



M.D. of Foothills No. 31

# NEWS

Spring 2009, Issue 17

## Dark Sky Bylaw now in effect!

The Dark Sky Bylaw was passed on April 16<sup>th</sup> and is now in effect throughout the MD of Foothills. To review the new bylaw, check it out on the MD's Dark Sky website at [www.mdfoothills.com/DarkSky](http://www.mdfoothills.com/DarkSky).

With the bylaw now passed efforts are continuing with other aspects of the Initiative, including the enhancement of existing educational opportunities, and most recently the creation of the MD of Foothills Forums. The Forums are a web-based interactive community where members can post questions and comments regarding the Dark Sky Initiative. To join, go to [www.mdfoothillsforums.com](http://www.mdfoothillsforums.com) and open an account.

Highlights of the year ahead:

- The Anne and Sandy Cross Conservation Area partnering with the MD to become a Dark Sky Nocturnal Preserve, recognized by the IDA
- Celebration of the UNESCO International Year of Astronomy
- Continued discussion with neighbouring urban municipalities regarding the possibility of a Dark Sky region
- Further updates and program enhancements to the Dark Sky educational outreach program
- Municipal building retrofits
- Investigation of retrofitting programmes for residents and businesses within the MD of Foothills

You are invited and encouraged to join the forum and/or our mailing list to keep track of the Dark Sky Initiative, how it affects you and what you can do to help "clean up" the night skies over the MD of Foothills.



## Keeping Our Skies Dark!

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## Doing Business in the MD

All businesses operating within the M.D. of Foothills are encouraged to contact the Development Department to review the necessity of permits.

Guidelines for requirements and criteria defining the types of operations can be found under the Home Occupations heading at: [www.mdfoothills.com/Development](http://www.mdfoothills.com/Development) or, contact the Development Department at (403) 652-2341.

## Signage

Before you put your sign up, please take the time to review the guidelines for signs within the M.D. at: [www.mdfoothills.com/Development](http://www.mdfoothills.com/Development) or contact the Development Department at (403) 652-2341

## Lost and Found Pets

Keep your pets safe by registering them with [www.petlynx.net](http://www.petlynx.net) an automated recovery system. The MD does not have a licensing tag system, therefore [www.petlynx.net](http://www.petlynx.net) is a valuable service that can assist with lost and found animals. We recommend that all your pets have an ID tag with a phone number attached to allow a successful return of your pet.

## Highway 2A Industrial Area Structure Plan



The process of amending the Highway 2A Industrial Area Structure Plan (H2AIASP) and the Aldersyde Area Structure Plan (AASP) into one statutory planning document with an expanded plan area is moving forward. In mid-March the MD of Foothills invited technical stakeholders - including civic and business leaders, government and quasi-judicial delegates, and utility company representatives - to a two-day technical planning workshop. Through the initial workshop we collected data and received input on the direction that the future plan should take from a technical perspective. That information was then presented to the general public in an open house format for review and input on March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at the Highwood Memorial Centre.

More than eighty MD residents and landowners attended the public open house and provided MD staff with valuable input regarding next steps in drafting an updated plan. This information is being used in developing the draft plan that will be presented to technical stakeholders and the general public in the second phase of consultation and plan amendment. After that, a public hearing will be scheduled with the MD of Foothills Council for final adoption of the new plan.

Please feel free to review further details of the planning process and provide us with additional input by visiting the project website at [www.mdfoothills.com/h2ai](http://www.mdfoothills.com/h2ai) or by participating in discussions on our online web forums at [www.mdfoothillsforums.com](http://www.mdfoothillsforums.com). Should you have any questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Ryan Payne at (403) 652-2341 or email us at [H2AIASP@mdfoothills.com](mailto:H2AIASP@mdfoothills.com).

Thank you to everyone who took the time to participate in the workshops and attend the open house. Your opinions matter and your input is valued in providing the MD with direction for developing a planning framework that will guide the future development of the Highway 2A industrial corridor.

