



# Summer Village of Ghost Lake Newsletter

[www.ghostlake.ca](http://www.ghostlake.ca)

January 2021

## Waste Management and Recycling Changes

On January 19<sup>th</sup> you will notice that the current waste and recycling bins will be removed from the Village. Please hold on to your waste until new bins are delivered on January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021.

The Summer Village has entered into a contract with a new waste and recycling company called BluPlanet Recycling.



A Calgary based owned and operated company, BluPlanet Recycling is a sustainability-focused waste services company whose mission is to provide the most reliable and effective waste diversion programs to the market, while maintaining the highest standards in customer service.

Separate posters are attached for easy reference when separating your waste and recycling materials.

Please remember there is absolutely **NO** furniture, appliances, construction material, tires, chemicals, batteries, compressed tanks, or recyclables allowed in the garbage bins. Unfortunately, when items are put in the garbage that are not allowed someone has to sort it out and there is a cost to that. To keep costs as low as possible please follow the guidelines provided.

Council will review usage and garbage vs recycling again this spring to ensure we are meeting the Villages needs.

## Upper Bow River Hazard Study By Alberta Environment and Parks

The Upper Bow River Hazard Study assesses and identifies river-related hazards along 118 km of the Bow River, as well as 7 km of Policeman Creek, 1 km of Exshaw Creek, 5 km of Bighill Creek, and 5 km of Jumpingpound Creek. The study area extends from Banff National Park to Bearspaw Dam, including through Canmore, Cochrane, Exshaw, Kananaskis Improvement District, Lac des Arcs, Municipal District of Bighorn, Rocky View County, and Stoney Nakoda First Nation.



More information can be found online at [www.floodhazard.alberta.ca](http://www.floodhazard.alberta.ca)

- New flood maps are available for watersheds across Alberta, including our own watershed. You do not need to be an engineer or flood expert to view or provide feedback. The provincial government will carefully consider all feedback received and will revise the draft reports and flood maps to address technical errors, as appropriate.
- The provincial government has released draft flood maps meant to improve public safety, support emergency management, and help build safer and more resilient communities over the long term. Engagement opportunities

are open for Albertans to provide feedback on new flood maps. Feedback will help ensure this work is technically sound.

- Share your thoughts on the draft flood maps by going to [www.alberta.ca/flood-study-engagements.aspx](http://www.alberta.ca/flood-study-engagements.aspx) by January 15, 2021.

## Next Council Meeting

The next regular Council meeting will be held on **Monday, February 22, 2021** and will commence at 5:30 pm. The meeting will be held at the Super 8 Cochrane, Meeting Room located at 11 Westside Drive, Cochrane Alberta

***Social Distancing will be implemented and masks will be required as per local bylaws.***

If you would like to speak with Council on a specific item, please forward your written request, either by mail, fax or email, stating the nature of your presentation, to the Village Office at least one week prior to the meeting in order to be placed on the agenda.

***Reminder - all council and committee meetings are open to the public for observation – consider this your invitation.***



The purpose of a Rural Crime Watch program is to improve awareness of the potential for crime and promote crime prevention through the communication of information. The role of a Rural Crime Watch member is to observe and make note of information that can be passed on to the RCMP which can be helpful in the investigation of criminal activity and help lead to arrests and charges being laid.

To become a Rural Crime Watch member, or for more information about the program go to <https://cfparcw.ca/mship.html>

## Reminders:

### Fire and First Response in the Village

The Summer Village and the MD of Bighorn have a Fire Services agreement in place. This means when a 911 call is placed for Fire or Emergencies the Jamieson Fire Hall is our designated first responder.

**Fire Insurance** Please check your fire insurance policy to confirm that the Summer Village of Ghost Lake's nearest "manned" fire station is in the Town of Cochrane. Jamieson Fire Hall is the first responder for Village fires; however, they are classified as a volunteer fire department. It is important that your insurance company is aware of that. Also, under the provisions of the fire bylaw, property owners can be billed for the cost of fighting fires on their property. This can amount to thousands of dollars. **Check with your insurance company** to ensure that you have adequate coverage for firefighting expenses.

**911 Medical Emergency calls** will still result in an ambulance being dispatched from Cochrane. The Jamieson Fire Hall will also respond, as our medical first responders, to provide emergency medical support until an ambulance can arrive on scene.

