Summer Village of Birch Cove

**MAY 2025 ANNUAL NEWLETTER**

Box 8 Alberta Beach, AB T0E 0A0

Office Location: 2317 Township Road 545 Lac Ste. Anne County, AB

780-967-0271

[cao@birchcove.ca](mailto:reception@wildwillowenterprises.com)

*Hello Birch Cove!*

On behalf of Council, I wish everyone a safe and enjoyable season in 2025. Council is working with Wendy Wildman, Chief Administrative Officer and her team on finalizing a new Land Use Bylaw which will be presented at the Town Hall on Saturday, May 24, 2025, at the Cook House.  
  
Community safety and being prepared for emergencies is always a priority. Please remain vigilant in monitoring your fires and keep extinguishers accessible as conditions are dry this spring. We thank Renee for her continued leadership and personal time invested to implement the emergency management program. We also thank Chrissy for volunteering to partner with Renee in this role.  
  
We extend our appreciation to Alex McKendry and Jan Tschudin for continuing as Public Works employees and we thank Rick Greenling and Ernie Holmberg for their ongoing help with maintenance.  
  
Bruce has developed a schedule for all those interested in continuing to remove debris along the shoreline while protecting the environment (schedule page 7). Many thanks to everyone for the ongoing efforts to clean up the beach area for long term benefits.  
  
The Summer Village of Birch Cove has a strong spirit of volunteerism, watching out for our neighbours and working together to keep our community safe and enjoyable.  
  
We invite your suggestions, ideas and feedback as it takes a collaborative effort to make Birch Cove the best community possible.

A house with a large building in the middle of a grassy area

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

Sincerely,

**Summer Village Town Hall**

The Summer Village Town Hall will take place Saturday, May 24, 2025 at the Birch Cove Cook House at 10:00 am.

Mayor

*Dean Preston*

Emergency Contact Information

Fire Emergency 911

Ambulance Emergency 911

RCMP Emergency 911

RCMP Barrhead Detachment Emergency 780-674-2696

RCMP Barrhead Detachment Non-Emergency 780-674-4848

**PROPERTY TAXES ARE DUE MONDAY, JUNE 30, 2025**

Taxes are due Monday, June 30, 2025. An 18% late penalty will be added on all current unpaid taxes remaining unpaid after June 30, 2025. An additional18% penalty shall be added on all outstanding taxes and related costs that remain unpaid December 31, 2025.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

* Mail a cheque to Summer Village of Birch Cove, Box 8, Alberta Beach, AB T0E 0A0
* E-transfer to [cao@birchcove.ca](mailto:cao@birchcove.ca) (no password is required, *indicate tax roll number in memo*)
* Drop off in person cheque or cash to our office at 2317 TWP RD 545 Lac Ste. Anne County

Our office hours are Monday through Thursday from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm (closed on holidays)

**ASSESSMENT AND TAXATION – *Where will your 2025 municipal tax dollars go*?**

What is Property Assessment?

Each year, the Assessor will inspect certain properties within the Municipality. The Assessment is the estimated market value of your property from the prior year, which is used to calculate your property taxes for the current year. The market determines the value of your property; that value is the basis for the assessment which is then used to calculate your property taxes. Assessors are bound by strict guidelines for assessment and will be ensuring everything possible is taken into consideration.

**Property Assessment services are contracted to Municipal Assessment Services.**

***What if I disagree with my assessment?***

You are encouraged to talk to an assessor if you have concerns about the assessment as it relates to you property value. Remember, you can only make a complaint against your assessed value, not your tax dollars or rates, and you **must** have grounds for your complaint. Please also keep in mind that the assessor does not set the tax rates in the municipality, and therefore, cannot answer questions about property taxation, nor can they answer questions about the amount of services you receive. New legislation allows you 60 days from the date of your combined tax and assessment notice to make an assessment complaint. **The assessment complaint deadline is Monday, July 21, 2025.** There is a fee of $50.00 that **must** accompany a completed assessment complaint form, which is available on the Summer Village website, www.birchcove.ca, or by contacting the office at 780-967-0271. Prior to completing the assessment complaint form, please contact the Assessor to first discuss the matter of your assessment (not your tax dollars), Travis Horne 780-939-3310.

**Council Meetings**

If you have any suggestions or matters you would like addressed by Council, please contact the Administrator at 780-967-0271, to be placed on the Council Agenda. Meetings are posted on the website and can be attended in person or via Zoom. Watch the website for the link.

Summer Village Council

Mayor………. ….Dean Preston

Deputy-Mayor Dory Sample

Councillor Steven Tymafichuk

Chief Administrative Officer ……..Wendy Wildman

**2025 is a Municipal ELECTION YEAR**

Running for Council is a great way to get more involved in your community! Councillors are key community builders who are an integral part of summer village planning. If you have a vision of what you believe the Summer Village of Birch Cove could look like in the next 5, 10, 15 years, this is your chance to help set the direction. While it takes some effort, serving on Council is rewarding and a great way to learn and give back to the community.

