

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT *of Willow Creek*

Volume XIII | Winter Newsletter

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COUNCIL MESSAGE - 'TIS THE SEASON

The October election is over and as you know, all MD of Willow Creek Councillors had the courage and conviction to let their names stand for re-election for another term of 4 years. "You have to accept whatever comes and the only important thing is that you must meet it with courage and with the best that you have to give." (Eleanor Roosevelt). Councillors Evan Berger, Brian Nelson, Glen Alm, John Van Driesten and Maryanne Sandberg were acclaimed. Two individuals came forward to contest incumbent Councillors Earl Hemmaway and John Kroetsch - Michael Neufeld ran against Earl and Cecilie Fleming challenged John. Thank you to those who did challenge incumbents – it is nice to see democracy in action and people stepping up for the good of the MD. Ultimately, Earl Hemmaway remains Councillor for Division 5, and Cecilie Fleming is the new Councillor for Division 2. Congratulations to both. Welcome to Council, Cecilie.

Thank you to John Kroetsch for serving as Division 2 Councillor for the past 12 years (2013 – 2025). In those 12 years, John K gave his best to the position of Councillor for Division 2., serving on many boards and committees – MPC, the Granum Library Board, the Willow Creek Regional Waste Authority, Ag Service Board and the Granum District Community Board. When Granum became a Hamlet within the MD, we jokingly called him "Mayor" of Granum as it was in his District. There was joke amongst Council, that the Reeve had 2 "johns" and now she only has one!!! All the best John.

All Councillors had to attend a council orientation session – to familiarize us on our roles as Councillors and the MGA (Municipal Government Act) before we could be sworn in and before our first meeting after the election. Interestingly, there were a few things that we old Councillors did learn. Proof that you can teach an old dog new tricks!! This Council is committed to do their best for the MD of Willow Creek.

Now, this Council will get to work on the Budget for 2026, and Strategic Planning (reviewing our old Plan and looking forward to seeing what we want for our MD in the coming years). We definitely are planning on "Coffee with Council" in 2026 in 2 locations – Stavelly & Fort Macleod and our Annual Open House Bar-B-Q probably in June in Granum. We definitely value good suggestions that anyone has with regards to the Strategic planning process. Just remember that we are there to listen. Anyone can attend Council meetings – you are always welcome and if you wish to make a presentation, please contact the CAO at the MD office.

Congratulations to the Ag Service Board on a very successful "Legacy of Our Land" on November 7th. A huge crowd filled the Fort Macleod Community Hall to enjoy not only each others company but also a great meal by M & A Catering. Well received were the fantastic door prizes thanks to a major sponsorship by Fortis. Thank you also to Claresholm Veterinary Services Ltd. & Alberta Hardware Ltd. for sponsoring door prizes. The guest speaker - the Grizzly Guy – Jeremy Evans was tremendously moving and an inspiration to all. Money raised by the silent auction went to Jeremy's cause – advancing research for mental health for those suffering with PTSD (Post Traumatic Distress Syndrome).

Hope everyone celebrates Remembrance Day – WE SHALL NOT FORGET the men and women of the past and present who fought and fight for the freedoms that we enjoy today. Members of Council will be present to lay wreaths at the ceremonies in Nanton, Claresholm, Granum and Fort Macleod.

We wish everyone a very, very MERRY & BLESSED CHRISTMAS and a HAPPY NEW YEAR.

Glen Alm, Evan Berger, Earl Hemmaway, Cecilie Fleming, Brian Nelson, Maryanne Sandberg, and John Van Driesten

Council – M.D. of Willow Creek

Main office 403-625-3351 • Toll Free 1-888-337-3351

email: md26@mdwillowcreek.com

In Case You Missed it... 2025 PROPERTY TAXES WERE DUE OCTOBER 31, 2025.

Any payments **RECEIVED** by the MD **AFTER** that date were reviewed to determine the outcome if a penalty should be applied or not. On November 1st a **10% LATE PAYMENT PENALTY** was assessed on all outstanding property tax balances. Please note any outstanding balance is subject to **A FURTHER 10% LATE PAYMENT PENALTY** on DECEMBER 31, 2025. If you are concerned about the status of your property tax account(s), please don't hesitate to contact the MD of Willow Creek No. 26 at 403-625-3351 – Extension 226.



IS YOUR PROPERTY TITLE CURRENT?

Your home and land are valuable! Something as simple as keeping your mailing address correct ensures you – the property owner – will receive notifications from the MD (such as property tax notices, newsletters, neighbouring development, etc.) or notifications from the Calgary Land Titles office if anyone tries to place a lien on your property. Sensitive information cannot be released to anyone but the property owner. Having the correct name(s) on the land title allows for the information to be released to property owners.

TAX PAYMENT PLANS

The MD of Willow Creek offers numerous opportunities for property tax payments, such as:

TIPPS:

- Tax Installment Payment Plan
 - o The previous year's property taxes are divided into monthly amounts with the intention that come October 31st, the balance is at \$0.00
- On-Line Banking:**
- o Ratepayers can set the MD of Willow Creek No. 26 as a payee through their financial institution and make payments throughout the year, again, with the intention that come October 31st, the balance is at \$0.00

Credit Card:

- o Credit card payments can be made from the comfort of your home by visiting:
 - www.mdwillowcreek.com > Online Payment (lower left corner)
 - Scroll to the bottom and click on "Pay Now"

E-Transfer:

- o The only e-mail that will accept e-transfers is: finance@mdwillowcreek.com
Please use TAXES as the security word
- ** Note invoice / account number in message

Cheques: Mail to: M.D. of Willow Creek No. 26
PO Box 550, Claresholm, Alberta T0L 0T0

In Person: at 273129 Secondary Highway 520 West
Monday through Friday – 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Council Meetings

January 14

10 a.m. - Municipal Planning Commission
11:30 a.m. Council Meeting

January 28

10 a.m. – Agricultural Service Board
11:30 a.m. Council Meeting

February 11

10 a.m. - Municipal Planning Commission
11:30 a.m. Council and Annual Organizational Meeting

February 25

10 a.m. – Agricultural Service Board
11:30 a.m. Council Meeting

March 11

10 a.m. - Municipal Planning Commission
11:30 a.m. Council Meeting

March 25

10 a.m. – Agricultural Service Board
11:30 a.m. Council Meeting

April 8

9 a.m. - Municipal Planning Commission
11:30 a.m. Council Meeting

April 22

9 a.m. – Agricultural Service Board
11:30 a.m. Council Meeting

May 13

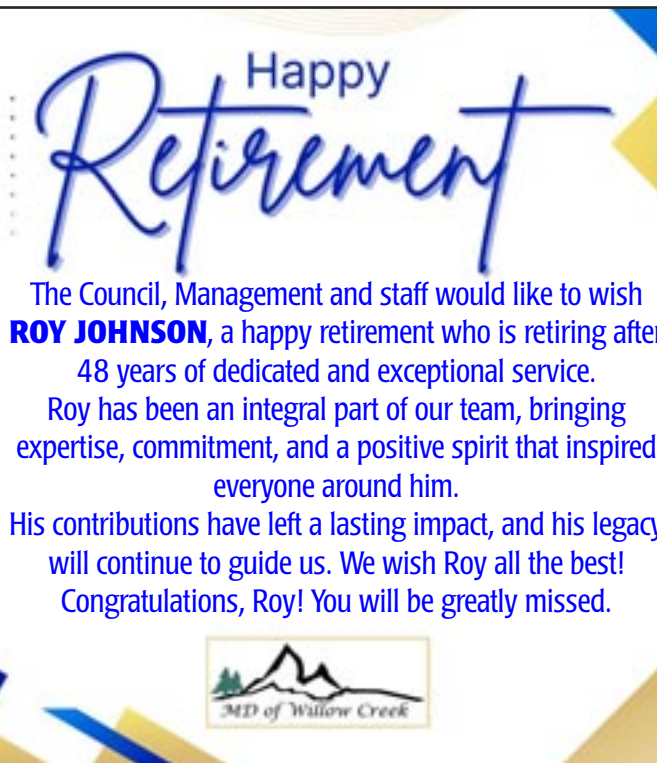
9 a.m. - Municipal Planning Commission
11:30 a.m. Council Meeting

Did you know...

