

VOLUME #9, ISSUE #3

FALL 2026

SADDLE HILLS COUNTY LIVING



Saddle Hills
COUNTY

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Supporting the Community

The latest Council sponsorships and financial support.



Saddle Hills County Supported Northern Lights Intercollegiate Rodeo

Saddle Hills County supported the Northern Lights College Intercollegiate Rodeo with a \$1,500 Ranch Hand Sponsorship.

The event took place September 26–27, 2026, in Dawson Creek, B.C., bringing together post-secondary rodeo athletes from across Western Canada to compete and celebrate the region's strong agricultural and rodeo traditions.

The event provided young athletes with an opportunity to compete at the post-secondary level while building skills, connections, and experience. The County's sponsorship also recognized the importance of agriculture, rural traditions, and regional partnerships to communities on both sides of the Alberta-B.C. border.



Council Supported Kinette Club Charity Golf Tournament

Saddle Hills County Council supported the Kinette Club of Spirit River's 23rd Annual Hole-in-One Charity Golf Tournament with a \$2,000 Platinum Sponsorship.

The tournament took place on September 12, 2026, bringing together golfers, businesses, volunteers, and community members for a day of fun and fundraising.

For more than two decades, this annual event has raised funds to support local charitable initiatives and community programs throughout the region. Council's sponsorship recognized the important role local service clubs and volunteers play in giving back and helping build strong, connected communities.



Local Chariot Driver Sponsorship

Saddle Hills County Council supported local chariot driver Josh Moxness with a \$1,500 sponsorship to compete in the chariot races at the Dawson Creek Exhibition & Stampede.

Council's sponsorship supported a local competitor while helping showcase Saddle Hills County's connection to the region's agricultural, rodeo, and western traditions.



Supporting Local Agricultural Fairs

Saddle Hills County Council provided \$15,000 in funding to support local agricultural fairs and community events.

The Rycroft, Bonanza, and Savanna Agricultural Societies each received \$5,000 to support events that brought residents together, celebrated agriculture, showcased local talent, and kept rural traditions strong.

Council's support helped these organizations continue providing opportunities for families, youth, producers, and visitors to connect and celebrate the agricultural roots of the region.



County Supported Dawson Creek Exhibition & Stampede

Saddle Hills County Council supported the Dawson Creek Exhibition and Stampede with \$5,000 in funding.

The funding helped support the maintenance of agricultural facilities, the delivery of youth and livestock programming, and efforts to keep the Exhibition accessible to producers, families, and residents from across the region.

The annual Exhibition and Stampede provides an important gathering place for the agricultural community, giving producers and youth opportunities to showcase livestock, develop skills, and celebrate the rural traditions shared across the region.

Council's support recognized the event's contribution to agriculture, youth development, regional connections, and the continuation of rural and western traditions important to Saddle Hills County residents.



Share the Stories that Built Saddle Hills County

Help preserve the memories, people, and places.



Every community has a story, and Saddle Hills County is inviting residents to help preserve and share those stories for future generations.

As part of the development of the 2027 Saddle Hills County Calendar, the Stories That Built Saddle Hills County project is collecting photographs, memories, and stories that showcase the people, places, and events that helped shape our communities.