The Summer Village of Birch Cove has 3 Councillors, and they elect a Mayor from among themselves – all three positions are up for election/re-election. To be eligible to run in the election you must be a resident, property owner, or spouse of a property owner in Birch Cove. For those interested in running for Council, there will be an optional **Candidate Information Session on May 24 at the Darwell Interlake Golden Age Club (Seniors Center)** from 10 a.m. until 12 noon. More information can be found on the Summer Village election website.

**NOMINATION DAY** has been set for **Saturday, June 21th, 2025 from 10 a.m. until 12** **noon** at the Cook House. Nomination Day is when qualified people who want to run for Council drop off their **completed** nomination packages. Nomination packages can be found on the Summer Village website www.birchcove.ca.

**ADVANCE VOTE** (if required) has been set for **Monday, July 14th, 2025 from 4:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m.** at the Cook House.

**ELECTION DAY** (if required) has been set for **Saturday, July 19th, 2025 from 10:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m.** at the Cook House.

Street Lights

If you notice problems such as street lights not working, staying on all day long, or flickering on and off; please call Fortis Alberta at 780-310-WIRE or 780-310-9473 to report the problem and location. There should be an identification number on the pole.

Spring Cleanup Waste Bin

This waste bin was dropped off early May at the pumphouse, and will be in place until the end of June. This bin is intended for spring cleanup materials but there are some materials which can not be accepted: **NO CHEMICALS, NO PAINT, NO OIL, NO FLAMMABLES, NO PROPANE TANKS, NO APPLIANCES.**

We encourage residents to take advantage of this bin to clean up your yards and home, but please do no try to dispose of the items that can not be accepted.

Community Dock Installation

Please come help install the dock system and boat lifts **Saturday, May 17th, at 10:00 am.** See you there!! The dock will come out on **Saturday, September 6th**.

Off-Highway Vehicles (Quads)

The operation of **all** off-highway vehicles is controlled under the Provincial Highway Traffic Act. If you are not familiar with this Act, it is the Act which regulates the operation of all motor vehicles, whether you have an operator’s license or not. Under provincial law, off-highway vehicles are prohibited from operation on all highways and roadways. The Summer Village of Birch Cove passed an off-highway vehicle bylaw to allow the operation of off-highway vehicles on their roadways, with conditions such as having the vehicle plated and insured. The helmet bylaw is also in effect. Do not allow one or two offenders take this privilege away from you. **If you see illegal operation of an off-highway vehicle, please report it to the RCMP.**

Lac Ste. Anne East End Bus Society

The Summer Village of Birch Cove is contributing to the East End Bus Society which provides seniors with bussing services in the east end of the County. Bus schedules are advertised in the *Bulletin* newspaper.

Contact Lorna at 780-905-3934

Office hours: Monday - Thursday 9:00am to 4:00pm

Fires Happen! ARE YOU COVERED?

Did you know that the cost of fire suppression by the fire department is payable by the property owner? In our area we have seen the cost of fire suppression for a structure fire as high as $28,000 and for a wildland (grass fire) as high as $12,000. Be sure to check your home insurance policy or talk to your insurance agent about what exactly your policy covers and how to inquire about wildland insurance (for a grass fire that happens but never reaches a structure). Should the fire department be dispatched by 9-1-1 to your residence for any reason (house alarms, including false alarms, campfires during a fire ban or fires deemed out of control or unattended, downed utility line, etc.) you, as the property owner, will receive an invoice.

A reminder that fire pits must follow Bylaw #123-13

* a minimum of 3 metres clearance, measured from the nearest fire pit edge, is maintained from buildings, property lines, or other combustible material
* the fire pit height does not exceed 0.6 metres (11.6 inches) when measured from the surrounding grade to the top of the pit opening
* the fire pit opening does not exceed 1 metre in width or in diameter when measured between the widest points or outside edges
* it has a spark arrestor mesh screen of 5 to 16 mm expanded metal (or equivalent) to contain sparks over the fire at all times
* the fire pit installation has enclosed sides made from bricks, concrete blocks, heavy gauge metal, or other non-combustible materials acceptable to the Fire Chief

Emergency Preparedness – Are You Prepared?

No one wants to think or worry about disasters. The Summer Villages Regional Emergency Management Partnership was formed through Ministerial Order A017/20 to provide Emergency Management Services for ten member Summer Villages in Lac Ste. Anne County as legislated by the Emergency Management Act R.S.A. 2000, c E6.8. Each Municipality has appointed a local Director of Emergency Management (DEM) and a Deputy Director of Emergency Management (DDEM). This is in place to create a network of support to assist you in case of emergency.