## 9-1-1 Addresses

The Municipal District of Foothills No. 31 assigned 9-1-1 addresses to more than 9,000 homes and businesses within the municipality last year. These addresses should be attached to your telephone number in the Provincial 9-1-1 Database. We believe that 5 to 10 percent of the 9-1-1 addresses *are not* registered correctly – especially in subdivided quarter sections. Please take 5 minutes to check your telephone account.

If you are a Telus customer, please check your account online at [www.telus.com](http://www.telus.com). If your telephone service is provided by someone other than Telus, please contact your provider and confirm that your new 9-1-1 address is in the Provincial 9-1-1 Database.

### What to do if your service address is wrong.

Please send an email to [911@mdfoothills.com](mailto:911@mdfoothills.com) with the following information, and we will forward it to your provider, requesting that they change their database immediately.

- Name as shown on the telephone bill
- Telephone number
- Service address as shown on your account
- Legal description of your property (include plan, block & lot if there is one)
- Actual 9-1-1 address for your property
- If there is more than one home on the property, provide full information for each one.

## Assessment Department

### How Assessments are Prepared

An appraisal is an estimate of value. Assessors value properties in Alberta using a method called mass appraisal. Mass appraisal techniques allow assessors to accurately value a large number of properties in a short period of time.

### Data Collection

Before an assessment can be prepared, property data must be collected. Sources of information are property owners, Alberta Land Titles, the real estate Multiple Listing Service and financial institutions. Detailed information about each property is also gathered by making on-site visits. The assessors visit all properties with building construction in progress, properties that have sold, as well as newly subdivided parcels. As part of our requirement to re-inspect each property in the M.D. of Foothills every five years we plan to visit approximately 2,000 properties this year.

With the number of inspections that need to be done each year, the assessors are unable to make appointments. We will arrive at your door unannounced in the hope that you may be home. In the event no one is home we will make note of any progress or changes visible from the exterior of the buildings.

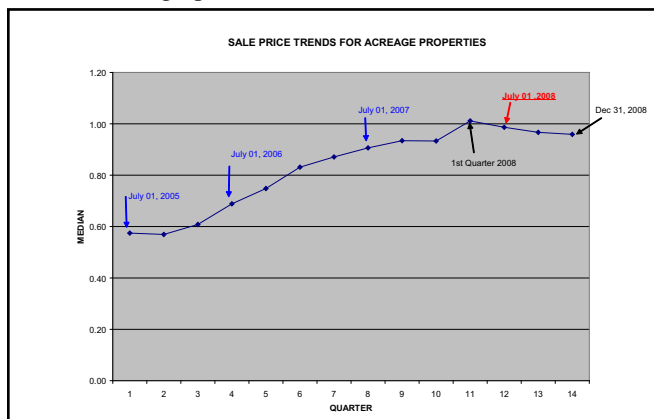
The assessors drive M.D. Foothills marked vehicles and have I.D. cards with them. Inspections are done 12 months of the year. We encourage you to take the time to go over your assessment with them if they come to your house for an inspection visit.

*Thank you for your past and future cooperation with the assessment process.*

## 2008 Property Assessments For 2009 Taxes

Compared to surrounding cities, towns and villages in southern Alberta; acreage sales in the MD of Foothills are showing a delayed softening of the market.

The legislated date of assessment valuation is July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008 for 2009 taxes for all properties within Alberta. The MD of Foothills acreage property sales peaked in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2007 and started softening to our valuation date of July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008, but not lower than our previous assessment with a valuation date of July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007 as you can see in the graph here.



The MD of Foothills assessments have an average market value increase of approximately +10% from July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007 to July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008. The acreage market continued to soften after our valuation date, but the assessment must reflect a value as of July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008.

## Agricultural Services

### Road Side Weed Spraying Program

The Agricultural Services for the M.D. will commence the road side weed spraying program in June 2009 and continue until September 2009.

