

WINTER 2025
VOLUME 5

COUNTY connections



IN THIS ISSUE

MEET YOUR NEW
COUNCIL

2-3

LOCAL FIELDS FEED
GLOBAL NEEDS

13

SHOP LOCAL THIS
HOLIDAY SEASON

19

MEET YOUR NEW COUNCIL



Mayor Alanna Hnatiw

Alanna Hnatiw is serving her third term as Mayor of Sturgeon County, first elected in 2017. She lives on a small farm, reflecting generations of agricultural roots and a deep commitment to our rural community. With a professional background as a small business owner in the oil and gas service industry, Mayor Hnatiw has championed environmental stewardship, safety, and innovation throughout her career.

Mayor Hnatiw is particularly recognized for her vision and leadership in advancing aviation and aerospace development in the region. Through her championing of the Villeneuve Landing Network, a groundbreaking regional partnership, she has been instrumental in revitalizing Villeneuve Airport as an economic hub for aviation, aerospace, logistics, advanced manufacturing, and defense industries. Under her guidance, Villeneuve Airport has seen transformative infrastructure upgrades and collaborative agreements, positioning it as a key driver of investment and innovation in the Edmonton region.

As Mayor, she is dedicated to building a prosperous, self-sustaining future for Sturgeon County—removing barriers, supporting small businesses, and fostering opportunities for residents of all ages. Her priorities include diversifying agriculture and industry, while making progress at the speed of relevance.

Her regional leadership is recognized province-wide: she is the founding Chair of the Edmonton Region Hydrogen Hub, vice-chair of Alberta's Industrial Heartland, and a former Vice-Chair of the Edmonton Metropolitan Regional Board. She also served four years on the governing body of the Canadian Hydrogen Convention and was named Hydrogen Leader of the Year in 2023.

Outside of her mayoral duties, Alanna enjoys horseback riding, golfing, skiing, and yoga. She is proud to represent over 21,000 residents and bring their voices to the tables where she has the privilege to serve.

Division One Councillor Amanda Papadopoulos

Amanda Papadopoulos was elected in 2025 to represent Division 1 on Sturgeon County Council. Bringing extensive experience as a former award-winning residential, rural, and commercial realtor, Councillor Papadopoulos is known for her dedication to service, community development, and practical solutions for local residents.

Councillor Papadopoulos is deeply committed to preserving the natural environment, recognizing the importance of protecting wildlife and safeguarding habitats. She is passionate about maintaining the health and beauty of the county's river valley and ensuring it remains a key part of the community's ecological and recreational identity.

She is focused on fostering responsible growth, supporting small businesses, and championing transparent communication between residents and council. Councillor Papadopoulos prioritizes enhancing infrastructure, promoting community safety, and ensuring efficient service delivery for Division 1's diverse rural and urban communities.

With a passion for collaboration, Councillor Papadopoulos works to strengthen accessibility, advocate for sustainable development in Sturgeon Valley, and build partnerships that benefit all residents.



Division Two Councillor Kristin Toms

First elected in 2019 and re-elected in 2025, Kristin Toms brings a dynamic blend of communications, marketing, and business expertise to her role as Division 2 Councillor. With a background in growing her family's wealth management business, Councillor Toms leverages best practices from diverse industries to champion effective decision-making and sustainable growth in Sturgeon County.

Councillor Toms holds a Bachelor of Education degree from the University of Alberta and a Public Relations Diploma from MacEwan University, reflecting her strong commitment to lifelong learning. Residents know her for her open-door approach, decisive action, and dedication to improving local infrastructure—including her leadership in projects such as traffic safety upgrades and emergency response enhancements. Councillor Toms also spearheaded initiatives to support community organizations, particularly during challenging periods.

Her priorities for Division 2 include advancing transportation networks, supporting responsible development, fostering business opportunities, and maintaining transparency in all council affairs. Councillor Toms direct, honest communication style ensures that residents are heard and kept informed.

Outside council, she is a dedicated parent, avid gardener, enthusiastic cook, and a Spartan race competitor.



Division Three Councillor Matthew McLennan

Matthew McLennan is proud to serve as Councillor in Sturgeon County, bringing a lifelong connection to Alberta and deep commitment to community service. With a background in physical education and athletics through the University of Alberta and Grant MacEwan University, Councillor McLennan combines practical experience and entrepreneurial spirit with strong local roots. He operates his own small business and is an active volunteer with local food banks, animal shelters, and senior support organizations.

On Council, Councillor McLennan is passionate about listening to residents and delivering results that make life better for County residents. He has championed improvements to local roads and transportation networks, expanded rural broadband access, and strengthened emergency services.

Councillor McLennan believes in protecting Sturgeon County's rural lifestyle while building a vibrant future for everyone. Residents appreciate his approachable style, practical problem-solving, and commitment to making Sturgeon County a thriving place to live and work. He welcomes conversations, feedback, and new ideas from the community, always striving to bring positive change to Sturgeon County.



Division Four Councillor Richard Boissonneault

Richard Boissonneault is honoured to serve as Councillor for Division 4, bringing lifelong roots in Sturgeon County and a strong dedication to local residents. A proud community advocate and business leader, Councillor Boissonneault and his family have called Sturgeon County home for many years, building deep connections and understanding the needs of rural neighbourhoods.

Elected to Council in 2025, Councillor Boissonneault's focus is on strengthening services that matter most to residents — including road safety and maintenance, reliable infrastructure, and efficient delivery of municipal services. He is committed to representing Division 4 with openness, approachability, and practical problem-solving.

Councillor Boissonneault works to foster a collaborative spirit across Division 4, welcoming conversation with residents, local groups, and businesses. He believes in listening first and acting in the best interests of the community, helping build a vibrant, welcoming future for Sturgeon County.



Division Five Councillor Deanna Stang

Deanna Stang is honoured to represent Division 5 as Councillor, drawing on years of local experience as a long-time resident and community volunteer. With her husband and three children, Councillor Stang has built deep roots in Sturgeon County, fueling her passion to keep the county safe, connected, and thriving.

A champion for rural families, Councillor Stang is especially dedicated to tackling rural crime and building stronger neighbourhoods. She actively listens to residents' safety concerns and works hard to ensure their voices are heard at Council. She believes that every resident deserves to feel secure in their home and community, and the Councillor collaborates with local organizations and law enforcement to advocate for more resources and a proactive approach to crime prevention.

