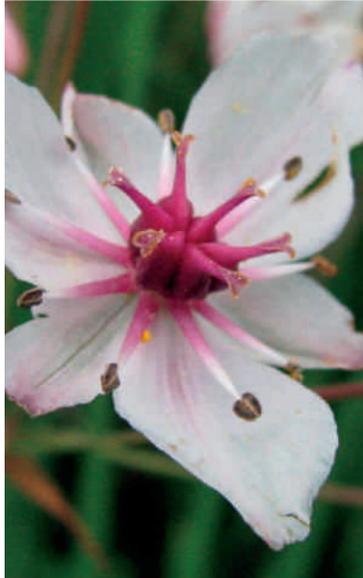


Did you know noxious weeds grow in water?



Flowering rush

Most noxious weeds are introduced species (non-native) and have been introduced through contaminated shipments of feed and crop seeds or intentional introductions such as ornamental plants for horticultural use.

Typically, they are plants that grow aggressively, multiply quickly, are difficult to manage and invasive in nature. These plants are more destructive than beneficial to the habitat.

Some weeds thrive in water. The most common water-loving weeds in Strathcona County are Purple loosestrife, Himalayan balsam, common tansy and Tamarisk. Flowering rush and Yellow flag iris are two others not found in our area, but are potential threats that we must look out for.



Purple loosestrife

These noxious weeds choke out all other species. Habitat for native species of birds, mammals and insects are lost as they cannot use these plants as food, nesting sites or as shelter material. These plants also block the flow of water and increase sedimentation in ditches and drainages. Unfortunately, this exacerbates flooding conditions in the spring and increases the likelihood of property damage.

Weeds are more difficult to control in areas with water nearby because machinery cannot get to them due to the soft, wet ground and herbicides are not allowed near most bodies of water. Handpicking is often the only solution to rid these areas of weeds.

It is important that residents periodically check their land for invasive plants as they are easier to control when the infestation is young and small. Preventing the plants from flowering also decreases the chances that the infestation will spread to other parts of your land or your neighbour's land downstream. If you find these plants on your property, please remove them as soon as possible.



Yellow flag iris

Further information:

Transportation and Agriculture Services
780-417-7100
www.strathcona.ca/tas

Keep Alberta rat free

Alberta takes pride in its "rat-free" status and relies on residents to keep them out. Ultimately this saves crop damage, disease, food contamination and damaged buildings.

The Alberta Rat Control Program and network of pest control officers are dedicated to maintaining this status. Any suspected rat sightings or activity should be reported to Transportation and Agriculture Services or Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development at 310-FARM (3276) or visit www.agriculture.alberta.ca/rats

Further information:

Transportation and Agriculture Services
780-417-7100
www.strathcona.ca/tas



Respecting Boundaries

Subdivisions and neighbourhoods thrive when residents respect their property lines.

Long before your home is built, a tremendous amount of thought and careful planning has gone into the design of your neighbourhood or subdivision. Strathcona County takes many features into account when planning the areas our residents live, such as parks, water management, natural areas, utility locates and protected environmental areas such as wetlands. It is the County's responsibility to manage them and ensure they are being used appropriately.

We depend on our residents to respect the designated uses for these lands, not only for the enjoyment of other residents and visitors, but for safety measures and environmental protection as well.

When residents interfere with lands they do not own, it is called 'encroachment.' This term is used to describe the gradual trespass onto lands that one does not personally own. Strathcona County has a bylaw in place (Bylaw 8-2007) to deter unauthorized use of County lands.

Examples of encroachment activities include:

- landscaping, cutting down trees and destroying vegetation outside of one's own property lines.
- dumping unwanted materials and garbage on County reserves and undeveloped road allowances.
- building sheds or other accessory structures (docks, boat launches, etc.) off your property.
- using protected areas for recreational purposes such as quadding or snowmobiling.

While encroachment activities may seem harmless, they have the potential to cause serious problems and safety issues. Help us limit encroachment by avoiding encroachment activities and reporting any you witness to a bylaw officer.

Further information

Planning and Development Services
780-464-8080
www.strathcona.ca/pds



County property that was intended to be a fully treed and engineered public utility corridor for storm water runoff. Removal of the trees will now result in an increase in water runoff and a decrease in local water filtration.