- Council meetings are OPEN TO THE PUBLIC and are held the second and fourth Wednesday of each month— meetings typically begin at 11 am
 - All individuals or groups requesting an opportunity to make a presentation to Council and are invited to contact our office at 403-625-3351 prior to the Council meeting day to schedule a time for your delegation.
 - Council meeting agendas are ready for distribution on the Municipal website: www.mdwillowcreek.com or can be picked-up in person prior to each meeting.
- To view past Council agendas and minutes, please visit our website.

Office Holiday Closures

December 24-26 Christmas Break
January 1 - New Year's Day
January 2
February 16 - Family Day
April 3 - Good Friday



M.D. OF WILLOW CREEK WEBSITE QUICK LINKS

SCAN WITH YOUR CELL PHONE CAMERA TO ACCESS



Service Requests



Burn Permit



Bylaws, Policies and Other Documents



Meeting Agendas and Minutes



Development Applications



Grading and Graveling Services



Land Use Bylaw Map



Land Use Bylaw



Snow and Ice Control

Government Roles & Responsibilities

Municipal Government

MD of WC



Administration Office



Development & Building Permits/Fees



Family & Community Support Services
20% Municipal Government
80% Provincial Government



Local Road Maintenance & Improvement



Parks, Trails & Playgrounds



Property Tax
Municipal Portion



Protective Services



Recreation Facilities



Senior's Supportive Housing
(Mosquito Creek, Willow Creek, Porcupine Hills Foundations)



Social Services
Education & Awareness of Services Available



Utilities
Water, Sewer, Wastewater



Waste Collection

Provincial Government

Alberta



Employer & Employee Supports



Family & Community Support Services
20% Municipal Government
80% Provincial Government



Highways



Hospitals



Housing



Justice



Landlord & Tenant Supports



Post-Secondary Education



Property Tax
Provincial Portion



Safety Enforcement



Schools



Social Services
Treatment & Specialized Services,
Domestic Violence Shelters



Student Loans

Federal Government

Canada



Airports



Borders & Passports



Broadcasting & Telecommunications



Canada Child Benefit



Charter of Human Rights



Employment Insurance



Fisheries, Oceans & National Parks



Income Tax



International Travel & Support for Canadians Abroad



Mortgages
Canadian Mortgage & Housing Corporation



National RCMP



National Defence & Veterans Affairs



Postal Service



Student Loans

Willow Creek Rural Crime Watch

Awareness - Education - Report Suspicious Activity



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, March 5, 2026, at 6:30 PM

MD of Willow Creek Administration Building

#273129 Secondary Highway 520 West

IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL (Email wrcwa@gmail.com for the Teams Meeting link)

All MD residents interested in preventing crime are welcome to attend!

There will be a short AGM followed by a 45 - 60 minute presentation on Cyber Crime and Scams

For more information and membership application forms go to www.wrcwa.ca

\$20 for a Lifetime Membership and your first Rural Crime Watch sign. Additional signs \$10 each.

Connecting the community of Willow Creek for the safety & security of our people, livestock & assets

Willow Creek Regional Landfill

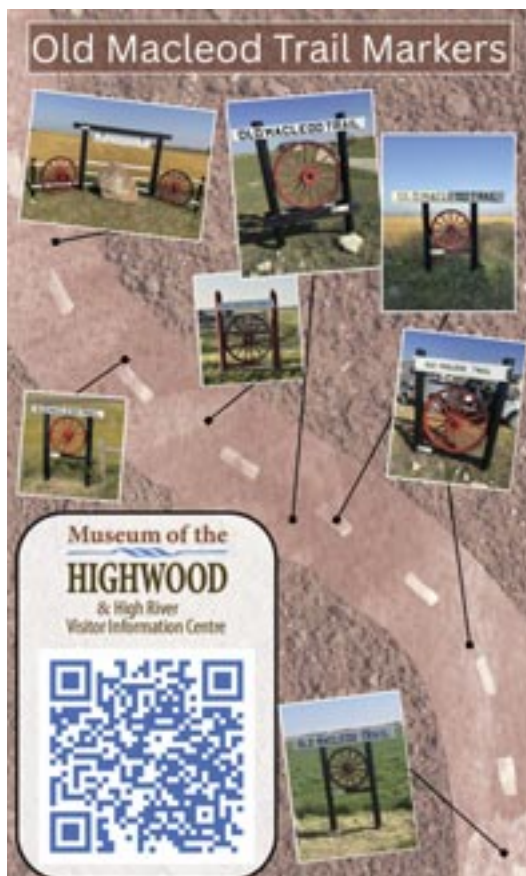
Holiday Hours

December 24	CLOSING AT 12 p.m.
December 25	CLOSED
December 26	CLOSED
December 31	CLOSING AT 12 p.m.
January 1 & 2	CLOSED

Regular landfill hours will resume January 5, 2026



The Willow Creek Regional Landfill staff, management and Board of Directors would like to wish our customers, neighbours and friends the joy and peace of the Christmas Season and continued health and prosperity in the New Year.



Agricultural Service Board

Agricultural Service Board

273129 Secondary Hwy-520 West
ASB Shop is at the SW end of the main shop.

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DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURAL SERVICES

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ASSISTANT AGRICULTURAL FIELDMAN

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Old Macleod Trail

- Sign Restoration Project

Continuing from our restoration the past few years, the Old Macleod Trail markers were inspected again, minor repairs and a new paint job were completed in 2025 to keep these historic reminders in good shape!

Reclamation Seeding



This year, our seasonal crew was able to seed approximately **68 acres** of bare ground.

We complete this work to:

1. Protect our soil from erosion
2. Lessen the likelihood of unfavourable or invasive vegetation from taking over, especially after a disturbance like road construction
3. Reclaim gravel pits, road edges, and other areas of construction!

