

Livestock Emergency Preparedness

The Municipal District of Spirit River No. 133 is part of the Central Peace Regional Emergency Management (CPREM) partnership, which includes Saddle Hills County, Birch Hills County, the Town of Spirit River, and the Village of Rycroft. This collaboration strengthens our ability to prepare for and respond to emergencies affecting residents, including those with livestock operations.

Agriculture is a cornerstone of our community. Many residents raise cattle, horses, and other large animals. Proactive planning helps protect your livestock, reduce economic losses, and support a coordinated municipal response during events such as wildfires, floods, winter storms, transportation incidents, or disease outbreaks.

Regional Risks in the Central Peace

Our area faces hazards typical of northern Alberta, including:

- **Wildfires** — especially during dry periods.
- **Flooding** — from spring runoff or heavy rains.
- **Extreme weather** — blizzards, high winds, and power outages.
- **Other incidents** — transportation accidents or biosecurity concerns.

The MD encourages all livestock producers to develop and maintain a personalized **Farm Animal Emergency Preparedness Plan** as part of the broader CPREM framework, informed by lessons from past events like the 2019 wildfires.

Shelter-in-Place vs. Evacuation

Sheltering livestock in place is often the preferred option when safe, as moving large animals can be stressful and logistically complex.

Ideal Shelter-in-Place Pasture Criteria:

- At least 1 acre (0.4 hectares) of open space per group of animals.
- Evenly spaced native trees with minimal underbrush.
- No overhead power lines or poles.
- No sources of blowing debris.
- No barbed wire fencing.
- Reliable, non-electric-dependent sources of feed and water.

Prepare for **at least 72 hours** of self-sufficiency. For wildfires, use heavily grazed or green pastures; for floods, move to higher ground. Open internal gates where safe to allow animal movement.

Evacuation becomes necessary when directed by authorities or when conditions make sheltering unsafe. Pre-arrange transport, handlers, evacuation sites, feed/water, and multiple routes.

Key Elements of Your Livestock Emergency Plan

1. **Identification & Records**
 - Permanent ID (ear tags, brands, tattoos, microchips).
 - Proof of ownership (photos with you, registration papers).

- Up-to-date inventory, health, and vaccination records.
- Temporary marking supplies for emergencies.
- 2. **Property Preparedness**
 - Map your property (buildings, utilities, access, hazards).
 - Secure loose items (trailers, tanks, troughs).
 - Store and label hazardous materials safely.
 - Reduce fire fuels and clear debris.
- 3. **Emergency Kit** (rotate supplies regularly)
 - Feed and water for 72+ hours (ideally 7–14 days).
 - First aid, halters, ropes, bolt cutters.
 - Flashlights, battery-powered radio, portable chargers.
 - Sanitation and handling tools.
- 4. **Communication & Contacts**
 - Family, neighbours, veterinarian, transporters.
 - Sign up for CPREM alerts via Voyent or local channels.
 - Share your plan with household and employees.
- 5. **Transportation**
 - Maintain trailers and vehicles.
 - Practice loading and have experienced handlers ready.

Municipal Support and Coordination

The MD of Spirit River No. 133 works closely with CPREM partners to coordinate resources, including potential Large Animal Reception Centres if evacuations are required. Producers can offer trailers, equipment, or space by contacting Agricultural Services.

Contact the Municipal District of Spirit River No. 133:

- **Main Office:** 4202 - 50 Street, Spirit River, AB T0H 3G0
- **Phone:** 780-864-3500
- **Email:** mdsr133@mdspiritriver.ab.ca
- **Agricultural Fieldman:** Simon Amting, 780-864-9358, samting@mdspiritriver.ab.ca
- **Office Hours:** Monday–Friday, 8:30 am–12:00 pm and 1:00 pm–4:30 pm

For **after-hours emergencies**, call 911. Visit cprem.ca for regional plans, alerts, and agriculture resources.

Additional Resources

- **CPREM Agriculture Page:** Shelter-in-place and evacuation checklists.
- **Alberta Livestock Emergency Guidelines** (via Alberta.ca).
- Local links available on the MD website: mdspiritriver.ab.ca

Next Steps

- Review and update your plan annually.
- Conduct dry runs with family or staff.
- Connect with neighbours for mutual support.
- Participate in community training opportunities.

Being prepared helps safeguard your livelihood and contributes to the resilience of our entire region. For site-specific advice, contact Agricultural Services or the Director of Emergency Management through the MD office.

This information is for guidance only. Always follow directions from emergency officials during an actual event.