FireSmart your property



As a rural resident, it is important to be aware of the many fire hazards on your property. Because spring is a high-risk season for wildfire, be sure to take time to assess your property and reduce as many fire hazards and fuel sources as possible.

FireSmart 101

- Does your property have trees or branches that are close or are touching power lines? If so, contact your utility company and they will cut back the branches.
- Is your roof and eavestrough free of needles and leaves? If not, clean the debris from your roof and eaves to eliminate fuel for a potential fire.
- Ensure there are no overhanging trees, branches or shrubs next to your house that can catch fire.
- Ensure your fireplace chimney is clean and a spark arresting screen is installed.
- All long grass, shrubs, logs, branches, twigs and needles should be removed within 10 metres of your home.
- Firewood should be stored a minimum of 10 metres away from any structure.
- It is your responsibility to keep a watchful eye on fire pits, open fires and burn barrels when they are in use. *If a wildfire starts on your property, you may be responsible for the cost of fighting that fire.*
- Ensure that your address or lot number is clearly visible from the road for quick identification.

To book an appointment for a free property hazard assessment, phone 780-464-8468 or email safety.educators@strathcona.ca

Further information:

Emergency Services
780-467-5216
www.strathcona.ca/sces

Weed Inspection Program

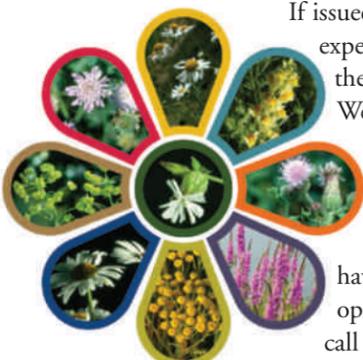
This summer weed inspectors will be in your area to talk about the growth and spread of noxious weeds. By working together, we can continue to maintain and enhance the economic vitality of our agricultural community and the beauty and biodiversity of Strathcona County.

What are noxious weeds?

Plants are categorized as noxious or prohibited noxious when they exhibit invasive tendencies. This could include:

- infestation of crops and pasture.
- reduction of the biodiversity of native habitat.
- damage done to infrastructure.
- competition with native plants.
- adversely affecting the natural behaviour of animals, insects and bird species.

What do I do if I am issued a weed notice?



If issued a weed notice, landowners are expected to control or destroy weeds on their property required by the Alberta Weed Control Act. Each weed notice contains a detailed map of the infested area on your property. Information pamphlets will be included in your package. If you have any questions about control options or weed identification, please call our weed inspectors.

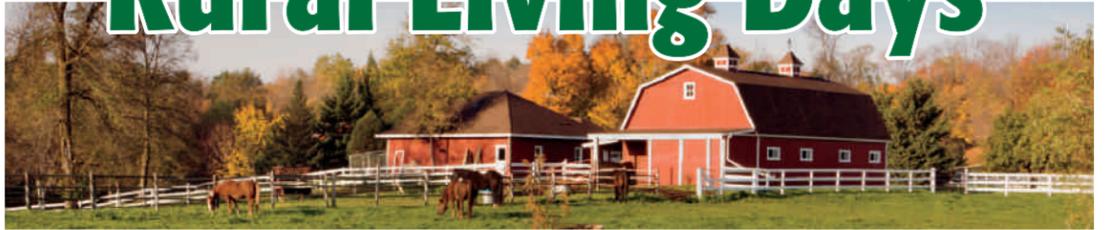
Weed inspectors are responsible for:

- acting as a resource to all County residents, making information and positive identification available to everyone.
- responding to invasive plant queries.
- monitoring the spread of invasive species on both public and private land.

Further information:

Transportation and Agriculture Services
780-417-7100
www.strathcona.ca/tas

Rural Living Days



Open House for rural residents

Drop in and get information on:

- vegetation and pest control
- waste management
- showcase of local businesses
- turf and lawn care
- pond management
- various County departments
- water conservation
- community safety

Workshop presentations:

- lawn maintenance
- Green Hectares
- weeds and horticulture
- and more...
- coyote hazing

Join us for a **FREE barbecue at 11 a.m.**

Petting zoo for the kids all day

Saturday, May 25, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Ardrossan Recreation Complex, 80 - 1 Avenue, Ardrossan

Further information **780-417-7100**

Hosted by the **Agricultural Service Board of Strathcona County**

 **STRATHCONA COUNTY**

Beavers in the County

Transportation and Agriculture Services is responsible for monitoring beaver activity in the County.

