

MUNICIPAL DISTRICT of

Spirit River

The Spirit of Our Soil: News, Nature, and Neighbours

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Farm Safety Day Teaches Lifelong Lessons for Local Youth

It was an incredible day of learning, hands-on experiences, and community collaboration during this year's Farm Safety Day, where students from across the Central Peace region gained valuable knowledge that could one day save a life.

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of organizer **Meagan Milkovich**, students from **Spirit River Regional Academy, Rycroft School, and Ste. Marie Catholic School** had the opportunity to participate in a variety of engaging and interactive safety demonstrations focused on life in rural communities.

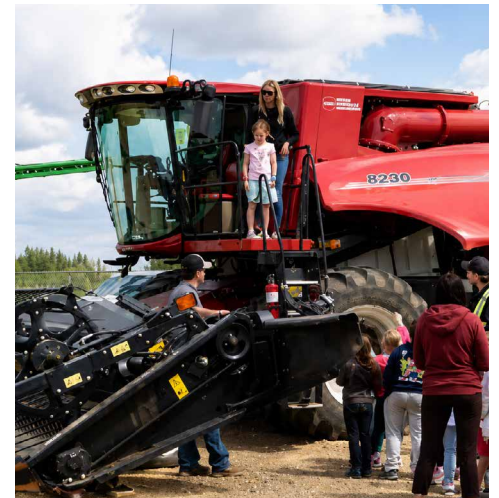
Farm Safety Day is much more than a field trip—it's an investment in the future of agriculture and the well-being of our young people. Farms and ranches are unique environments where homes and workplaces often exist side by side. Children growing up in rural areas are frequently exposed to large equipment, livestock, chemicals, grain bins, and utilities from an early age. Teaching them how to recognize hazards and make safe decisions is essential in preventing accidents and injuries.

According to farm safety organizations across Canada, many farm-related incidents are preventable through education, awareness, and proper safety practices. Programs like Farm Safety Day help instill these important lessons at a young age, encouraging youth to develop habits that will serve them throughout their lives—whether they choose careers in agriculture or simply live and work in rural communities.



The success of the day would not have been possible without the many sponsors, presenters, and volunteers who generously shared their time, equipment, and expertise. A sincere thank you goes out to:

- Prairie Coast Equipment – Daniel Jodoin
- Milkovich Bros Ltd. – Brayden Boychuk and Byron
- MD of Spirit River – Simon Amting
- Central Peace Gas Co-op – Ryan and Ryan
- Dave Ross Equipment
- Flaman – Danny Walyk
- Spirit River Fire Department – Brian Kroes
- ATCO Gas – Dan Viel
- Utility Safety Partners – Dan Thiessen
- ATCO – April and Brayden Dwernychuk
- Cargill – Travis Gemmel, Kathleen Parlee, and Maddie Chabot
- BASF – Dylan Lekstrom, Lily Gaumont, Kristin Prellwitz, and Nick de Medeiros
- Heartland Safety – Leanne, Echo, and Merv



Their presentations and demonstrations gave students a firsthand look at the importance of staying safe around farm equipment, utilities, emergency situations, and rural workplaces.

The knowledge shared during Farm Safety Day could make a lifelong difference. By working together to educate the next generation, our community is helping ensure that farms remain not only productive places to live and work, but safe ones as well.

Building Resilient Communities: The Power of Making Connections in Emergency Preparedness

In an era of increasing climate-related events, natural disasters, and everyday disruptions, strong community ties are one of the most effective tools for resilience. The Alberta government's guidance on making community connections emphasizes that preparedness isn't just about individual kits and plans—it's about fostering social networks that support prevention, response, and recovery. Communities formed by neighbours, coworkers, faith groups, sports teams, cultural connections, or shared interests can pool knowledge, skills, and resources to handle emergencies more effectively.

Why Community Connections Matter

Emergencies and disasters affect everyone, but professional emergency services may face delays in reaching affected areas. This places the initial responsibility on individuals, households, and local networks. Alberta encourages building self-reliance for at least 72 hours while highlighting the multiplier effect of collective action.

Key principle: "We all have a role to play." When people know each other's strengths, vulnerabilities, and resources beforehand, communities can respond faster, reduce harm, and recover more quickly. Research cited in the guidance shows that pre-established social connections lead to better post-disaster outcomes, including shorter recovery times and reduced overall impacts.

Everyday Opportunities to Build Connections

Building resilience doesn't require waiting for a crisis. Simple, ongoing actions can strengthen bonds:

- **Start conversations:** Use seasonal changes, current events, or anniversaries of past disasters to discuss preparedness. Share personal experiences, lessons learned, and ideas for improvement. Organize a "hazard walk" with neighbours to identify local risks and brainstorm mitigation steps.
- **Leverage scheduled events:** On Earth Day (April 22), simulate a power or water outage to practice conservation and identify gaps. During Cyber Month (October), focus on digital security updates.
- **Take practical steps:**
 - Watch and share educational videos on resilient communities.
 - Connect with local organizations for support services.
 - Seek funding for community-led initiatives.
 - Volunteer to expand your network.
 - Use resources like [211 Alberta](#) to find nearby services.
 - Host events or create virtual groups to build trust.
 - Lead by example—sharing one preparedness action can inspire others.

