



Welcome Home

to Kiskatinaw River Evacuees

A State of Local Emergency is still in effect and active wildfires are still a concern nearby.

You are returning to an area that was affected or had the potential to be affected by wildfire. Returning home may be stressful and traumatic. This handout will help you know what to do and where to get help.

The Grande Prairie Regional Emergency Partnership (GPREP) members, including first responders and municipal employees, have worked very hard to protect our communities. Whether on the ground or coordinating various activities behind the scenes, everyone played a part in protecting your lives, property and livestock.

We would also like to take a moment to thank you for your patience and cooperation during the evacuation. This was a crucial part in helping our crews fight this wildfire.

Please exercise extreme caution and respect any restricted areas and any directions given to you by First Responders.

**If you notice a fire on or near your property, call 911,
and let them know you are in the Kiskatinaw River fire zone.**

Questions or Concerns?

Please call the County of Grande Prairie Kiskatinaw River Wildfire Call Centre

Kiskatinaw River Wildfire Call Centre Hours:

- **Friday, June 13:** Open until 7:00 p.m.
- **Saturday, June 14:** Open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- **After Saturday:** Call Centre demobilized.
- **Starting Monday, June 16:** Contact the County Office at 780-532-9722
 - Hours: Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

IMPORTANT:

**DO NOT DRIVE OVER ANY EQUIPMENT, INCLUDING HOSES.
FOLLOW THE DIRECTION OF THE FIREFIGHTERS**

Fire Apparatus, water tanks, and equipment are still positioned in the area. Please avoid them. Dozer guards (fire breaks) have been created to limit the spread of fire.

Please be aware of activity in your area.

If you notice the residue of fire retardants on your property (red stains) use water or biodegradable household cleaners. Never use bleach to clean areas where fire retardants have been used.

CAUTION: ASH PITS – An ash pit is a hole in the ground filled with ash, possibly containing hot embers beneath. They are often found near the base of trees and in areas with deep organic soil. Ash pits are a danger to residents and their pets and livestock returning after a wildfire has gone out. Residents returning to their homes are reminded to stay vigilant and be aware of this danger. If you find an ash pit, do not step in or around it. If you're concerned about its location or giving off a lot of heat, please contact Kiskatinaw River Wildfire Call Centre at 780-830-5002.

First steps when you return home:

- ▶ Wildlife may have taken shelter in/around your home, garage, or outbuildings. Leaving a door open will allow the animals to return on their own to their natural surroundings. Call a Fish and Wildlife officer at 780-538-5265 (24 hours) for animals that appear injured or unwilling to leave.
- ▶ If you see stray livestock in your yard, please call the County of Grande Prairie's Agricultural Services Department at 780-532-9727.
 - ▶ Do not allow anyone to enter or play in areas damaged by fire.

- ▶ There are many safety risks:
 - Pits filled with ash which can be deep and hot.
 - Burned trees and branches which can fall over at any time.
 - Burning roots can cause trees to fall.
- ▶ If you smell gas, exit your home **IMMEDIATELY** and call ATCO Gas at 1-800-511-3447.
- ▶ Check for electrical hazards such as exposed wires. Avoid contact with damaged or fallen power lines and poles. If there are any hazards, contact ATCO Electric at 1-800-668-5506 (24-hours).

When you walk through your door:

- There was a brief disruption in gas utility service for some residents during this event. Please follow the directions provided by ATCO in this package for restoring gas service. Due to the short duration of the disruption, no damages are anticipated, however, it is recommended that residents check your gas, electricity, and water to make sure they are working and contact your utility providers if required.

Water: drinking and household use

- ▶ You should run all of your taps (hot and cold) for at least five (5) minutes to remove stagnant water out of your lines. You are able to drink, shower, do laundry, and use your water as you normally would.
- ▶ Check your water and sewer systems including sump pumps and livestock watering devices.
- ▶ For information regarding private wells or cisterns please refer to the "Alberta Health Services Returning to Your Home" reference material included in your Welcome Home guide.

Cleaning

IF you have SMOKE CONTAMINATION, do not throw anything away until you contact your insurance company.

Disposing of food from your home

- Refer to the "Alberta Health Services Returning to Your Home" reference material included in your Welcome Home guide for tips for disposal of food.
- If disposal of your fridge and freezer is required, you may leave your food contained in the appliance and seal it shut with duct tape. Refer to the Waste Disposal section of this guide.

To assist with smoke decontamination or deodorizing inside:

- ☐ Wash interior walls and hard surfaces with a steam cleaner or white vinegar.
- ☐ Wash or dry clean clothing, linens, and bedding.
- ☐ Wash all movable items with a steam cleaner or microfiber cloth. This includes children's indoor toys.
- ☐ Disinfect and deodorize upholstery and fabric window treatments with spray deodorizing products available at most supermarkets. Do not use odor-masking sprays as they only cover up the problem and do not fix it.
- ☐ You can also steam clean items including carpets, window coverings, upholstered furniture, and mattresses. Steam neutralizes the odor and carbon film left by forest fires.
- ☐ Consider having heating, ventilating and air conditioning units, and all ductwork professionally cleaned to remove soot, ash, and smoke residue. You can change filters when you first return home and then continue to replace them frequently.
- ☐ Refer to the "Alberta Health Services Returning to Your Home" reference material included in your Welcome Home guide for additional tips for cleaning your home.