### RFID

The MD has recently purchased two RFID Tag Readers for rental to MD ratepayers. Producers will be able to read their tags and upon returning the tag reader will be able to download this information and forward it directly to CCIA Canadian Livestock Tracking System in order to age verify their calves. The Tag Readers will be available to rent for \$25.00 per day plus GST, with the renter being responsible for any repairs resulting from damages.

### Agricultural Assistance Available

Assistance is available to the MD ratepayers with regards to weed problems, pasture management and other various concerns with their land and live-stock management. The Agricultural Fieldman and the Assistant Agricultural Fieldman are available, through appointment, to assist you with your concerns.

For further information contact Ron Stead or Faith Turner at 403-652-2423.



## Agricultural Service Board Scholarship

We offer an annual scholarship to rate payers whose children are planning to attend a post secondary institution in the faculty of Agriculture or a related field of study.

The application deadline for this program is May 31, 2009. For more information view [www.mdfoothills.com](http://www.mdfoothills.com).

## Volunteer Fire Fighting Opportunities

Are you interested in volunteer fire fighting in or near the communities of Priddis, Blackie or Cayley?

Give us a call at 403-652-2341 and ask about this rewarding service. The Foothills' Fire Department provides the training and equipment.



# Are You FireSmart?

## Protect Your Home From Wildfires

### Get Ready

Properly preparing your home and community doesn't guarantee that you will not incur fire damage, but it does reduce the risks. Make sure your home is insured. Without it, you will suffer a loss. Some of these preventative measures cost very little and reduce fire dangers by a great deal; others require planning and a long-term commitment to change. Let's look at these areas that, if properly managed, may reduce the damage to your property should a wildfire strike.

### Site Preparation

#### Any kind of vegetation is combustible.

Mature trees, shrubs, grass, even your woodpile, are fuels to a wildfire. Their beauty and practicality vanish in an advancing blaze. Managing the space around your house and buildings is of prime importance.

#### Do you have a cleared zone around your house and buildings?

The first 10 metres of space around your home is your "First Priority." It's the most critical area to consider for fire protection. A good fuel free space gives your fire team a fighting chance to save your home from an advancing fire. A home without a good fuel free space around it can make firefighting difficult, if not impossible.

#### What to do?

Remove any shrubs, trees, deadfall or woodpiles from this area and keep your grass mowed and watered.

#### How FireSmart is your "Second Priority" zone?

From 10 to 30 metres out from your home is the second priority zone. In this zone, you need to reduce and manage potential fuel sources so that combustion cannot be supported.

#### What to do?

Remove trees and debris that would support the crowning of a spreading fire. The crowns of individual trees should not touch. Remove or reduce the number of evergreen trees in the area. Evergreens such as pine and spruce are much more combustible than deciduous trees. In fact, aspen, poplar and birch all have very low flammability rates. Remove deadfall, thick shrubbery and mature trees that might provide the opportunity for a ground fire to climb up into the forest canopy. Once a fire crowns out, it's virtually unstoppable. Because fires spread more easily up hill, it's important to extend the second priority zone precautions further on downhill slopes and on windward exposures.

#### Can you extend your FireSmart maintenance plan to the "Third Priority" zone?

The third priority zone begins 30 metres from any structure and extends to a distance of 100 metres and beyond. The idea here is not to remove all combustible fuels from the forest, but to thin the area so fires will be of low intensity and more easily extinguished.

#### What to do?

Thin or reduce shrubs and trees that make up the under story, retain fire resistant deciduous trees, and manage the canopy to reduce the potential for a crowning fire.

#### These are...

simple economical steps anyone can take to create a FireSmart home, community or business site. For these actions to be effective, they must be maintained.

## Home and business construction

Our second set of precautions deals with the building materials and construction techniques. While it may not be practical or economical to apply all of them to an existing structure, many of these precautions are easily made. Others can be included in long-term maintenance or renovation plans or incorporated in new dwellings as they are designed and constructed.

