sunflower

- high fat content and thin shell so it is easy for birds to open
- usually found in mixed-seed formats at stores
- attracts chickadees, nuthatches, goldfinches, house finches, grosbeaks and jays

Striped Sunflower

- lower fat content and a harder shell
- best offered in a hanging tubular or hopper type feeder
- attracts same set of birds as with the Black Oil Sunflower

Hulled Sunflower Seed

- comes as either complete hulled seeds or as sunflower chips
- no additional hull to clean up, which is an advantage, and birds find it much easier to eat
- best offered in a hanging tubular or hopper type feeder
- attracts a greater variety of birds including woodpeckers, wrens, chickadees, nuthatches, goldfinches, house finches, grosbeaks, sparrows and jays

Thistle Seed (also called Nyjer seed)

- must be offered in special feeders due to the size of the seed or it will spill out, usually a plastic tubular feeder or wooden feeder with a fine mesh over the holes to slow down the seed flow
- attracts gold finches, house finches, purple finches, pine siskins and redpolls

Millet

- small round seed; white proso millet is light coloured and the most popular with the birds
- attracts doves, sparrows and juncos

Safflower

- larger seed with a white coating
- often used in substitution for the black oil sunflowers when trying to discourage grackles, starlings and house sparrows from your feeder
- best offered in a hanging tubular or hopper type feeder
- attracts the same birds as the black oil sunflower but not as readily


Cracked Corn

- simply dried corn kernels that have been cracked into smaller pieces
- usually found in seed mixes and is less expensive than other seeds
- best offered in seed mixes in hopper or tray feeders, or scattered on the ground
- attracts the ground feeding birds such as pheasants, doves, sparrows, blackbirds, grackles and jays

Nuts

- usually the nuts in a seed mix are peanuts or peanut hearts
- best offered in hopper, or tray feeders, or scattered on the ground
- attracts most of the same birds as the hulled sunflower

Further information

 www.royalalbertamuseum.ca/natural/birds/intro.htm

Hunting

Strathcona County's 2010 hunting season runs September 8 to December 7.

Wildlife is abundant in the rural areas of Strathcona County. An overabundance of animals may cause problems within urban and farming communities. Wildlife management is necessary for maintaining healthy and diverse wildlife populations.

If you are planning to hunt this season, ensure you know the regulations and what are the rights of landowners.

Further information

The 2010 Alberta Guide to Hunting Regulations is now available. For locations of hunting licence issuers:

- www.albertaregulations.ca
- 1-877-944-0313

Alberta Fish and Wildlife Edmonton District Office:

- 780-427-3574

Strathcona County Transportation and Agriculture Services

- www.strathcona.ca/tas
- 780-417-7100
- Firearms Control Bylaw 11-2007

24-hour numbers

- RCMP Sherwood Park 780-467-7741
- Report-a-Poacher 1-800-642-3800



Christmas in the Heartland

Saturday, November 27, 2010

Agrium
Shell
TOTAL

A festive self-guided tour of markets, sleigh rides, miniature horses and furry friends, lights, and fun for all ages. Events are from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. (Heartland Hall open from 4 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.)

- Brookville Community Hall | Crafts, bake sale
- Partridge Hill Community Hall | Crafts, baking
- Good Hope Hall | Country bake sale
- Bethany Lutheran Church | Sleigh rides, nativity displays
- Alberta Country Orchards | U-pick Christmas trees
- Moyer Recreation Centre | Crafts, baking
- Elk Island Art Club & Seniors Centre | Original art works
- Heartland Hall (4 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.) | Miniature horses, 60-ft. Christmas tree, fireworks, Bookmobile

For more information, visit www.strathcona.ca

In partnership with
Travel Alberta
Canada

Strathcona
County

Muskrat

A cut-out-and-keep guide to urban wildlife

Appearance

- Muskrats are typically 40 to 60 centimetres long and weigh anywhere from 680 grams to 1.8 kilograms.
- Muskrats have a thick cover of short brown fur. Their tails, which make up almost half of their length, are flat and scaled. It is commonly confused with the Norway Rat, which has a round tail.
- Muskrat tracks are easy to identify because their tail drags through the dirt behind them.

Behaviour

- Muskrats live a semi-aquatic life, frequently spending time in water. Accordingly, they are often found near wetlands, lakes, rivers and ponds.
- They typically live in groups within extensive underground burrows.



- Muskrats tend to feed on aquatic vegetation, but occasionally eat small marine animals; in turn, muskrats are an important food source for a number of animals, including foxes, coyotes and birds of prey.
- They are most active at dawn, dusk or overnight.
- Muskrats can mate several times a year between March and September, giving birth to litters of three to seven kits a month after mating.