Beaver dams are individually assessed and criteria including property damage, agricultural activity and bird nesting are taken into account. Depending on the site, manual digging, a backhoe or low impact explosives may be utilized to deal with dams.

Beavers may be deterred from culvert areas by using mesh gates or culvert extensions. If beaver damage persists, animals may be removed.

To protect your property:

- wrap tree trunks with wire mesh.
- use mesh fencing on culvert ends.
- hand-breach small dams to discourage rebuilding.

Beaver facts

- The beaver is Canada's largest rodent. It can average 16 to 32 kg in weight and 60 to 80 cm in length.
- Beavers have large incisor teeth that never stop growing. They are used to chew through saplings and trees.
- Beavers can hold their breath under water for up to 15 minutes.
- Beavers are semi-aquatic mammals.



- Their flattened, paddle-shaped, scaly tail with large hind legs makes it a strong swimmer.
- Beavers tend to live in a lodge or on the banks of creeks and ponds.

Creek beavers will dam up running water with sticks, trees, rocks and mud; these are an important habitat for wildlife and assist in stabilizing water tables. However, dams can cause flooding of crops and industrial and residential land.

To report a problem or for assistance in animal removal, contact Transportation and Agriculture Services.

Further information:

Transportation and Agriculture Services
780-417-7100
www.strathcona.ca/tas

Fire Bans and Permits

A fire permit is required to have an open, uncontained fire or to use a burn barrel on your rural property. A condition of the fire permit is to call the burning information line at 780-464-8464 prior to igniting a fire.

Burning is suspended if current or projected weather conditions are prone to start a quick-moving fire or if Emergency Services resources are depleted due to other emergencies. This is a temporary status; please phone back as the status may change when conditions change.

A fire ban is different from a temporary burning suspension. During a fire ban, wildfire conditions are considered critical. No one is allowed to burn in Strathcona County, which includes using backyard fire pits and charcoal barbecues. A fire ban will be communicated to residents through the newspaper, radio, road signs, Strathcona County's website (www.strathcona.ca) and social media.

Further information:

Emergency Services
780-449-9651
www.strathcona.ca/sces

Agricultural Societies

Agricultural Societies are non-profit organizations that encourage improvement in agriculture and in the quality of life of people living in agricultural communities. They develop programs, services and facilities based on the needs in their community.

For further information on Agricultural Societies in your area, contact:

Josephburg Agricultural Society
780-998-9450
www.josephburg-ag.ca

Ardrossan Recreation and Agricultural Society
780-977-5116
www.ardrossanrecagsociety.ca

Colchester & District Agricultural Society
780-464-4442
www.colchesteragsociety.org

Attention Wildflower Gardeners

If you are a gardener looking to buy wildflower mixes, you need to be aware of what you are planting. Many wildflower mixes contain seeds that are not native to Alberta. The majority of the seeds in these packages will not even germinate in our climate. They are bulk packaged for a wide geographic area with varying climates and environmental conditions. These packages often contain seeds of invasive plants and noxious weeds that are difficult to remove once established.

To prevent many hours of weeding and digging, it is a good idea to avoid these mixes and create your own wildflower mix by purchasing individual seed packages of non-problem plants. You may also choose pre-packaged wildflower mixes with the scientific names of the plants listed, or by only choosing native Alberta wildflower mixes from reputable businesses that list the plants and how the seeds were collected.

For more information, or to find out where to get Alberta Native Wildflowers, visit the Alberta Native Plant Council, Native Plant Source List on the main home page at www.anpc.ab.ca

Noxious weeds occasionally found in wildflower mixes

- Daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*) or (Tripleurospermum perforatum syn. T.inodorum)
- Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*)
- Dame's rocket (*Hesperis matronalis*)
- Baby's breath (*Gypsophila paniculata*)
- Creeping bellflower (*Campanula rapunculoides*)

To learn more on invasive plants in our area, please visit the Invasive Plants Council at www.invasiveplants.ab.ca



Creeping bellflower
(*Campanula rapunculoides*)



Baby's breath
(*Gypsophila paniculata*)



Dame's rocket
(*Hesperis matronalis*)



Himalayan balsam
(*Impatiens glandulifera*)

From our Community to Yours: HayEast 2012

Ten years ago hundreds of farmers participated in HayWest - a campaign where approximately 50,000 bales of hay were sent from Eastern Canada to Western Canada to assist producers affected by drought.