### Is your roof FireSmart?

The most fire resistant roofing materials are metal, asphalt, and ULC treated shakes. Untreated wooden shakes and shingles provide no resistance. They are ideal fuels for a roaring wildfire. Even if your plans for re-roofing are years away, it's still valuable to ensure that your existing roof is free of combustible debris and that no combustible materials such as overhanging trees or vegetation provide fuel for airborne sparks and embers.

### Are your exterior walls FireSmart?

Materials such as stucco, metal, brick and concrete offer superior fire resistance to wildfire. Logs and heavy timbers are a little less effective, and wood and vinyl siding offer very little protection.

### Is your home free of fire accumulators?

If you are designing your home, it's wise to reduce areas that offer protection or hiding places for airborne sparks and embers. Closed-in eaves and screened soffits are better than those left open or unscreened. Decks and balconies that are not closed in and screened also pose potential hazards. Fire suppression crews call all these open recesses fire accumulators. These areas increase the vulnerability of a structure to wildfire.

### Are your doors and windows FireSmart?

Tempered glass has good resistance to damage by fire. Double or thermal pane window construction provides moderate protection, but single pane glass provides virtually no protection.

*Excerpt from the Home Owners Firesmart Manual, Partners in Protection and Alberta Sustainable Development*

For more information: <http://www.partnersinprotection.ab.ca/downloads>



*This home's close proximity to combustibles, unrated wood shakes and vinyl siding creates an opportunity for fire to spread easily.*

*Source: Firesmart Manual.*

## Hogg Park

Hogg Park is ready for you! A new camp kitchen and new outhouses have been built and landscaped. Look for the new horseshoe pitches going in.

The group camping area has been relocated to the upper level of the park. For group camping information, please contact Spencer Croil at 403-603-6227 or email [spencer.croil@mdfoothills.com](mailto:spencer.croil@mdfoothills.com).

## South Calgary Ring Road Open House

### Functional Planning Study Highway 22X

(Marquis of Lorne Trail) From Deerfoot Trail to 85 St. SW

**Thursday, May 28, 2009**

**5 p.m. - 8 p.m.**

**Bishop O'Byrne High School Commons, 333 Shawville Blvd. SE, Calgary, AB**

Stakeholders and interested members of the public are invited to attend the open house to view recommended plans for the South Calgary Ring Road. Members of the project team will be available to answer questions and to receive comments.

For more information: Visit [www.southcrr.ca](http://www.southcrr.ca). Phone Janet Willson at (403) 238-1397.

## Parades

Mark these dates on your calendar!

**Little Britches Parade** – Monday, May 18, 2009

**Black Diamond** (Valley Diamond Parade Days) – Saturday, June 6, 2009

**Okotoks Parade** – Saturday, June 20, 2009

**Blackie Parade** – Wednesday, July 1, 2009

**Longview** (Little New York Daze Parade) – Saturday, July 18, 2009

We look forward to seeing you there!

## Foothills Regional Landfill

Hwy 783, 5.6 km south of Hwy 7 and Okotoks  
Tel: 403-938-5224  
Open: Monday-Saturday, 10:00 am-4:30 pm

- \$5 minimum charge for loads up to 100 kg.
  - \$57/metric tonne over 100 kg.
  - \$75/metric tonne for hard to handle garbage.
  - \$20 Freon removal per appliance plus tonnage fees
- \$10 surcharge for load not tarped

### Salvage Centre

No fees to leave good reusable items at the Salvage Centre.

### Recycling Centre

On-site recycling includes scrap metal, appliances, batteries, tires, used oil, propane bottles, antifreeze, oil filters, cardboard, wood waste & greens pile (compost), household hazardous waste. Tonnage fees apply. Pesticide containers only at no charge – must be triple rinsed!



## Foothills Regional Landfill

The Foothills Regional Landfill currently has landscaping materials such as compost, wood chip, gypsum and landscaping rock for sale.

