

Welcome home to High Level, portions of Mackenzie County near High Level, Meander River, Bushe River and Chateh



***** EVACUATION ORDER ENDS *****

Evacuation alert remains

The threat of wildfire still exists in the High Level area. You are still in a high risk area with very active wildfire. Be prepared: have a full tank of gas in your vehicle. Have a few days' worth of food and water.

Be safe

You are returning to an area that was affected by wildfire. Returning home may be stressful and traumatic. This handout will help you know what to do and where to get help.

First responders have worked very hard to protect our communities. We are grateful to them, and to everyone who is working to get our communities up and running again. Some services may be limited at first, but health care, police and other essential services are already in place.

You should stay out of burned areas – they can be dangerous. Please respect any restricted areas and any directions given to you by first responders or utilities workers.

High Level Mayor Crystal McAteer
Mackenzie County Reeve Joshua Knelsen
Dene Tha' First Nation Chief James Ahnassay

Things you might see

While you were away, firefighters may have taken some actions around your homes and properties in case the wildfire entered the community.

You may notice:

- propane tanks and BBQs in your driveway – they were moved away from your home to make sure they didn't ignite or explode during the forest fire and endanger your homes
- outdoor furniture on your front lawn – items can catch flying embers and start fires on your decks and in your yards
- coloured tape on your homes, door, trees or shrubs – these were used to alert officials of potential fire risks around your home

You can move your items back into your yards, but please keep barbecues away from the house or from under trees. You can barbecue as usual.

Please leave the coloured tape on your property for now. In the coming weeks and months, we suggest contacting your local fire department or FireSmart Canada (firesmartcanada.ca) to get advice on steps you can take to better fire proof your home in the future.

Sprinklers and water tanks are still positioned around town. Please avoid them.

A wide dozer guard and fire break has been dug around the north and west sides of High Level to protect the town.



First steps when you return home:

- A fire ban and off-highway vehicle restriction remains in effect for the High Level area.
- Do not allow anyone to enter or play in areas damaged by fire.
 - There are many safety risks:
 - Pits filled with ash. They can be deep and hot.
 - Burned trees and branches. They can fall over at any time.
 - Burning roots. They can cause trees to fall.
- If you smell gas, exit your home IMMEDIATELY and call AltaGas Utilities at [1-866-222-2068](tel:1-866-222-2068) (24-hour emergency line).

- Check for electrical hazards such as exposed wires. Avoid contact with damaged or fallen power lines and poles. If there are any hazards, contact ATCO at [1-800-668-5506](tel:1-800-668-5506) (24-hours).
- Wildlife may have taken shelter in your home, garage or outbuildings. Leaving a door open will allow the animals to return on their own to their natural surroundings. Call a fish and wildlife officer at 1-800-642-3800 (24 hours) for animals that appear injured or unwilling to leave.

When you walk through your door:

- Check your gas, electricity and water to make sure they are working and contact your utility providers if you need to restore service.

Electricity (ATCO)

- Electricity service has been restored to the community.
- If the electricity in your home is off, please check your main electric panel and breaker.
- Simply move any tripped switches to the 'on' position may restore electricity.
- If this doesn't restore electricity to your home, call ATCO at [1-800-668-5506](tel:1-800-668-5506) (24-hours)
- **Billing:** Residential, farm, irrigation and small commercial electricity customers in the mandatory evacuation zones will not be billed for their electricity during the mandatory evacuation period from Monday, May 20 to Monday, June 3, 2019.

Natural gas

In Town of High Level: AltaGas Utilities

- The natural gas will be on unless you turned it off before you left.
- If off, relight your appliances according to manufacturer's instructions.
- If you need help relighting your appliances, call AltaGas Utilities at [1-866-222-2068](tel:1-866-222-2068) (24 hours).
- **Billing:** Customers will not be billed for natural gas during the mandatory evacuation period from Monday, May 20 to Monday, June 3, 2019.

In Mackenzie County and Bushe River: Northern Lights Gas Co-op

If you live outside of High Level and need help relighting your appliances, call Northern Lights Gas at 780-928-3881.

