

# MILE ZERO

## Banner Post



Providing News & Advertising for communities along the Mackenzie Highway from Grimshaw to Manning and points beyond **\$1.25** (GST included)

## County to increase water rates by 20 per cent

**Dan Archer**  
 In a motion by Councillor Brent Reese on July 25, the Council representing County of Northern Lights agreed to boost the water utility rates by 20 per cent effective on November 1, 2023.  
 In the County's Water Utility Rates Discussion Report, it was noted that the municipalities of Peace River and Manning had frequently hiked their utility rates. Utility rates are exposed to cost variabilities, as municipalities strive to break even or profit from water distribution. Town of

Peace River's rate increased by 5 per cent (including fixed and adjustable charges) in 2023. Town of Manning's water rate for the County surged by 11.64 per cent on June 1, 2023.  
 The County's goal through strategic planning is to improve services while continually reviewing the costs of utility rates for residents.  
 The County operates a water distribution system allowing customers to access potable water through direct utility connections or from truck fill stations.  
 At present, residents are

paying \$5.50 per cubic metre at truck fills for amounts up to 20 cubic metres and \$11 per cubic metre for fills surpassing 20 cubic metres. Residents with rural water connections pay \$6 per cubic metre for fills up to 20 cubic metres and \$12 for fills above 20 cubic metres.  
 "We purchase most of our water from the Town of Manning or Town of Peace River. We are subject to price changes from them," said Director of Finance Josh Hunter.

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## Manning resident on gold medal winning volleyball team in Halifax...



Manning's Jackson McGillivray was part of Team Alberta's gold winning volleyball squad at North American Indigenous Games at Halifax from July 15-23, 2023. Photos courtesy of Lorena McGillivray. See article on page 2 for more details.

## MD expresses concern about carbon tax

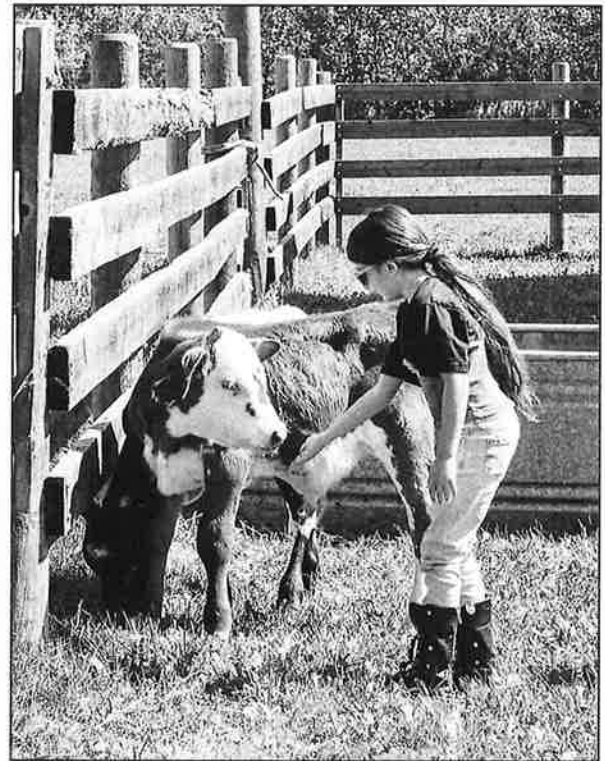
**Kristin Dyck**  
 Earlier this year, in May, the MD of Peace Council was alerted by administration to an untracked amount in their budget, the federal carbon tax.  
 After noticing that one of the MD's power bills had a \$1,300 carbon tax levy attached to it, council asked administration to start tracking exactly what the MD pays in carbon tax annually.  
 At the August 8 meeting of the MD of Peace council, the financial statements, which were updated to June 30, showed the MD had already paid in excess of \$5,000 in carbon tax levies in 2023.  
 "That's quite interesting to see that," said Reeve Bob Willing. "Realistically, that carbon tax there, is that reducing our usage of fossil fuels in any way, shape or form?"  
 "No," replied CAO Margaret McClarty. "It's an inelastic demand. We have to have it."  
 Coun. Sandra Eastman floated the idea around the council table that the MD should speak out at the upcoming Rural Municipalities of Alberta conference to highlight the amount the MD, a relatively small rural municipality, paid in carbon tax in the last year. She suggested speaking directly to the politicians who may be present and asking how these fees have helped improve climate change.