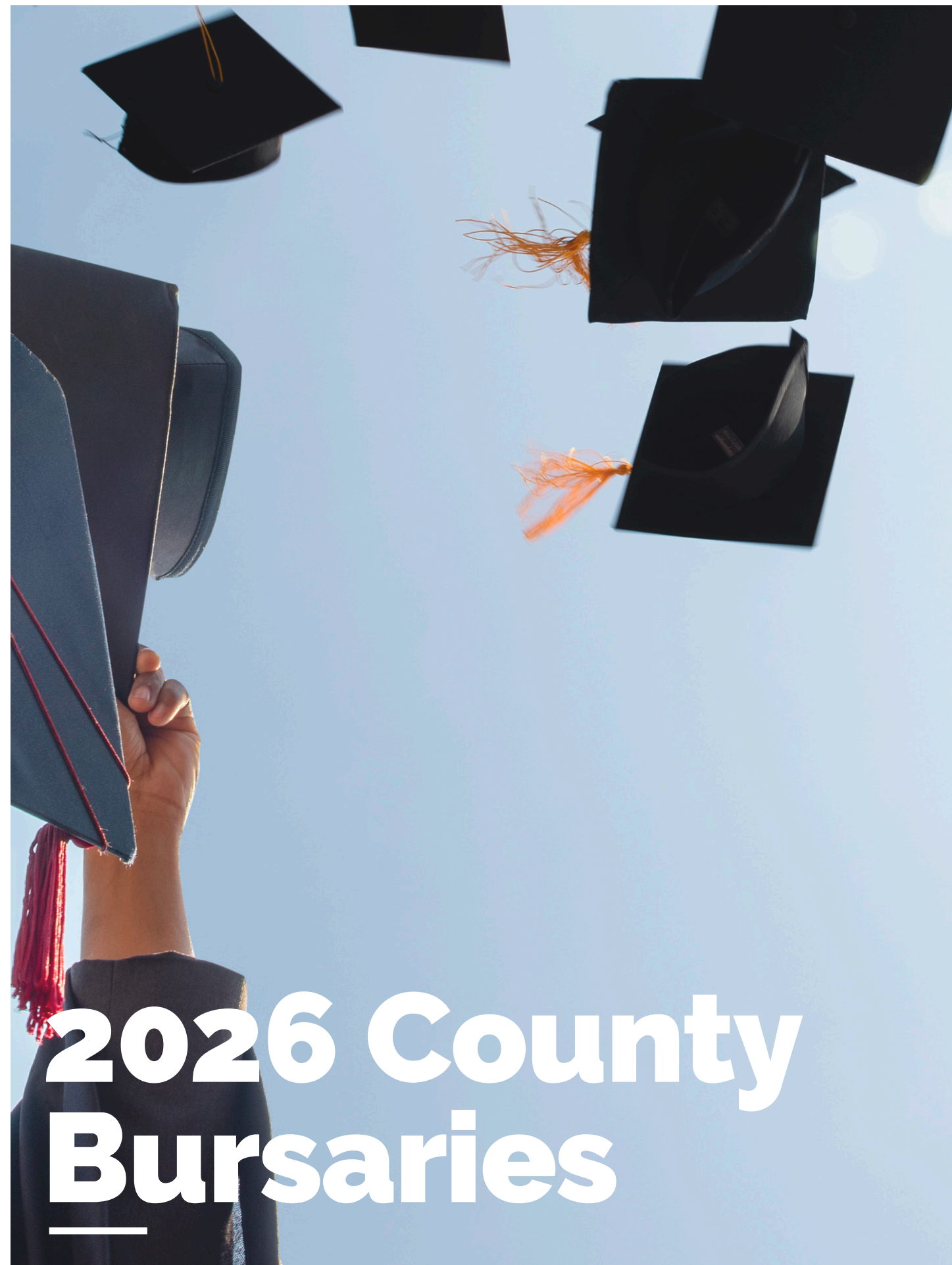
From pioneer homesteads and one-room schoolhouses to family farms, local businesses, community halls, sports teams, and community celebrations, every story adds another piece to the history of Saddle Hills County.

Selected submissions may be featured in the 2027 Saddle Hills County Calendar, on the County website, social media, and in future communications materials.

HAVE A STORY OR PHOTO TO SHARE?

Email photos and stories to communications@saddlehills.ab.ca by November 1, 2026. Please include your name, the community connected to the submission, and any information you have about the people, place, event, or photograph.

Help preserve the memories, people, and places that built Saddle Hills County and keep their stories alive for generations to come.



Local Students Take the Next Step with County Bursaries

From university and college to the trades and commercial driver training, local students are taking the next step toward building their futures.