These activities turn everyday interactions into opportunities for mutual support and knowledge-sharing, especially valuable given local residents' historic knowledge of area hazards.

Learn Who Is in Your Community

Effective response relies on knowing your neighbours' capabilities and needs. Take inventory of:

- **Skills and expertise:** First aid certification, medical professionals, amateur radio operators, technical experts, psychologists, knowledge keepers, etc.
- **Resources and assets:** Generators, vehicles, special equipment, gardens, or stored water.
- **Support needs and offers:** Who might require extra assistance (e.g., older adults, people living alone, or those with disabilities) and who can provide help.
- **Buddy systems and networks:** Individuals willing to check on others, share information, or deliver supplies.
- **Community organizations:** Churches, community halls, NGOs, community watch groups, and humanitarian networks that can serve as hubs.

Store this information securely and accessibly. These connections create a living support system that functions year-round and activates during uncertainty.

During an Emergency: Rely on Your Network

Pre-built connections become invaluable when disaster strikes:

- **Check on others:** Prioritize wellness checks for vulnerable individuals. Ensure they have current information from authorities. Include pets in these plans.
- **Share resources and skills:** Use virtual groups for updates, support requests, and tips. Pool flashlights, PPE, first aid knowledge, or emotional support.
- **Help where safe:** Pack grab-and-go bags for evacuations, gather supplies for shelter-in-place, fuel vehicles, charge devices, and secure animals.

After an Emergency: Supporting Long-Term Recovery

Recovery can be prolonged and uneven. Continued connection aids healing:

- **Ongoing check-ins:** Provide regular emotional and practical support.
- **Share accurate information:** Direct people to trusted resources like 211 Alberta.
- **Reflect collectively:** Discuss what worked, what was missing, and future improvements to strengthen preparedness for the next event.

Broader Context in Alberta's Preparedness Framework

This guidance fits into a larger emergency preparedness strategy that includes preparing supplies, making personal and family plans, staying informed, and understanding local risks. By integrating community connections, Albertans create a holistic approach that enhances individual self-reliance with collective strength.

Strong communities are resilient communities. Start small—have a conversation today, note a neighbour's skills, or join a local group. These steps not only prepare you for the unexpected but also enrich daily life and foster a more supportive society overall. For more details, visit the official [Alberta.ca](#) resource on making community connections by scanning the QR code provided.



Rycroft Community Library News!

With your **FREE** membership at the Rycroft Community Library your adventure begins:

HAPPENING IN AUGUST!

Art Day

Every Tuesday from 2:00PM – 4:00PM

Science Day

Every Wednesday from 2:00PM – 4:00PM

Outside Play

Every Thursday from 2:00PM – 4:00PM

Inside Play

Every Friday from 2:00PM – 4:00PM

Please plan on attending with your child - as per library policy children under 11 require parental supervision.

Dates are subject to change. Please follow the library website or Facebook page for updates on programs.
[rycroftlibrary.ab.ca](#)

The Rycroft Community Library
WHERE WE ARE SO MUCH MORE THAN JUST A LIBRARY
Rycroft Community Library
4724 50th St Box 248 Rycroft, AB T0H 3A0



COUNCIL MOTIONS MDSR No. 133 Council June 24th 2026



The next Council meetings will be held on **August 12th & September 9th at 9:00am**, in Council Chambers located in the MD Office in Spirit River. Council meetings are open to the public and streamed live.

The following motions were made at our Council Meetings on May 27th & June 10th, 2026.

Thank you to Rycroft Ag Society

Moved by Councillor Bzowy to send a thank you letter to the Rycroft Agricultural Society expressing gratitude and commendation for coordinating and hosting the Empowering Minds events that occurred on June 16th and 17th, 2026 at the Rycroft Agricultural Society building.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

New Website Contract

Moved by Councillor Schoorlemmer per closed item 17. B., to enter into contract for upgrading MD of Spirit River No. 133 website with Catalis, as per their contract proposal.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Anyone wishing to review more of our Council Meeting minutes can visit the MD of Spirit River No. 133 website under **Council and Council Meeting Minutes**.

MDSR Council Welcomes RMA Representatives

On June 24, 2026, representatives from the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) met with the Council of the Municipal District of Spirit River No. 133 as part of the association's three-year municipal member visit program. These visits provide an opportunity for meaningful discussion about the opportunities and challenges facing rural municipalities.

Established in 1909, the Rural Municipalities of Alberta is the independent voice of Alberta's 69 counties and municipal districts. Its mission is to strengthen rural Alberta through effective advocacy and valued member services while supporting municipalities with insurance, risk management, procurement programs, group benefits, education, and networking opportunities. For more than a century, the RMA has worked to ensure rural communities have a strong voice in shaping provincial policies and programs.

The visit offered Council a valuable opportunity to connect one-on-one with provincial advocates in an informal setting, allowing for open conversations about local successes, ongoing challenges, and ways the RMA can continue to support both the MD of Spirit River and rural municipalities across Alberta.

Reeve Tony van Rootselaar discussed the Municipality's transition from a ward electoral system to open representation, which was implemented for the first time during the October 2025 municipal election. The discussion highlighted Council's experience with the change and its impact on local governance. "The move allowed the MD's residents to fully participate with all members of Council," expressed Reeve Tony van Rootselaar.