"Please, somebody answer it, anybody," agreed Coun. Theresa Johnson.  
 Eastman, who is council's representative on the North Peace Housing Foundation, also shared with council that in 2022 the Foundation paid \$518,000 on natural gas and propane. Of that amount, \$113,000 was the levy for the carbon tax.  
 "That's 22 per cent and in 2023 it has gone up to 30 per cent," she said. "So, my question to politicians is out of that \$113,000, how are we helping the world?"  
 "How much more do we have to lower the temperatures in our seniors' lodges in order to get our carbon tax down to a reasonable amount? So, what temperature do you want us to live at? Ten degrees Celsius, 11, maybe," said Willing.  
 In the July NPHF Board meeting synopsis, a report was given on the federal carbon levy. The report included colour coded charts that showed the percentage of the December, 2022, March and April, 2023 natural gas bills that accounted for the carbon tax, delivery charges, and actual consumption

charges. While the December chart showed the actual consumption charges to be the largest portion of the bill, that amount moved to approximately one third of the total bill in March, and just one quarter of the total bill in April.  
 "If you compare the increased portion of the orange wedge [representing the carbon tax] against the green wedge [representing actual consumption charges] in April in June, versus the prior periods, we are now at a point where the carbon levy is a greater cost than the retail cost of natural gas consumed," reads the report prepared by NPHF Executive Director Tammy Menssa.  
 While the MD council voiced anticipation that many of the representatives from other Alberta municipalities that will attend the RMA conference in the fall will have feelings similar to those of the MD of Peace council, just the idea of making public the amount of money a small rural MD is paying into this levy is enough to move forward with the discussion.

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## History of early pioneers celebrated...



Agriculture heritage was celebrated in the Peace County in Manning August 6 and near Grimshaw at Lac Cardinal Regional Pioneer Village Museum Demonstration Day, held August 12. Above, Magdalena Cook-Hendrickson took a moment to visit with the calves at Lac Cardinal Regional Pioneer Village Museum Demonstration Day. See pages 6 & 7 for more details about each event.

Continued from front page...

## MD expresses concern about carbon tax

According to the federal government, pricing carbon pollution is considered one of the most effective and efficient approaches to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The carbon levy is supposed to create a financial incentive for individuals and businesses to pollute less.

However, in areas of the country where biking to

work is unrealistic for reasons related to distance, terrain and weather, or long cold winters demand higher fuel consumption, many individuals and businesses feel as if there is not much they can do to avoid paying large carbon levies.

While the federal government explains that they return approximately 90 per cent of the fuel charge

proceeds to Canadian families through Climate Action Incentive payments, these payments do not benefit the local municipalities who are also feeling the pinch of this extra line item in their budgets.

"We can't do anything about it at all," said Coun. Lori Kinnee.

## Fall fence line spray program designed to aid MD producers

Dan Archer

MD of Peace No. 135 has introduced a fall fence line spray program free of charge for producers in the municipality. The program is meant to control the strips of land under fences for noxious weeds. The land beneath fences is often missed with herbicides whenever farmers spray their crops for weeds. Thus, weeds are capable of thriving in fence line areas.

Residents who are interested in enrolling in the fall fence line spray program must sign and send release forms to the MD's office in Berwyn. The deadline for the release forms is August 31, 2023.