### Compost

Compost contributes nutrients and beneficial life to soil structure. Compost can be used as mulch on flower and vegetable beds, on lawns, as ground cover and as erosion control. \$20.00/tonne.

### Wood Chips

Construction Chip is ground, new and used lumber and wood furniture passed through 2" screens and over a powerful magnet to remove the most ferrous metals. May contain pressure treated or painted material. \$20.00/tonne.

### Green Chips

Green Chip is ground trees and branches, ideal for mulch and reclamation projects. \$40.00/tonne.

### Pallet Chips

Pallet Chip is dimensional unpainted or non-treated lumber and used pallets passed over a powerful magnet to remove most nails and screws. \$40.00/tonne.

### Gypsum

Gypsum is ground new dry-wall cut-offs. This material is pH neutral which assists in correcting both acidic and basic soils. It improves swelling clays, increases water retention in soil, improves water efficiency, fruit quality and prevents some plant diseases. \$20.00/tonne.

### Landscaping Rock

Landscaping rock is sandstone from landfill cell excavations that have been screened from clay liner material. Sizes range from 150 mm to over 4 cu. metres. Unfortunately we do not load sandstone into private vehicles. For larger pieces please arrange for heavy equipment to load and transport. \$20.00/tonne.

Hours of Operation are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Saturday. Landfill closed on Sundays and Statutory holidays. Please contact the Landfill for more information at 938-5224.

## Road Construction:

The following road construction project started in 2008, will be completed this year:

- Plummer's Road, west from 240<sup>th</sup> Street West to 288<sup>th</sup> Street West

The approved local road program for 2009 consists of:

- 48<sup>th</sup> Street East, 1.6 kilometers south of Highway 552
- Highway 540 from 64<sup>th</sup> Street West to 56<sup>th</sup> Street East

## Road Paving:

The paving program for 2009 consists of:

- 32<sup>nd</sup> Street East between 338<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 306 Avenue (3.2 kilometers)
- 370<sup>th</sup> Avenue from Highway 2 to Okotoks Town Limits (4.0 kilometers)
- 112<sup>th</sup> Street West south of Highway 22X (0.8 kilometers)
- Millarville Ridge Estates (0.7 kilometers)
- 354<sup>h</sup> Avenue west from Highway 549 (0.3 kilometers)
- 220<sup>th</sup> Street West south of 298<sup>th</sup> Avenue (0.3 kilometers)
- 72<sup>nd</sup> Street West south of Highway 22X (1.0 kilometer),

## Community Standards Bylaw

The MD of Foothills Community Standards Bylaw (CSB) provides the municipality a mechanism to control unsightly premises and noise. The CSB along with the Traffic, Animal Control, Lot Grading and Land Use Bylaws as well as the Traffic Safety Act help provide clarity to landowners as to how to conduct their affairs. Knowing your landowner or tenant responsibilities will result in a higher rate of voluntary compliance, resulting in less need for enforcement and fewer community conflicts. The ultimate benefit to individuals is the protection of the investment in their properties and the community at large.

The Community Standards Bylaw has been developed based on the “Broken Window Theory”. The Broken Window Theory states that if a building window is broken and left unrepaired, it is a signal that no one cares and all the rest of the windows will soon be broken. The Broken Window is a metaphor for disorderly behaviour and minor crime - if disorderly or unsightly conditions remain unaddressed, it signals nobody cares about the community, resulting in further serious disorder and negative behaviour.

A well maintained property instills a sense of pride in its residents and results in a higher standard of living. These bylaws have been written to protect the environment, our communities and ensure a high standard of public health and safety. They are not meant to restrict freedoms, but are meant to help neighbours live together peacefully.

Some of the key issues addressed in the Community Standards bylaw and others are:

- Recreational and passengers vehicles parked on streets longer than 72 hours;
- Maintenance standards of residential properties;
- Weed control;
- Cutting of grass on boulevards and clearing snow from sidewalks adjacent to residences;
- Construction projects and accumulation of construction materials;
- Noise nuisances;
- Accumulation of animal feces and manure management;
- Unsightly and nuisance properties;
- Overland drainage and interruption of natural drainage courses;
- Use of ATVs on private and public lands.