Councillor Stang's approachable nature and practical outlook make her a trusted advocate for Division 5. When she's not working on behalf of her constituents, she loves spending time with family, baking, travelling, reading and connecting with neighbours. She remains deeply passionate about making Sturgeon County a safe place for everyone to live, work, and raise a family.



Division Six Councillor Jason Berry

Jason Berry has deep connections to Sturgeon County, with a strong appreciation for the sense of community and the value of supportive neighbours.

First elected in 2021 and recently re-elected, his focus is on protecting residents and their property, advocating for rural crime reduction, and supporting local businesses and agriculture. A key priority is the improvement and maintenance of gravel roads and highways, ensuring safe and reliable transportation for all residents and supporting economic growth in the region.

Councillor Berry is committed to expanding recreation opportunities and championing the continued growth of the Alberta Industrial Heartland to drive economic investment. He believes in the importance of volunteering and giving back, having spent several years involved in community initiatives, including supporting local sports and organizing annual food bank fundraisers.

Councillor Berry values open communication and collaboration, with a commitment to welcoming conversations and feedback from the community.





STURGEON COUNTY'S WINTER ROADS: PLOWING PRIORITIES

See a road problem? Report right from a phone.

In Sturgeon County, crews work throughout the winter to keep roads safe, providing ongoing snow and ice control to maintain reasonable driving conditions.

When uninterrupted snowfall reaches 10 centimetres or more, a snow event is officially declared. Crews are dispatched during the event to keep roads safe and passable. The service commitment timeline for full snow removal begins once the snowfall stops, ensuring a timely and coordinated clean-up.

Roads are cleared according to their priority, based on traffic volumes and usage:

- **Priority 1:** Main paved and oiled roads, such as arterials and collectors, which carry the highest traffic. These roads are cleared first to ensure residents can travel safely and emergency services can respond without delay.

- **Priority 2:** Other paved and oiled roads within subdivisions (local roads), providing safe access to homes and neighbourhood streets.

- **Priority 3:** Gravel roads, including both collector and local roads within rural and suburban areas.

The County aims to have **Priority 1 roads cleared within 24 hours** of a snowfall ending, and **Priority 2 and 3 roads cleared within 72 hours**. These timelines help maintain safety, accessibility, and mobility throughout the community during winter conditions.

Transportation crews typically work **weekdays from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m.**, plowing, sanding, and removing snow. During snow events, crews increase their hours and work **seven days a week** to meet Sturgeon County's service goals. Residents may notice multiple passes by plows to remove snow and ice efficiently while ensuring roads are safe for travel.

Motorists' patience and cooperation are appreciated during winter weather. Please remember to **drive carefully, give plows plenty of room, and avoid parking on roads during snow events** to help crews complete their work safely and efficiently.

Report a Road Concern

Sturgeon County crews work to maintain and improve County roads, but they rely on residents to report any road issues. Road concerns can be reported from cell phones.

Visit the County's Winter Operations page to learn more about the Snow and Ice Control Policy and how to report a road concern.



WARM UP YOUR WINTER WITH LOCAL EVENTS!

Just because it's cold outside doesn't mean the fun slows down! Winter in Sturgeon County is full of festivals, family activities, and heartwarming community gatherings. Whether you're bundling up outdoors or staying warm inside, there's always something to enjoy.

Here's a sample of what's coming this season:

- **Cardiff Park Skating Trail** (*watch the County's website and social media accounts for updates on when the trail will be open*)

This scenic ice pathway is beautifully lit in the evenings, making it perfect for a cozy skate with family and friends. Take breaks on the benches along the trail or warm up by the firepits. Bring your skates and maybe a thermos of hot chocolate and enjoy one of Sturgeon County's favourite winter activities!

- **Country Living Expo – March 2026**

Enjoy a full day of family-friendly fun with local vendors, live demonstrations, and hands-on workshops. Kids will love meeting farm animals, while adults can pick up tips on gardening, homesteading, and country living. Whether you're a long-time acreage owner or just love the country lifestyle, there's something for everyone!



Share Your Event with the Community!

If your group is planning a fundraiser, workshop, market, festival, registration night, or neighbourhood get-together, let Sturgeon County's **Community Event Calendar** help spread the word!

It's free to use and open to local clubs, schools, faith groups, non-profits, and community organizers. It's the easiest way to:

- Get more people involved
- Promote your event across the region free of cost
- Avoid overlapping dates with other groups

How to Submit Your Event:

1. Visit sturgeoncounty.ca/events
2. Scroll to the bottom of the calendar
3. Click "Add an Event"
4. Enter your details (upload a poster or photo if you like!)
5. Hit submit, we'll review it and publish it online

That's it! Your event will be out there for neighbours and families across the County to discover.

Questions? Reach out to corporatecomms@sturgeoncounty.ca





BUILDING SAFE, RELIABLE ROADS FOR STURGEON COUNTY: 2025 CAPITAL PROJECTS

As the road construction season wraps up, Sturgeon County is proud to highlight projects that strengthen the safety and efficiency of our transportation network. These investments reflect our continued dedication to ensuring residents and visitors benefit from reliable infrastructure that supports the community's growing needs.

Starkey Road Pedestrian Bridge & Pedestrian Trail

A new pedestrian bridge and shared-use pathway is taking shape in Sturgeon County's valley. This project directly addresses community concerns about safety and comfort for people who walk or bike in the valley.

When finished, the new pathway will connect pedestrians from communities south of the Sturgeon River into the Bellerose Park pathway system.

The approved project will cost \$6.77 million overall. \$1.74 million of that is provided from the 'Active Transportation Fund,' a federal grant that helps people choose walking, cycling, or other active ways of getting around instead of driving, as part of Canada's National Active Transportation Strategy.

To follow this project and receive updates, please visit the Starkey Road Pedestrian Bridge & Pathway project page and click "+ Follow" to stay informed throughout its progress. Scan the QR code below for more information.



Lamoureux Drive

The pavement along Lamoureux Drive had reached the end of its life cycle, making renewal essential. Feedback from residents at open houses highlighted that realigning the roadway would enhance safety by providing a clearer separation between vehicle traffic and a nearby multi-use trail. With this redesign, the distance between the trail and the roadway has been increased, offering improved safety for everyone using the corridor.

The new alignment helps to:

- Protect walkers, cyclists, and runners from vehicle traffic, reducing the risk of accidents.
- Improve traffic flow as drivers can focus more on the road ahead without pedestrians and cyclists near the road.
- Provide a green buffer, creating a safer, more comfortable environment for families with children or pets to enjoy, without the stress of being close to traffic.