Economic Development Officer and Assistant CAO Monty Bremont also outlined concerns surrounding

the Strategic Transportation Infrastructure Program (STIP), explaining the difficulties many municipalities face in successfully accessing funding under the current application framework. The provincial grant program provides financial assistance for essential transportation infrastructure such as bridges, community airports, and resource roads. RMA representatives acknowledged these concerns and recognized that the association has an important role to play in advocating to the Province for improvements to the program.



Standing (from left): RMA District 4 Director Karen Rosvold, Reeve Tony van Rootselaar, Councillor Bernie Schoorlemmer

Seated (from left): Councillor Shelley Rozecki, RMA President Kara Westerlund,

Councillor Evelyn Bzowy

Missing: Deputy Reeve Dean Wark

Council also shared some of the broader challenges facing rural communities, including ongoing workforce shortages that affect the delivery of essential services. Discussion also focused on the need for key infrastructure to support growth and quality of life, including affordable housing and child care, despite existing investments such as the local seniors' lodge.

Visits such as these provide an important opportunity for municipalities and the RMA to strengthen relationships, exchange ideas, and ensure that the realities of rural Alberta are heard at the provincial level. By working together, local leaders and the RMA can continue advocating for practical solutions that help rural municipalities remain resilient, vibrant, and well-positioned for the future.

HAPPY VALLEY

— . Ag & Recreation Club . —

Our local facility offers quiet outdoor luxury paired with unmatched privacy and stunning views of local scenery. The Club hosts many

events including trail rides, gymkhanas, clinics, and kids holiday parties. The facility is available for drop-in use and private rentals. Weddings, family reunions, baby showers, birthday parties, everything works in Happy Valley! The facility features a picnic pavilion, fire pit area, playground, horseshoe pits, day use area and a camping area with horse corrals.

— ★ Important Dates to Remember ★ —



Danette DeBolt Clinic
August 1-2



Gymkhana
August 9



Alberta Endurance Riders Event
September 4-6



Fall Ride and Steak Supper
September 12

Join us for our next event or call for private bookings! For more info, contact us at:

Happyvalleyagrec@outlook.com

Happy Valley Ag and Rec

Connie Poss
(780) 864-0785

Transit bus is on the MOVE



MD Summer Bus Tours in August

Friday, August 7th – Dawson Creek

Dawson Creek boasts many attractions including the Dawson Creek Art Gallery, Walter Wright Pioneer Village and N.A.R. Station Museum. This trip has something for everyone!

Friday, August 14th – Peace River

Ride the Shaftesbury Ferry, and visit Riverfront Park, Twelve Foot Davis, Peace River Museum and Archives, Mackenzie Centre, Judah Hill, and Sagitawa Lookout.

Friday, August 21st – Dunvegan Provincial Park

Experience the Historical Dunvegan Provincial Park. Take a stroll along the paths that overlook the Peace River or down to the river. Visit the Interpretive Centre, play Mini Golf, enjoy the Market and look the Peace River or take one Gardens.

Friday, August 28th – Tumbler Ridge

Located in the Foothills of beautiful British Columbia, this gorgeous, popular tourist destination is a must see. The Geopark, Community Centre and Tumbler Ridge Museum are just a few sights passengers will enjoy.

Call the office at (780) 864-3500 to save a spot on the bus!

Scan for full 2026 summer bus tour schedule

Bus Fare: Age 16+ \$25.00; Under 16 \$5.00

Fare is due upon registration. Riders are responsible for all expenses over and above the bus fare.

Bus leaves the MD garage at 8:30AM to pick-up passengers at designated locations and will be returning between 3:30PM and 4:00PM.

Priority given to seniors and those who are mobility challenged.



Healthy Living in the Peace

Practical wellness tips for rural life in the Central Peace



Supporting health, resilience, and well-being in our rural communities.

Brain Health & Memory: How to Protect and Enhance Your Cognitive Vitality

Your brain is the command center of your body, controlling everything from basic functions to complex thoughts, emotions, and memories. Maintaining brain health is essential not just for preventing age-related decline but for living a sharper, more fulfilling life at any age. Memory, one of the brain's core functions, allows us to learn, form relationships, and navigate daily life. As we age, natural changes occur, but lifestyle choices can significantly influence how well our brains function.

Understanding Memory and Brain Health

Memory isn't a single process; it includes short-term (working) memory for immediate tasks, long-term memory for facts and experiences, and procedural memory for skills like riding a bike. The brain's hippocampus and prefrontal cortex play key roles, but the entire organ relies on strong blood flow, healthy neurons, reduced inflammation, and efficient waste clearance (like during deep sleep).

Factors that harm brain health include chronic stress, poor sleep, cardiovascular issues (high blood pressure, diabetes), smoking, excessive alcohol, and a sedentary lifestyle. The good news? Many of these are modifiable. Research shows that healthy

habits can slow cognitive decline and lower the risk of conditions like Alzheimer's and other dementias.

Science-Backed Ways to Boost Brain Health and Memory

1. Stay Physically Active

Regular exercise increases blood flow to the brain, promotes new neuron growth (neurogenesis), and reduces inflammation. Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity per week, plus strength training. Activities like brisk walking, swimming, or dancing are excellent. Studies link physical activity to sharper memory and lower dementia risk.

