

County News



The 2013 Year in Review

Looking back over 2013 Vulcan County Council achieved great things. Regionalizing of three district Fire Departments will see the initialization of uniform and needs-based training throughout the region and standardized equipment, starting with the Carmangay Fire Department that took delivery of a brand new Fire Apparatus; sourced through collaboration with our neighbours Willow Creek and using some of our grant funding allocation. The Fire Training facility that was also funded using grant funding is now operational and additional training props will be added over the next two years, this facility will play a major role in training our outstanding fire department volunteers from all six fire districts, keeping them and all our communities safe.

Valuable lessons were learned from the flooding that occurred in June 2013, with approximately 35 properties damaged in the northwest end of Vulcan County and a number of agriculture and irrigation facilities damaged along the river shores. As part of improving communications we have initiated a disaster contact system, and are currently in the process of having a new communications tower erected which will hopefully head off some of the confusion due to intermittent communications contact and service in some areas. If you have not provided emergency contact information to the County office, please do so by calling 403-485-2241 and we can enter your information in our emergency contact system.

A multi-jurisdictional development planning project has got off the ground. When the final plan is in place resources that are shared across rural boundaries, such as water, and planning and development that takes place across boundaries will be communicated and protected.

The Blackspring Ridge Wind Farm project is well underway, increasing our visibility worldwide as it will be one of the largest wind farms in Canada, providing employment, landowner lease income and increasing our property tax base, therefore improving the sustainability of our community.

As part of our commitment to protecting the past, Vulcan County is the lead in a Municipal Heritage Partnership Project, the end results of which we will see later this spring with policies and bylaws in place regulating the preservation of our municipal resources. 2013 also saw the unveiling of a permanent marker at Taylor cemetery on the east side of the County, and the wall sculpture and gardens remembering the historical Nine in a Line Row of Elevators, this sculpture is located on the east facing wall of the Nine-in-a-Line building across the road from the County Administration Building.

We continue to lobby the Province to reinstate bridge repair funding that was cut last year. Bridges are a major part and cost of the transportation network in our County and the loss of this grant funding will have major impacts on our ability to fund other initiatives and in keeping our tax rates affordable.

The change in electoral divisions from 9 down to 7 and the 2013 election, which resulted in four new members on our seven member Council, has meant that our new Councillors have been on a very steep learning curve. It is encouraging to see the enthusiasm around the Council table and we are well on track for great things for 2014 and beyond.

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Development

For up-to-date information on proposed and approved developments, as well as upcoming public hearings check out the "New Developments" page on Vulcan County's website, under the Development Department.



Photo Credit: Sean Currie

A quick reminder, if you plan to use an aerial applicator this coming Spring or Summer, be sure to notify them of any new towers, wind turbines or transmission lines in your area. A quick reminder to your local spray pilot can help avoid a serious accident.

Register to get this newsletter electronically

As the cost of sending this publication via mail grows; our desire to find ways to make it more cost effective increases. Plus you get to save a tree!

E-mail news@vulcancounty.ab.ca if you would like to receive this publication via e-mail.

You can 'unsubscribe' at any time.

Spring Operations 2014

The 2014 construction season will see the Vulcan County Road Construction Department undertake 10 miles of road construction. Weather permitting the road construction season will be 29 weeks beginning April 20th and ending November 7th. Range Road 234 south of Hwy 542 is the first project for 2014. This two mile section of road has been



identified for a rebuild due to poor sight-lines and poor road base material in some sections. The rebuild will also improve drainage throughout the two miles of construction. Total construction time is projected at 5 weeks barring any weather related issues.

Range Road 242 also south of HWY 542 will be the second project of

Snow Removal

When clearing your own driveway please ensure that snow from your yards is pushed from the roadway to a spot in your yard or field. Pushing snow into roads causes problems for grader operators creating a place for snow to drift across the road and removes gravel from the roads. In the event of a snowstorm the grader operators first responsibility is to open roads for which an emergency request has been made, next on the list are school bus routes, then continue clearing snow from the other County roads.

If you require your driveway cleared by the road maintenance crew you

2014. This rebuild will address sight-line and drainage issues while bringing the road grade to a minimum of 1.3m above the ditch bottom. The standard height of 1.3m above ditch bottom will also help reduce drifting issues seen on this road in the winter months. Weather permitting total construction time is slated at 5 weeks. The third project of the season is Range Road 181 on the eastern side of Vulcan County. This four mile build starts at Township Road 170 and moves south to Township Road 162. This project will address drainage issues and severe soft spots while bringing the road top to the standard 8.5m wide. This road rebuild that has an anticipated construction time of 13 weeks.