Total cost for the project was approximately \$2.4 million.

Sturgeon Valley Estates

The pavement in the Sturgeon Valley Estates subdivision reached the end of its useful life. The County has replaced it with full-strength asphalt, creating a wider, smoother driving surface that meets modern standards.

In addition, the County completed an overlay on Range Road 230, extending the life of the existing roadway and helping to maintain a safe and comfortable driving experience for residents.

The total cost for this project was just over \$3 million.

Township Road 554

The section of road from about 800 metres west of Highway 2 to 800 metres west of Range Road 255 has been fully reconstructed. This project included upgrades to drainage, culverts, the road surface, and more. These improvements have made the road safer, smoother to drive on, and better able to handle storm water.

The total cost for the project was \$4.5 million.

The original alignment was moved west due to Alberta Transportation's planned interchange project for Highway 2 and Cardiff Road/Township Road 554. This provincial project will begin in 2026.

Stay up to date on road work that matters to you

Follow the progress of projects that interest you or are happening near your home by visiting Sturgeon County's project pages. By following a project, residents can receive two types of updates: general weekly progress updates to stay informed, and project-specific notices when there's important information the County needs to share with directly affected homeowners.

Find project pages by scanning the QR code, or visiting www.engage.sturgeoncounty.ca



STURGEON COUNTY TO UNVEIL NEW STRATEGIC PLAN



Sturgeon County Council is preparing to launch its new Strategic Plan in early 2026, setting the direction for the next four years and laying the groundwork for the County's long-term vision.

The Strategic Plan is the highest order of Council policy direction to County Administration, ensuring that actions taken by the County align with the community's priorities. Renewed every four years, the plan provides a framework for a 30-year vision, reflecting the community's aspirations for growth, sustainability, and quality of life.

Developed by Council, the plan outlines focus areas such as economic development, infrastructure investment,

environmental stewardship, and community well-being. It serves as a roadmap to guide decision-making, resource allocation, and future planning initiatives.

The County will share the new plan with residents early in 2026. Learn more about Sturgeon County's strategic planning process by scanning the QR code.



ENGAGING WITH THE COMMUNITY: 2025 WRAP UP

Every year, Sturgeon County offers public engagement opportunities to connect with residents, share information, and gather input on key initiatives. Those living across the County have many ways to play an active role in shaping the future of their community and local areas.

This year, attendees provided feedback through a variety of formats, including surveys, roundtables, webinars, open houses, and more. Some such engagements were Coffee with a Cop, Wellness on Wheels, the 2026 Budget

Survey, and roundtable sessions focused on community development. These opportunities encouraged active participation and gave residents a platform to express their ideas, concerns, and priorities.

Public input assists with informing future planning and decision-making. Over the course of the year, more than 2,300 individuals participated in engagement events, reflecting a strong interest in guiding shared spaces and services. Continued public involvement is

essential to building a more responsive and inclusive approach to municipal governance. Sturgeon County continues to create space to engage and collaborate with residents and help shape a community that everyone can be proud of.

To stay informed and get involved in upcoming events, please visit SturgeonCounty.ca or scan the QR code below.





A BERRY DETERMINED STURGEON COUNTY FARMER Rosy Farms Leads the Way in Regenerative Agriculture

It's easy to see why Andrew Rosychuk is bursting with berry pride as he guides visitors around his organic haskap farm in Sturgeon County.

This summer, more than 4,000 people travelled from across the province to pick more than 11,500 pounds of the juicy haskap berries on his U-pick farm, Rosy Farms.

Haskaps are an oblong-shaped berry originating in Japan and Russia that blend the taste of raspberries and blueberries into a tart, intense flavour.

Rosychuk, who was recently awarded Sturgeon County's Excellence in Agriculture Award, didn't achieve this impressive berry yield overnight. Years of patience, trial, and gradual progress shaped the abundant harvest his haskap berry fields produce today.

Eleven years ago, Rosychuk purchased 76-acres of farmland just northeast of Alcomdale. The soil there, which Rosychuk calls Alcomdale Gumbo, has high salt and compaction levels, which can be a challenge for farmers.

"It's what I could afford at the time," he recalls, saying he was looking to pursue the haskap berry as it had been intriguing him for some time due to its antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties.

"I thought I was smarter than Mother Nature," he jokes. Rosychuk holds a Production Horticulture Diploma from Olds College of Agriculture and Technology.

This Sturgeon County producer poured his heart and soul into improving his farm, along with savings from his work as a Red Seal welder and boilermaker in Alberta's oil patch. He was determined to enrich and restore the health of the soil on his property.

In between contracts, Rosychuk made improvements to the land by planting a cover crop of alfalfa, daikon radish, fescues, and clover—this thoughtful mix helped restore vital carbon, laying the groundwork for nutrient-rich soil that supports healthy, productive crops.

"I'm working with the biology to put more back into the system instead of taking out," he explains as several Canada geese gather nearby in a

wetlands area he created just south of his orchard.

These wetlands, in addition to the soil improvements, have helped the berry crop thrive.

"You let the mice come in and they can dig holes for the bumblebees. The bumblebees pollinate, and then you get more seeds of what you want."

He gradually added about 37,000 haskap bushes of different varieties, expanding his orchard each year with support from his tradesman wages.

His grit and determination have paid off. Sturgeon County awarded Rosychuk the Excellence Award in recognition of his efforts in agricultural production, community support, and innovation.

A founding member of the Haskap Alberta Association, he collaborates with other growers and is helping to organize Alberta's first-ever haskap field research with the University of Saskatchewan. The three-year 'Results Driven Agriculture Research' backed project will test 20 producers to create baseline soil requirements.

Rosychuk loves sharing his hard-earned knowledge and is excited about Alberta's growing horticulture opportunities.

"I'm glad that I'm in Sturgeon County because it is really supportive of new enterprises."



"I'M GLAD THAT I'M IN STURGEON COUNTY BECAUSE IT IS REALLY SUPPORTIVE OF NEW ENTERPRISES."

ON THE MOVE! HOW ROADS INFLUENCE NATIVE BEES

Shea Giesbrecht spent much of the summer checking up on bees along Sturgeon County roads.

For her master's research at the University of Alberta, she is studying how highways affect native bees and whether features like floral abundance or shelterbelts can reduce risky crossings.

The idea for her study originated from her time at the University of Saskatchewan, where she assisted a PhD student.