With many weather events in Ontario last year (including an early spring with a harsh frost and severe midsummer drought) it became the west's turn to lend a helping hand.

HayEast 2012 was officially launched in mid-September by the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, and grew to receive requests from over 200 farms in need of hay. Companies delivered hay to farms right up to Christmas Eve, decorating their trucks with festive lights as they made their stops.

Producers in Strathcona County began to get involved in November, sending a total of six loads or about 180 bales east.

Special thanks go out to Mel Marler, Jim Henry and the Scotford Hutterite Colony for their assistance with the program.

Further information:
www.hayeast2012.com

Truck Fills

There are three County-owned truck fills in Strathcona County - Half Moon Lake, Ardrossan and Sherwood Park.

Ardrossan

There have been some changes to Ardrossan's accepted method of payment. For increased security of personal information, credit cards are no longer accepted.

The Ardrossan truck fill is located on Range Road 222 (approximately 0.5 km north of Baseline Road). Hours of operation are from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily.



Half Moon Lake

The Half Moon Lake truck fill is located on Range Road 220 south of Township Road 522 at Colonial Estates. It is a single-pipe facility and is intended for local area and residential haulers and is open 24-hours.

Sherwood Park

The Sherwood Park truck fill is located at 1350 Sherwood Drive (north of the traffic circle on Sherwood Drive and Broadmoor Blvd.). Hours of operation are from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily.

Payment options vary at each location. Call at least two business days in advance to set up your account.

Set up your account:

Utilities
780-464-8273
www.strathcona.ca/utilities

South Cooking Lake Monthly Recycling

Drop your recycling off in the bins setup at Fire Station #2 on the last weekend of every month.

Bins will be setup accepting:

- corrugated cardboard (flattened, clean and dry)
- glass jars (food and beverage containers, lids removed)
- metal cans (aluminum cans and containers)
- mixed paper (inserts, flyers, cereal boxes, computer paper)
- newspaper
- plastic containers

In an effort to ensure that these events are successful and continue, please put items into their correct bins and only drop off accepted items.

Location

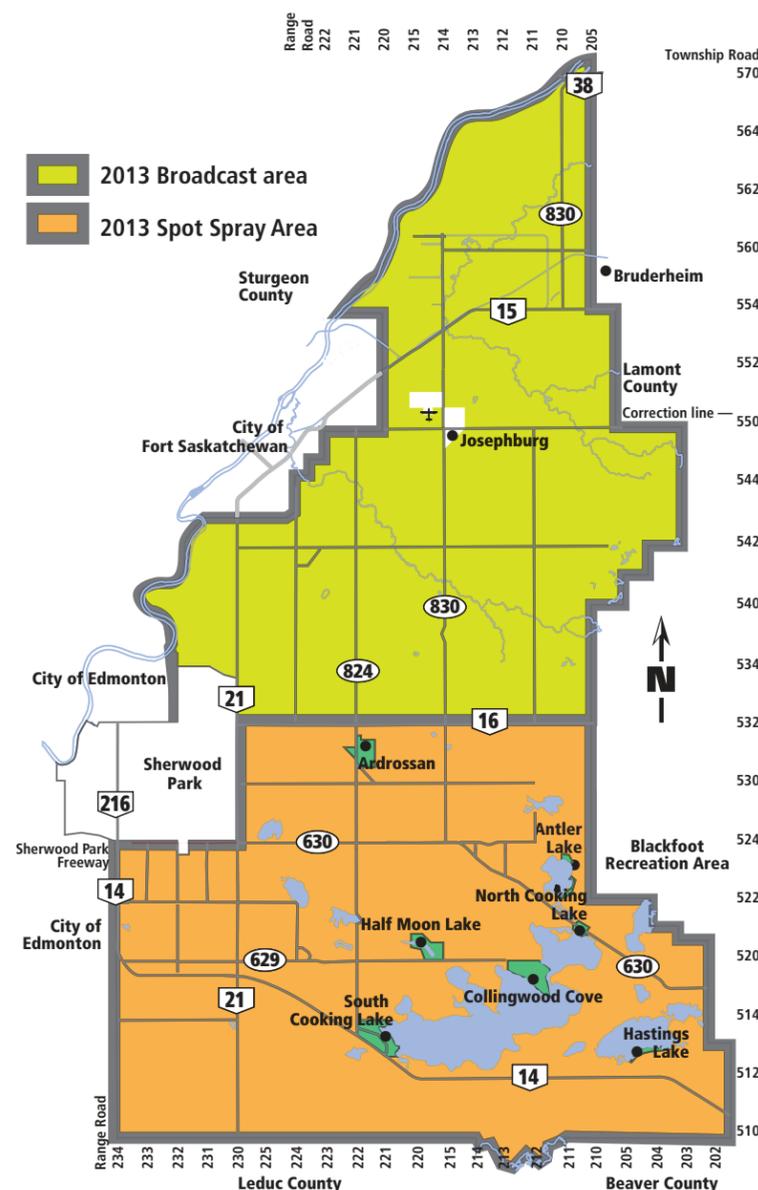
Fire Station #2
22142 South Cooking Lake Road