Rental Equipment

Agricultural Services provides the following equipment for rent by ratepayers:

Soil Conservation:

- o Manure Spreader (\$300/day)
- o Straw Incorporator (\$100/day)

Livestock:

- o Livestock Scale (\$100/day)
- o Livestock Tag Reader

Vegetation Management:

- o Skid Weed Sprayer (\$100/day)
- o Tree Sprayer (\$100/day)
- o 15L Backpack Sprayer

Animal Control:

- o Pressurized Exhaust Rodent Controller (\$300/day)
- o Various Magpie Traps
- o Skunk/Raccoon Traps

For more information, or to book an equipment rental, please call:

Ryan
403-682-7834;
Gary
403-625-6095

ALBERTA BIOCONTROL CONSORTIUM

Biocontrols are a really important part of an integrated pest management plan. Many plant species have natural predators that they have evolved alongside, these species (often insects) would naturally keep populations in check in their original habitat. This is not the case when a species invades a new environment, this is why invasive species often have the ability to spread aggressively through the new land. After rigorous testing, to ensure that a biocontrol species will not cause more issue that it fixes, species that target specific plants can be introduced into the new area that has been invaded to provide a natural enemy. This adds another tool in the toolbox to help keep invasive species from getting too abundant.

In an effort to expand and improve the biocontrol program here in Alberta, a biocontrol consortium has begun being formed. The consortium will help guide research priorities and contribute funding to support the development of high-priority biocontrol agents. Members for the biocontrol consortium will include organizations spanning from federal, provincial, and indigenous governments, municipalities, cities, producers, NGO's, and industry partners and will be led by a Steering Committee elected by the members. We hope that this will focus and expand our ability to apply biocontrols to assist us in vegetation control across the province.

NEW

Alberta Biocontrol Consortium (ABC)

Purpose:

To collaboratively facilitate, support, and coordinate the research, implementation, and delivery of sustainable biological control programs for invasive species in Alberta.

Objectives:

1. Identify and prioritize invasive species targets for biocontrol in Alberta
2. Support the development and evaluation of biocontrol agents
3. Facilitate knowledge sharing among member organizations.
4. Secure financial and in-kind resources to support biocontrol initiatives.



2025 Agricultural Service Board Workshop Summary

We are committed to providing the agricultural industry within the MD of Willow Creek with valuable workshops and events to help keep producers up-to-date, certified, and learning! Check out the table at the right to see the wide variety of workshops we offer. Agriculture is consistently changing and evolving, so there are always new practices or technology to share. If you have an idea you would like to see that has value for you and your fellow producers, please reach out to Agriculture Services!

2025		
Workshop Name	Date	Number of Attendees
Control Strategies: Gopher, Ungulate & Predators	30-Jan	76 (5 from Willow Creek)
Farmer Pesticide Course	27-Feb	25 (7 from Willow Creek)
PAL & RPAL Firearm Course	28 - 31-Mar	10
Tree Care & Maintenance	07-Apr	21
Bear Safety Workshop	01-May	21
Willow Creek Outdoor Adventure	15-May	189
SWIM Weed Pull - Oldman River	25-Jun	13
Southern Alberta Grazing School for Women	16-17 Jul	65
Stockmanship School - Mt. Sentinel Ranch	23 -24 Sept	21 (WC)
Move My Licence - DRAS	22-Oct	11
Agricultural Succession - Legal Info Session	28-Oct	36
Celebrating Rangelands (Connecting Research to On-Ranch Management)	13-Nov	115
EFP Workshop	28-Nov	TBD



MD OF WILLOW CREEK 70TH ANNIVERSARY ASB COOKBOOK



2026 marks the 70th anniversary of the establishment of an Agricultural Service Board in the MD of Willow Creek. To commemorate this milestone, we would like to help create a farming and ranching cookbook of tried-and-true meals. Whether its grub for branding, weaning, silage, or harvest, we want to hear from you!

- Want to contribute?
- Join the cookbook comittee, or
 - Send in your favourite in-the-field meals with the complete recipe and some pictures!

Please submit pictures and recipes to ryan.dovell@mdwillowcreek.com



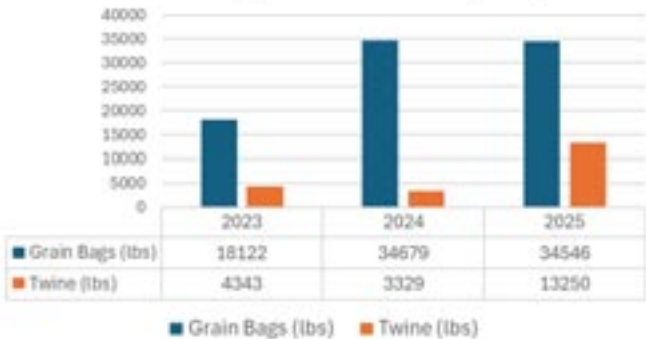
Cleanfarms Agricultural Plastic Recycling Program



Since the Cleanfarms program was lauched in 2023 in the MD of Willow Creek, producers have recycled:



Cleanfarms Agricultural Plastic Recycling



Current Agricultural Grant Program Summary

Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership

- **On-Farm Efficiency Program (OFEP)**
 - o To support producers in achieving environmental benefits by improving the efficient use of agricultural inputs.
 - o Closed for applications in 2025, reopening in 2026.
- **On-Farm Value Added Program**
 - o Supports producers in adding value to their agricultural products to grow sales, expand production capacity, explore market opportunities and create jobs in Alberta.
 - o Closed for applications in 2025.
- **Resilient Agricultural Landscape Program (RALP)**
 - o Offers funding that may cover up to 100% of eligible expenses to support producers in their ability to implement and maintain projects over a three-year term.
 - o Due to significant interest, RALP is now closed to applications.
- **Water Program**
 - o Accepting applications as of April 3, 2023.
 - o Supports agricultural water management in two streams:
- **On-Farm Irrigation Stream – can assist producers with irrigation projects**
 - o On-Farm Water Supply Stream – can assist producers with developments of wells, dugouts, cisterns, or springs, as well as decommissioning old wells. There is also funding available for this program that can assist with pipelines, or off-source watering systems.
 - o <https://www.alberta.ca/water-program>

On-Farm Climate Action Fund (OFCAF)

- There are two organizations in Alberta that are dispersing funding for OFCAF.
- o RDAR – Results Driven Agricultural Research
- o Currently accepting applications—usually closed by this time of year.
- o Any purchases made before April 1, 2025 are not eligible for reimbursement. Pre-approval by RDAR in writing is required to be eligible for program funding. The implementation of only the water portion of your rotational grazing project will not be eligible for reimbursement.
- o This program provides financial support to producers to accelerate their adoption and implementation of on-farm Beneficial Management Practices (BMPs) to lower Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, support production efficiency, sustainability and resiliency on their farm operations.
- o For more information, please visit:
<https://rdar.ca/funding-opportunities/ofcaf>
- o CFGA – Canadian Forage and Grassland Association
- o Currently closed to applications for 2025.

Alberta Verified Beef Plus – Incentive Program

- The Alberta VBP+ Incentive program allows eligible cattle producers to apply for rebates to facilitate further adoption of best management practices on-farm. By doing so, farmers and ranchers will improve on-farm practices and strengthen public trust.
- Applicants are required to have completed the VBP+ training (since 2016) for the Training Stream, or must be VBP+ audited for the Audited Stream.
- <https://albertabeef.org/alberta-vbp-incentive/>

LEGACY OF OUR LAND BANQUET

This year, we hosted the 32nd annual Legacy of Our Land Banquet at the Fort Macleod & District Community Hall on November 7th. Over 180 guests joined us for a delicious meal, Agricultural Service Board updates, and an inspiring speech from Jeremy Evans, the Grizzly Dude. Also included in this year's banquet was a silent auction, the proceeds from this were given as a charitable donation to a cause that Jeremy promotes, advancing research for mental health support for people suffering with PTSD.