"I found out that plenty of research has already been done on the impacts of highways on bees, but little research on how to mitigate the damages caused by traffic. This is how I landed on floral abundance and shelterbelts," explained Giesbrecht. She's examining whether trees, flowers, or the combination provide enough resources to keep bees on one side of the road.

Using Alberta's 2023 traffic volume map, land use and location criteria, and on-site crop surveys, Giesbrecht identified and prioritized over 200 potential highway sites, favouring those with cereals on both sides, but also including some with canola and alfalfa. She narrowed the choices down to 22 sites and set up traps.

By placing traps parallel to the road and others perpendicular, the study can show whether bees tend to travel alongside roads or try to cross them.

"I hypothesize that more bees will be caught flying along rather than to/from the highway when floral abundance is high or when shelterbelts are present," explained Giesbrecht. "This should be most pronounced when floral abundance is high and when trees are present."



The Importance of native bees

Giesbrecht says native bees contribute \$2.8 billion dollars to Canadian farmers through crop pollination, but that's not all.

"They also pollinate native plants which is important for our local ecosystems. Despite this, they are facing more critical challenges and receiving less assistance than honeybees. In fact, they are outcompeted by honeybees in some settings on top of facing habitat loss and disease."

Giesbrecht says for now, Alberta's native bees remain relatively strong despite worldwide declines... she also says, Sturgeon County residents can help.

"Plant flowers, preferably native flowers but anything that isn't invasive is a step in the right direction! Also avoid using pesticides in your garden. Instead, use bio controls such as ladybugs to fight off aphids, which you can buy at your local gardening store."

Giesbrecht plans to finish her thesis by the end of 2026.

"Ideally, I would like to come out of this project with realistic recommendations to landowners and roadside managers to aid in native bee conservation."



IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT SUPPORTING NATIVE BEES, SHEA GIESBRECHT RECOMMENDS VISITING THE ALBERTA NATIVE BEE COUNCIL WEBSITE BY SCANNING THE QR CODE.



Sturgeon
COUNTY

LET'S STAY CONNECTED!

Sign up for our weekly e-newsletter for news, programs, project updates & more!



Scan the QR code with your mobile device or sign up at [SturgeonCounty.ca/subscribe](https://sturgeoncounty.ca/subscribe)

INDUSTRIAL HEARTLAND PROCESS WATER INITIATIVE

Creating world-class opportunities for energy & business



Sturgeon County is pursuing the development of a water intake facility to attract industrial growth in the Heartland. This facility will be located along the North Saskatchewan River, ideally positioned to support new development and expansion.

Sturgeon County is committed to providing world-class opportunities for energy and economic development, reinforcing its reputation as an internationally competitive and business-friendly municipality. The ongoing growth of the Industrial Heartland is essential to fulfilling this commitment.

The Designated Industrial Zone (DIZ) in the Industrial Heartland launched in 2022 to streamline regulatory approvals and support infrastructure development while maintaining leading environmental standards. The DIZ is a special provincial regulatory framework designed to coordinate planning and development across multiple projects, making it easier for companies to invest and expand while ensuring responsible growth occurs.

As part of the DIZ, rigorous environmental protection and management measures are in place, including an Air Emissions Requirement Policy, enhanced guidance for air modelling, and a Water Quality Management Program.

Established access to water is needed for development in the industrial area. No new water intakes have been developed in the Industrial Heartland for more than a decade, even though demand by industry has grown substantially. Sturgeon County's water intake facility will provide non-potable, untreated water to industry.

Community Benefit

The new process water intake facility will help protect the community's drinking water supply by reducing industrial reliance on potable water (i.e., drinking water). By shifting industry to a separate water source, more of the County's treated water system is reserved for residents—especially important during times of drought.

Funding

This project is fully funded through a project specific grant of over \$16 million from the Government of Alberta (facilitated by the Alberta Industrial Heartland Association). It will support long-term financial sustainability and tax rate stability for Sturgeon County.

This grant is anticipated to cover all financial requirements needed to bring the project from initial concept phase through to completion of construction.

The water intake design is subject to regulatory applications that will require approval from municipal, provincial, and federal authorities.

Scan the QR code to keep up to date on project developments. Sign up to follow the project and receive email updates as the project reaches important milestones.



CHANGES COMING TO ASSESSMENT AND TAX NOTICES

Assessment and tax notices are going to look a bit different starting next year. The most important change Sturgeon County residents need to make note of is that property assessment and tax notices will no longer be sent in one single mail-out. Instead, they will be sent separately. Starting in 2026, property assessment notices will be sent in January and tax notices will be sent in May.

This change is being made to better align the municipal assessment process with the provincial assessment process. It will also help taxpayers better understand property assessments and reduce confusion over tax obligations. Deadlines for filing an assessment complaint and for paying property taxes will be clearly communicated on the respective notice.

For questions regarding the separation of assessment and tax notices, please contact Sturgeon County's Assessment Services at 780-939-0601 or assessment@sturgeoncounty.ca.

FOR MORE
ON PROPERTY
TAXES, SCAN
THE QR CODE.



MAKE YOUR HOME OR BUSINESS ENERGY EFFICIENT WITH CEIP

Sturgeon County residents and businesses interested in lowering their energy consumption are encouraged to take advantage of a new energy efficiency program.

The Clean Energy Improvement Program (CEIP) is a voluntary financing option designed to help homeowners and businesses cover the upfront costs of energy efficiency and renewable energy upgrades.

CEIP provides access to low-cost financing for energy efficient and renewable energy renovations (**up to \$50,000 for residential property owners, and \$300,000 for commercial**). CEIP offers a flexible, affordable way to offset rising energy costs while also improving your home's comfort and value. Program participants could save on energy bills and the initial expense of replacing old furnaces, upgrading insulation, or installing a solar photovoltaic (PV) system under the program

CEIP Residential Program

CEIP Residential Benefits

- Low interest rates. CEIP offers below-market interest rates for residential properties (3 per cent).
- Money back for a limited time. A 5 per cent rebate for each residential project reduces overall costs (*however, applications must be submitted now!*).

- Long repayment terms. Upgrades can be amortized for up to 20-years. Longer repayment terms mean lower annual payments.

- CEIP financing is assigned to the property, not the property owner. CEIP repayments are made through your regular property tax bill. CEIP is transferrable to new owners.

Eligible upgrades for residential properties include:

- Doors, windows, insulation, and air sealing
- Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems
- Lighting improvements
- Renewable energy systems, including solar PV and solar thermal
- Water heating upgrades

To learn more about eligible projects or how to apply, visit myceip.ca/sturgeon, scan the QR code below with your smartphone, or call 1-888-506-9996.

