

COUNTY OF ST. PAUL

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Our Mission - To create desirable rural experiences



County Agriculture News (CAN)

Spring 2022

Roadside Spraying Program

The roadside spraying program, under ASB, helps to control weeds and brush in the right-of-way (ROW) along the County roads. During the summer residents may see the County roadside spray truck or ATV spraying along our roadways.

Roadways are commonly sprayed every three to four years to promote grass growth and to keep trees and other weeds from obscuring the line of sight while driving. The roadside spray program is part of an integrated approach to keep our roads in good condition all year round.

If you are concerned about herbicides being applied to the roadway adjacent to your property, please contact ASB staff with your concerns. All of our operators are licensed by Alberta Environment and the herbicides used are safe for you and the environment. Clearview and Aspect are the two main herbicides used in the ROWs. These are selective herbicides that leave the grass and control most trees and broadleaved weeds. They are also very common agricultural products used to promote grass growth in pastures.

Any property owner who does not want a roadway sprayed by their property must fill out a 'Weed and Brush Control Agreement' every year before the program begins in mid-May. The owner is then responsible for controlling all of the weeds and brush in the roadway.

The County will supply the landowner with signs to post so the area not to spray is visible. Typically, if you are mowing the roadside it will not be sprayed so an agreement may not be necessary. Please make an appointment with ASB staff before coming in to sign an agreement.

FOR RENT

The ASB offers a variety of rental equipment to assist with farm operations remaining profitable and sustainable. The program is open to County residents only. The equipment for rent is available from Monday to Friday from the County Public Works Shop. To book an appointment call 780-645-3006.

Rental waivers will be signed and equipment will be inspected by a County representative and the renter before the equipment leaves the Public Works Shop and when equipment is returned.

Equipment that is available for rent include a cattle weigh scale, a loading chute with portable corrals, a squeeze chute, post pounders, scare cannons and traps for all sizes of animals. See the County website under 'Agriculture' for information on applicable rental fees.

Farm Equipment on the Road

What is the most frequent type of multi-vehicle collision? Farm machinery being hit as it is turning onto a public road.

In what three-month periods do almost half of all collisions occur?

- 1) March, April and May
- 2) July, August and September

See the County's 'Agriculture' webpage for information on 'Safe Transportation of Farm Equipment in Alberta'.

Agricultural Service Board (ASB) Contacts:

Keith Kornelsen, Agricultural Fieldman
Cell: 780-645-0154

Warren Leister, Assistant Agricultural Fieldman
Cell: 780-646-0120

Pests

If you are having any issues with pests ASB staff can, most likely, provide a trap or some advice to help you with the problems.

Beavers

Beavers are very important to our environment but sometimes they just get into the wrong area and start causing problems with our roads and property.



Every spring the County responds to numerous complaints about flooding related to beavers. These industrious and destructive animals plug culverts and water ways which can cause flooding of land and property. County staff ensure the culverts and roads are open to allow for water movement. If you see a culvert issue please phone ASB staff.

Several points are considered before a dam is blown such as where the water flows, whether the water will harm anything downstream, if there are any underground utilities, or if the County is under a fire ban.

The best time to remove beaver dams is early spring, late fall or when field work is done on any downstream land that may be effected.

County property owners who are having issues with beavers/ beaver dams can contact ASB staff who may be able to provide options.

Wild Boars

Wild boars are not native animals to Alberta. They were introduced into Alberta in the 1980's and 1990's when they were brought in as livestock.



Eventually some escaped. It was initially thought they would be unable to survive the Alberta winters. They not only survived but thrived in our climate.

Wild boars adapt to human activity, are very cautious around people, and become nocturnal which makes them extremely hard to eradicate.

Wild boars will cause crop damage, injure and scare livestock, eradicate native plants and animals, have the potential to harm people and ruin habitat.

Wild boars have been spotted in the County of St. Paul. Signs of wild boars include droppings, crop damage, rolling around on property (rooting and wallowing), tracks or wild boar nests. See examples of damage at <https://www.alberta.ca/signs-of-wild-boar-activity.aspx>

If you see a wild boar or their evidence, contact (information below) -

Feral pigs, also known as wild boar at large, are one of the **most damaging invasive species** in North America.

Hunting is not an effective control option.
For more information, visit abinvasives.ca



Report signs and sightings through:

- EDDMapS
- AF.wildboar@gov.ab.ca
- 310-FARM
- your local municipality

CANADIAN AGRICULTURAL PARTNERSHIP

ALBERTA invasive species COUNCIL

Alberta

Canada

Rats

Since 1950 Alberta has been maintaining that the province is rat free. Most of the efforts to keep Alberta rat free is completed on the border with Saskatchewan from Cold Lake to Montana. This is a about a 600 km long and 30 km wide area where active 'Rat Squads' hunt and destroy rats that may enter the province. This area is really the only place we see rats 'moving' into our province as the other borders have natural barriers that keep rats out.

Over the past ten years all of the 'rat sightings' in the County have been either pocket gophers or muskrats. Rats are rarely aggressive or seen during the day which are characteristics of muskrats.