We would like to thank everyone who was able to attend this banquet, Fortis Alberta for their generous sponsorship, Claresholm Veterinary Services and Alberta Hardware for their donation of a door prize, and finally MA Catering for the exquisite prime rib meal.



In September 2022, the Town of Stavely, Municipal District of Ranchland No. 66, and the Municipal District of Willow Creek No. 26 entered into an agreement for a Regional Emergency Management Plan.

The Regional Emergency Management Plan Agreement renews the existing agreement between the Town of Stavely, MD of Ranchland and the MD of Willow Creek. The Plan provides the following key provisions:

- To create a Regional Emergency Management Plan and Program, including training and exercises.
- To provide a management structure that includes the appointment of a common Director of Emergency Management (DEM), or his or her designate.
- To allow for the activation of the Regional Incident Management Team at the request of the DEM or designate.

Mr. Kelly Starling has been appointed as the Director of Emergency Management.

The Director of Emergency Management (DEM) is responsible for the strategic leadership, coordination, and administration of emergency planning across the Municipal District of Willow Creek, the Municipal District of Ranchland, and the Town of Stavely. This role encompasses oversight of emergency preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation efforts, ensuring compliance with Alberta's Emergency Management Act and the Local Authority Emergency Management Regulation (Alberta Regulation 203/2018).

The DEM provides emergency management leadership, is responsible for the maintenance of the plan, ensures that municipal staff is trained and prepared to respond to emergency situations that require the implementation of the plan, coordinates the activation of the plan and mutual aid agreements and provides overall leadership for the regional emergency management plan.



MUTUAL AID AGREEMENTS: STRENGTH IN COLLABORATION DURING DISASTERS

When disaster strikes, no single community can always manage the response alone. That's where **mutual aid agreements** come in—formal arrangements between municipalities, counties, and emergency organizations to share resources when they're needed most.

What is a Mutual Aid Agreement?

A mutual aid agreement is a formal, pre-established commitment between jurisdictions or organizations to provide assistance during emergencies. These agreements outline how resources—such as personnel, equipment, and expertise—will be shared when local capabilities are overwhelmed. They ensure that help can be deployed quickly and efficiently without delays caused by negotiations during a crisis.

The **Municipal District of Willow Creek** maintains multiple mutual aid agreements with:

- **Neighbouring municipalities**
- **External agencies**
- **Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)**

In addition, we participate in a **Regional Emergency Management Program** alongside the **Town of Stavely** and the **MD of Ranchland**, strengthening our collective preparedness and response capabilities.



Being a rural community, we also benefit from the **unwritten but invaluable support** of local farmers, ranchers, and Hutterite colonies. Their equipment, manpower, and knowledge of the land often play a critical role in emergency operations.

Why Mutual Aid Matters

Disasters often overwhelm local resources. Mutual Aid Agreements ensure that additional equipment, personnel, and expertise can be deployed quickly from neighbouring jurisdictions. This collaboration helps maintain continuity of operations and speeds up recovery efforts.

Benefits of Mutual Aid Agreements

- **Access to extra equipment** – Fire trucks, water tenders, rescue gear, and specialized tools can be mobilized from partner agencies.
- **Additional personnel** – Skilled responders such as firefighters and emergency management staff can reinforce local teams.
- **Faster response times** – Pre-established agreements eliminate delays in requesting help during critical moments.
- **Cost efficiency** – Sharing resources reduces financial strain on individual communities.
- **Preparedness through partnership** – Mutual aid is more than a handshake—it's a lifeline during emergencies. By working together, communities build resilience and ensure that when the unexpected happens, help is never far away.

Winter Is Here: #BePrepared for Seasonal Hazards

As snowy, cooler weather returns across Alberta, it's time to prepare for the many winter hazards we face. Storms, icy roads, and freezing rain can create dangerous conditions - planning ahead can make all the difference.

Tips to Stay Safe This Winter:

- Avoid Travel During Severe Weather - Blizzards, freezing rain, and ice storms can make roads treacherous. If you must drive, travel during daylight hours and let someone know your destination and estimated arrival time.
- Stock Your Vehicle Emergency Kit - Include warm layers, a shovel, heat packs, and other essentials in case you need to pull over or shelter in place during a storm.

- Stay Informed by downloading these apps before you travel:
 - ✓ **511 Alberta** – for road conditions and detours
 - ✓ **Alberta Emergency Alert** – for critical alerts
 - ✓ **WeatherCan** – for up-to-date weather forecasts

If you find yourself stuck in a vehicle during a winter storm, stay inside the vehicle, run the engine every once in a while, and beware of fumes. Ensure the exhaust pipe is not blocked, and continually allow fresh air in.

Preparedness is key to staying safe during Alberta's harsh winter months.

Take time now to plan ahead and protect yourself and your loved ones.



WINTER DRIVING TIPS

Do your part to keep our highways safe and to help maintenance crews clear the roads as safely and efficiently as possible.

Plan ahead and drive according to the conditions.

- Unless travel is absolutely necessary, stay off the roads during major storms.
- Winterize your vehicles. This should include an examination of the spare tire, battery, belts, hoses, anti-freeze, tires, brakes, heater, defroster and windshield wipers.
- Carry an emergency road kit.
- Clear all snow and ice completely off windows, side view mirrors, headlights, taillights and licence plates.
- Buckle up and adjust head restraints. The centre of your head restraint should be even with the top of your ears.
- Keep your vehicles more than half full of fuel. The extra volume can help reduce moisture in your fuel system, which adds extra weight to your vehicle. A topped-up gas tank will also help if you become stranded.
- Slow down. The posted speed limit is intended for ideal road conditions. Road signs may indicate 110 km/h, but icy or snow-covered roads warrant slower speeds.
- Drivers are legally required to drive according to road conditions. You can be charged with a traffic offence you aren't driving to the conditions.
- Stay back from snowplows. They will let you pass when it's safe to do so.
- Plan your destination ahead of time.
- Keep your headlights on so drivers behind you can see your taillights - don't rely on daytime running lights.
- Never use cruise control in winter conditions.
- On snowy roads, try driving outside of the previous tire tracks for extra traction.
- Signal early to let other drivers anticipate and react. Check your rear view and side mirrors, and always shoulder check before changing lanes.
- Avoid sudden moves. Abrupt changes in direction or slamming on the brakes could cause you to spin out of control.
- On wet /slick surfaces, allow at least three times the normal following distance.
- Remember bridge decks are often slicker than other parts of the highway are, due to greater temperature fluctuations.
- Know your braking system and how it reacts on ice. Be gentle with braking pressure on slick roads.
- Avoid braking on curves; drive through a safe, steady speed.
- Accelerate slightly when approaching hills and then maintain a steady speed going up.
- Gear down for both uphill climbs and downhill grades. This will avoid brake wear and chances of sliding. Be careful of abrupt downshifting which can cause skidding, particularly when turning.
- Take your foot off the brake if you start to skid, and steer in the direction you want to go. When the wheels regain their grip, brake firmly and smoothly.
- When driving a rear-wheel drive, prepare to steer just enough in the opposite direction to prevent a counter skid.