CEIP Commercial & Farm Benefits

- Low interest rates. CEIP offers below-market interest rates (4.7 per cent).
- Long repayment terms. Upgrades can be amortized for up to 20-years. Longer repayment terms mean lower annual payments.

- CEIP financing is assigned to the property, not the property owner. CEIP repayments are made through regular property tax bill. CEIP is transferrable to new owners.

Eligible Commercial & Farm Upgrades Include

- Doors, windows, insulation and air sealing
- Heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems
- Lighting Improvements
- Renewable energy, including solar PV and solar thermal
- Water heating upgrades
- Commercial kitchen
- Motors and drives

To learn more about eligible projects or how to apply, visit myceip.ca/sturgeon, scan the QR code below with your smartphone, or call 1-888-506-9996.

CEIP (residential and commercial) is administered by Alberta Municipalities in partnership with Sturgeon County. Grant funding from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities offsets initial residential program administration costs and helps offer low-interest CEIP financing to residents.

FOR MORE ON THE
COUNTY'S PARKS
PROJECTS AND TO
ACCESS THE OPEN
SPACE PLAN, SCAN
THIS QR CODE.



FROM RIDING LESSONS TO RECOVERY: A RANCH MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Paradise Acres Ranch honoured with Sturgeon County's Excellence in Agriculture Award



A chance meeting over chicken wire led a Sturgeon County family and a visionary to join forces and transform an equine ranch into a place for healing.

In 2019, Lee and Bobby Brochu moved their Paradise Acres Ranch from Slave Lake to Sturgeon County. Lee had grown up west of Morinville, and the couple wanted to return to the area where his relatives still live to raise children of their own.

The Brochus were content to run their equestrian operation as a welcoming place for riding, lessons, and horse boarding. But along came Jocelyn LaCoste, a horse lover searching for free chicken wire.

LaCoste and the Brochus started chatting and LaCoste ended up buying a horse the Brochus had inherited with their new land.

That horse was the start of a friendship, which grew through numerous conversations.

Bobby says they were aware of the challenges many people face with mental health and had experienced firsthand how horses can make a meaningful difference. Jocelyn recalls their initial discussions.

"I vividly remember us sitting down at the kitchen table, and we were like, 'What can we do to help the community? How can we provide the services that are so necessary through the power of the horses?'"

**"YOU KNOW YOU
ARE MAKING A
DIFFERENCE."**

Bobby and Lee were captivated by the idea. With the land and fields to produce hay for feed, they were deeply motivated by a genuine desire to make a positive difference in the lives of others.

People from all walks of life, from youngsters to veterans to seniors, now connect with their horses to work through anxiety, addictions, and recovery.

One early participant stands out.

"A young girl came that felt that her life was not worthy of being part of this world," said Bobby.

"We started her out just working with the horses and spending some time reflecting on herself with the horses."

"The second visit was a session that I did with her riding through the field and then from there on, I feel like that was a really big shift," Bobby remembers.

Eventually, the young teen created videos on her experiences with the horses.

Today, LaCoste is the ranch's manager and trainer. The herd has grown to 36 and equine therapy is now a primary focus at this Sturgeon County ranch. It's a popular venue for people seeking alternative therapy. More than 1,000 people from across Alberta connected with Paradise Acres' four-legged therapists in the past year.

The ranch's success was recently recognized by Sturgeon County with an Excellence in Agriculture Award, paying tribute to businesses who demonstrate excellence in what they do and who help to improve the environment, local communities, and the economy.

Bobby says they take great pride in being recognized for their role in transforming a traditional horse-riding facility into a space that offers meaningful benefits to the community.

"It's exciting, it almost drives you to push even harder," says Jocelyn on receiving the county award.

"You know you are making a difference."



Share the Harvest combines start rolling with the wave of a Canadian flag

LOCAL FIELDS FEED GLOBAL NEEDS

There's no question that Sturgeon County has plenty of caring, selfless residents who work tirelessly to make a difference in their community—truly demonstrating the spirit of neighbours helping neighbours. But there are also local organizations making an impact on an even larger scale.

Share the Harvest and Harvest 4 Hunger are two initiatives rooted in local farmlands that are making a global impact. Both organizations recently held their annual harvest events to celebrate the contributions of project supporters.

Share the Harvest, now in its 23rd year, is a grassroots project that brings together local farmers, agri-businesses, individual sponsors, and volunteers to grow and harvest crops with proceeds going to the Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFGB), a partnership of 15 Christian church organizations working to combat hunger in developing countries.

The harvest takes place on 280-acres of land donated by Suncor, located within Sturgeon County, making the region a key player in this humanitarian effort. Farmers donate their time, equipment, and expertise, while supporters can sponsor an acre through the Grow Hope campaign.

"We had another great event this year, with folks coming out to witness the harvest, enjoy a free BBQ, and even ride in a combine," said project director Shaun Galloway. "We look forward to this event every year because it's a great way for people to get a hands-on look at how local efforts can make a global impact."

Harvest 4 Hunger, led by Bernie Prefontaine, is another community-driven project that, like Share the Harvest, donates the entire proceeds from one year's crop to the CFGB. The project was inspired by a century-old family farm and the legacy of the late Leo Seguin of Westlock, Alberta, whose motto, "Place the concerns of others before your own," continues to guide the initiative.

The '4' in Harvest 4 Hunger holds personal significance: the farm is located 4 miles east of Legal, Bernie is the 4th generation to farm the land, both he and his wife come from families of 4 children—and they have 4 children of their own!

"I'm beside myself with the enthusiasm and interest of businesses and local residents wanting to take part in this," said Bernie. "Everyone is so willing to help—with everything from fuel to equipment—it's just unbelievable and I'm so grateful and so proud to be part of this operation."

Thanks to overwhelming support from local businesses, volunteers, and donors, most project costs are covered, allowing nearly all crop proceeds to go directly to CFGB's Peace and Development Fund. Donations are eligible to be matched by the Canadian government, multiplying their impact.

A common thread through both of these initiatives is the gratitude felt by organizers and supporters alike. As Shaun puts it, "We couldn't pull this together without the generosity of our agri-business partners and the selfless work of area farmers. Their willingness to contribute to this cause and

the 'git 'er done' spirit is amazing!"

For more information or to get involved, visit sharetheharvest.ca and harvest4hunger.ca, or follow their Facebook accounts.