This year, 19 Saddle Hills County students received support through the 2026 Saddle Hills County Bursary Program. The program helps Saddle Hills County residents pursue education and training while encouraging graduates to bring their skills and experience back to northern Alberta.

2026 BURSARY RECIPIENTS

Ashlyn Bourassa, Jaden Bourassa, Levi Boychuk, Rory DeSmet, Samuel Dietsche, Gracie Dolen, Paige Dolen, Reagan Emmons, Rylee Goodheart, Lauren Konashuk, Phoenix Maxwell, Joshua Moxness, Arika Pullishy, Evan Pullishy, Chloe Richard, Dane Singer, Shaye Singer, Kiera Toews, and Tess Weber.

These students represent the next generation of skilled workers, professionals, tradespeople, and community members with connections to Saddle Hills County.

Council congratulates each recipient and wishes them success as they continue their education, develop new skills, and work toward their future careers.

Investing in Veterinary Care Close to Home

Access to veterinary care is important to Saddle Hills County's agricultural community. For local livestock producers and families with animals, having trained veterinary professionals serving rural areas supports animal health, farm operations, and a strong local agriculture industry.

Through the Veterinary Education Bursary Program, the Saddle Hills County Agricultural Service Board supports students pursuing careers as veterinarians and veterinary technologists, with priority given to students from the Central Peace Region.

By supporting students with connections to the region, the program helps encourage the next generation of veterinary professionals to live, work, and build their careers in rural communities where their skills are needed.

In 2026, Nathalie Randall, Tulsen Fawcett, and Jailene Ramsey-Pratt received Veterinary Education Bursaries. Saddle Hills County congratulated this year's recipients and wished them success as they continue their education and prepare for careers that can make a meaningful difference to agriculture and animal care in the region.

Roots Run Deep

Celebrating Saddle Hills County Volunteers



Saddle Hills County celebrated the people who gave their time, energy, and talents to their communities at the Annual Volunteer Appreciation BBQ, held August 27, at the Bonanza Hall.

The theme, Roots Run Deep – Years of Service. Generations of Impact, recognized the important role volunteers played in building strong rural communities.

Their years of service strengthened community connections, kept local traditions alive, and created a lasting impact for future generations.

The volunteers recognized were Amanda Olson, Bree Hamilton, Leanna Shore, Cheryl Brett, Colleen Coleman, Linnea Potratz, Daniel Adair, Darcy Galbraith, Heidi Good, Helen Konaschuck, Helen Kuehl, Helen Mills, Liz Purves, Marion Paish, Rob and Trina Hampton, Sue Kolosky, Suzie Jack, and Tina Dotsel.

Each recipient contributed in their own way, from supporting local organizations and events to mentoring youth, helping neighbours, and giving countless hours behind the scenes. Together, their efforts demonstrated the lasting difference volunteers made throughout Saddle Hills County.

A sincere thank you to the Bonanza Agricultural Society for preparing the meal, Bryan and Joyce Matkowski for providing dinner music, Mike DeVuyst of 262 Custom Works for designing and making the volunteer appreciation awards, and Maggie Jorgenson for arranging the beautiful centrepieces.

Roots Run Deep celebrated years of service, strong community connections, and a legacy passed from one generation to the next.

Building Ice & Cold Water Rescue Capacity Close to Home

Saddle Hills County is strengthening emergency response close to home with Council’s approval of a new Ice and Cold Water Rescue Program. Based out of Bonanza, the program will give trained local firefighters the specialized skills and equipment needed to respond to emergencies involving ice, cold water, dugouts, reservoirs, and other water bodies within the County. Currently, this specialized service must be provided by agencies outside Saddle Hills County, which can mean longer response times.

The program will be developed over approximately 12 months and will include specialized equipment and training to applicable NFPA standards. Three County firefighters will also be trained as instructors, allowing future refresher and new-member training to take place locally and helping keep the program sustainable over the long term.

The initiative follows discussions with Alberta Occupational Health and Safety after a 2023 workplace fatality involving a worker who drowned in a man-made reservoir in Saddle Hills County. Funding for the program is being provided through proceeds from an Occupational Health and Safety creative sentence.