CARRY AN EMERGENCY ROAD KIT INCLUDING:

- ◆ First Aid Kit
- ◆ Fire Extinguisher
- ◆ Blanket
- ◆ Road Map and Compass
- ◆ Extra Clothing and Footwear
- ◆ Paper Towel or Rags
- ◆ Sand, Road Salt or non-clumping Kitty Litter
- ◆ Flashlight with Extra Batteries
- ◆ Emergency Food – anything that won't spoil like granola bars, nuts or chocolate
- ◆ Ice Scraper and Snowbrush
- ◆ Cell Phone
- ◆ Candle in a deep tin
- ◆ Waterproof Matches
- ◆ Shovel
- ◆ Booster Cables

www.transportation.alberta.ca

Dial 5-1-1 • www.511.Alberta.ca • @511Alberta

Holiday Road Trips Are Coming!

The holiday season is just around the corner, and many of us will soon be hitting the road for festive visits, family gatherings, and winter adventures. The MD of Willow Creek Enforcement Services wants to share a cheerful reminder to keep our most precious travelers safe and securely buckled up for every ride.

Proper child restraints aren't just important they're the law. In Alberta, drivers must ensure that children under the age of 16 are properly restrained. Research shows that using the right child safety seat can reduce the risk of serious or fatal injuries by 60–70%, making those few extra moments of checking straps well worth it.

Rear-Facing Car Seat (birth until at least 2 years)

A child is safest in a rear-facing car seat until they:

- are at least 2 years old, or
- reach the maximum weight or height limit for the rear-facing seat (as stated by the manufacturer)

Forward-Facing Car Seats (at least 2 years until at least 6 years or 40 lbs)

By law in Alberta, children under the age of 6 who weigh 18 kg (40 lbs) or less must be in a child safety seat.

Your child should be in a forward-facing car seat once they:

- are at least 2 years old, or
- reach the maximum height or weight limit for their rear-facing car seat

Your child should use the forward-facing car seat until they:

- are at least 6 years old, or
- weigh more than 18 kg (40 lbs) and have reached the maximum height or weight limit for the car seat (as stated by the manufacturer)

Booster Seats (at least 6 years or 40 lbs until a seat belt fits)

Booster seats are not required by law in Alberta. Drivers must ensure children aged 6 to 15 or who weigh more than 40 lbs wear a seatbelt. However, booster seats are highly

recommended because they help position a child so the shoulder-lap belt fits across the child's chest and hips, rather than their neck and stomach.

Your child should be in a booster seat once they:

- are 6 years old, or
- weigh more than 18kg (40 lbs) and have reached the maximum height or weight limit for their forward-facing car seat

Your child should remain in the booster seat until they:

- reach the maximum height, or
- weight limit for the booster seat (as stated by the manufacturer) and a seatbelt fits properly

Keeping kids safe on the road is one of the best gifts we can give this holiday season. From all of us at the MD of Willow Creek Enforcement Services, we wish you safe travels, and a merry Christmas!

Reference: <https://www.alberta.ca/child-seats>



MUNICIPAL ENFORCEMENT LINE



One of the most common questions we receive about the Peace Officer Program is: **"HOW DO I GET A HOLD OF A PEACE OFFICER?"**

The answer is simple and convenient.

The M.D. of Willow Creek contracts the

services of the **Foothills Regional 9-1-1 Service**, ensuring help is always just a phone call away.

If you have a concern, complaint, or inquiry, you can reach a Peace Officer **any time, day or night**, by calling the **Municipal Enforcement Line**. Once your information is received by dispatch, the next available Peace Officer will be assigned to respond promptly.

This system allows us to provide timely assistance and maintain the safety and well-being of our community

around the clock.

Municipal Enforcement Line: 403-625-2248

We're here for you! Whether it's a question, a concern, or something that just doesn't seem right, don't hesitate to call. Your Peace Officers are committed to keeping the MD of Willow Creek safe and welcoming for everyone.

MD of Willow Creek
Municipal Enforcement Line
403-625-2248

REMINDER TO FOLLOW FIRE PERMIT CONDITIONS!

As winter approaches, many landowners will want to conduct a controlled burn. If you hold a Fire Permit, it's essential to follow all conditions to ensure safety and compliance. These rules are in place to protect you, your property, and the community.

Fire Permit Conditions to Remember:

- Supervision - the fire must be supervised at all times by a responsible adult.
- Weather Restrictions - no burning is permitted when winds exceed 25 km/h or are gusting.
- Fire Control Measures - you must have adequate fire extinguishing tools and water supply on site to maintain control.
- Time Restrictions - burning is not permitted between 10 PM and 5 AM unless a special permit has been issued.
- Material Restrictions - only Class A combustibles (clean wood or paper products) may be burned.
- Fire Dispatch Centre – dispatch must be notified approximately one (1) hour prior to the burn taking place.
Call 1-888-808-3722 (do not call 9-1-1).
- Permit Validity - Fire Permits are valid for a maximum of 5 days from the date of issue. Permits may be cancelled at any time if conditions warrant.

By following these guidelines, you help reduce the risk of wildfires and ensure safe burning practices. If you have questions about your permit or need clarification, contact the Emergency Services department before starting your burn.

CAUTION WHEN WINTER BURNING

At this time of year, many landowners take advantage of cooler weather to burn debris and brush piles. While winter burning can be an effective way to manage vegetation, it comes with important responsibilities to prevent future wildfires.

Why It Matters:

If fires are not fully extinguished, they can smolder underground—even beneath snow and ice—all winter long. Under the right conditions, these hidden fires can re-emerge in the spring as dangerous wildfires.

Following safe burning practices now helps prevent holdover fires that could ignite later.

Key Safety Tips for Winter Burning:

- Fully Extinguish Your Burn: Snow can reduce the risk of fire spreading underground, but it's not a guarantee. Regularly revisit all fall and winter burn sites to confirm they are completely out.
- Walk the burn area and roll over debris to check for hot spots.
- Look for signs such as melting snow around the edges.
- Touch the area for warmth and smell for smoke.

Have the Right Tools:

- Keep an axe, shovels, and an adequate water supply at the burn site.

Monitor Weather Conditions:

- Be aware of forecasted wind. Strong winds can carry sparks or embers and start a wildfire.

Burn Responsibly:

- Do not attempt to burn more than you can control. For larger piles, consider lighting a smaller fire nearby and gradually feed material from the main pile. This approach allows you to extinguish the fire quickly if weather conditions change.

By taking these precautions, you help protect your property and the surrounding community from the risk of spring wildfires. Safe burning today means a safer tomorrow.



Carbon Monoxide Safety



Often called the invisible killer, carbon monoxide is an invisible, odorless, colorless gas created when fuels (such as gasoline, wood, coal, natural gas, propane, oil, and methane) burn incompletely. In the home, heating and cooking equipment that burn fuel can be sources of carbon monoxide.