The final build of the season is a two mile rebuild of Range Road 232 north of Hwy 529. This project will address drainage/soft spot issues while bringing the road to a standard 8.5m in width and a minimum of 1.3m above ditch bottom. Anticipated construction time is 6 weeks. Another annual project that is fast approaching is the **Dust Abatement Program**. Once again Vulcan County will be using Chlorides

for dust control. Magnesium and Calcium Chloride options are being reviewed. Residences that are



interested in having dust control must contact Shellah Kingsmith, Public Works Administrative Assistant at (403) 485-3124, expressing where the dust abatement is to be applied and how many feet. **Deadline for submission of interest is March 15th, 2014.** Once all submissions have been received the total volume of product will be calculated, with a request for quotes being sent out to our suppliers. This process allows for us to receive the best pricing. Once pricing has been received you will be contacted with actual costing for your dust abatement. 2013 pricing for Magnesium Chloride was \$1.21 per liner foot.

must obtain a 'Driveway Maintenance Agreement' from the County. The agreement is free and is good for 2 years. The rate for plowing snow or blading driveways shall be on the following basis. The first half hour is \$75.00, after the first half hour the rate is \$220.00 per hour. These are current Alberta Road Builders and Heavy Construction Equipment rates. Motorists are asked to use caution when approaching road maintenance equipment as the operators' visibility is restricted.

Please contact the County at 403-485-2241 for further information.



Fire/Burn permits

Fire Permits are required within the boundaries of Vulcan County, with the exception of those areas designated as a Forest and Prairie Protection area.

A Fire Permit is required for all outdoor fires, except where:

- the fire is an attended fire in an approved fire receptacle in a designated campground or totally confined within (burn barrel) or container that has the draft and smoke vents covered with heavy gauge metal screen an "acceptable fire pit"
- the fire is a flare stack used in the petroleum industry;
- the fire has been set by the fire service for the purpose of training firefighters or for hazard reduction;
- a fire that is set for the purpose of cooking or obtaining warmth;
- burning by the Fire Department or by Alberta Environmental Protection for the purpose of fire hazard abatement;
- burning of a Smudge Fire.

What Are We Permitted to Burn?

The Alberta Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act regulate what is and isn't permitted to be burnt outside in permitted fires. The Act sets out 2 categories:

Burnable Debris means all inflammable waste other than Prohibited Debris and includes but is not limited to:

- Straw and stubble, leaves and tree pruning;
- Used power, telegraph and telephone poles that do not contain wood preservatives;
- Wooden materials from the construction or demolition of buildings which do not contain wood preservatives;
- Solid waste from post and hole operations that does not contain wood preservatives;

Prohibited Debris means any matter that, when burned, may result in the release to the atmosphere of dense smoke, offensive odors or toxic substances and includes but is not

limited to:

- Animal manure, pathological waste;
- Non-wooden material or preserved wood
- Waste material from building or construction sites, excluding wooden materials that do not contain wood preservatives;
- Combustible material in automobile bodies;
- Tires, rubber or plastic, or anything containing or coated with rubber or plastic or similar substances, except rubber or plastic attached to shredded scrap steel, used oil.

Fire Permits issued are valid for such period of time as deemed appropriate to the Fire Guardian. To obtain a permit, you must call Reception (Fire Guardian) at the Vulcan County Administration Office (403) 485-2241. You can request a permit (but not obtain a permit) on Vulcan County's website: www.vulcancounty.ab.ca.

Each application for a Fire Permit must contain the following information:

- the name and address of the applicant;
- the name and address of the owner of the property upon which the applicant proposes to set a fire;
- the legal description of the land on which the applicant proposes to set a fire;
- the type and description of material which the applicant proposes to burn;
- the period of time the fire permit is valid;
- the signature of the applicant;
- a fire incident number as issued at the time the named applicant reports their controlled burn to the Fire Dispatch Centre;
- the name and signature of the Fire Guardian issuing the Fire Permit.

This information is being collected in pursuant to Section 33 of the FOIP Act.