Management

- Wire netting can be used to protect vulnerable water banks. Simply lay the netting across the banks, at least four feet beneath the waterline and two feet above to prevent muskrats from tunnelling into the shore.
- Trapping is a labour-intensive, but potentially effective method of managing muskrats.

Further information

Transportation and Agriculture Services

780-417-7100 (24 hours)
www.strathcona.ab.ca/tas

Get with the Green winter Routine!

We all know that the weather in Alberta can change drastically – sometimes overnight! Here are some tips to keep in mind when the temperatures drop and the snow falls.

Layer it up

Layering your organics cart is very important. Place a layer of wet organics, such as food, grass and leaves, with dry organics, such as newspaper, cardboard or a thin layer of shredded paper. Then continue alternating. Layering can reduce odour and organics becoming stuck.

Give your organics cart a winter lining

Line the bottom and sides of your green organics cart with newspaper or cardboard. Then layer your organics with newspaper when filling your cart. This will reduce the possibility of organics freezing to the bottom or sides of your cart when the temperatures drop.

to try and loosen the frozen clump. If it is frozen solid, bring it into your garage and let it warm up a little then try to stir it up. If you store your carts in your garage, layering becomes even more important. If your cart isn't dumped until later in the day, the organics may freeze. The key is to layer, layer, layer!

Pull don't push

In the winter time, pull your organics or waste cart – don't push it. The bottom of the cart will cause snow to build up making it difficult to move. Pulling the cart won't cause snow to build up.

Changes to cart placement in winter

Once the snow has fallen and is here to stay, please place your waste or organic roll-out cart at the end of your driveway. Carts cannot be on the road because snow removal vehicles cannot manoeuvre around them.

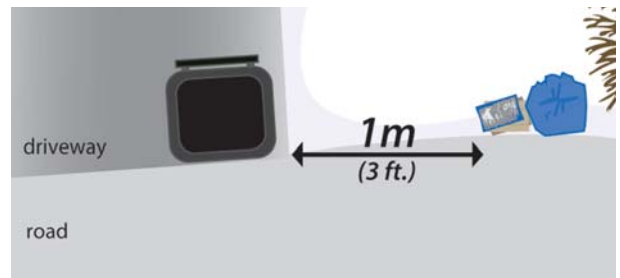


Hold the wetness

Wrap organic items with a lot of moisture with newspaper or put them into a cracker box. The paper will help absorb the moisture and prevent it from freezing to the cart.

It's stuck!

If organics have become stuck in your cart use a broom or shovel



For information

 www.strathcona.ca/utilities
780-449-5514

Ardrossan Recreation Complex getting strong support



Construction for the much anticipated improvements to the Ardrossan Recreation Complex is well underway. Local residents have been patient as pilings go in to support the new section of the building, which includes an arena, a wellness centre, indoor fitness track and a preschool playground. Piles are expected to be completed by late October (weather permitting). Installation and re-routing of deep utilities is also happening now.

The winter season for the arena ice has begun on time using a temporary ice plant. Strathcona County is also working closely with the Ardrossan Curling Club to

get the curling rink up and running, which has been delayed so far.

Over the next three months, the building will start to take shape with the foundation and installation of structured steel. A live webcam is available online at www.strathcona.ca/revitalize. Look under Indoor Facility projects to see the exciting progress.

Service modifications

If you are coming out to the complex for events and activities, please be prepared to walk as parking is limited. The hall and arena entrances have been temporarily relocated to the west side of the building. A temporary entrance has also been created on the south side of the curling rink. These relocations will be in place throughout the winter season.

Further information

 www.strathcona.ca/revitalize

Winter Feed for Horses

With winter quickly approaching thoughts are turning to acquiring feed for animals. For most horse owners, feed is purchased from a local cattle farmer or hay producer. This year there will be a lot of hay available. The big questions are: will you get your money's worth, and will it be good enough to feed to your horse?

Feed quality can differ from field to field, and year to year. 2010 hay is going to be especially variable because of poor weather experienced during haying season, and hay being left too long in the field.

Tips to determining good quality hay

Colour: Good feeding hay is green in colour. The green colour is an indication of higher vitamin, mineral and protein levels. If hay is a yellow or brown colour, it will have either been harvested mature or has been weathered, and can be of lower quality.

Maturity: If hay was harvested too late in the season, quality will be reduced. Older hay will have coarser stems and less leaf material.

Weeds: Hay that consists of weeds will have reduced nutritional value, and some weeds could even be poisonous.

Moisture content: From the outside, a bale of hay may appear to be dry. If you reach inside and pull out hay that feels damp there is a high chance that the hay will or has become moldy. Mold is not good for animals and can cause respiratory illness.