If you have any questions or concerns about these or any other bylaws please contact Bylaw Services at 652-2341 or visit the website [www.mdfoothills.com](http://www.mdfoothills.com)

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## Bridge Replacements:

The following bridges are scheduled for replacement:

- BF6885 located in NW5-22-3-W5, Coalmine Road West crossing of Fish Creek, Standard Bridge
- BF74301 located in SW2-21-3-W5, Millarville east access, Culvert
- BF81997 located in NW33-20-2-W5, 160<sup>th</sup> Street West, Culvert
- BF77225 located in NW36-19-27-W4, 434<sup>th</sup> Avenue East, Culvert
- BF74476 located in SW4-21-26-W4, 304<sup>th</sup> Street East

## Mapping

The 2009 Municipal Map will be available this summer. Please visit the website for the official release date of the MD map and any other new mapping products.

“Bird’s Eye View” aerial images and custom mapping is available.

For information call Johanna at 403-603-6244 or email [Johanna.Kortenschyl-Allan@mdfoothills.com](mailto:Johanna.Kortenschyl-Allan@mdfoothills.com)



## Gravel Road Dust Control

For those residents in the municipality who are adjacent to gravel roads and negatively affected by the dust, there is a program available for relief. The spot treatment program provides residents with 100 metres of dust control at no charge adjacent to the residence.

Applications are accepted yearly from May 1 to July 31, for the program with road work starting in August. Requests may be made by phone to the Public Works department at 652-2341 between 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

## MD Staff Foothills Patrol School Bus Driver Training Program

### New Personnel

*(permanent employees only)*

Trevor Beal,  
Welder Apprentice

Rodney Lazenby,  
Peace Office

Shiela Storoschuk,  
Landfill Scale Operator

Joe McLean, Agricultural  
Services Board

### Goodbye

Carol Robinson,  
Community Services,  
20 years

### Retired

Bob Krueger, Public  
Works, 33 years

John Dale,  
Public Works, 29 years

Ross Bill,  
Public Works, 10 years

Foothills Patrol has seen a significant increase in the number of complaints received regarding vehicles passing school buses with alternately flashing red lights activated over the past 15 months. In an effort to assist the bus drivers from Foothills School Division, Southland Transportation (Christ the Redeemer School Board) and Edison School, a training program was developed and presented by Peace Officer, Darlene Roblin. To date approximately 115 bus drivers have attended these training sessions which cover topics including: legislation pertaining to school buses, key information to report when a vehicle passes a school bus with lights flashing, court preparation and testimony. Reporting forms and contact information for all law enforcement agencies operating within the M.D. of Foothills have been developed and distributed to these drivers who are willing and able to forward complaints of vehicles passing their buses which will result in charges being laid.



### DID YOU KNOW?

- That drivers approaching a school bus with alternating flashing amber lights are required to slow down and only pass in a cautious, prudent manner?
- That drivers approaching a school bus with alternating flashing red lights are required to STOP until such time as the lights are turned off?
- That the fine for passing a school bus with alternating flashing red lights activated is \$402.00 and carries 6 demerit points?



## Last Call For Photos!

Contest ends June 30, 2009!

*Send us your photos of your community -  
at work, play or home.*

*Rural Character*

## PHOTO CONTEST

Enter your best pictures now!

Share your view of Rural Character - how you see the community around you, the people who make your community, your home, your work.

For more information on how to enter, entry forms and rules and regulations, visit: [www.mdfoothills.com](http://www.mdfoothills.com) or pick up your entry forms at:  
MD of Foothills Administrative Building, 309 Macleod Trail, High River

*Enter now!*

\*Photos taken within the towns of Okotoks and High River are not eligible.