2013 Dates

May 25 and 26
June 29 and 30
July 27 and 28
August 31 and September 1
September 28 and 29
October 26 and 27
November 30 and December 1
December 28 and 29

Further information:

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



2013 Rural Roadside Vegetation Control Program

This program will help Strathcona County keep roadsides clear of weeds and brush, while utilizing environmentally conscious practices and reduced-risk herbicides.

Keeping rural roadsides free of noxious weeds and brush improves:

- visibility at intersections.
- visibility along the roadside making it easier to see wildlife.
- drainage.
- efficiency of snow clearing.

All roads south of Highway 16 will be spot sprayed using herbicide and all roads north of Highway 16 will receive a broadcast application of herbicide as required.

In all country residential subdivisions, herbicide will be applied using a spot spray method on noxious weeds and brush under two metres, as required.

Landowner Option Program

This program provides the landowner the option to control vegetation adjacent to their property rather than having County staff do the work using herbicide. To take part in the program, please contact Transportation and Agriculture Services.

Further information:

Transportation and Agriculture Services
780-417-7100
www.strathcona.ca/tas

Know the Rules Off-highway vehicles

In an effort to keep off-highway vehicle users safe, officers will be patrolling the County on quads with recognizable police identification.



Did you know?

It is illegal to operate an off-highway vehicle on any highway, including ditches in Strathcona County. If you are operating an off-highway vehicle on public property where permitted, you must have valid insurance, registration and display a current license plate. Persons under the age of 14 years must be supervised by an adult while operating an off-highway vehicle.

Common offences and fines

- Operating an uninsured off-highway vehicle on a trail - \$230
- Failing to produce valid insurance/registration/operating license - \$172
- Failing to stop before crossing a highway - \$230
- Driving or permitting another to drive without registration - \$115
- Operating off-highway vehicle on a highway without insurance - \$2,875
- Provide invalid insurance - \$230
- Operator of an off-highway vehicle failing to stop for police - \$172
- Modifying a muffler or exhaust system causing excessive noise - \$57

As an off-highway vehicle user, it's important to respect private property

Landowners can prohibit entry through a written notice, oral notice or by posting signs prohibiting entry to their property. The Alberta Petty Trespass Act sets out guidelines that deal with unauthorized entry onto private land. The Act also sets out certain kinds of property where entry is always prohibited.

Common offences related to private property

- Carelessly operating an off-highway vehicle - \$402
- Enter on land without permission - \$287
- Fail to leave property when directed - \$287
- Tear down/remove/cover up a No Trespass Sign - \$287

Complete copies of the *Petty Trespass Act*, *Traffic Safety Act & Regulations* and *Off Highway Act & Regulations* can be viewed in the Queen's Printer Section of the Alberta Government at www.qp.alberta.ca

Further information:

Strathcona County RCMP
780-467-7741
Strathcona County Enforcement Services
780-449-0170

Let's mingle

The separation is over!