Pocket gophers will be seen during the day. Pocket gophers and muskrats may be mistaken for a rat to the untrained eye. A great website to see the difference between rats and their look-a-likes is <https://www.alberta.ca/identifying-rats.aspx>

If you think you see a rat, contact the County ASB staff to investigate the sighting. The sooner we can respond to a rat problem the easier it will be to take care of.

There is no direct cost to rat control or investigation to the ratepayer. The province and counties bear the cost of the program. Albertans are not allowed to have rats as pets.

Strychnine

The County no longer sells 2% liquid Strychnine for the control of Richardson Ground Squirrels. All supplies on hand were sold before March 4, 2022.

The Health Canada Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) decided not to register the product after March 4, 2022. Residents will now need to rely on other less perfect controls. There are some options available at local hardware or farm supply stores but most require more work and may not be as effective.

Residents are encouraged to contact Health Canada PMRA to have Strychnine brought back. The County of St. Paul has written letters and has been part of provincial resolutions asking the federal ministry to reinstate the product but so far PMRA has not changed the policy on Strychnine.

Below are a few ways to ensure that rats won't be a problem on your property (Source: Alberta Government, 'Rat prevention and control')



Remove food sources Remove any and all food items from your property.

Because rats are capable of eating almost anything, it is important to remove all possible food items such as garbage, empty food containers, spilled grain or feed.

Remove rat shelters Keep your property clean and tidy. Rats can and will make any object their temporary or permanent home as long as they can crawl underneath. A rat will use any flat object lying on the ground including tires, planks, square bales, etc. as a shelter until it can seek out permanent cover.

Rat proof structures By elevating farm outbuildings, protecting doorways and windows, utility connections and other openings to barns, sheds, granaries, warehouses and industrial structures, rats can successfully be turned away from potential shelter. Efficient rotation of stored grain or forage bales will also discourage rat activity.

Check your vehicle When you return from an out-of-province trip, check for rats hitchhiking in your vehicle's undercarriage.

ASB would encourage producers to contact the PMRA and their local Member of Parliament to pressure the government to reverse its decision. Quote 'Re-evaluation Decision RVD2020-06-Strychnine and its Associated End-use Products (Richardson's Ground Squirrels) when asking for more information on the cancelation of Strychnine. See the County's 'Agriculture' website for PMRA's decision to remove the use of strychnine.

PMRA Contact information:
Pest Management Regulatory Agency, Health Canada
2720 Riverside Drive
A.L. 6607 D
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0K9

Phone Number: 1-800-267-6315 or 613-736-3799

Email: hc.pmra.info-arla.sc@canada.ca

Dogs

If you are having **dog issues** with your neighbor's dogs, such as if the dog visits when it shouldn't, it barks too much or makes you feel unsafe when walking by a dog owner's property, under the 'Dog Control Bylaw' the County's Bylaw Enforcement Officer can investigate. Phone 780-201-6777 for a question or a complaint.

If you have a **stray dog** that comes for a visit or see a stray dog somewhere in the County, call Keith Kornelsen at 780-645-0154 or Warren Leister at 780-646-0120 to have the dog caught. The stray dog is held at the County kennels for 3 days. Lost/ found dogs are posted on the County's Facebook and on the 'St. Paul Alberta Lost and Found Pets' Facebook.



A reminder to dog owners, regardless of where you live in the County or if visitors bring their dogs . . .



Clubroot Fields

Agricultural Services posts the number and location of Clubroot fields found in the County since 2014. This information is located on the 'Agriculture' webpage of the County's website.



Wildfire Prevention

Wildfire Season is March 1 to October 31 With a little planning you can reduce the threat of wildfire on your property.

Property owners in the County of St. Paul can get a **free FireSmart home assessment**. Are your gutters and the roof free of debris? That's just one issue around your home that's looked at by trained assessors in about thirty minutes. You'll receive an easy to understand report . . . And peace of mind.

Contact St. Paul Deputy Fire Chief Henry Thomson at 780-645-4100 to book your FireSmart home assessment.

Visit the County's website 'Fire, Emergency Services & Safety' to download a copy of "Farm and Acreage: A Guide to Reducing the Risk From Wildfire".

The Association of Agriculture Fieldmen Bursary



The bursary is intended for Alberta students continuing their education at a College or University. Students must be enrolled in an agricultural or environmental science program.

The \$1,000 bursary is available each calendar year for each of the five provincial regions of the Association of Alberta Agricultural Fieldmen. *Applications are accepted until September 1.* See the County's 'Agriculture' webpage for the link to information and the application.

Upcoming

Farmer's Day is June 10

Celebrate your achievements and your contributions to our community and country. Thank you!



4-H Show and Sale will be held on June 6 in

St. Paul The Show starts at 11 a.m.; Parade of champions at 5 p.m.; Sale at 7 p.m. through in-person live auction or bid online with Direct Livestock Marketing Systems.

Lakeland Agricultural Research Association (LARA)

The County provides annual financial support to LARA to ensure its goal continues of "conducting applied research, demonstrations and extension programs that provide valuable unbiased information to local producers." For program information on LARA programming and research see LARA's Facebook or website: www.laraonline.ca



Alberta Agriculture

For Agriculture resources, courses and information: alberta.ca/agriculture

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