2. Keep Your Mind Engaged

Mental stimulation builds cognitive reserve. Challenge your brain with:

- Learning a new skill (language, instrument, or hobby)
- Puzzles, reading, or strategy games
- Trying new routes or recipes

Lifelong learning and education are associated with reduced cognitive decline.

3. Prioritize Social Connections

Social interaction combats loneliness and depression, both linked to memory issues. Spend time with friends and family, join clubs, or volunteer. Meaningful relationships stimulate multiple brain areas.

4. Eat a Brain-Healthy Diet

Nutrition directly impacts brain structure and function. Focus on the MIND diet

(a hybrid of Mediterranean and DASH diets), which emphasizes:

- **Leafy greens** (spinach, kale): Rich in vitamin K, lutein, and folate; associated with slower cognitive decline.
- **Fatty fish (salmon, sardines)**: Provide omega-3 fatty acids that support neuron membranes and reduce beta-amyloid plaques.
- **Berries (blueberries, strawberries)**: Flavonoids improve memory and delay decline.
- **Nuts, seeds, and olive oil**: Healthy fats and vitamin E for antioxidant protection.
- **Whole grains, beans, and poultry**: Steady energy and nutrients without excess saturated fats.

Limit red/processed meats, butter, sweets, and fried foods. Coffee and tea (in moderation) may also offer benefits through caffeine and antioxidants.

5. Get Quality Sleep

Sleep is when the brain consolidates memories and clears toxins. Aim for 7-9 hours per night. Poor sleep is linked to higher risks of cognitive impairment. Establish a routine, limit screens before bed, and address issues like sleep apnea.

6. Manage Stress, Blood Pressure, and Other Health Factors

Chronic stress elevates cortisol, which can shrink memory-related brain areas. Practices like meditation, yoga, or mindfulness help. Control cardiovascular

risk factors—high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol—through diet, exercise, and medication if needed. Quit smoking and limit alcohol.

7. Stay Organized and Use Tools

Practical strategies include routines, to-do lists, calendars, and placing everyday items in consistent spots. These reduce cognitive load and compensate for normal forgetfulness.

When to Seek Professional Help

Some memory changes are normal with aging (like occasionally forgetting names), but consult a doctor if you notice:

- Frequent confusion or getting lost in familiar places
- Trouble following conversations or instructions
- Significant personality changes
- Memory loss interfering with daily life

Early evaluation can identify treatable causes like vitamin deficiencies, medication side effects, or depression.

Conclusion: Start Today for a Sharper Tomorrow

Brain health is cumulative. Small, consistent habits—moving your body, feeding it well, challenging your mind, and nurturing relationships—compound over time. It's never too early or too late to invest in your cognitive future. By prioritizing these evidence-based strategies, you can enhance memory, mood, and overall quality of life for years to come.

CHIEF'S BRIEFS



This past month's emergencies have picked up a little and our members are meeting each new challenge head on.

As of my last briefing to you we have had 13 Medical First Responder calls, 1 Motor Vehicle Collision, 4 Fires, and 3 alarm calls mostly due to cooking issues. This brings our total emergency calls this year to 109 at the time this was written.

Our team is growing; we have had another three people join us in the last month. It's such an honour to meet these young people that want to serve and protect our community.

Our golf tournament was a success again this year, even though we had rain throughout the day's event, people were still in great spirits and had a good time. I believe this year we had the most golfers join the event with 92 attending. Food was great as always and we'd like to thank **Chinook Valley Golf Course and staff** for letting us hold our event there. I would also like to thank everyone for attending, and the following sponsors for making this event happen.

We would like to thank our **Platinum Sponsor** – Saddle Hills County; **Gold Sponsors** – Brogan Fire & Safety, Chilly's

Industrial Services Ltd., Clear Shot Industries, Platinum Chemical Solutions, Spirit River Flooring Ltd., Weaver Auctions, Wild Horizon Ventures Ltd. **Silver Sponsors**, Adama Ltd., Ananthan-Silva Professional Corporation, Canadian Natural, DFI, Div's Pharmacy, Fountain Tire, Ionson Mechanical Ltd., Municipal District of Spirit River #133, Pure Spirit Water, Town of Spirit River, and Yours to Brew; **Bronze Sponsors** – Dave Ross Equipment Ltd. Deken Oilfield Transport, Edge Auto Repair, Prestville Seeds, Rage Oilfield Services Inc., The Little Petal Co., and Village of Rycroft; and for **Donation Sponsorships** – Centex Go Market, Dika Industries Ltd., EFROC Industries Ltd., Esso/Husky Tags, Flaman Rentals – Fairview, Greggs Distributors LP, Hawrylenko Trucking, Heads up, IGA, J4 Performance, Lehar Services, Lighthouse Promotions, Mazy Enterprises, New Horizon Coop, Northern Balance Massage, Nutrien Ag Solutions, Prodigy Tech Group Inc., R360 Canada – Spirit River, RBC, Rexall Pharmacy, Ruskin Construction Ltd., Smitty's Family Restaurant, Spirit River Home Hardware, Superior Fire Control, Spirit River Hotel, Spoke Resources Ltd., The Barber Shop East of Maine, The Moose Crossing, Traveland RV Grande Prairie, WFR; as well as the Spirit of the Peace newsletter for advertising the event. Thank you all!