Your paper recycling and containers can now all go in the same clear blue bag.

As long as items are clean and dry, let them mingle! Just keep the blue bag under 25 kg (50 lbs).

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



Watch for agricultural equipment on roads and highways

Spring means agricultural equipment on rural roads and highways; we are all well advised to take extra precautions when we encounter them on our travels. Driving safely is in everyone's best interest.

Farmers use a variety of machinery for various agricultural operations. Today's farmer may have fields in several locations, resulting in having to cross public roads with large machinery.

Being safety minded is the best insurance against risk. According to Canadian Agriculture Injury Surveillance, 13 per cent of farm-related fatalities are traffic related.

Typical circumstances of a collision involving farm equipment are left-turn collisions, rear-end collisions and passing collisions.

Enjoy the drive! Following a farm vehicle usually takes just a few minutes. Don't let frustration lead you to make a decision that may cause you and others harm.

Defensive driving tips for motorists

- Be alert. Watch for farm vehicles on rural roads.
- Keep your distance. Stay at least 15 metres or five car-lengths back.
- Slow down. As soon as you see a slow-moving vehicle, slow down immediately.
- Be patient.
 - Don't assume a farm vehicle is pulling right to let you pass. Check the left side of the road for gates, driveways or any place a farm vehicle might turn left.
 - Don't assume the farmer can move aside to let you pass.
 - Don't pass until the road is clear of traffic and you are positive it is safe to pass.
- Make sure you're clear. When passing, make sure you can see the farm vehicle in your rear-view mirror before you change back into the right lane.

Further information:

Transportation and Agriculture Services - 780-417-7100



Exploring the Beaver Hills

Created by glacial retreat over 12,000 years ago, the Beaver Hills (also known as the Cooking Lake Moraine) is a distinct land form covering 1,600 square kilometers. Over 80 per cent of Strathcona County's land base resides in the Beaver Hills, giving the County the unique rural character we see today.

The Beaver Hills includes Strathcona, Leduc, Camrose, Lamont and Beaver Counties. It is home to Elk Island National Park, a number of provincial parks and protected areas. This area is distinctly different from the surrounding prairie lands in terms of the soils, terrain, climate and elevation.



Why are the Beaver Hills Important?

- The Beaver Hills are an island of boreal forest surrounded by Aspen Parkland. It forms an ecological link for wildlife to move between these natural regions.
- The Beaver Hills are a critical source of surface and ground water.
- Healthy forests, grasslands and wetlands filter rainfall, trap sediment and recycle nutrients, which protects and enhances water quality.
- This ecosystem contributes to quality of life of area residents and others by supporting biodiversity, conservation of wetlands and forests that help to maintain clean and abundant drinking water, clean air, and healthy lands.

Did You Know?

Up to 48 mammals, 250 bird species, eight amphibians and reptiles have been identified in the Beaver Hills. This includes boreal species such as moose, cougar and black bear as well as grassland species like the sharp-tailed grouse and mule deer.

The Beaver Hills Initiative (BHI) was developed in 2002 from a collective recognition among all levels of government agencies, academia, industry and locally active environmental groups. Currently 30+ organizations (and growing), participate in the BHI, through the BHI Board, and working groups.

Further information:

Corporate Planning and Intergovernmental Affairs
780-464-8280
www.beaverhills.ca

Agriculture Services

The Board acts as an advisory body to Council on agricultural matters, while promoting and developing agricultural policies and programs to meet the needs of our residents and the municipality.

Agriculture Services phone numbers

Manager Joel Gould	780-417-7134
joel.gould@strathcona.ca	
Pest control/weed inspection/vegetation control	780-417-7100
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	
Phone	780-417-7100
Web	www.strathcona.ca/tas
Fax	780-417-7109

Agricultural Service Board

The members are available to discuss matters of interest to you.

Councillor Clinton Alexander	780-464-8147
Councillor Linton Delainey	780-464-8206
Councillor Bonnie Riddell (Chair)	780-464-8003
Councillor Peter Wlodarczak	780-464-8146
Paul Barlott	780-951-0631
Jackie Christie (Vice Chair)	780-422-8633
Gary Millar	780-499-9219
Paul Smith	780-998-1247