Work will begin this fall, with most firefighter training taking place in 2027. The service will become operational once training is complete and the required equipment is in place.

Building this capacity locally means trained responders and specialized equipment will be closer when every minute counts, strengthening emergency services for residents, workers, farms, and industry throughout Saddle Hills County.

Bay Tree, Bonanza, and Savanna Designated as Hamlets

At the May 26, 2026 Saddle Hills council meeting, Council gave third and final reading to Bylaw 471-2026 (Hamlet of Bay Tree Designation), Bylaw 472-2026 (Hamlet of Bonanza Designation), and Bylaw 473-2026 (Hamlet of Savanna Designation).

The approval of these bylaws formally designates Bay Tree, Bonanza, and Savanna as hamlets within Saddle Hills County, supporting future planning, development, and service delivery.

Saddle Hills Moves Forward with Transfer of Old Recreation Site

The Recreation Site Feasibility Survey showed strong public support for maintaining public access to the Old Pouce Coupe Stockpile Site #3 (DRS229) while preserving its natural character. Respondents supported modest improvements such as picnic tables, fire pits, pit toilets, and garbage receptacles, while emphasizing the importance of protecting the area for future generations.

Based on the survey findings, Council directed Administration to formally accept Alberta Forestry and Parks’ offer to transfer the site to Saddle Hills County and to bring recreational development options back to Council for consideration in fall 2026.



Council Highlights

Recent decisions made by Saddle Hills County Council.

Ag News

The latest agricultural news for Peace Region producers.

Agriculture is at the heart of our community. Keep informed of all the latest Agriculture News in Saddle Hills County, or get more information on any of these stories, by visiting the dedicated Agriculture News stream on our website, at saddlehills.ab.ca/AgNews.

You can also follow the hashtag **#SaddleHillsAg** on Instagram for all the latest agriculture updates.

ALUS Expressions of Interest from Producers

ALUS works to restore difficult to farm, and marginal lands into environmental projects that generate cleaner air and water, wildlife habitat, and other ecosystem services. ALUS enhances wetlands and riparian buffer areas, plants trees to boost wildlife, establishes new pollinator habitats, while also assisting with flood and drought resilience.

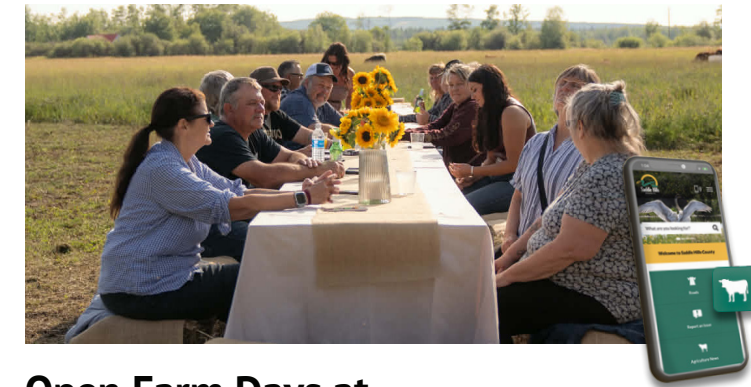
Based on sound scientific principles and verification guidelines, ALUS provides valuable support and technical expertise for the design and implementation of green infrastructure projects and nature-based solutions. The ecological services produced by ALUS projects have economic value on the marketplace, which ALUS is actively developing. The ALUS Saddle Hills County program coordinator will work with local producers to help establish ALUS projects in the County. Saddle Hills County is accepting Expressions of Interest from County producers for projects planned for 2027.

Want more information on the ALUS program? Visit the dedicated ALUS page at www.saddlehills.ab.ca/ALUS or contact the ALUS Program Coordinator at ag@saddlehills.ab.ca or call (780) 864-3760.

Local Youth Got Outdoors at Land & Learn Camp

Saddle Hills County supported local children attending the Land & Learn Camp, held August 10–14, 2026, with funding of up to \$5,000, or \$260 per participating youth.

