

Contact Information

Agricultural Service Departments

Lamont County (780) 895-2585

Beaver County (780)663-3730

Smoky Lake County (780) 656-3730

County of Two Hills (780) 657-3358

County of Minburn (780) 632-4033

Thorhild County (780) 398-3741

Camrose County (780) 672-4765



Water drainage can be a contentious issue that can affect all landowners in Alberta at one point or another. Many problems arise between landowners when natural creeks or streams flow through one landowners land onto another. These streams or creeks can be seasonal or permanent. When the spring melt begins, so does the increased call volume counties receive. Counties begin to focus on clearing plugged culverts or bridges, so that the natural flow of water is not blocked. Depending on the year sloughs and streams may develop where they have not normally developed before. The provincial Water Act requires that landowners maintain naturally occurring wetland, sloughs and temporary water bodies that exist and may occur from time to time on their properties subsequent to rainfall or snowmelt runoff events.

Farmland Drainage

Changes to drainage patterns on farmland that results in additional water flowing off of an owners land onto the lands of their neighbors or into the County road borrow pit is not permitted without the approval of Alberta Environment and consultation with the County. Landowners who have obtained approval to undertake drainage improvements will be responsible for all cost associated with grading borrow pits to facilitate drainage, or installing properly sized culverts.



Did You Know!

Counties can have 7,000-10,000 or more culverts to look after and this is not including bridges.

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Did you know under Lamont County Land Use Bylaw 675/07 there are special land use provisions when it comes to developing near a river, creek or watercourse.

Did you know that site grades shall prevent drainage from one site to adjacent sites except where drainage conforms to an acceptable local standard or a subdivision drainage plan.

Did you know that you are not allowed to build permanent buildings within the 1:100 year flood way of any river, creek or watercourse.

Did You
KNOW!

BEAVER CONTROL



Alberta's Water Act requires that an approval and/or license be obtained before undertaking a construction activity in a water body or before diverting and using water (surface water and groundwater).

Dugouts are usually used by landowners to store water for purposes such as stock watering, domestic use, spraying, etc.

Approvals

Approvals are not required for placing, constructing, maintaining, or filling in a dugout unless the dugout:

is located in a watercourse frequented by fish or in a lake or a wetland,

is located in a watercourse, lake or wetland in an area that is subject to a reservation by order of the Minister under section 35 of the Water Act or to a Director's decision under section 53 of the Water Act,


would change the flow of water on an adjacent parcel of land,

has a capacity greater than 2,500 cubic metres,


is located in the same watercourse and parcel of land as an existing dugout, or

is restricted by an approved water management plan.


If your dugout falls outside these exemptions, then apply for a Water Act approval by completing and submitting an Application under the Water Act. The application form can be found at the Alberta Environment web site location <http://environment.alberta.ca/01189.html>





Many Counties have beaver control programs to address creek and river blockages. Counties will remove dams in a timely manner to ensure that water levels are where they should be and are not affecting infrastructure.




Examples of alterations to drainage patterns include:

 **Drainage improvements to farmland which alter the timing and volume of runoff following high rainfall and snow melt events. These usually result in increased runoff downstream of the improved parcel.**

 **Installations by private parties of unapproved approaches that have no culverts or undersized culverts. This usually results in flooding of parcels upstream.**

 **The effects of soil drifting and the cultivation of road back slopes within the County road allowance with respect to their rate, timing and volume of runoff.**

 **The construction of public and private structures such as roads, approaches, dwelling, farm yards and buildings, which have altered drainage patterns.**