Water: drinking and household use

- We have tested the water throughout High Level and it is safe.
- You should run one of your taps for 1-3 minutes to refresh the taste of the water.
- You are able to drink, shower, do laundry and use your water as you normally would.
- Water restrictions are in place for the first week after re-entry. You can still hand-water outside plants and pots, but please conserve water so we won't put too much pressure on the system.
- A sprinkler ban is in effect until further notice. Water needs to be conserved for firefighting efforts and for household uses. Please don't water your lawn or wash your vehicles.
- If you do not have piped water and sewer services, check your water and sewer systems.

Boil water advisory – Meander River

Residents of Meander River should bring water to a full boil for at least one minute and let cool before using for drinking, brushing teeth and washing or preparing food. Water does not need to be boiled for bathing or washing clothes.

Fridges and freezers

- During the evacuation, High Level's power supply was disrupted for about 36 hours. Some food might have spoiled in refrigerators and freezers. Some frozen food may be okay.
- Throw out food that is not in sealed packages or cans.
- There are large green and black bins placed around the town. Please use them largely for spoiled food for the first 5 days, although general garbage can also be tossed. These bins will be checked and emptied daily.
- Spoiled food products may have impacted your refrigerator or freezer. Clean, sanitize, and deodorize your refrigerator and freezer once you have discarded the spoiled food. To do this:
 - First unplug the refrigerator and freezer.
 - Rinse or blow out the coils and compressors on the refrigerator and freezer.
 - To clean the inside, use soap and water and then rinse with clean water.
 - Sanitize the inside with a bleach/water mixture made by mixing 1 teaspoon of ordinary household bleach for every 4 cups of water. Pre-mixed sanitizers can also be purchased locally.
 - Leave the doors of the refrigerator and freezer open to help them dry out.
 - Once the appliance is dry, reconnect the power.
 - Wait until the inside temperature of your refrigerator has reached 4°C before restocking it with food.
 - Wait until your freezer temperature is at -18°C before restocking it with food.
- If you are considering discarding your fridge or freezer, please contact your insurance representative to discuss your coverage.

Garbage

- Regular pickup is not yet scheduled, and we don't want piled garbage to attract wild animals.
- Please don't put general waste in your usual garbage containers right now.
- Although the metal bins are largely for spoiled food products in the first 5 days after re-entry, your general waste can be tossed in them as well. Please don't toss any large items until regular garbage pickup re-starts or the town holds its spring cleanup event.
- If you have any questions about garbage, call [780-821-4012](tel:780-821-4012).
- If you see problem wild animals and bears, call a fish and wildlife officer at 1-800-642-3800 (24 hours).



Inside cleaning

- Do not start cleaning or throwing anything away until you contact your insurance company.
- Wash interior walls and hard surfaces with a steam cleaner or white vinegar.
- Wash or dry clean clothing, linens and bedding.

- Wash all movable items with a steam cleaner or microfibre cloth. This includes children's indoor toys.
- Disinfect and deodorize upholstery and fabric window treatments with spray deodorizing products available at most supermarkets. Do not use odour-masking sprays since they just cover up the problem and don't fix it.
- You can also steam items including carpets, window coverings, upholstered furniture and mattresses. Steam neutralizes the odour and carbon film left by forest fires.
- Consider having heating, ventilating and air conditioning units and all ductwork professionally cleaned to remove soot, ash and smoke residue. You can change filters when you first return home and then continue to replace them frequently.
- Remember to keep all receipts for cleaning and other expenses to provide to your insurance company for possible reimbursement.

Outside cleaning

- Pressure wash or scrub all exterior surfaces including walls, walks, drives, decks, windows and screens.
- Wash all children's outside toys, play structures and recreational equipment to remove any residual smoke and ash. Replace the sand in sandboxes with clean sand.
- Cut down and remove any trees around your property that have been damaged by fire.
- Do not water your lawn immediately upon return to reduce pressure on the water system.
- Wash your hands if they come in contact with ash.
- If you notice the residue of fire retardants on your property (red stains) use water or biodegradable household cleaners. Never use bleach to clean areas where fire retardants have been used.

Pets

- Staff from the Town of High Level will help reunite you with your pets.
- Pets will be reunited with their owners from 2 to 8 p.m. on Tuesday, June 4, the day after general re-entry.
- Please come to the Curling Rink Lobby at the High Level Arena Complex (10101 105 Ave. in High Level) where staff will help you with your pet.
- You will need to provide your address and ID.
- If you can't attend to pick up your pet, call 780-821-4012 to make arrangements.