Fields bordering municipal roads are eligible for spray applications from the MD. Clearview - Overdrive and Navis will be sprayed to control Canada thistle, yellow toadflax, sow thistle, and scentless chamomile. Producers can indicate the areas they want to be sprayed on their release forms. In addition to this program, the MD is still regulating weeds in the ditches beside municipal roads.

The MD has employed different methods to help producers control weed growth. The Alberta Weed Control Act has divided the province's weeds into two categories: prohibited noxious weeds and noxious weeds. Prohibited noxious weeds spread quickly and are highly competitive with other plants. Noxious weeds also multiply quickly and can damage crops. Noxious weeds can be contained. All traces of prohibited noxious weeds must be destroyed at once whenever they are located in the MD.

Municipalities are authorized by the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry to administer the Alberta Weed Control Act on all non-exempt lands within its boundaries.

"In our MD, we have noxious weeds, Canada thistle is the most common and perennial sow thistle is another one," said Nasar Iqbal, the MD's manager of Agricultural Services.

Yellow toadflax is another familiar weed in the region. In certain places of the MD, wild mint and scentless chamomile are growing in areas closer to Peace River. "We are dealing with that, but they aren't growing on an extensive scale," Iqbal said.

Weeds in the MD can grow anywhere including areas with sandy soil or clay soil. Weeds can withstand all sorts of conditions. "Even when it's very dry, and crops are dying, the weeds will take over," Iqbal said.

Weeds also produce "thousands of seeds," as Iqbal confirmed.

Most of the weeds discovered in the MD are noxious weeds. In rare instances, prohibited noxious weeds like tansy ragwort have flourished in the municipality. "It's a very beautiful flowering plant," Iqbal described.

The toxic plant has bright yellow petals. The flowered weed can be spread by humans, wind, soils, and livestock. Iqbal said signs of tansy ragwort growth were discovered under MD fence lines in the past.

Invasive plants like tansy ragwort and common toadflax have been grown in gardens for their flowers. "Even a few years back, we saw Walmart

selling scentless chamomile, because they are beautiful flowers," Iqbal said.

"Normally, when we describe a weed, it's a plant that's out of place," Iqbal defined.

While every weed isn't immediately dangerous, the MD and the provincial government want to control their spread. If weeds aren't regulated, they can compete with crops and native plants.

"If somebody has weeds on their land and they can't identify what it is, they can contact the MD, and we can identify the weed for them. And we can also suggest what controls to use," Iqbal said.

Weeds like Canada thistle can be mowed down. However, mowed scentless chamomile will branch out from the base and produce new shoots. "If you're mowing scentless chamomile, that's not proper control," Iqbal underscored.

Navis is a broadleaf herbicide. The MD will mostly be using Navis for their fence line weed control project in the fall. There are frequent questions about safety issues with spraying herbicides on crops. Iqbal advised producers to use herbicides as recommended on the manufacturer's label. "Use the herbicides properly. If you are not - there might be some consequences."

During the fall fence line spray program, Iqbal emphasized that the MD will not apply herbicides inside the producers' fields. "If we are just on the fence line, there is less of a possibility of spreading any disease to a different area," Iqbal said.



Office Hours:

Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. - Noon - 1:00 - 4:30 p.m.  
Phone: 780-338-3845/780-338-3846 Fax: 780-338-2222  
Website: mdpeace.com Email: info@mdpeace.com  
Mailing Address: Box 34, Berwyn, AB T0H 0E0

"We want our community to be a preferred place to live and work"

### NOTICE OF DECISION OF THE DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

This is to notify you with respect to a decision of the Development Officer, whereby a Development Permit has been issued as follows:

**Application No.:** 28/23 **Name:** S. Zacharias  
**Legal:** Lot 1, Block 2, Plan 132 5263, Pt of NW34-83-22-W5  
**Development:** Accessory Building - Attached Garage  
**Date of Decision:** August 16, 2023

