



News Release – For Immediate Release Monday, May 27, 2019

Sportsplex Pond Closed Due to Illegal Dumping in County Sewer Drainage System

County crews and environmental protection specialists are on scene at the pond located at the Crosslink County Sportsplex in Clairmont dealing with an industrial oil contamination caused by illegal disposal of oil in a curbside street drain located at 85 avenue and 105 street.

“The County was notified about the spill on Thursday, May 23,” said Christine Rawlins, parks and recreation manager. “Crews were immediately dispatched to assess the situation and immediately implemented measures to contain the release and prevent further contamination of the pond.”

As the release occurred in the drainage system, there are no impacts to the water system and there are no immediate impacts to public health and safety. However, residents are asked to avoid the area until further notice.

“The Sportsplex pond is a popular recreational facility, and many of our residents enjoy fishing in the pond and walking along the paved trail,” said Reeve Leanne Beaupre. “The health and safety of our residents is paramount, so we have closed the site to the public until the site has been cleaned, all environmental assessments have been completed and we have confirmation there is no danger to the public. We do not know how long it will take, but this is something we cannot rush, so we ask for the public’s patience and understanding.”

Given the environmental implications, the County of Grande Prairie also contacted Alberta Environment and Parks and environmental mitigation specialists to help assess the site and provide advice for clean up and mitigation, including protection of wildlife including fish and waterfowl. This includes measures to deter waterfowl from landing on or otherwise accessing the pond.

“This is a very sensitive time for waterfowl, especially for any ducklings or goslings that may be in the area, and we are closely monitoring any wildlife that may call the pond their home,” said Rawlins.

County officials have no timeline as to when the pond will be re-opened and ask all residents to avoid the area while containment and remediation efforts take place.

“We know there will be a lot of concern by our residents regarding this illegal release and we are committed to providing regular updates on our progress,” said Beaupre.

“Information and updates will be posted on the County website, on our social media channels, and shared with local media. For the safety of the public, our crews, and the environment, I ask all residents to respect the barricades and not access the site until the County has confirmed it is safe to do so.”

“This is an unfortunate situation that could have been completely avoided if the industrial oil had been properly disposed,” said Beaupre.



Media Contact:

For interview requests, please email communications@countygp.ab.ca