Feed testing: For a more technical evaluation hay can be tested. This requires taking samples from various bales from a field and sending them to the lab for analysis. The best way to sample is with the use of a forage probe. The probe will cut through a bale and take a small core. After sampling 10 – 15 bales from the same field they are mixed together and submitted to the lab. Lab analysis will give an indication of dry matter, protein, feed value and minerals. Lab reports can be compared to previous hay tested or to common average hay values. Feed testing also helps in determining feeding rates. By knowing the

analysis and feed requirements of the animal, over or underfeeding can be avoided.

If feed testing is of interest, the North West Alliance Conservation Initiative has a forage probe available. A conservation technician can come out free of charge and take hay samples. Lab fees are not covered by the program.

How to feed hay to a horse

Once you have acquired your hay, what's the best way to feed it to the horse? Keeping a herd in the same area all winter is not the best. This can cause issues with manure accumulation, hay loss from trampling, mud and unsanitary conditions.

One feeding method that can alleviate a lot of these problems is moving your feeding areas throughout your pasture. This reduces manure issues and assists with improving your pasture for the following summer. By moving your animals regularly, valuable nutrient rich manure and hay is distributed around the pasture. The key to this method is to move your animals regularly to avoid plant damage and too much manure being deposited at a specific site. Pick poorer areas of the pasture such as hill tops, weedy areas or poor stand establishment areas.

Winter feeding areas should not be located near dugouts, rivers, lakes, wetlands or streams (even if streams only run occasionally) to avoid water contamination. Animals should be provided with some type of shelter and access to water or snow.

There are various ways to manage your feeding areas. In the fall, electric fencing can be placed around bales. The fencing is removed as a new bale is needed. Or, place bales as needed throughout the winter. If hand feeding is the only option, bales can be placed across the field, fenced, then fed out daily, which can be more work.

Important goals of pasture feeding are to distribute manure across the pasture to provide quality nutrients to the land, reduce contamination of water sources and eliminate animals standing in manure.

Winter is not the most enjoyable time of the year to own horses, but by looking at the feed you are purchasing and considering the way it is being fed, horse owners should have healthy horses and healthy pastures throughout the winter.

Further information

North West Alliance Conservation Initiative

Mike Hittinger at 780-939-0602

Jennifer Stoby at 780-939-0618

www.nwaci.com



Watch for wildlife on roads



As the days get shorter, Strathcona County would like to remind drivers to slow down and be aware of wildlife activity, especially along rural roads.

Many species are more active during dawn and dusk, particularly deer and moose during the fall mating season. Visibility while driving may be reduced at this time of year. Animals are unpredictable, especially when faced with glaring headlights, blowing horns and fast-moving vehicles.

Reduce the chance of a collision with wildlife

- stay alert and drive at a speed appropriate to road conditions
- reduce speed at night, especially on unfamiliar rural roads where wildlife frequently cross, i.e. near water, wooded areas and open spaces
- use high-beams when possible
- look for more than one animal – some species travel in groups
- leave plenty of room when driving around an animal on or near a road; a frightened animal may run in any direction



Take extra care when you see wildlife signs.

Further information:

Transportation and Agriculture Services
780-417-7100

Community Centre

Come see what's inside

Grand Opening

Sunday, December 5 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Celebration of Lights

Enjoy crafts, a petting zoo, entertainment, a special light-up ceremony & fireworks!

Festival of Trees

Presented by the Information and Volunteer Centre for Strathcona County - December 3, 4 and 5

2001 Sherwood Drive, Sherwood Park

Watch for details
www.strathcona.ca
780-464-8111



Celebrate heart in our community

A place for everyone to gather for culture, learning, services and celebration

Centre in the Park
Community Centre

Strathcona
County

Agriculture Services

Agricultural Service Board

Contact:

Chris Allam (Chair)	780-998-9860
Jim Henry (Vice Chair)	780-719-4383

Agriculture Services phone numbers

General questions 780-417-7100

Coordinator	Joel Gould	780-417-7134
	gould@strathcona.ab.ca	

Pest control/weed inspection/vegetation control 780-417-7100

Mitch Weller	780-410-6502
WellerM@strathcona.ab.ca	
Heather Horner	780-417-7133
horner@strathcona.ab.ca	

Transportation and Agriculture Services is located at
370 Streambank Avenue
Sherwood Park, AB T8H 1N1

Office hours 8:30 a.m. to 12 noon, 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Monday to Friday

Website www.strathcona.ca/tas

Fax: 780-417-7109

Strathcona
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TRANSPORTATION &
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