The camp gave Saddle Hills County children ages 6–13 an opportunity to spend time outdoors while developing practical skills and learning more about the natural environment.



Open Farm Days at The Farm on Dead Horse Flats

The Farm on Dead Horse Flats welcomed visitors for a day of farm life, local food, and rural hospitality during Alberta Open Farm Days.

Visitors met cattle, chickens, and George the pig, explored the flower gardens and U-pick, checked out vintage and working farm equipment, and took part in guided and self-led tours. The day also featured BBQ cheeseburgers from The Moose Crossing Rycroft.

The evening wrapped up with a Long Table Supper and Country Dance, featuring a home-cooked meal by The Moose Crossing, Stolen Harvest Meadery, and live country music from Trin James and Christina Rogers.

It was a celebration of local agriculture, food, and community — and a great way to experience life on the farm.

Throughout the week, participants took part in hands-on activities including tracking, foraging, navigation with a compass, shelter and fort building, arts and crafts, and bushcraft skills.

Supporting the Land & Learn Camp helped make local outdoor learning more accessible for County families while giving young people an opportunity to build confidence, learn new skills, and connect with the land close to home.



Protect What Matters. Be Battery Safe.

Frequently Asked Questions

As more electronics are used indoors during colder months, battery safety becomes even more important. Charge devices safely, inspect batteries regularly, and recycle old batteries properly.

Q: What is a lithium-ion battery?

A: A rechargeable battery commonly found in phones, laptops, tools, e-bikes, toys, and many other household devices.

Q: Why are lithium-ion batteries dangerous?

A: If damaged or improperly charged, lithium-ion batteries can overheat and catch fire.

Q: What should I do if my battery swells?

A: Stop using it immediately and take it to the Public Drop-Off at the landfill for proper disposal.

Q: Can rechargeable batteries be recycled?

A: Yes. Rechargeable batteries should always be recycled.

Q: Why shouldn't batteries go in the garbage?

A: Garbage trucks and landfill equipment can crush batteries, causing fires that put workers at risk. Public Drop-Off is available at all Saddle Hills County Transfer Stations.

Lithium-Ion Battery Safety

Most of the electronics we use in our homes every day are powered by lithium-ion batteries. In fact, most everything that's rechargeable uses this kind of battery.



LITHIUM-ION BATTERIES store a lot of energy in a small place. These batteries can overheat, start a fire, or explode if overcharged or damaged. By learning how to **BUY**, **CHARGE**, and **RECYCLE** these batteries safely, you can help prevent a fire in your home.



BUY only listed products. When buying a product that uses a lithium-ion battery look for a safety certification mark such as UL, ETL, or CSA*. This means it meets important safety standards.



CHARGE devices safely. Always use the cables that came with the product to charge. Follow the instructions from the manufacturer. Buy new chargers from the manufacturer or one that the manufacturer has approved.



CHARGE your device on a hard surface. Don't overcharge your device. Unplug it or remove the battery when it's fully charged.



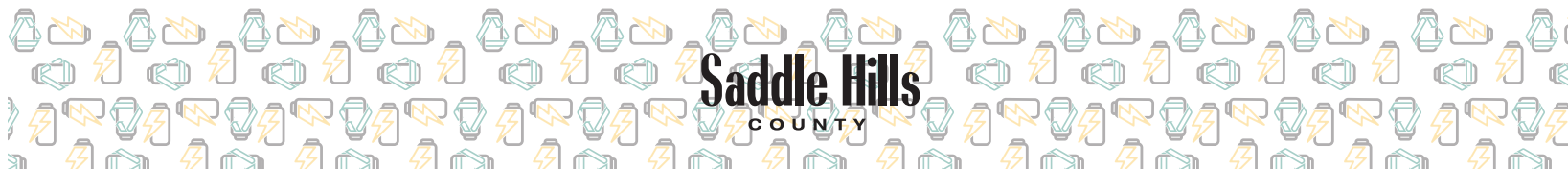
RECYCLE your device or battery at a safe battery recycling location. Visit recycleyourbatteries.ca/Find-A-Drop-Off-Location to find a recycling spot near you.