Bernie and Colleen Prefontaine



MASTERING THE FUTURE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES IN THE COUNTY

It's no secret that the County's Emergency Services department undertakes lifesaving work every day. Whether it's a small incident or a full-blown wildfire emergency response, County residents can rest easy knowing the Emergency Services team—which includes fire and enforcement services—has their back.

The frequency, complexity, and severity of emergency situations has evolved over time. Since 2015, emergency incidents in the County have increased from approximately 400 incidents to over 1,000 in 2024.

That's why Emergency Services is taking a proactive approach to setting the County up for emergency response success now and into the future.

Sturgeon County Council recently accepted a Fire Master Plan for future planning—a comprehensive roadmap to strengthen emergency services and ensure the safety of residents as the community grows and evolves. The plan provides a framework for short- and long-term emergency service planning, outlining potential strategies to help

improve fire protection, emergency response, staffing, infrastructure and training over the next two decades.

"The master plan gives us a solid foundation to grow the future of the County's emergency services. It provides potential strategies and approaches we can take over the next 5, 10, 20 years that will help ensure the community is prepared to respond to the changing needs that come with the growth and development of the region," says Sturgeon County Fire Chief Chad Moore. "We are excited for the future and continuing to deliver high-quality service to residents and businesses."

VIEW THE FIRE MASTER PLAN AND LEARN MORE ABOUT STURGEON COUNTY FIRE SERVICES BY VISITING [STURGEONCOUNTY.CA/FIRE-SERVICES](https://sturgeoncounty.ca/fire-services) OR SCANNING THE QR CODE.



YES ACADEMY 2025: IGNITING YOUTH PASSION FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES



Ask a teenager about last summer and you might hear of new adventures, hobbies, or memorable moments with friends. This is certainly the case for a group of 21 Sturgeon County youth, who all have plenty to talk about when recalling their summer activities in 2025.

Sturgeon County held its inaugural Youth Emergency Services (YES) Academy—a three-day, two-night immersive experience that left a lasting impact on participants aged 14 to 17. Designed for those curious about careers in emergency services, the academy offered a rare, behind-the-scenes look into the world of first responders.

From the moment recruits arrived, the excitement was palpable. They stepped into the shoes of emergency professionals through real-life simulations, physical challenges and interactive presentations. The academy wasn't just about observing—it was about doing.

Highlights from the 2025 program included:

- Live firefighting drills at professional training facilities
- K9 demonstrations with RCMP Police Dog Services
- Control tactics sessions led by local peace officers
- Military gear showcases and hands-on equipment demos
- Presentations from Emergency Medical Services, STARS Air Ambulance, and specialized RCMP units

Recruits didn't just learn—they truly lived the experience. Sleeping onsite, participating in early morning physical training, and working as a team fostered discipline, leadership, and personal growth. For many, it was a transformative journey that sparked new ambitions and lifelong friendships.

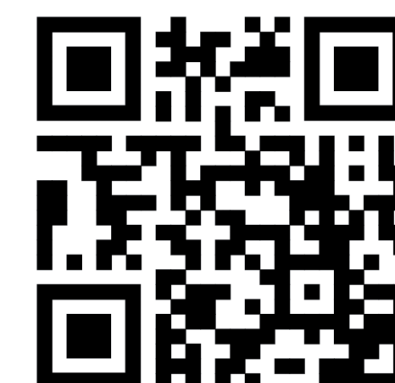
For Liam Sullivan, a 16-year-old participant who hopes to one day join the RCMP, the

experience was worthwhile. "I especially enjoyed having the opportunity to talk to and learn from law enforcement. I wish the camp could have been longer!" he said.

The experience was equally fulfilling for parents who supported their child's participation in the camp. Liam's mom, Patricia Sullivan, says "it was lovely to see him be able to try something he really wants to do" and that the experience has solidified his interest in pursuing a future career with the RCMP.

For those who missed out this year, don't worry—YES Academy will be back! Stay tuned for details on YES Academy 2026 and don't miss the chance to be a part of this community-building initiative and take the first step towards a career that makes a difference!

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT YES ACADEMY BY VISITING [STURGEONCOUNTY.CA/YES-ACADEMY](https://sturgeoncounty.ca/yes-academy) OR SCANNING THE QR CODE.



EXPLORING OPTIONS FOR FUTURE WASTE MANAGEMENT

Early steps toward a waste strategy

Sturgeon County is considering the development of a Waste Management Strategy to guide how the community's waste is collected and managed in the future. As part of the early planning, the County is consulting with residents who volunteered through a public call to share their perspectives on a future waste strategy. The County wants to better understand community priorities and

preferences regarding waste services, such as recycling, composting, and disposal options. That feedback will help shape the programs and initiatives the County may implement.

Residents are encouraged to check Sturgeon County's website as more updates on this project become available.

WE INVITED STURGEON COUNTY RESIDENTS TO SEND IN PHOTOS OF THEIR PETS IN THE LAST ISSUE OF COUNTY CONNECTIONS. HERE ARE THE ENTRIES AND THE WINNERS!

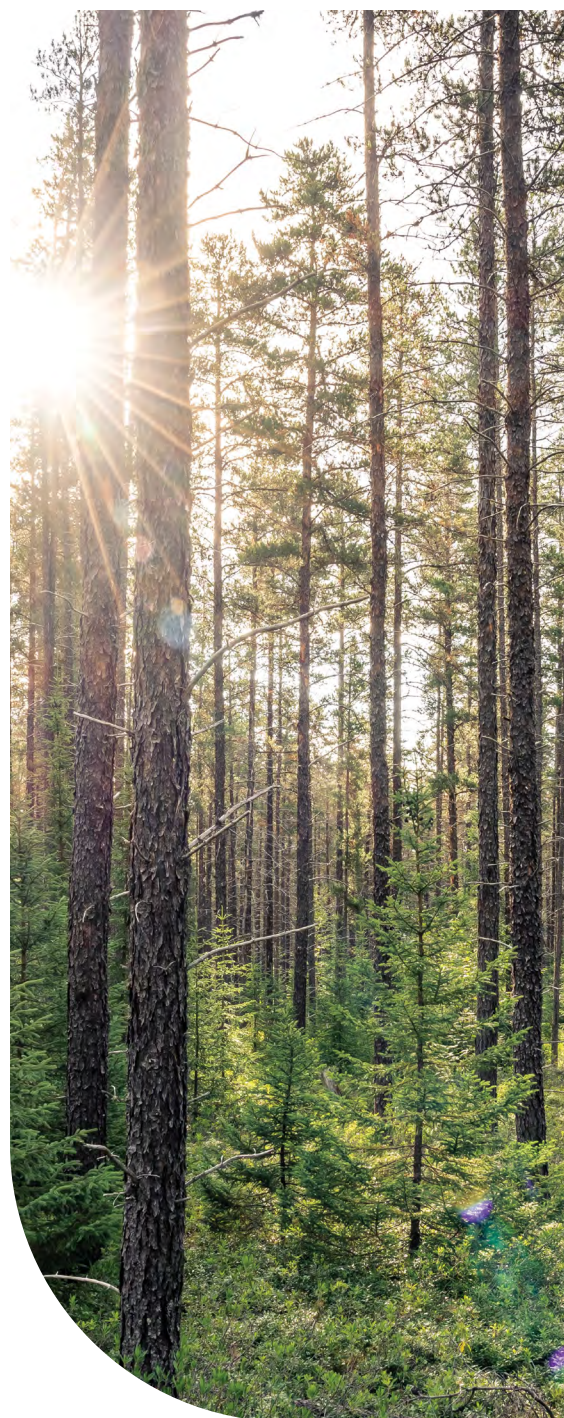
PET PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS!
Hachi & Luna!