We had an amazing event, and we all want to send out our

congratulations to **Mr. Shawn Shura** for his hole-in-one on the back nine 16th hole with a **185-yard shot**. What a day to remember! Mr. Shura will be receiving his **hole-in-one cheque for \$5,000** shortly. Again, congratulations. The tournament will be taking place next year at the Chinook Valley Golf Course on July the 10th, 2027, so mark it in your calendars!

I know I mentioned this last month and the month before that, but again, I'd like to thank everyone who has had large burns over the winter months for good management and maintenance of those fires. With our high winds of late we haven't been called to any previous burns.

Again, another little quick reminder, as you pass emergency workers on the road, whether, fire, police, EMS, tow vehicles, or roadside workers, please slow down to 60kmh as we all have families we want to return to at the end of the incident. Always pull over and stop in both directions for emergency vehicles approaching. We do take licence plate numbers down and report them to RCMP to send a voucher in the mail. As mentioned last month, there is quite a large fine for failing to pull over and stop for approaching emergency vehicles with lights and sirens on. Just please be careful out there.

Thank you for your continued support.
Brian Kroes
Fire Chief, CFFRC

River Bend Jr. Cattlemen's Club Celebrates Another Successful Show & Sale

For members of the River Bend Jr. Cattlemen's Club (RBJCC), the annual show is about much more than ribbons and banners. It's the culmination of months of early mornings, hard work, dedication, and the countless hours spent caring for their cattle.

Founded in September 2024, the River Bend Jr. Cattlemen's Club was created to give local youth hands-on experience in the beef industry while developing life skills that extend far beyond the show ring. Now in its second full year, the club continues to grow as young cattle enthusiasts from across the area develop practical livestock skills, leadership, and lasting friendships. Members learn responsibility, integrity, leadership, animal husbandry, and the value of teamwork—all while fostering respect for agriculture and the rural communities they call home.

This year's show highlighted the remarkable achievements of the club's young exhibitors, whose commitment to their projects was evident throughout the competition.

Leading the way in the steer division was **Emily Jassman**, who earned Grand Champion Steer, while **Bree Kosowan** was named Reserve Champion. Kosowan also had an outstanding day in a few other classes, taking home Grand Champion Female, Grand Champion Two-Year-Old Cow-Calf Pair, Grand Champion Yearling Heifer, and Grand Champion 2026 Born Calf. Emily Jassman added Grand Champion Mature Cow-Calf Pair to her list of accomplishments, with **Jesse-Lee McClanaghan** earning Reserve Champion honours in the Two-Year-Old Cow-Calf Pair class.

The club's members also demonstrated the practical skills that are essential to livestock production. Awards were presented in judging, rate of gain, grooming, and showmanship—recognizing not only the quality of the animals but also the knowledge, preparation, and confidence of the exhibitors.

Junior Steer Confirmation Class



Emily Jassman Grand Champion Steer



Mature Cow-Calf Class



Among the many award recipients were **Walter Knobloch**, Champion Rate of Gain; Emily Jassman, Champion Senior Judging; Nate Jones, Champion Junior Judging; Bree Kosowan, Champion Senior Female Grooming, Champion Senior Female Showmanship, Champion Senior Steer Grooming, and Champion Senior Steer Showmanship; **Josh Knobloch**, Champion Junior Female Grooming and Champion Junior Female Showmanship; **Caleb Knobloch**, Champion Junior Steer Grooming; and **Ari Jones**, Champion Junior Steer Showmanship.

While the trophies celebrate individual achievement, the true success of the River Bend Jr. Cattlemen's Club lies in the experiences shared by its members. Since its inception, the club has provided opportunities for youth to attend agricultural events, learn from industry leaders, support charitable initiatives, and give back to their community—all while building friendships that will last a lifetime.

Congratulations to all of the River Bend Jr. Cattlemen's Club members on another successful year. Your dedication, sportsmanship, and enthusiasm continue to showcase the bright future of agriculture in our region.

MOUNTIE MINUTE

Summer is winding down! Don't waste a minute of it, or you'll regret it come January, and it's snow and ice as far as the eyes can see!

With the help of several concerned citizens and Members of the Spirit River Detachment, Kyle HUDSON was finally located and arrested for his many outstanding warrants. He had been evading police for some time, and continued to reoffend while at large. At the time of writing, he is still in custody, awaiting his next court appearance.

Spirit River RCMP warn public about rental property fraud schemes

We are reminding residents to remain vigilant when searching for rental housing following reports of scams involving false rental listings and impersonation of property owners or landlords. Our community may be small, but we're still not free from scumbags trying to take advantage of someone's desperation.

In one scenario, a renter responds to an online advertisement for a rental home and meets with an individual claiming to be the landlord. After viewing the property, the renter provides more than \$2,000 for rent and a damage deposit, signs an agreement, and receives a key with an agreed move-in date. After moving in, the renter later discovers another individual also claims to have legitimately rented the same property, revealing the arrangement to be fraudulent or improperly managed.