RECYCLE batteries responsibly. Don't throw lithium-ion batteries in the trash or regular recycling bins because they could start a fire.



STOP using your device right away if the battery smells weird, gets too hot, makes popping noises, changes in shape or color. If it is safe, move the device away from anything that can catch fire. Call 9-1-1.





1

Prevention Starts at Home

Reduce fire risk by keeping exits clear, using space heaters safely, and never leaving cooking unattended.

2

Change Your Smoke Detector Batteries

Working smoke alarms save lives.
Test them regularly and change batteries at least once a year.

3

Lithium Battery Safety Matters

Charge devices on hard surfaces, use approved chargers, and never leave lithium batteries charging unattended or overnight.

4

Have a Fire Escape Plan

Know two ways out of every room and choose a safe meeting place outside.
Practice the plan with everyone in your household.

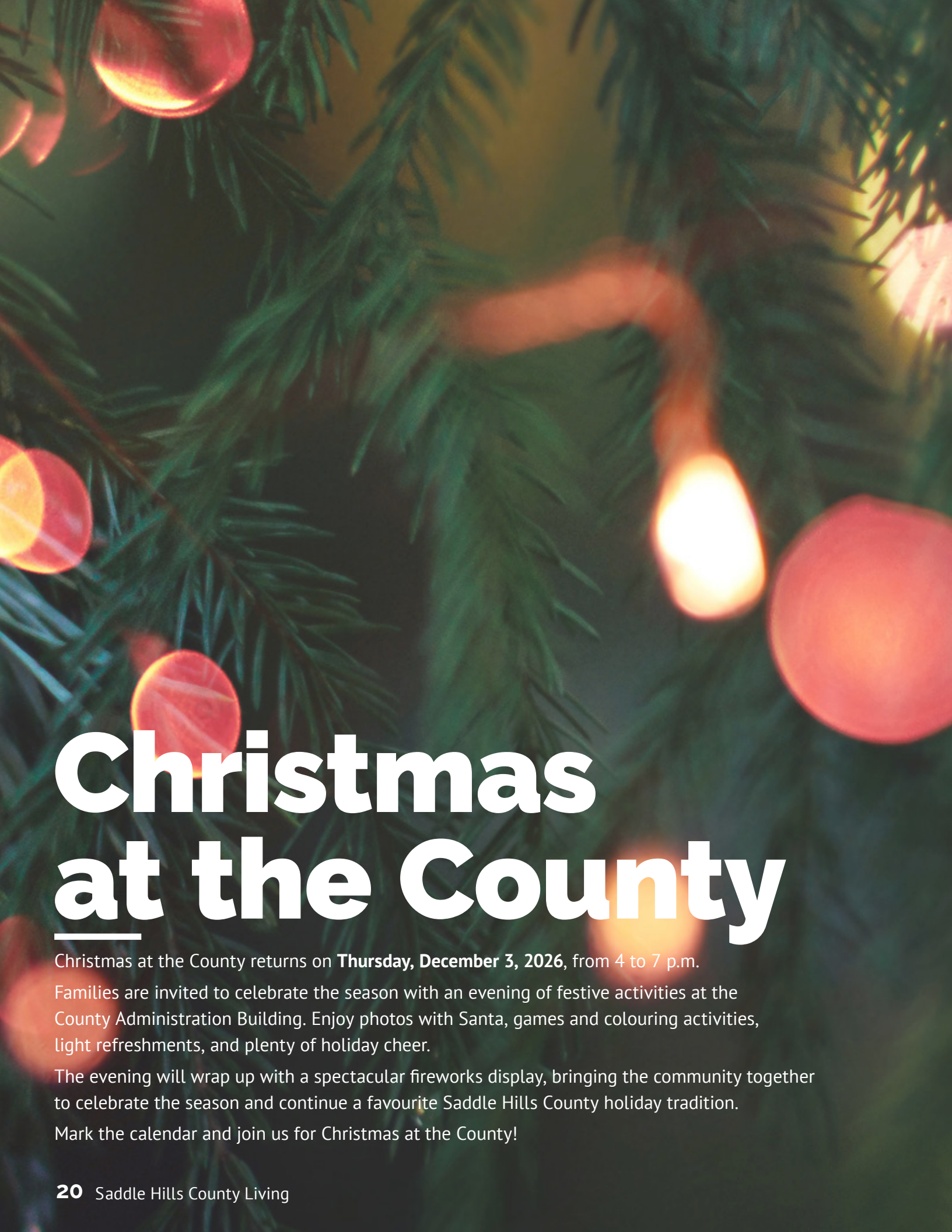
5

Prepare a Grab-and-Go Bag

Keep essential items ready—I.D., medications, chargers, and important documents—so you can leave quickly if needed.

Fire Prevention

A few simple steps can make a critical difference.



Christmas at the County

Christmas at the County returns on **Thursday, December 3, 2026**, from 4 to 7 p.m.

Families are invited to celebrate the season with an evening of festive activities at the County Administration Building. Enjoy photos with Santa, games and colouring activities, light refreshments, and plenty of holiday cheer.

The evening will wrap up with a spectacular fireworks display, bringing the community together to celebrate the season and continue a favourite Saddle Hills County holiday tradition.

Mark the calendar and join us for Christmas at the County!

Our Community Events



Woking Playgroup

Woking Multiplex
Tuesdays | 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.
Parents & Kids (ages 0-6)
Morgan (403) 923-0481



Woking Pickleball

Woking Multiplex
Thursdays | 1 - 3 p.m.
Doreen (780) 814-1127



Woking Volleyball

Woking Multiplex
Thursdays | 7 p.m.
Diamond (780) 882-0380
April (780) 518-7756



Dawson Creek Farmer's Market

NAR Park, Alaska Ave.
Saturdays | 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Locally Grown Produce,