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO ENTERED!



PROJECT FOREST

COLLABORATION MEETS STEWARDSHIP



As 2025 draws to a close, Sturgeon County is celebrating another year of progress on its ambitious rewilding project – Project Forest – at the Sandy Lake Wilderness Area. In partnership with Pembina Pipeline Corporation (Pembina) and non-profit organization Project Forest, the initiative is restoring vital habitats, supporting local ecosystems, and deepening ties with Indigenous partners.

The project at the Sandy Lake Wilderness Area will cover over **22 hectares** and plant **42,000 seedlings** northwest of Edmonton and adjacent to Alexander First Nation's traditional territory. Efforts focus on adding biodiversity and improving soil health, ensuring that Sandy Lake remains a thriving natural refuge for generations to come.

A cornerstone of the planning and development of Sandy Lake Wilderness Area is collaboration. Pembina, a long-time supporter of Project Forest and sole funder of this project, recently extended their partnership for three more years with a \$1.5 million investment that funds rewilding projects and builds Project Forest's organizational capacity. Together, Sturgeon County, Pembina, and Project Forest are turning shared values into action — strengthening ecosystems, fostering inclusion, and creating a legacy of stewardship.

As work continues into 2026, Sturgeon County invites residents to stay engaged, learn about the project's progress, and take part in shaping a greener, more resilient future.



Photo Credit: Adam Becker - @air2adam; Intercept Photo

SNOWMOBILING IN STURGEON COUNTY

Outdoor activities are a staple Alberta pastime over the long winter months. And what better way to enjoy the season and the County's wide-open spaces than snowmobiling? But, before going for a ride, residents must remember there are guidelines that need to be followed—especially when it comes to where they ride.

Snowmobiles can be ridden on private property as long as the landowner has given their express permission. Without it, riders could be charged under the *Petty Trespass Act*, which carries a \$600 fine.

A few other things to keep in mind:

- Riding on private, unfamiliar land can be dangerous. Fences, buried structures, or hidden debris under the snow can cause serious injuries. If the terrain is unfamiliar, don't take the risk.
- Stick to established snowmobile trails. Off-trail riding can damage crops, harm the land, and upset fellow County residents.
- Enjoy wildlife from a distance. Never chase or approach animals.

By riding responsibly, snowmobilers help protect the land, wildlife and their own safety. Following these simple guidelines helps keep winter activities fun and respectful for everyone.



FIND OUT MORE ABOUT
ENFORCEMENT SERVICES AT
STURGEONCOUNTY.CA/ENFORCEMENT
OR BY SCANNING THE QR CODE.



ENHANCING PUBLIC SAFETY, ENJOYMENT AND STEWARDSHIP IN STURGEON COUNTY PARKS



On September 9, 2025, Sturgeon County Council passed Bylaw 1668/25, a new regulation designed to protect and enhance the use of public parks across the County. As residents take advantage of the community's green spaces for outdoor activities—whether it's walking the dog, enjoying a picnic, or exploring trails—this bylaw helps ensure parks remain safe, clean and welcoming for everyone.

A central focus of the bylaw is the enhancement of environmental protections to reduce harm and impacts on vegetation, waterbodies, and wildlife.

Below are key features of the bylaw residents need to be aware of.

Park hours

- Parks are open daily from 5:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.
- Pathways are open 24-hours, unless posted otherwise.
- Temporary closures may occur from time-to-time for maintenance or safety reasons.

Activities that require County approval

To maintain safety and environmental integrity, certain activities are not allowed in parks and green spaces without the County's permission (for more information or to request permission for these activities, please contact osas@sturgeoncounty.ca):

- Camping or overnight parking
- Hosting events or operating a business
- Using motorized boats or aircraft
- Building structures or placing signs
- Discharging firearms or fireworks

Pets in parks

- Dogs must be leashed in designated parks, as marked by signage.
- Owners must clean up after their pets.

Fire safety

- Fires are only allowed in County-provided fire pits.
- Never leave fires unattended or dispose of hot materials improperly.
- Fire bans may be issued during high-risk conditions. Visit SturgeonCounty.ca for the most current information on fire restrictions and bans.

Waste management

- Use garbage bins where available.
- If none are provided, pack waste for later disposal in a bin.
- Dumping waste in bodies of water is strictly prohibited.

Wheeled devices

- Bicycles, e-scooters and similar devices must have:
 - A bell or horn
 - Hand brakes
 - Lights and reflectors if used at night

Smoking, vaping and alcohol

- No alcohol unless approved for a designated area or event.
- No smoking or vaping within five meters of playgrounds, sports fields, pathways, or events.

Fishing

- A valid Alberta fishing licence is required.
- Dispose of fishing gear properly to protect wildlife.

Penalties

Fines range from \$100 to \$1,000, depending on the violation. Examples include:

- \$200 for vandalism or entering parks after hours
- \$500 for unauthorized fires or firearm use
- \$300 for disturbing wildlife or vegetation
- \$100 for not cleaning up after pets

Enforcement and review

- Bylaw officers and RCMP may issue tickets.
- Repeat offences within two years may result in double fines.
- The bylaw will be reviewed every five years to ensure it remains effective.