In another common variation, suspects advertise rental properties that appear in high demand and pressure prospective tenants to send deposits quickly, often without viewing the property. In some cases, individuals are asked to provide personal information or transfer funds electronically without any in-person meeting. Once payment or information is received, communication is typically cut off.

These scams often rely on urgency, limited-time pressure, and convincing advertisements to target individuals actively seeking housing.

Spirit River RCMP encourage prospective renters to take several steps to help protect themselves, including:

- Visiting the property in person and verifying the listing is legitimate and accurately represented.
- Conducting online research and reverse image searches to confirm photos are not reused from other listings.
- Confirming ownership through a builder or property records when applicable.
- Ensuring a written tenancy agreement is completed and signed by both parties, including full landlord details.
- Requesting identification from the landlord to confirm identity.
- Avoiding cash payments where possible and using traceable payment methods.
- Never sending money or personal financial information without proper verification of the rental arrangement.
- Seeking a second opinion from a trusted friend or family member before committing.

Members of the public are advised to be cautious if they encounter warning signs such as below-market rent, requests for deposits without a lease, landlords refusing in-person meetings, incomplete rental documentation, or pressure to send money quickly. These scoundrels are relentless and continue to come up with new ways to rip you off.

Anyone who believes that they have been involved in a rental scam are encouraged to report the incident to their local police service and the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre by calling 1-888-495-8501.

Ooof! Here's another scam: Recently there have been several reports of people getting a text message on their phones claiming to be from "Alberta Registry Services", and then goes on about having an unpaid ticket or parking fine. The victim will then receive more messages encouraging them to click the link and pay through there. Then, there are threats that there will be more fees if the person doesn't pay right away. Don't give these slimy crooks one red cent! If you think you have a fine that needs to be paid, you can pay them at the Registries, and if you received an actual ticket, there's also instructions on how and when to pay. Keep in mind that the Registries does not send notices or reminders through text message.

Again, I must remind everyone to slow down in construction zones. Speeding fines double in construction zones where workers are present and fine amounts range from \$252 to \$991. If a driver is caught traveling 50 km/h or more over the speed limit, it will require a mandatory court appearance and fines are at court discretion. Driver's license demerits range from two to six points. If you've ever stood on the side of the highway while traffic goes whizzing past, you know how unnerving that feeling is. Imagine working on the side of the road all day, such is the case for someone doing road construction for a living. The speed limits may feel extremely low, but they're low for a reason. You might have to stop suddenly while they move equipment. This helps keep the crews safe, as well as yourself. The person doing road repairs shouldn't have to worry about getting run over because you slept in, and now you're late. So, do your part and drive respectfully through construction zones so everyone can get home at the end of the day.

Many people are complaining lately about the service they receive when calling 911. The dispatcher takes too long on the call asking "stupid questions" or you had to wait on hold for too long before getting through. I'll break it down so that this can reduce some frustration:

First, they need to know what the emergency is so they can dispatch the right agency. Next, they need to know where to send people. Your landline or cell phone can help with that, but that takes time. It's best to know where you are, such as the actual address, or closest street intersection, or even a big visible landmark – write your address on your fridge, and make sure your kids know where to look for it if there's an emergency. They want to know who you are. It might seem annoying that they're asking for all YOUR details while you're trying to report your neighbour's house fire for example, but at that point, they're already dispatching someone to your emergency, so they aren't really wasting any time at all. Right from the very first step, they're writing everything down and sending the details to the appropriate locations.

As far as sitting on hold for too long, I can explain that too. 911 is for EMERGENCIES ONLY! Many people use 911 as a catch-all, requesting help NOT for emergencies, but for inconveniences. A few days ago, someone called 911 to ask our Members to bring some bolt cutters to cut a padlock as they didn't have their key. There wasn't a person or animal trapped inside, or anything close to an emergency. At the end, the caller stated, "Well, it was worth a shot."

Other common non-emergency 911 calls are for someone accidentally locking their keys in their car at a gas station, or wanting a ride somewhere. Again, NON-emergencies. An emergency is something urgent that just can't wait, such as an imminent risk to life, potential injury, risk to property or animals etc. Another common issue is accidental 911 calls. Some businesses with multiple phones and phone lines use the number 9 system where the number '9' must be pressed to get a line out. So, they press 9, and then fumbly double-tap the number 1 somehow. Then they panic and hang up the phone. Well, as soon as 911 is dialed, it gets the ball rolling, and the dispatchers send police. Since it's an unknown emergency, police need to be dispatched to rule out a mistake or a real emergency where someone hung up because it isn't safe for them to talk. Another issue is people letting their kids play with their phones. Even an old phone without a SIM card can still call 911. If you're going to let your kid play with an old phone, monitor them so that doesn't happen.

So, if you have an emergency, call 911. For everything else, call **310-RCMP**.

Having said all that, I hope everyone is having a good summer!

Corporal Don McCullough
RCMP Spirit River Detachment

Municipal District of
Spirit River No. 133

Monday–Friday:
8:30 am–12:00 pm, 1:00 pm–4:30 pm
Closed weekends & statutory holidays

Street Address: Mailing Address:
4202 50th Street Box 389
Spirit River, AB T0H 3G0
(780) 864-3500 | mdspiritriver.ab.ca



*Missing an
issue? Need
more info?
Grab your
phone and
take a look!*

Back to Basics: Practical Living in the Central Peace

Real-life ways to grow, save, and live more self-sufficiently.