- CO alarms should be installed in a central location outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home and in other locations where required by applicable laws, codes or standards. For the best protection, interconnect all CO alarms throughout the home. When one sounds, they all sound.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for placement and mounting height.
- Choose a CO alarm that is listed by a qualified testing laboratory.
- Call your local fire department's non-emergency number to find out what number to call if the CO alarm sounds.
- Test CO alarms at least once a month; replace them according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- If the audible trouble signal sounds, check for low batteries. If the battery is low, replace it. If it still sounds, call the fire department.
- If the CO alarm sounds, immediately move to a fresh air location outdoors or by an open window or door. Make sure everyone inside the home is accounted for. Call for help from a fresh air location and stay there until emergency personnel declare that it is safe to re-enter the home.
- If you need to warm a vehicle, remove it from the garage immediately after starting it. Do not run a vehicle or other fueled engine or motor indoors, even if garage doors are open. Make sure the exhaust pipe of a running vehicle is not covered with snow.
- During and after a snowstorm, make sure vents for the dryer, furnace, stove, and fireplace are clear of snow build-up.
- A generator should be used in a well-ventilated location outdoors away from windows, doors and vent openings.
- Gas or charcoal grills can produce CO — only use outside.

HOME HEATING EQUIPMENT



Have fuel-burning heating equipment and chimneys inspected by a professional every year before cold weather sets in. When using a fireplace, open the flue for adequate ventilation. Never use your oven to heat your home.

FACTS

- ! A person can be poisoned by a small amount of CO over a longer period of time or by a large amount of CO over a shorter amount of time.
- ! In 2010, U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated 80,100 non-fire CO incidents in which carbon monoxide was found, or an average of nine calls per hour.



NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION
The leading information and knowledge resource on fire, electrical and related hazards



THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF WILLOW CREEK – INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

The Council of the Municipal District of Willow Creek continue to work toward maintaining the quality of services within the Municipality through investment into important infrastructure that provides these services.

Many projects were completed in 2025. Highlighted projects are listed below:

- Claresholm Airport Drainage Improvements – Phase 2
 - o Design is to abandon end of life underground infrastructure and replace the function with above grade drainage
 - o Results in lower lifecycle cost to the municipality
- Range Road 25-0 Base and Pave
 - o From Township Road 9-2 to Highway 3
 - o Full base and pave to accommodate current and future traffic and industry
- Bridge Maintenance
 - o Maintenance on multiple bridges
 - o Scope includes scour repair, riprap placement, rail repairs and replacement
- Granum Sidewalk Replacement (Funded by Hamlet of Granum Special Tax)
 - o Replace end of life sidewalk
- Granum Surfacing Works (Funded by Hamlet of Granum Special Tax)
 - o Throughout the Hamlet
 - o Replace end of life roadway
 - Granum Sanitary Sewer Lift Station Pump Re-build
- Granum Fire Hydrant Replacements
- Claresholm Shop Improvements
 - o Construction of offices and meeting spaces within the shop mezzanine
- Township Road 12-4 Oiling
 - o New surface and base work on Township Road 12-4 west of Highway 520
- Bridge File 74835 Replacement
 - o Replacement of a bridge sized culvert
- Bridge File 963 Regulatory Approvals
 - o Approvals for replacement of the Bridge
 - o Construction expected to begin in late 2026
- Grant applications have been submitted for numerous projects and will proceed if successful in gaining grant funding
 - o Airport tiedown area
 - o Airport lighting renewal

- o 2 Bridges
- o Roadway widening – Township Road 92
- o Roadway base/pave – Township Road 122
- Roadway Shoulder Pulls – Throughout the MD
 - o Numerous roads throughout the municipality received an overhaul with heavy maintenance to renew the roadway geometry

All in all, the municipality had another successful construction season with the help of internal forces, contractors, and consultants as required. We look forward to a busy and productive construction season again in 2026. If you have any questions regarding the projects please call our office at 403-625-3351.



Bridge File 74835 Replacement



Paving on Range Road 250

UNDERSTANDING WASHBOARD ON GRAVEL ROADS: Causes, Impacts, and Solutions

If you've ever driven down a gravel road and felt your vehicle bounce rhythmically, you've encountered washboarding—a common issue in rural areas. These rippled patterns on the road surface can make driving uncomfortable and even hazardous. Let's explore what causes washboard, why it matters, and how it can be managed.

What is Washboard?

Washboard refers to a series of evenly spaced ridges that form on gravel roads, resembling the surface of an old-fashioned washboard. These ridges typically appear during dry conditions and can range from a few millimeters to several centimeters deep.

Why Does Washboard Form?

Several factors contribute to washboard formation:

- **Vehicle Speed:** Driving too fast on loose gravel causes tires to bounce, displacing material and creating ripples.
- **Wheel Acceleration and Braking:** Frequent acceleration and braking disturb the gravel surface.
- **Dry Conditions:** Lack of moisture reduces cohesion between particles, making the surface more prone to displacement.
- **Traffic Volume:** Repeated vehicle passes amplify the effect, especially on lightly maintained roads.

Impacts on Drivers and Roads

- **Safety Risks:** Washboard reduces traction, increasing the risk of skidding.
- **Vehicle Wear:** Continuous vibration can damage suspension systems and tires.
- **Maintenance Costs:** Roads with severe washboard require frequent grading, increasing municipal expenses.

How to Prevent and Manage Washboard

1. Regular Grading

Graders smooth out ridges and redistribute gravel, but this is a temporary fix.

2. Moisture Control

Applying water or dust suppressants helps bind particles and reduce ripple formation.

3. Proper Gravel Mix

Using gravel with a good blend of fines and angular particles improves stability.

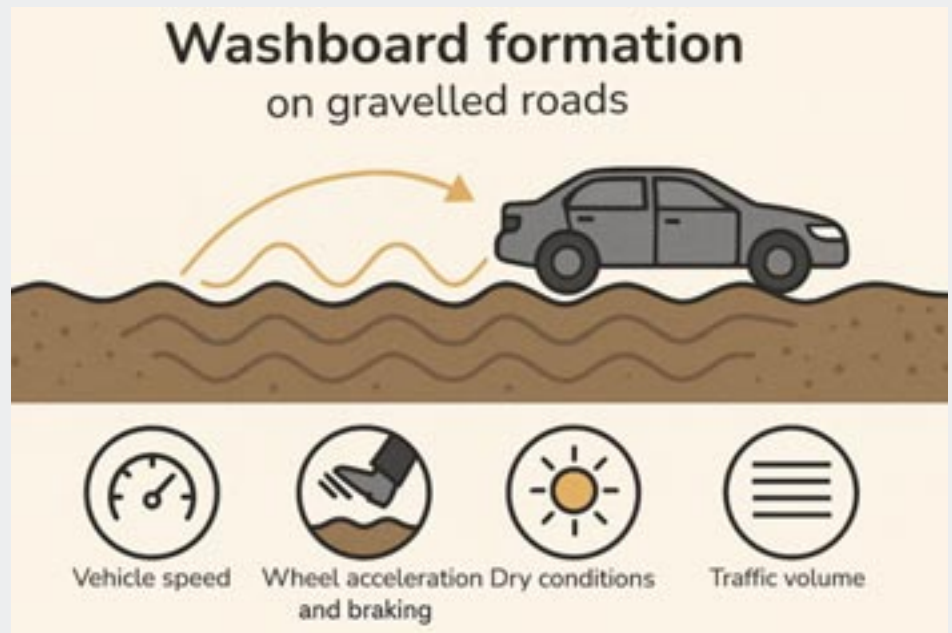
4. Speed Management

Posting and enforcing speed limits can significantly reduce washboard development.