### WHAT TO DO IF THERE IS A FIRE?

**CALL 9-1-1**

**Evacuate all people and pets to a safe distance**

**If someone is available – pull the Emergency Pull Station on the Community Services Building. This will sound the Community Alarm so your neighbors will be alerted to the potential danger**

**Stay Safe**



## Trees on Public Lands



The Summer Village of Ghost Lake Tree Protection Bylaw was passed in 2019 to protect, preserve, and retain the trees and shrubs located on all public spaces. All pruning, trimming,

shaping, removal, or planting of trees on public lands must have an approved Tree Permit before any work begins.

More information and the Application can be found online at

<https://ghostlake.ca/administration/documents/>

## Guidelines – Use of Boulevards

Boulevards and Village land are not to be considered an extension of your personal parking. **Personal vehicles. RVs and equipment should be parked on your own property.**

Ghost Lake is a summer village which means during the summer, residents can park their boats on the boulevard in front of their property, that is acceptable in a lakeside community.

However parking your Recreational Vehicle/Trailer on the boulevard is not acceptable practice. RV's should be parked wholly inside your own property.

If you have visitors on the weekend in the summer, the boulevard directly in front of your property can be used to accommodate your guests' vehicle with their RV over the weekend but the vehicle and/or RV cannot continue to park on the boulevard throughout the week and beyond.

Onsite storage on your residential property is to be orderly and only include items that would be normally located within a single-family residence. That means no commercial or industrial storage including vehicles and equipment. Storage may not spill over from private land onto public land.

Please review the Summer Village of Ghost Lake Boulevard Bylaw located online at <https://ghostlake.ca/administration/documents/> For more information.

## Cats and Dogs

The Summer Village of Ghost Lake Animal Control Bylaw requires owners to ensure pets are not allowed to roam free, outside their private property. This includes but is not limited to both cats and dogs.



- Roaming dogs are a community nuisance; they can chase other people's pets or defecate on neighbour's property.
- Keeping your dog in your yard keeps it safer from traffic, wildlife, poisons, diseases, frostbite, dehydration and abuse from humans.
- Roaming cats are a community nuisance; they dig in gardens or defecate on neighbour's property.
- Outdoor cats kill thousands of songbirds each year. This greatly impacts biodiversity and natural health of our environment.
- Keeping your cat in your yard keeps it safer from traffic, wildlife, poisons, diseases, frostbite, dehydration and abuse from humans.

## Newsletter Distribution

As a paperless community, committed to sustainability, newsletters are delivered via email. If there is no email recorded on a property, a copy will be mailed, however, if a property has multiple owners, newsletters will **ONLY** be emailed to the email addresses on file, copies will not be mailed to the co-owners without email addresses. If you have a co-owner that does not have an email address on file with the Summer Village, please either print and give them with a copy, let them know to check the website to read or download a copy of the newsletter or ask them to provide the Village Office with their email address.

Article from the Alberta Institute for Wildlife Conservation  
Blog <https://www.aiwc.ca/blog/>

**BIRD FEEDER BLUES: CLEANING IS CRITICAL FOR KEEPING BIRDS HEALTHY**



**By Robyn Maerz**

The house finch sat listlessly below the bird feeder. Birds flew about, pecking at seeds, chirping loudly, and jostling each other for the best perches. But this house finch made no effort to eat or fly. Feathers fluffed up, its eyes were swollen and crusted; it was obvious the bird was very ill. AIWC was called, and soon the sick bird was on its way to the center. After undergoing an exam and various tests, AIWC determined the finch was suffering from a condition called “House Finch Disease”. Although the home owner did not yet know it, the bird feeder itself was spreading the infection among the flocks of birds frequenting his garden.

Yes, you read that right. Bird feeders can “seed” infectious disease among our feathered friends! The main culprits are moldy or decomposing seeds, bird droppings, and other foreign

material that pile up on feeder trays. The hazard lies in what is IN that debris: bacteria, viruses and fungi, many of which are capable of causing infectious illness in our backyard birds.

### **What exactly is “House Finch Disease”?**

In 1994, bird feeder aficionados started noticing house finches with swollen, red and crusty eyes in the Washington D.C. area. Tests revealed the cause was a bacterium called *Mycoplasma gallisepticum*, which until then had only been found in chickens. The disease had jumped to house finches and started spreading rapidly across the United States and into Canada. Sadly, this condition has also been found in birds in the Calgary region. An afflicted bird will not die from the infection, but the birds are vulnerable to predators and starvation due to lacking energy blindness caused by the eye crusting[iii].