Preserving the Harvest: Enjoying Summer's Bounty All Year Long

Summer brings an explosion of fresh produce—ripe tomatoes dripping with juice, sweet berries, crisp cucumbers, fragrant herbs, and overflowing baskets of zucchini and peaches. For many, the seasonal abundance is a joy, but it can also feel overwhelming. Preserving the harvest allows you to capture that peak flavour and nutrition, reduce food waste, save money, and bring a taste of summer to your table even in the depths of winter.

Whether you have a backyard garden, shop at farmers' markets, or take advantage of seasonal sales, learning basic preservation techniques opens up a world of homemade goodness. Here's a practical guide to get you started.

Why Preserve?

- **Flavour and Nutrition:** Produce frozen or canned at its peak often tastes better than off-season imports that travel thousands of miles.
- **Sustainability:** Less waste means fewer trips to the store and a smaller carbon footprint.
- **Self-Reliance and Creativity:** Stock your pantry with custom jams, pickles, sauces, and dried herbs tailored to your family's tastes.
- **Cost Savings:** Buying (or growing) in bulk during summer glut periods is significantly cheaper than purchasing out-of-season items later.

What to Preserve from Summer's Bounty

Produce	Best Methods	Ideas for Use
Tomatoes	Canning, freezing, drying	Sauces, salsa, sun-dried
Berries	Freezing, canning, drying	Jams, smoothies, baking
Cucumbers	Pickling	Snacks, sandwiches, relish
Zucchini/Summer Squash	Freezing, pickling, dehydrating	Breads, fritters, chips
Peaches/Stone Fruit	Canning, freezing, drying	Pies, cobblers, chutneys
Herbs	Drying, freezing in oil/ice	Seasonings, pesto, teas
Corn	Freezing, canning	Soups, casseroles, creamed corn

Getting Started: Practical Tips

1. **Start Small:** Don't tackle your entire garden at once. Preserve one or two items per session.
2. **Gather Equipment:** Basic canning kit (jar lifter, funnel, bubble remover), freezer bags, dehydrator (optional but helpful), and a large stockpot.
3. **Harvest or Buy at Peak:** Slightly underripe for canning; fully ripe for freezing and jams.
4. **Organize Your Pantry:** Use clear jars, labels, and FIFO (first in, first out) rotation.
5. **Experiment Safely:** Follow tested recipes for canning. For freezing and drying, creativity is more forgiving.
6. **Involve the Family:** Kids love picking berries, stirring jam, or packing freezer bags. It creates great memories and teaches valuable skills.

Enjoying Your Preserved Bounty

Pull out summer tomato sauce for cozy winter pasta nights. Top pancakes with homemade berry jam. Add pickled vegetables to charcuterie boards or sandwiches. Dried herbs transform ordinary meals. The satisfaction of opening a jar you preserved months earlier is hard to beat. Preserving isn't just about food—it's about connecting with seasons, honoring tradition, and practicing resourcefulness. Whether you're a seasoned canner or a curious beginner, this summer is the perfect time to dive in. Your future self (and your taste buds) will thank you.

Essential Preservation Methods

Freezing – The Easiest Starting Point

Freezing is beginner-friendly and requires minimal equipment. Most fruits and vegetables freeze well and retain good texture and nutrition.

Tips for Success:

- Blanch vegetables (briefly boil then shock in ice water) to stop enzyme activity and preserve color and nutrients.
- Flash-freeze berries, sliced peaches, or chopped herbs on a tray before transferring to bags or containers to prevent clumping.
- Use freezer-safe bags or containers, removing as much air as possible. Label with contents and date—most items keep 8–12 months at 0°F (-18°C).
- **Popular choices:** Berries for smoothies and baking, corn kernels, chopped bell peppers, pesto (with herbs), and tomato sauce.

Quick Idea: Freeze cherry tomatoes whole on a tray, then bag them for roasting straight from the freezer in winter soups or pasta.

Canning – For Shelf-Stable Treasures

Water-bath canning works for high-acid foods (fruits, pickles, jams, tomatoes). Pressure canning is needed for low-acid vegetables and meats for safety.

Safety First: Always follow tested recipes from reliable sources like the National Center for Home Food Preservation. Use proper jars, lids, and processing times based on your altitude.

Favorites to Can:

- Strawberry or peach jam
- Salsa or crushed tomatoes
- Dill pickles or pickled green beans
- Applesauce or pie fillings

Canned goods can last 1–2 years or more when stored in a cool, dark place.

Drying and Dehydrating

Removing moisture inhibits bacterial growth. Use a food dehydrator, oven on low heat, or even sun-drying in hot climates. Some great options are:

- Herbs (basil, oregano, thyme) – dry quickly and store in airtight jars.
- Fruit leathers from berries or apples.
- Tomato slices or cherry halves for "sun-dried" style.
- Zucchini or apple chips for snacks.

Dried foods are lightweight, compact, and versatile for trail mixes, teas, or rehydrating in soups and stews.

Pickling and Fermenting

These methods add tangy brightness and probiotic benefits (especially with fermentation).