Air quality

People with breathing difficulties may want to delay returning home until the air quality improves. Residents should continue to review the air quality statements issued by Environment Canada at https://weather.gc.ca/airquality/pages/provincial_summary/ab_e.html.

Insurance information

If you are insured:

Take the following steps:

- Assess and document the damage. Taking photos can be helpful.
- Call your insurance representative and/or company.
- List all damaged or destroyed items.
- If possible, assembly proofs of purchase, photos, receipts and warranties. Take photos of the damage and keep the damaged items unless they pose a health hazard.

- Keep all of the receipts related to cleanup, and if you've been ordered to leave your home, keep the receipts for your living expenses.
- Ask your insurance representative what living expenses you're entitled to be reimbursed for and for what period of time.

Insurance Bureau of Canada

If you can't remember who your provider is, or can't reach your insurance provider, contact the Insurance Bureau of Canada to help understand fire insurance coverage.

- Phone: [1-844-227-5422](tel:1-844-227-5422) (toll-free)
- Email: askibcwest@ibc.ca
- Web: ibc.ca/ab/disaster/alberta-wildfire

If you are not insured:

- For information on available assistance, check with:
- Government of Alberta: [310-4455](tel:310-4455)
- Canadian Red Cross: [1-800-565-4483](tel:1-800-565-4483) or www.redcross.ca

Health

- The Northwest Health Centre is open and ready to help you with emergency and medical needs.
- For health advice or information on health services, including mental health services, call Health Link at [811](tel:811) or [1-866-408-LINK](tel:1-866-408-LINK) (5465).
- If you are having a medical emergency, call 911 right away.

Mental health

- For those impacted by the Alberta wildfires, AHS has supports and resources in place to help you through these challenging times.
- Go to www.ahs.ca/wildfire or call the Mental Health Help Line 24/7 at [1-877-303-2642](tel:1-877-303-2642).

Schools

Please go to the Fort Vermillion School Division website for updates, <https://www.fvsd.ab.ca/>.

Childcare

- Free day camp services are available to help you while you're settling in.
 - Monday, June 3, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
 - Tuesday and Wednesday, June 4-5, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
 - Location: High Level Arena Complex, upstairs hall
 - 10101 105 Ave.
 - Ages: 3 – 11, all children must be potty trained
 - Meals provided (breakfast, lunch, and snacks)
- Please bring your Alberta Health Care card with you when you drop off and register.
- Contact: [780-821-4012](tel:780-821-4012) for more information.

Emergencies

If you have an emergency, call 911.

Employment questions

These contact centres can help if you have questions about your job.

- Employment Standards Contact Centre [1-877-427-3731](tel:1-877-427-3731)
- OHS Contact Centre [1-866-415-8690](tel:1-866-415-8690)
- Temporary Foreign Worker Helpline
 - South: [403-476-4540](tel:403-476-4540)
 - North: [780-644-2584](tel:780-644-2584)
 - Toll free: [310-000](tel:310-000) before either phone number (in Alberta).

- Alberta Labour & Immigration: <https://www.alberta.ca/labour-and-immigration.aspx>

Handy phone numbers:

High Level - http://highlevel.ca/	780-926-2201
Mackenzie County - https://www.mackenziecounty.com/	780-927-3718
Dene Tha' First Nation - https://denetha.ca/	780-841-1265 or 780-841-9572
Alberta Health Link	811
Alberta Government Information Line for evacuees – https://Emergency.Alberta.ca/	310-4455
Alberta Supports	1-877-644-9992 from 7:30 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday to Friday
ATCO	1-800-668-5506
AltaGas Utilities	1-866-222-2068
Northern Lights Gas	780-928-3881
Fortis Alberta	310-WIRE (9473)
Trans Alta	403-267-7110
TELUS Mobility	*611 on your TELUS mobile phone or 1-866-558-2273
TELUS Internet	Toll-free 1-888-811-2323
Shaw	Toll-free 1-888-472-2222
Bell Mobility	1-800-667-0123
Bell TV	1-888-797-8686

Questions or concerns

If you still have questions, please phone [780-821-4012](tel:780-821-4012) (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) and someone from the FCSS office (Family Community Social Services Office) can help.

We strongly encourage residents to call the above number rather than visit the town office with questions.

The municipal building is open, but understand it is still very active as a centre for fire operations, so people with urgent issues will be our priority.

If you need assistance in person, drop by the FCSS office.

- 10511 103 Street, High Level
- Hours: 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.