### **Other common contagions**

Unfortunately, House Finch Disease is not the only risks that face birds at feeders. The most common disease encountered is *Salmonella*, which is a bacterial infection. Birds affected by *Salmonella* show symptoms such as diarrhea, ruffled feathers, and lethargy.

A *Salmonella* infection can spread rapidly among birds that eat at crowded bird feeders, where they often ingest food spoilt by contaminated bird droppings. Sadly, an untreated infection of this kind can be deadly, and infected birds can die within 1 to 2 days[i].

Another potential illness at feeders is *Aspergillosis*, which is a fungus that can grow on damp bird seed. Birds inhale the fungal spores into their lungs and air sacs, causing pneumonia, bronchitis, and eventually leading to death.

Viral diseases such as “avian pox” can also be spread by feeder crowds. This virus causes sores that form on the un-feathered parts of a bird’s body, including areas such as in the mouth, on the feet and eyelids, and around the eyes. Avian pox spreads though direct contact with infected birds at the feeder, but also through the bites of mosquitoes that have already bitten an infected bird. Fortunately, except for birds whose sores block their vision, most birds survive avian pox[ii].

### **How can we help protect our backyard birds?**

One of the best things we can do to protect our feeder birds is to keep our feeders clean! See the list of tips and tricks below to ensure your birds stay as healthy as possible.

- **Clean your bird feeders every two to four weeks**, and even more often during times of heavy use or wet weather. If you can, take your feeder apart and scrub all the parts thoroughly to remove caked on bird droppings and old bird seed. Soak the feeder in a solution of one-part bleach to nine parts water for a few minutes. Rinse with plain water and let the feeder air dry. You can also wash the feeder with soap and water, but only the use of bleach kills bacteria such as *Salmonella*[iv] [v] [vi] [vii].
- If you notice uneaten food is gathering in or under your feeders, think about **switching to a seed mix more to the birds’ liking**.
- If you see birds fighting over space at a feeder, **consider adding another feeder** to relieve the crowding that may be promoting the spread of disease.[viii] Social distancing isn’t just for humans!

- **Clean up old seed hulls and bird waste below the feeders** and throw it in the garbage. This will also reduce the number of mice who frequent the area for a free seed snack.
- **Ensure the seed you offer is fresh**, and always store your bird seed in airtight containers to minimize spoilage. Don't forget to wash your hands thoroughly before and after putting the new seed out!
- **Don't forget your hummingbird feeders** either! In order to prevent the growth of mold or the start of deadly fermentation, change the sugar water every three to five days; more frequently in hot weather. Do not wash these feeders with soap and water as this can leave behind a harmful residue. Rinse them with a dilute bleach or weak vinegar solution, followed by a thorough washout with plain hot water. Let the feeder air dry before refilling it.<sup>[ix]</sup> <sup>[x]</sup>

Many bird lovers find feeding their back yard feathered friends a source of great joy. But danger lurks for birds where least expected, in a dirty bird feeder! Help keep them healthy by regularly cleaning your feeders and **spread the word among your bird feeding friends and neighbors!**

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## References

- [i] Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2017. "Keep Bird Feeders Clean: Dirty Feeders Can Spread Disease to Backyard Birds". [https://www.dfw.state.or.us/news/2017/12\\_dec/121817.asp](https://www.dfw.state.or.us/news/2017/12_dec/121817.asp). Accessed 07 November 2020
- [ii] Mass Audubon. 2020. "Common Bird Parasites & Diseases". <https://www.massaudubon.org/learn/nature-wildlife/birds/common-bird-parasites-diseases>. Accessed 08 November 2020
- [iii] Project Feeder Watch. 2020. "House Finch Eye Disease". <https://feederwatch.org/learn/house-finch-eye-disease/>. Accessed 08 November 2020.
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- [vii] Mantz, Melyssa. 2020. "Bird Feeder Cleaning Tips". *The Spruce*. <https://www.thespruce.com/bird-feeder-cleaning-tips-386563> Accessed 12 November 2020
- [viii] Wild Bird Scoop. "How To Clean Bird Feeders: How Often and What Tools To Use". <https://www.wildbirdscoop.com/how-to-clean-bird-feeders.html> Accessed 12 November 2020
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- [x] National Audubon Society. 2017. "Hummingbird Feeding FAQs". <https://www.audubon.org/news/hummingbird-feeding-faqs>. Accessed 12 November 2020