- **Quick Pickles:** Refrigerator pickles (cucumbers, onions, beets) take minutes and last weeks in the fridge.
- **Traditional Pickles:** Use vinegar brine and water-bath canning for shelf stability.
- **Fermentation:** Sauerkraut, kimchi-style veggies, or lacto-fermented pickles develop complex flavors naturally with salt and time.

Jams, Jellies, Sauces, and Butters

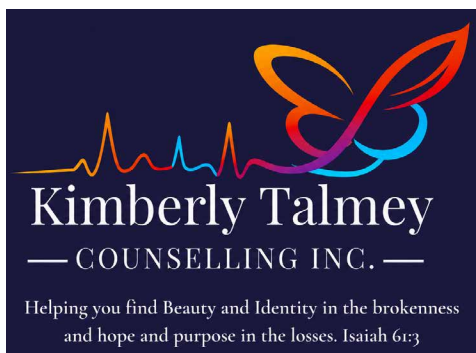
Low- or no-sugar recipes let the natural sweetness shine. Pectin helps set jams, but many fruits (apples, grapes) have enough natural pectin.

Stop by the library to take your turn.
Every lap around the board gets a PRIZE!
LIBRARY-OPOLY



Rycroft Community Library
4724 50th Street Box 248
Rycroft, AB T0H 3A0
Phone: (780) 765-3973





**Contact (780) 814-1224
or counselling@kimberlytalmey.ca**

Interview with Kimberly Talmey Counsellor with Kimberly Talmey Counselling Inc.

Q: Can you share a bit about your own journey and what led you to become a mental health counsellor?

A: I went through a very difficult time in my 30s and 40s that needed counselling help and I couldn't find the type of childhood trauma therapist I needed locally. I also wanted someone of faith to help me grow and heal, so I had to travel to Edmonton to find the right person. When I went to school for my BA in Christian Counselling, I also knew I had to open an office to help our local rural community.

Q: What formal training, certifications, or professional experiences do you have in mental health support, and how have they shaped your practice?

A: I am a licensed Master Practitioner in Clinical Counselling (MPCC), formerly known as Registered Professional Counsellor (RPC), with the Canadian Professional Counsellors Association

(CPCA), and a Counselling Therapist (CT) with the Association of Counselling Therapists of Alberta (ACTA). I have a Master's level of clinical and practical skills that accompany my own hours of being in counselling.

I have healed and grown through so many childhood traumatic events that along with formal education gives me a unique opportunity to sit with others through their own stories.

This journey has taught me how to hold space for other's pain and suffering and help guide their experience into a purposefully authentic life.

Q: What are your core values, and how do they guide the way you work with clients experiencing mental health issues?

A: #1 is (biblical) truth, not emotional truth; #2 is authenticity.

Being authentic and connected in relationships;

#3 is believing. You can borrow my belief in you until you can start to believe in yourself!

I have learned that emotions are to sign posts to healing but not necessarily to truth. Our emotions will tell a story but it might not be the authentic way that we need to heal.

I hold a 5-fold perspective on healing: Biological (body), Psychological (mind), Emotional (feelings), Social (relationships), and Spiritual (faith). *However, you do not need to be a Christian or hold faith to come and see me.*

Q: How would you describe your approach or philosophy to supporting people through a mental health crisis? What does a typical process look like with you?

A: Supportive, non-judgmental, openness, championing, and relational. It's very much like meeting with a trusted friend

over coffee. We build a relationship and trust as the process unfolds. We set goals, we talk and laugh. Sometimes we cry and accept the facts of suffering working towards the goals. No two sessions look the same because we are dynamic and diverse. But there are stable components to each session. Sometimes there are educational pieces, sometimes silence (I know that uncomfortable dreaded silence), and sometimes there are great big uh huh moments when it comes together and healing happens.

That's my why! That victory over the brokenness that becomes life of authentic truth! There is no other feeling like it in the world when someone experiences emotional freedom in the suffering.

Q: Can you share an example of how you've helped someone navigate a particularly challenging experience?

A: In grief work, I guide people through the grieving process helping where they're stuck or feeling alone and abandoned.

In mental health work, such as suicidal thoughts, I help people find other solutions for their pain and suffering. When they are beyond coping, we work towards breaking through the overwhelming pain to smaller manageable pieces.

Support, safety, and someone to unburden too has a profound impact on one's emotional stability.

With general Counselling, such as just not happy, career issues, or marriage struggles, we learn new skills, learn how to do direct communication, problem solve, address the stress and stressor, work through anxiety, and develop a happier sense of self-esteem.

Of course, I am just scratching the surface but I hope this give readers a general sense of the help I can provide.

2026 PROPERTY TAXES

due September 15, 2026



Tax Notices for the 2026 Taxation Year were mailed out on **June 22, 2026**, and are payable **on or before September 15, 2026**. All tax notices are deemed to have been received seven (7) days after mailing within Alberta and fourteen (14) days outside of the province.

If you do not receive your notice, please contact the MD of Spirit River Administration Office at (780) 864-3500

Residents are welcome to pay their taxes at the MD office where cash, cheque, or debit card will be accepted to avoid any potential issues or delays. However, the following payment methods are also available:

- **Option Pay**
- **Direct Deposit at ATB**
- **E-transfer to eftpayments@mdspiritrivier.ab.ca**

**** Credit cards are not accepted for tax payments.**