

Summer Village of White Sands

Fall 2020 Newsletter

Greetings to all from your Council. Hope you had a great summer! My, the Village was busy this year! There was a great deal of property that changed hands over the last several months so some of this info is for our new owners. If you have a new neighbour, please ask them to sign up for email news on our website.

We would like to thank the young folks, Patrick, Nathan and Quinn, who were interested in working for the Village this summer. COVID 19 and Employment Standards limit our hiring practices. We hope that you are not discouraged from applying with us again.

Here are the news items in point form:

- Be aware that our Bylaws require you to have a concrete sewer holding tank if you have an RV on your property for longer than 30 consecutive days. We will be enforcing this Bylaw. You can purchase a smaller tank if you wish to build a privy or hook up your RV. Remember to place your tank in an appropriate location for pump truck access and so as not to impede any future development plans you may have.
- The rules concerning lived-in RVs on lots may be changing to coordinate with the Buffalo Lake Inter-municipal Development Plan.
- Please do not park RVs, trailers, boats, etc. on the road or municipal reserve. They must be parked on your property.
- The “No Parking” signs on streets and cul-de-sacs are to ensure access for Emergency Services and are there by order of the Fire Department, EMS and RCMP. Please respect this.
- We remind you that the beaches in White Sands are public property. It came to my attention that a family was asked to move three separate times in one afternoon because in each instance they were sitting on someone’s “spot”. Due to the high-water table this year, certainly there was less beach than usual. Add to that the COVID distancing and the beach area definitely becomes smaller. However, the beaches are first come, first serve. If you have a favourite spot on the beach, get there early and claim it. Regardless of whether you groom that area, have property that fronts that area or have your boat dock/lift in that area, it does not belong to you. I hope and believe that these are isolated incidents as I have always found White Sands residents in general to be very gracious.
- Still waiting on mooring and docking legislation. The AB Government has been working on this for 8 years. I do not know what the problem is.
- On July 13 there was 4.5 cubic metres per second draining into the lake from Parlby Creek and the western drainage area. The lake level has been at about 9” over full level for July and August and is now sitting at 5.5” over full. The highest levels recorded were in 1955, 1976 and 2020.
- At beach accesses 3, 5, 7 and 8, swimming areas are marked by the large rocks on the beach. No docks or lifts are allowed in this area or 6 metres from the sides of this area.
- Fireworks are not permitted in the Village or on the beaches unless you have a permit from the Fire Chief for which you are required to be federally licensed. In the past, fireworks have damaged boats and boat covers along with other property. They are also a fire concern during dry periods. Offenses will be heavily fined.
- If you have a water cistern, you can find guide lines on the AB Government website regarding keeping them safe and disinfected.
- We have witnessed several instances of children and teens driving ride on mowers for fun and small children riding an adult while mowing the grass. Please be aware that this is a VERY dangerous practice.

- The Village would be very appreciative if you could please cut back brush and weeds around any road or address signs in front of your property. We have between 400 and 500 sign posts in the Village so we need some help maintaining them. Thanks.
- Any garden sheds or accessory buildings on a lot without a cabin or house must be less than 144 square feet. A building permit is required if larger than 100 square feet. Note that only 3 accessory buildings (including a garage) are allowed per lot with a cabin/house on it. Please refer to our website (under Town of Stettler's at www.stettler.net) for full details of building restrictions.
- We were leaving the dump trailer out for lawn clippings (without bags), leaves, garden waste and small amounts of brush. Unfortunately this service was abused. Full truck-loads of brush were being unloaded into the trailer rather than making a trip to the land fill or Stettler transfer station (which is open 7 days a week). We also found construction waste and a foam mattress in the trailer. Consequently this service is no longer available. Rochon Sands had similar incidents with their burn pit and had to discontinue that service. If we find that folks are dumping their grass, leaves and brush in our dumpsters, we may have to limit access to the dumpsters to certain days and times and have them manned to protect our waste service. Naturally this would be reflected in your taxes. Unfortunate how the behaviour of a few affects the many.
- Fire pits are not permitted on Municipal Reserve or public property. One such fire pit was observed south west of beach # 2 access. Be sure your fire pit is within your property boundaries.
- Please ensure that any items on the beach such as chairs, canoes, floaties, etc. are removed back to your private property before winter. Any abandoned items will be disposed of.
- It has come to our attention that some properties do not have a sewer pump out truck servicing their tanks and there has been speculation that some folks have holes in their sewer tanks or are pumping their tanks into Municipal Reserve. If this is happening run off could end up in ponds and sloughs which we sometimes pump into our lake (following rules set out by AB Environment). In addition, the aquifer could be at risk of contamination. Council, with guidance from AB Municipal Affairs, Environment and Parks, and AB Health Services, is developing a strong Bylaw which will include inspections to ensure these problems, if they exist, are rectified.
- The Summer Villages of White Sands and Rochon Sands have been in mediation with the County of Stettler regarding the "Paradise Shores" (now called Buffalo Lake RV Park) plan. Your council will have a news release when appropriate.
- In closing we are sorry to have to let you know that we have been given notice from the Town of Stettler that they will be discontinuing the provision of our administration service effective December 31, 2020. Our Village has grown considerably and has become a lot more work. In addition the Town is dealing with a lot of key staff retiring and moving. We would like to thank the Town of Stettler for the great job they have done for us over the past 24 years. We have begun looking for a new administrator.

Thank you and have a great and safe fall season.

The Ol' Gray Mayor Lorne Thurston
 For the Summer Village of White Sands Council