FOR MORE INFORMATION,
VISIT STURGEONCOUNTY.CA
OR SCAN THE QR CODE.



CELEBRATING KINDNESS: the new Sturgeon Regional Positive Ticketing Program spreads smiles across the County!

Earlier this year, Sturgeon County proudly launched the Sturgeon Regional Positive Ticketing Program, and the results so far have been nothing short of inspiring. Starting May 1, officers from the RCMP and municipal enforcement teams, along with Sturgeon County Municipal Enforcement, hit the streets—not to issue warnings, but to celebrate youth who set a good example for others and make a difference in their community.

So far, the program has seen about 700 positive tickets handed out to local youth who demonstrated outstanding citizenship. Whether it was helping a neighbour, following safety rules, volunteering, or simply showing kindness, these youngsters were recognized for their contributions to a stronger, more caring community.

Each ticket came with a reward—a gift certificate redeemable at local businesses for treats and goodies. But the real reward was the sense of pride and encouragement felt by young recipients, their families, and the officers who had the privilege of acknowledging their efforts.

The success of the Positive Ticketing Program is a testament to the power of recognition and the importance of lifting up and supporting youth who are modeling positive, community-building actions. The County is excited to build on the momentum of this program, fostering stronger relationships between young people and local enforcement, and reminding us all that small acts of kindness truly do matter.

Congratulations to all those who have been recognized so far—keep up the great work!



FOR MORE ON POLICING AND ENFORCEMENT IN STURGEON COUNTY, VISIT [STURGEONCOUNTY.CA/ENFORCEMENT](https://www.sturgeoncounty.ca/enforcement) OR SCAN THE QR CODE.



INDUSTRIAL HEARTLAND CAREER FORUM WINS

Sturgeon County is proud to be part of the regional partisanship that was awarded the 2025 Minister's Award for Municipal and Public Library Excellence in the Partnership category for its work on the Industrial Heartland Career Forum. This annual award program celebrates municipalities that deliver innovative solutions, streamlined services, and creative partnerships.

Sturgeon County collaborated with Fort Saskatchewan, Lamont County, Strathcona County, and Alberta's Industrial Heartland Association to host the inaugural forum in January 2025. More than 500 people attended the event, which connected students, job seekers, and career-changers with opportunities in the trades, manufacturing, energy, and other

sectors. Organizers worked to make the event accessible by offering free transportation, childcare, interpretation, and recorded sessions for later viewing.

Spearheaded by Sturgeon County's Economic Innovation and Growth team, the forum reinforces Sturgeon's commitment to supporting residents and business owners and strengthening the local economy through workforce development.

With the event's success, it has been confirmed that Sturgeon will host the forum again in 2026. Watch the Sturgeon County event page for opportunities to get involved.



FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT [STURGEONCOUNTY.CA](https://www.sturgeoncounty.ca) OR SCAN THE QR CODE.



SHOP LOCAL THIS HOLIDAY SEASON



As the holiday season approaches, there's no better time to support the heart of our community — the local shops, artisans, producers, and small businesses that make Sturgeon County unique. Shopping local isn't just about convenient gifts; it's about investing in our community, our economy, and our shared future.

Buying from local Sturgeon County businesses means more dollars stay in our community, supporting jobs, infrastructure, and local vibrancy. Sturgeon County's Shop Local initiative highlights fresh food producers, artisans, rural experiences, and more. Learn more at <https://www.sturgeoncounty.ca/shop-local/>.

What You Can Discover Right Here

- Local growers and food producers — Explore cheese, farm-fresh produce, preserves, and other edible gifts grown or made in Sturgeon County.

- Artisans & makers — From pottery, skin care, woodcrafts, and holiday décor, our region is home to many creative entrepreneurs.

- Retail gems — Retailers serving Sturgeon County offer gifts and supplies with local service and personality.

Tips for Holiday Shopping That Strengthens Our Community

- Plan ahead — Locals often have limited stock or custom options; reach out early.

- Bundle your purchases — Support multiple cottage-food makers or artisans from one shop.

- Ask about sourcing — Knowing where things come from helps you tell the story behind the gift.

- Wrap with local flair — Use locally made paper, fabric, or embellishments to add a personal touch.

- Use local services — Combine your shopping with meals at nearby cafés or stops at other small businesses to boost foot traffic for all.

By choosing to shop local this holiday season, neighbours can support neighbours and help preserve the unique character of our rural community. This year, make every gift count and support the people who grow, craft, and create right here where we live.

SCAN THE QR CODE TO VIEW A LIST OF LOCAL BUSINESSES.



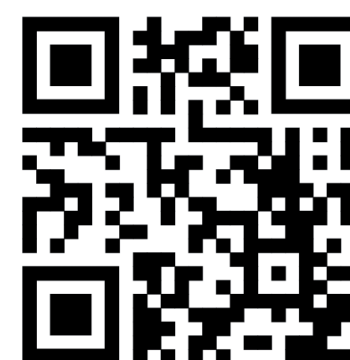
BLUE LIGHTS ADDED TO BOOST ROADSIDE SAFETY

MAINTENANCE VEHICLES WILL HAVE BLUE AND AMBER LIGHTS

Alberta has introduced new rules allowing maintenance vehicles to use blue lights alongside amber lights. This change makes certain provincial and municipal maintenance vehicles, such as snowplows, remain more visible in poor weather and low light, helping drivers see them sooner. Increased visibility, in turn, improves safety for Sturgeon County roadside workers and all road users alike.

In addition to the flashing lights, the new Slow Down and Move over law through the *Alberta Traffic Safety Amendment Act* require drivers to slow down to 60 km/h (or the posted speed limit, whichever is lower) and move over a lane, when safe to do so, when passing any vehicle with flashing lights, not just emergency vehicles.

SCAN THE QR CODE TO VIEW THE TRAFFIC SAFETY ACT.



WINTER/SPRING 2026 PROGRAMS

Scan the QR code below or visit
SturgeonCounty.ca/Programs to view
our Winter program guide!



Event Calendar

Stay connected and discover what's happening in our community! The Sturgeon County Event Calendar is your go-to resource for local events from neighborhood clean-ups and cultural festivals to public meetings, art shows, and charity fundraisers.

Residents, organizations, and local businesses are invited to submit their events at no cost. The calendar helps bring people together and keeps everyone informed about what's going on around in the community.



Add your event today!

Scan the QR code with your mobile device
or visit sturgeoncounty.ca/event-calendar