We are continuing to look for Emergency Management support volunteers to assist the Director of Emergency Management and Deputy Director of Emergency Management with preparing our Village in the event of an emergency. Hazard assessments are conducted for response to various emergencies; however, our main concerns in the Village are fires and severe weather events. The plan moving forward, and our immediate need, is to have one to two people on each street to act as a Block Captain, who would assist in confirming evacuation of everyone on their street, and help with the education program, so that the people in the Village are aware of where to go in the event of an evacuation. **Our muster point stations are at the playground toilet shelter and at the pump house garage.** If you feel you might require assistance for someone in your family, we would appreciate submission of details and address to our DEM to coordinate assistance for you if required.

Renee Jackson Christine Greene

Director of Emergency Management(DEM) Deputy Director of Emergency Management (DDEM)

[Renee.jackson4@gmai.com](mailto:Renee.jackson4@gmai.com)

*Forest & Resource Improvement Association of Alberta (FRIAA)*

Advice from FireSmart Canada – Ways to Reduce Your Risk

* Download the FireSmart Begins at Home app & undertake a structured ignition-zone assessment
* Rake and remove pine needles and dry leaves within a minimum of 1.5 metres of a home’s foundation. As time permits, continue up to a 10-metre distance around the home. Dispose of collected debris in appropriate trash receptacles
* Clean pine needles from roofs and gutters
* Get out your measuring tape and seeing how close wood piles are located to the home. If closer than 10 metres, relocate the pile
* Mow grass to a height of 10 cm or less
* Remove items stored under decks and porches and relocating them to a storage shed, garage, or basement. Gasoline cans and portable propane tanks should never be stored indoors and should be located away from the home

For additional information, visit [www.firesmartcanada.ca](http://www.firesmartcanada.ca)

Dogs – Barking and Running Loose

Please keep your dog confined to your property or on a leash. If your “best friend” is one who:

* barks till the wee hours of the morning
* chases cars or people
* runs loose and leaves “gifts” in the parks or in your neighbour’s yard
* garbage

Remember, it is the owner who is inconsiderate, not the dog. Please be responsible!

**All residents should ensure that they have proper garbage cans or containers for their trash. Garbage not only attracts dogs, but many wild animals such as skunks, foxes, and porcupines.**

Do you think you’ve Spotted a Quagga or Zebra Mussel?

Help keep our aquatic animals and plants healthy!

Report it to Alberta’s invasive species hotline at   
**1-855-366-BOAT (2628)**.

Quagga and zebra mussels move from lake to lake by attaching themselves to boats and other recreational equipment. Quagga mussels are found in various parts of North America, such as in the Colorado River system in the USA, a popular destination for Alberta snowbirds. Zebra mussels were discovered in Lake Winnipeg, Manitoba in October 2013.

Let’s keep Alberta water free of aquatic invasive species and keep your boat and recreational equipment in ship-shape!

**Clean, Drain, Dry Your Boat!**

Remove any vegetation or clumps of mud or debris from the vehicle and thoroughly clean the underside of vehicles, tires, and parts before moving to another area.

Development Permits

For all development questions, development permits, and compliance certificates please contact:

**Tony Sonnleitner**

Box 2945

Stony Plain AB T7Z 1Y4

Phone: 780-718-5479

Fax: 866-363-3342

E-mail: [pcm1@telusplanet.net](mailto:pcm1@telusplanet.net)

Safety Codes Permits

All construction in the Village requires Safety Code Permits. This includes building, electrical, plumbing, sewage, and gas permits. Please contact:

**Superior Safety Codes Inc.**

14613 – 134 Avenue

Edmonton AB T5L 4S9

Phone: 780-489-4777

Fax: 780-489-4711

Toll-free phone: 1-866-999-4777

Toll-free fax: 1-866-900-4711

## **2025 Community Beach Cleanup Dates**

Thank you Birch Cove volunteers of all ages who bring their shovels and rakes to create a pleasant beach and wading area. With your help, we have avoided thousands of dollars in costs, made significant improvements to our lake front, had fun, and built community spirit. Thanks also to the Community League and others for providing refreshments.  
  
**Weather permitting, and if there is a need, the schedule is as follows:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Day** | **Date** | **Time** |
| Sunday | May 18, 2025 | 10:00 AM |
| Saturday | June 7, 2025 | 9:00 AM |
| Saturday | June 21, 2025 | 9:00 AM |
| Saturday | July 5, 2025 | 9:00 AM |
| Saturday | July 19, 2025 | 9:00 AM |
| Saturday | August 2, 2025 | 9:00 AM |
| Saturday | August 16, 2025 | 9:00 AM |
| Saturday | August 23, 2025 | 9:00 AM |
| Saturday | September 6, 2025 | 9:00 AM |

**Beach Cleanup will be consistent with Alberta Environment protections for fish spawning:  
☆ April 16–July 15: NO SLUDGE OR WEED REMOVAL IN THE WATER SHALLOWS  
 (Can remove accumulated sludge on land from the high-water line)  
  
☆ After Sept 15: NO SLUDGE OR WEED REMOVAL IN THE WATER SHALLOWS  
  
☆ Aquatic plant removal will take place in the wading area between the boat docks and the pier (will not impact bird and waterfowl nesting)**