

County of Wetaskiwin No. 10 Municipal Policy

Department:

Policy No.

62.2 Agricultural Service Board Pest Control

62.2.1

Title Beaver Control

1. Policy Statement:

1.1. The County's Beaver Control Program provides beaver control and management or beaver dam removal on County Infrastructure including road allowances, water management projects, and County-owned Property in order to prevent flooding.

1.2. This Policy provides the guidelines to ensure the management of beavers and the removal of beaver dams on private and public lands is undertaken in an as efficient and effective manner as possible, giving consideration to human safety, municipal liabilities and the mitigation of non-target animal capture.

1. Responsibilities:

1.1. The County is granted the authorization to remove beaver dams and trap on County controlled lands and public and private lands to which it has access, under the authority of the *Wildlife Act and Regulations*:

1.2. The Director of Agricultural Services or designate is responsible for

1.2.1. Conducting and supervising the Beaver Management Program outlined in this Policy.

1.2.2. Ensuring all beaver management work is conducted according to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans under the *Fisheries Act* and in compliance with *Alberta's Water Act*.

1.2.3. Securing any necessary licenses, permits and infrastructure required for the transportation, storage, and the use of explosives.

1.3. The Beaver Trapper hired by the County is responsible for:

1.3.1. Securing all permissions to enter onto private land.

1.3.2. Ensuring their safety as well as the public, including but not limited to property, buildings, and infrastructure when conducting beaver management work and has the authority to refuse to carry out any work if conditions are not safe.

1.3.3. Taking into consideration the characteristics of the site and the consequences of the control work.

1.3.4. For removal and disposal of carcasses in an appropriate manner.

1.3.5. Discharging a firearm in the performance of their duties under this Policy; subject to possessing a valid Possession and Acquisition Licence (PAL).

2. Guidelines: Beaver Control on County Road Allowances and County-owned Property

2.1. The Beaver Trapper or designate is authorized to manage beaver and/or remove beaver dams within County Road Allowances and County-owned Property as required.

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- 2.2. If the beaver and/or dams are located on private property, notification must be given to the landowner and written permission to enter upon lands must be obtained from the landowner.
- 2.3. If a landowner will not authorize the County to carry out beaver management work on their land the matter will be referred to Alberta Environment and Parks for investigation under the *Water Act*, the *Wildlife Act*, or any Act of Alberta that bestows powers to the County for the protection of County road infrastructure and public safety.
- 2.4. Trapping to remove beavers will be conducted in a fashion that reduces the risk of non-target animal capture and takes into consideration the safety of the public.
- 2.5. Signage will be posted a minimum of two days prior to setting traps.

3. Guidelines: Beaver Control on Private Lands

- 3.1. Beaver Control will be done on a request basis only on private land, when and where resources are available.
- 3.2. The landowner must sign a "Permission to Enter Upon Lands Form" prior to any beaver management work being done.
- 3.3. There will be a fee for service charge applied for beaver control work when it is performed on private land, as per the Fees & Charges Bylaw.

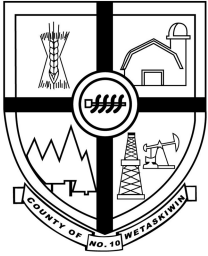
4. Guidelines: Removal of Beaver Dams

- 4.1. The County will not remove beaver huts using dynamite given the limited value of such an exercise.
- 4.2. The County will remove only the necessary section of the beaver dams as required to facilitate the flow of water. Removal of the entire dam structure could result in severe downstream flooding and an increases risk to people and property from a larger blast zone.
- 4.3. Where explosives cannot be safely detonated, or the use of explosives will have limited or no effect on breaching the beaver dam, the landowner will be responsible for utilizing alternative methods to remove the dam.