A valid Notice of Appeal must contain the legal description of the subject land, the reasons for filing the appeal, and the required appeal fee. The *Municipal Government Act* requires an appeal to be submitted within twenty-one (21) days from the date on which notice of issuance of permit was given. A Notice of Appeal form and further information on the associated fees and hearing process can be found on the Peace Regional Subdivision and Development Appeal board website: <http://mmsa.ca/services/peace-regional-sdab>

### BROWNVALE ANNIVERSARY CENTENNIAL - AUG 18, 19 & 20, 2023

The program schedule for the weekend includes lots of activities for kids and live entertainment as well as a parade and silent auction. No pre-registration is required, the cost is \$10.00 per person for the entire weekend. For full program schedule, visit the MD Facebook page and website. For more information call: (780) 618-0295.

### MD CALENDAR - UP COMING COUNCIL MEETINGS

September 12, 2023 commencing at 9:00 a.m.  
September 26, 2023 commencing at 5:00 p.m.

### GRANT FUNDING - APPLICATION DEADLINE - AUGUST 31ST

Are you part of an organization providing activities and events that have a positive impact on the quality of life in your community and the MD?



Applications for funding must be received by **August 31, 2023**. The policy and application form can be viewed and downloaded at [www.mdpeace.com/policies/grant-funding](http://www.mdpeace.com/policies/grant-funding).

All applications submitted to the MD's Grants, Donations and Funding **MUST** be completed **IN FULL**. Any that are not, will be mailed back to the applicant. **The release of funding will be approximately 6 weeks from the deadline date.**

**At the June 13, 2023 Council meeting, Council directed administration to begin charging a \$10 per unit per night fee for anyone camping at Strong Creek Park and Brownvale campgrounds.** Camping Fees are \$10 per night/per unit for Brownvale Campground and Strong Creek Park. Permits can be purchased at the MD office during business hours.

### BURNING PERMITS - FIRE RESTRICTIONS LIFTED

The MD of Peace has lifted the fire restriction that was in place. **ALL AREAS OF THE MD NOW** require a burning permit.

### THE FALL FENCE LINE SPRAY PROGRAM

Is underway to control Noxious Weeds along private fence lines. The MD will also continue with the existing program to control noxious weeds in the ditches adjacent to MD roads. Weed control work performed on fence lines adjacent to Municipal roads will be done on a first come first served basis at no charge. **Adjacent landowners must sign a release to have ClearView+Overdrive, Truvis or Lontrel sprayed along their fence lines for the control of Canada Thistle, Yellow Toadflax, Sow Thistle or Scentless Chamomile (Mayweed). TO REGISTER for the 2023 Fall Fence Line Spray Program, you must sign a Release form by August 31, 2023.** Applications can be found on our website at <https://mdpeace.com/>. For more information, please phone Nasar at 780-338-3845 or 780-219-4534.

### GRAIN BAGS IN THE DITCHES



Please do not leave your grain bags in the ditches. The MD has a grain bag roller for rent. **Grain bags can be taken to Fairview landfill for recycling, bags MUST be relatively clean, rolled and tied tight. If they are dirty, they can be taken to the regional site as garbage at \$55 per MT tonne.**

### ROCKS IN DITCHES

**Do not dump rocks or other debris in MD ditches. These materials cause damage to our equipment and can even harm our equipment operators.**

### RECYCLE BINS

Did you know the MD pays for 50% of the cost of the recycling bins located in the Village of Berwyn?

**The Recycle bins have moved!**



They are now located on 52 Ave across from the Village of Berwyn's Public Works Shop. Your recyclable items such as aluminum and tin cans, glass items, plastics, paper and cardboard can be placed in the recycling bins.

### DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPLICATIONS

A Development Permit is required if you are planning to build on your property. A Development Permit Application can be obtained at the Municipal office or downloaded from the MD website: [www.mdpeace.com](http://www.mdpeace.com). Information required to complete the application includes the legal description of the property, the proposed use, a site plan of the proposed development, the estimated commencement and completion dates and the estimated cost of the development. If you have any questions, please feel free to speak with our Development Officer.