Permit Notifications and Communications

To obtain a fully executed fire permit, the permit holder must sign the permit and return it to the Fire Guardian by e-mail or fax. Once the Fire Guardian has signed the permit, it is a fully executed permit. The permit holder shall have a copy of the burning permit at the fire location and shall be able to produce it upon request by a fire official acting in the performance of his or her duties. Each morning of the burn, the landowner/permit holder must contact Foothills Dispatch at 1-888-808-3722 to report the burn. This helps reduce emergency responses to a permitted controlled fire. All permit holders must have a cell phone or other means of communication on site in order to report any emergency situation that may arise. Fires cannot be left unattended. No fire shall commence if wind conditions pose a risk, creating an uncontrolled spread of the fire.



Smoke Management

Smoke signs must be placed on numbered highways when a permitted burn will be within .5/half a mile from highway. Consideration should be given to wind and weather conditions and signs installed up to a mile if visibility may cause a safety problem on the roadway. Call Volker Stevin at (403) 571-5800 for signage to be installed.

Penalties

All landowners must follow the provisions/guidelines of the fire permit or be found in non-compliance of Vulcan County Fire Services Bylaw 2013-12 resulting in a fine being issued. Where an emergency or a potential emergency exists, and a Fire Ban has been imposed, the Regional Fire Chief, the District Fire Chief, the Fire Guardian shall suspend all fire permits issued within the County for such a period of time and on such conditions as may be determined.

Agricultural Services

Twin Valley Campground

The campground will be opening on May 31st and closing on September 30th. We are currently looking to renew our contractor position for this year and should have everything in place for opening day. Agricultural Services will also be planting some more mature trees in the campsite area this spring and will continue to

add more trees each year. For more information on the campsite please call 403-485-3103.

Shelter-Belt Trees

We are no longer providing the tree shelter-belt service. Agriculture Canada has closed the tree nursery site in Indian Head Saskatchewan and is no longer providing this service to the Prairie Provinces. If you wish to

purchase shelter-belt trees feel free to contact Agricultural Services at 403-485-3103, we will provide you with a list of companies willing to sell seedlings for this spring.



Economic Development News

2013 was a busy time for the communities located within Vulcan County. The Town of Vulcan is in the midst of a strong economic upswing, with residential vacancy rates as low as <1%, and six new store fronts having opened up. The Blackspring Ridge wind turbine project is also moving along, and has provided a strong economic benefit both to the County and to the Village of Carmangay. Foundations for all 166 turbines have been poured. When completed, the project will produce 300 MW of power.

The summer floods unfortunately caused damage within the County to infrastructure and private property, and forced the shutdown of the bridge on highway 547 crossing the Bow River just north of Arrowwood into Siksika Nation. This has caused an economic disruption for Arrowwood since travellers must go out of their way and bypass the Village. VBDS was a part of the Economic Disaster Recovery Project

funded in part by the Province of Alberta, and we are eager to see the bridge repaired soon.

The Vulcan Opportunity Development Cooperative Supports Creative Community-based Economic Development.

The Vulcan Opportunity Development Cooperative, being founded by a group of involved community leaders via the Vulcan Business Development Society through a grant from the Alberta Community and Cooperative Association, will be incorporated by the end of January. The VODC exists to leverage local wealth in order to support business development, including expansion and succession, in the Vulcan and County area. The VODC's goal is to build a strong community. Investment shares will be sold for \$5000 each, with membership shares being sold for \$500.

Investment share values are RRSP applicable. The pooling of investment share capital allows the cooperative to invest into business ventures that the

community would like to see happen, without having to wait on the whims of outside investors. The VODC represents a creative investment mechanism to support rural economic development.

The VBDS continues to work in partnership with Lethbridge College to provide a Vulcan County campus offering the following programs: *Small Business Management & Entrepreneurship; Unit Clerk; Welding; and Master Electrician.*

The VBDS would also like to remind residents about some of our services.

1) Contact the VBDS to promote your events on the VBDS website and Facebook page for free; 2) The VBDS also operates a business incubation centre for start-up businesses with all the amenities of a modern, high-tech office. Offices can be rented for just \$300 per month.

Please contact us at 403-485-4100 or reception@vulcanbusiness.ca for further information on any of these initiatives.

Maps!

Coming soon.

We will soon be reintroducing the map room to our website. The following is a list of things you'll be able to download:

- County Map
- Electoral Division Maps
- Township Maps
- Hamlets and Subdivision Maps

- Land Use Zone Map
- School Divisions Map
- Fire Districts Map
- Points of Interest Map
- Township and Range Road Grid Numbering Scheme
- Legal Land Description Numbering Scheme
- Rural Addressing Pamphlet

These will be updated on a yearly basis where applicable. Please note due to regulations none of these maps include ownership information