5. Related Documents:

- 5.1. Policy Directive (attached)
- 5.2. Policy 12.2.7 Subsistence & Travel
- 5.3. Discharge of Firearms Bylaw
- 5.4. Fees & Charges Bylaw
- 5.5. Fisheries Act
- 5.6. Water Act
- 5.7. Wildlife Act & Regulations
- 5.8. Occurrence Report
- 5.9. Permission to Enter onto Private Lands

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1. A District Occurrence Report shall be completed and sent to the Fish and Wildlife Office in Wetaskiwin, and one copy to the Agricultural Fieldman's Office.
2. Detailed work order records will be kept by the Beaver Trapper for each location, including the following:
 - a. Number of beavers trapped;
 - b. Number of dams blown or dug out;
 - c. Number of culverts opened by hand or blown;
 - d. Amount of explosive used; and
 - e. Labour, time and mileage per complaint.
3. The Beaver Trapper shall submit the work order records to the Director of Agricultural Services by the end of each month.
4. Prior to blasting, the Blaster will ensure that all easements have been completed. A call to Alberta First Call will be completed prior to work commencing, at the discretion of the Blaster. The County of Wetaskiwin will also notify the RCMP, the Community Peace Officers and, if necessary, adjacent Municipalities of blasting.
5. The Blaster will do a quick visual assessment prior to each job outlining:
 - a. Blast area and size.
 - b. Obstructions:
 - i. Above: ie. Powerlines
 - ii. Below: ie gaslines
 - iii. Beside: ie. fences, roads, livestock, bridges, etc.
 - c. Setback distances
 - d. Downstream flooding potential
6. On every blast, the Blaster is the person in charge. The Blaster has authority over any and all persons at the blast site. It is their responsibility to ensure a safe, efficient blast. The Blaster's instructions are to be followed out exactly.
7. Proper safety equipment must be worn by all present at the blast site.
8. Removal or breaching of beaver dams should be carried out in a manner that minimizes downstream sediment load. Only a small portion of a dam should be removed at one time to allow water from the beaver pond to be released slowly. As water levels decrease, the size of the opening may be increased to allow drainage to the desired level in the upstream pond. The water should be drained such that the sediment contained in the bottom of the pond is not released. This may require the removal to be

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conducted over a period of a few days depending on the size of the dam and the amount of water that needs to be released to alleviate flooding.

9. The County will not perform any hand removal of beaver dams on private property.
10. Areas downstream of the beaver dam should be monitored during removal/breaching activities to determine whether impacts are occurring to the channel and adjacent properties receiving additional water volumes. If damage is occurring, the rate of breaching may be slowed to prevent further damage.
11. If more than one dam is to be removed in a section of stream, dams should be breached and removed in order starting at the downstream dam and working in an upstream direction.
12. Disturbance to aquatic and riparian vegetation should be minimized and any areas disturbed should be stabilized and re-vegetated upon completion of the work.
13. Spoil materials removed from the beaver dam should be deposited in an area separated from the water course by a well-vegetated area and stabilized such that they do not re-enter the water course. Spoil includes any material associated with the beaver dam removed from the channel such as sediment, rocks, vegetation, and woody debris.
14. Fish that become trapped in isolated pools as a result of beaver pond dewatering or stranded in newly flooded areas below the dam may be relocated unharmed to the main channel of the water course.
15. No instream work should occur outside of the footprint of the beaver dam or outside of a road right-of-way where woody debris is being removed.
16. Appropriate precautions should be taken to ensure that harmful substances do not enter any water course.
 - 16.1 There should be no instream use of tracked or wheeled equipment or excavation of the streambanks. Equipment should be operated in dry weather conditions from the banks or road.
 - 16.2 The cleaning, fueling, and servicing of equipment should be conducted in an area from which spills or wash water will not enter fish habitat.
 - 16.3 Equipment operating near any water course should be properly maintained in sound mechanical condition and free of any fuel, oil and hydraulic fluid, or coolant leaks.
 - 16.4 Any spilled materials should be cleaned up as soon as possible and disposed of in an environmentally safe manner. Spilled material should not be left where it may enter any water course.
 - 16.5 If these measures are insufficient for effective control, it is the responsibility of the Beaver Trapper to implement alternative measures as required for effective deleterious substance control.

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17. Where explosives are used, the following measures should be employed:

- 17.1 No more than 3 kilograms of explosive should be detonated at any one time. If more than 3 kilograms is required to achieve an effective breach, subsequent charges should be detonated separately allowing sufficient time between charges to ensure breaching occurs slowly and downstream sedimentation, debris load and scour to the streambed is minimized.
- 17.2 Charges should be sent into the upstream side of the dam at a location above the natural streambed so that the detonation of the explosives does not alter the profile of the streambed.

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