Tips for Drivers

- Slow down on gravel roads to minimize ripple formation.
- Avoid sudden braking or acceleration.
- Keep tires properly inflated for better traction.

Bottom Line: Washboard is a persistent challenge on gravel roads, but with proper maintenance and responsible driving, its impact can be minimized. Understanding the causes helps communities and drivers work together for smoother, safer rural travel.



SAFE WINTER DRIVING ON GRAVEL ROADS:

Sharing the Road with Graders and Other Vehicles

Winter in the MD of Willow Creek No. 26 brings unique challenges for drivers. Gravel roads demand extra caution, especially when graders and other maintenance vehicles are out keeping routes safe and passable. These crews work tirelessly in cold, often unpredictable conditions to ensure residents, farmers, and emergency services can travel safely. By practicing patience and courtesy, we can all help ensure safer travel for everyone.

Key Safety Tips

- **Slow down on gravel roads** Reduced traction in winter means longer stopping distances. Loose gravel, snow, and ice can make roads slippery, so drive at a speed appropriate for conditions, not just the posted limit.
- **Give graders plenty of space** Road maintenance equipment is large, slow-moving, and often operating in the middle of the road. Stay well back and wait for a safe opportunity to pass. Remember that graders may need to back up or swing wide unexpectedly.
- **Watch for limited visibility** Graders and trucks can kick up snow, dust, or gravel, reducing visibility. Keep headlights on low beam, increase following distance, and be prepared for sudden changes in road conditions.
- **Be patient when passing** Only pass when you have a clear line of sight and enough room. Passing too closely or too quickly can endanger both you and the operator. Always signal early and make sure the grader operator is aware of your presence.
- **Stay alert for other vehicles** Farm equipment, trucks, and school buses also share these roads. Anticipate slower speeds, wider turns, and unexpected stops. Rural roads are community roads, expect the unexpected.
- **Prepare your vehicle** Winter tires, working lights, and a stocked emergency kit are essential for rural winter driving. Include items like blankets, water, a flashlight, and traction aids in case you get stuck.
- **Respect road crews** Operators are working to keep roads safe for everyone. A wave of thanks or a moment of patience goes a long way in building community spirit.



Why It Matters

Gravel roads in our district are vital links for residents, farmers, and emergency services. They connect families to schools, businesses to customers, and emergency responders to those in need. Safe driving practices not only protect you and your passengers but also safeguard the crews working tirelessly in harsh conditions.

Every winter, accidents on rural roads remind us how quickly conditions can change. By slowing down, staying alert, and giving graders and other vehicles the space they need, we can all contribute to safer winter travel in the MD of Willow Creek No. 26.

A Community Effort

Winter road safety is more than just an individual responsibility; it's a shared commitment. When drivers respect graders, yield to buses, and prepare their vehicles, they help create a safer environment for neighbors, friends, and family. Together, we can make this season one of patience, respect, and community care on our roads.



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

The new Municipal District **Land Use Bylaw No. 2025** was approved on September 24, 2025 and is now in full effect. The Land Use Bylaw No. 2025 may be viewed on the municipal website: www.mdwillowcreek.com Development permit approval is required when planning new construction, renovations, or modifications to building or land use. Development requiring a permit include dwellings, RTM dwellings, prefabricated dwellings, buildings or previously owned buildings, move on structures, additions, accessory buildings/structures, replacement or renovations of existing buildings, solar systems for residential/agriculture, home occupations, commercial / industrial operations, industrial renewables, signage or change in use. To determine whether or not your development requires a development permit approval, contact the Planning and Development department at (403) 625-3351, email: development@mdwillowcreek.com or visit our website www.mdwillowcreek.com All planning and development applications may be obtained from the Municipal District of Willow Creek website: www.mdwillowcreek.com. Contact the office to arrange for a meeting to discuss your future plans.

DEVELOPMENT PERMITS FOR PERMITTED OR DISCRETIONARY USES

Applications and all required information supporting the application can be emailed to development@mdwillowcreek.com. A Development Officer will review the application and will contact you once the application is deemed complete for processing or incomplete.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS (LAND USE BYLAW AMENDMENT, SUBDIVISION, ETC.)

Land Use Bylaw Amendment Applications and information supporting the application can be emailed to development@mdwillowcreek.com,

for review and completeness for processing. Subdivision applications may be obtained from Oldman River Regional Services Commission (ORRSC) website: www.orrsc.com or the Municipal District of Willow Creek website: www.mdwillowcreek.com Subdivision applications may be emailed to admin@orrsc.com or dropped off at the Municipal Districts office during office hours.

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

A Certificate of Compliance is confirmation from the Municipal District of Willow Creek that a development permit has been issued and the locations of structures on the property comply with the Land Use Bylaw. This is confirmed on a Real Property Report (RPR) prepared by an Alberta Land Surveyor. It does not regulate or enforce any building code requirements or serve as a confirmation of permit history on a property.

The policy 610-05 Certificate of Compliance Policy may be reviewed on the Municipal District website: www.mdwillowcreek.com Contact the Planning & Development office for information.

DEVELOPING PROPERTY

Before purchasing property, developing or undertaking any construction or placement of development in the MD, it is important to check the following:

- Verify the Land Use District (land use designation/zoning) of the parcel with the MD to ensure your project conforms to Land Use Bylaw No. 2025.
- Some subdivisions have additional restrictions and guidelines in the form of Restricted Covenants with further restrictions such as the size, design of buildings and the use of the lot. To determine if the lot is affected by a Restrictive Covenant, it is recommended that you obtain and research an up-to-date

copy of the title from Alberta Land Titles or any Alberta Registries office.

- Consider having the property surveyed by an Alberta Land Surveyor to ensure the property plan and property lines are accurate. Fences do not necessarily reflect property lines.
- Inquire about Development Permit requirements for your project.
- Inquire about required Safety Code permits. A Development Permit is not a Building Permit.
- Become aware of policies for existing and future land uses as established in the Municipal Development Plan.

FARM BUILDING EXEMPTION

Farm buildings shall meet and adhere to all the definitions and exemptions within the National Building Code (AE), Safety Codes Act, Agricultural Operations Practices Act and the Land Use Bylaw.

Contact the Planning and Development department to discuss farm building exemption and if your development qualifies by completing a Farm Building Exemption form.

STAY INFORMED

Check out the Municipal District website: www.mdwillowcreek.com to review the new Land Use Bylaw No. 2025, Notice of Municipal Planning Commission Meetings for development applications, Notice of Public Hearing Meetings for, MPC and Council Agendas, Notice of Decisions on development applications, online mapping, policies and more.

FOR MORE INFORMATION - CONTACT PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Cindy Chisholm,
Director of Planning & Development
Sheena Johnson, Development Officer
Emily Eremenko, Development Asst.
Jumai Robinson, Development Clerk

Office: 403-625-3351

Fax: 403-625-3886

development@mdwillowcreek.com

Service Request:

mdwillowcreek.com/servicerequest



Municipal Business Licences

Business being conducted with an office or shop or home in the municipality are required to obtain a Business Licence from the Municipal District of Willow Creek. These include home-based businesses, commercial and industrial operations. A development permit is required and upon an approval, a business licence will be issued. Businesses or persons that are not residences of the Municipality but do business within the municipality must obtain a non-residential Business Licence.