Artisinal Products



Farm Fresh Market

A-10301 10th St., Dawson Creek
Thursdays | 3 - 7 p.m.
Saturdays | 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Indoor Farmer's Market



Saddle Hills Market

Saddle Hills County Admin Building
Starting again in Spring of 2027
Saddle Hills County Vendors
Cash Preferred

Project Aurora

Project Aurora Continues to Connect Saddle Hills County



Work on Project Aurora continues across Saddle Hills County as crews move forward with the installation of high-speed fiber infrastructure.

Residents may notice construction crews, utility locates, flags, directional drilling equipment, and fibre installation along County roads and highways as work progresses into new areas. Project Aurora is a partnership between Saddle Hills County, Canadian Fiber Optics Corp., Northern Lights Fiber, the Government of Alberta, and the Government of Canada. The project is bringing reliable, high-speed fibre internet to homes and businesses across the County, with no-cost hookups for eligible properties.

As more fiber is installed, Saddle Hills County continues to move closer to its goal of becoming the most connected rural municipality in Canada. Reliable, high-speed internet supports local businesses and agriculture, improves access to education and services, enables residents to work from home, and helps rural families stay connected.

Motorists are reminded to slow down, watch for workers and equipment, and obey construction signage when travelling through active work areas.

Thank you for your patience while construction continues. Each new section of fibre brings Saddle Hills County another step closer to connecting homes, farms, and businesses throughout the County. For Project Aurora information and updates, visit the Project Aurora page on the Saddle Hills County website, at saddlehills.ab.ca/Project-Aurora



Junction of Highway 49 and Highway 725

RR1, Spirit River, AB. T0H 3G0

P: (780) 864-3760 | **F:** (780) 864-3904

Monday - Friday 8:15 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

 www.saddlehills.ab.ca  [saddlehillscounty](https://www.facebook.com/saddlehillscounty)  [saddlehillsab](https://twitter.com/saddlehillsab)