Business Licensing is mandated to promote safe and legitimate business premises and operations within the MD. The primary function of Planning & Development is to provide initial advice for new businesses, to process business licence applications with the context of the Municipal District's regulatory requirements and to maintain an up-to-date database on existing businesses in the municipality. The Municipal District is a member of the Alberta Southwest Regional Alliance and as such offers a Regional Business licence to businesses located in the Municipal District. A Regional Business Licence issued by the Municipal District is valid in 14 other communities that are members of the Alberta Southwest Regional Alliance.

Business Licence application forms may be obtained from the website: www.mdwillowcreek.com

Business licences are valid from January 1 to December 31 of each calendar year. Renewals are required to ensure your

business stays compliant for 2026. Business licence renewal payment is required by January 1st of each year to keep your business licence active. If payment is not received the business licence will be made inactive by end of January. Pursuant to Bylaw No. 1603 Business Licence, no person shall, within the Municipal District, carry on or operate any business, callings, trades, or occupations referred to in this bylaw unless a valid licence has been issued from the Municipal District in accordance with the provisions of this bylaw.

Contact the Municipal District office 403-625-3351 for further information.

BUSINESS LICENCE NOTICE

**BUSINESS LICENCE RENEWALS FOR 2026 ARE
DUE BY JANUARY 2, 2026.**

For options on submitting payment for your licence or you require further information, please call the MD office at 403-625-3351.

Business Licence Fees:

Resident - \$25.00

Regional + \$80.00

Non-Resident Business Licence - \$50.00

Website: www.mdwillowcreek.com

ALBERTA SAFETY CODES PERMITS

Safety Code permits are required to ensure that work on buildings will conform to construction and safety standards as accepted under the Safety Codes Act. It is the landowner's responsibility to comply with the Safety Codes Act for new construction, additions or renovations, and demolition of buildings by obtaining a Safety Codes permits.

The Municipal District is an accredited municipality and has contracted three accredited safety code agencies to provide services within the Municipality. The agencies provide knowledge, support, experience and qualified professionals for all safety code disciplines: Building, Electrical, Gas, Plumbing and Private Sewage Systems.



Superior Safety Codes Inc.

422 North Mayor Magrath Dr,
Lethbridge

403-320-0734

1-877-320-0734

info@superiorsafetycodes.com



Scan The QR Code & Visit
superiorsafetycodes.com
For More Information



Park Enterprises

#10, 491 W.T. Hill Blvd.
Lethbridge

403-329-3747

800-621-5440

contact@parkenterprises.ca



Scan The QR Code & Visit
parkinspections.com
For More Information



The Inspections Group Inc.

2825 18 Av N, Lethbridge

587-787-4143

1-888-852-3558

south@inspectionsgroup.com



Scan The QR Code & Visit
inspectionsgroup.com For
More Information

IMPORTANT NOTICE

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT NOTICE

Due to the rotating
Canada Post strike,
all Notices for Municipal
Planning Commission
meetings for development
applications, development
officer discretionary
applications and Public
Hearings for rezoning
applications will be posted
on the MD website.

mdwillowcreek.com

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

A Certificate of Compliance may be required by the purchaser of a property during a real estate transaction.

A Certificate of Compliance is a confirmation from the Municipal District of Willow Creek that a development permit has been issued and the locations of structures on a property comply with the Land Use Bylaw. This is confirmed on a Real Property Report (RPR) prepared by an Alberta land surveyor. It does not regulate or enforce any building code requirements or serve as a confirmation of permit history on a property.

A Real Property Report is a legal document that clearly illustrates the location of all significant visible improvements relative to all property boundary lines. Improvements include, but not limited to; buildings, decks, sheds, barns, corrals, retaining walls, fences, dugouts and reservoirs.

A Certificate of Compliance is usually required by lending agencies or lawyers in the sale of a property and/or mortgage approval to protect their clients' investments. Standard real estate purchase contracts often require the vendor to obtain a compliance certificate. A Certificate of Compliance is not a legislative requirement, but rather a service provided by M.D. of Willow Creek. The M.D. does not require you to get a compliance certificate and will not intervene in private transactions.

Sales, leases, and other agreements often require a Certificate of Compliance for the protection of interested parties. This is a private condition between the parties and may not always be required.

TIMELINE

In most cases when a property is sold a buyer will require a Certificate of Compliance.

In this case you will be required to obtain a Real Property Report from an Alberta Land Surveyor. Completion of a Real Property Report may take 4-6 weeks. Once a report is obtained it is provided to the M.D. Planning and Development Department for review. This process may take 2-4 weeks or more as a thorough review of the property is conducted to review whether the buildings and structures have been constructed in accordance with the land use bylaw, that the builder obtained safety code permits and if the uses on the property are consistent with the land use bylaw.

What types of issues have we seen related to property compliance certificates?

Over the years we have noted the following issues related to real property reports such as:

- Structures built within road allowance right of way
- Structures built across property lines
- Structures built on utility and pipeline right of ways
- Structures built without benefit of development permits
- Properties being used for uses not permitted in the land use district

When non-compliance issues are noted in the review of a property the M.D. will work collaboratively with the property owner to bring the property into compliance so that the purchaser and the purchaser's lender will have the assurance that the property is fully compliant with the land use bylaw.

However, if a property is not in compliance with the land use bylaw delays may occur as permits are applied for and reviewed, structures moved or removed, and other issues addressed.

How can you make the process move quicker?

Property owners can assist in making the compliance certificate process smoother by doing the following:

- Contact the M.D. before constructing a structure on your property to determine if a development permit and/or a safety code permit is required
- Ensure that all structures meet minimum setback requirements on development permits
- Ensure that any structures you construct are actually located on your property and are not located across property boundaries or on easements or right of ways.
- Plan Ahead!!! If you are planning on selling a property in the future contact an Alberta Land Surveyor to undertake a real property report and contact the M.D. well in advance of the planned listing of your property. The M.D. undertakes a thorough review of compliance related matters to ensure that future property owners are not purchasing a property that is out of compliance with the land use bylaw.
- If the property does not comply with the land use bylaw, the landowner/applicant will be notified and given the opportunity to resolve the issues.
- There may be situations where the applicant can apply for a development permit requesting a variance of minimum setback requirements, to allow the structure to remain as is. There are additional fees for a variance request. Be advised, there is no guarantee that a variance will be granted from the development authority.
- An applicant may be required to remove or relocate structures or buildings in order to meet minimum setback requirements. If this is the case, a Statutory of Declaration is required to affirm any changes that have been made to the property after the survey has been completed. Or, a revised real property report, by the original surveyor, may be submitted.



On behalf of the municipal council and staff, we hope your holiday season is filled with joy, laughter, and time spent with family and friends. As we celebrate, let's take a moment to reflect on the year and the blessings we share, and remember to lend a hand to those in our community who may need it most.

We look forward to a prosperous and exciting year ahead for all our residents

***Merry Christmas
and Happy New Year!***

**From the Council and Staff
of the M.D. of Willow Creek**

HOLIDAY HOURS

December 24: Closed

December 25: Closed

December 26: Closed

January 1 & 2: Closed