Remember to keep all receipts for cleaning and other expenses to provide to your insurance company for possible reimbursement.

To assist with smoke contamination or damage outside:

- ☐ Pressure wash or scrub exterior surfaces including walls, walks, drives, decks, windows, and screens.
- ☐ Wash all children's outside toys, play structures, and recreational equipment to remove any residual smoke and ash. Replace the sand in sandboxes with clean sand.
- ☐ Cut down and remove any trees around your property that have been damaged by fire.
- ☐ Wash your hands if they come in contact with ash.
- ☐ Refer to the "Alberta Health Services Returning to Your Home" reference material included in your Welcome Home guide for additional tips for cleaning your yard.

Disposing of dead livestock

We are sorry for your loss and understand that this will be upsetting for you and your family. Livestock carcasses can be taken to a class 2 registered and approved landfill. Aquatera Landfill south of Grande Prairie is a Class 2 Registered and Approved landfill.

If you require guidance or assistance with the disposal process please contact the Call Centre at 780-830-5002.

Insurance information

IF YOU ARE INSURED:

Take the following steps:

- ☐ Call your insurance representative and/or company and follow their instructions.
- ☐ Assess and document the damage. Taking photos can be helpful.
- ☐ List all damaged or destroyed items.
- ☐ If possible, assemble proofs of purchase, photos, receipts, and warranties. Take photos of the damage and keep the damaged items unless they pose a health hazard.
- ☐ Keep all of the receipts related to cleanup, and if you've been ordered to leave your home, keep the receipts for your living expenses.
- ☐ Ask your insurance representative what living expenses you're entitled to be reimbursed for and for what period of time.

IF YOU ARE NOT INSURED:

For information on available assistance, check with:

- ☐ Government of Alberta 310-4455

If you can't remember who your provider is, or can't reach your insurance provider, contact the Insurance Bureau of Canada to help understand fire insurance coverage.

Phone: 1-844-227-5422 (toll-free) Email: AskIBCWest@ibc.ca Website: www.ibc.ca/ab

Refer to the media release from the Insurance Bureau of Canada (IBC): [IBC Media Release](#) included in this guide.

Do I need permits to begin repairing my house?

Depending on the extent of the damage, permits may be required. There are a number of different licenses and permits that the municipality administers.

Please visit <https://www.countygp.ab.ca/en/business-and-development/building-permits.aspx> for more information or contact the County of Grande Prairie Planning Department or Safety Codes Department at 780-538-9842.

Provincial funding and supports

DISASTER RECOVERY FUNDING

The County of Grande Prairie is in the process of applying for the Disaster Recovery Program for financial assistance. If the County receives approval, affected residents may be eligible to apply for financial assistance under the Program to help cover damages that were not covered by their existing insurance. This program can only be used once per property, and only applies to residents who already have existing fire insurance.

Please refer to the “Disaster Recovery Program” reference material included in your Welcome Home guide or visit www.alberta.ca/disaster-recovery-programs.

Emergency Evacuation Payments

Emergency evacuation payments (EEPs) are a one-time payment for Albertans affected by mandatory evacuation orders that exceed 7 days. EEPs are meant to ease the cost of evacuating, temporary accommodation and essential day-to-day costs of being away from your primary home due to an evacuation order during a disaster.

For more information on how to apply or to determine eligibility visit <https://www.alberta.ca/emergency#evacuation-payments> or call the Alberta Supports Contact Centre 1-877-644-9992 or visit an Alberta Supports located at:

100 Towne Centre Mall,
9845 - 99 Avenue Grande Prairie.

Air quality

People with breathing difficulties may want to delay returning home until the air quality improves.

For more information visit [Latest Alert For: Air Quality Alert \(weather.gc.ca\)](https://weather.gc.ca/latest_alerts/air_quality_alerts/)

Mental health

- ▶ For those impacted by the Alberta wildfires, AHS has supports and resources in place to help you through these challenging times.
- ▶ Go to www.ahs.ca/wildfire or call the Mental Health Help Line 24/7 at **1-877-303-2642**.
- ▶ For health advice or information on health services, *including mental health services*, call Health Link at 811 or **1-866-408-LINK (5465)**
- ▶ For professional, emotional support and/or referral to community resources contact the Lifeworks Community Crisis Support Line at **1-844-751-2133** (24 hour).

If you are having a medical emergency, call 911 right away.

FireSmart your home

- ▶ You may notice upon your return that flammable items on the outside of your property may have been moved away from your home (for example propane tanks, ATV's). This was done to further protect your home from fire.
- ▶ Complete a scan around your home and property and take steps to remove combustibles.
- ▶ Check vents on the roof, foundation and exterior walls to prevent embers from entering your home.
- ▶ Refer to the "Last-Minute Checklist for Protecting Your Home and Property from Wildfire" reference material included in your Welcome Home guide.

Handy phone numbers:

Kiskatinaw Fire Wildfire Call Centre	780-830-5002
Alberta Health Link	811 or 1-866-408-5465
ATCO Electric	1-800-668-5506 (Emergency) 1-800-668-2248 (Customer Call Centre – 24 hours)
ATCO Gas	310-5678 (7 am – 7 pm Monday-Friday) 1-800-511-3447 (After hours emergency line)
Aquatera	780-532-3996
County of Grande Prairie Planning & Safety Codes Department	780-538-9842
Fish & Wildlife	780-538-5265 (24 hours)
GP Networks	780-882-6623
Insurance Bureau of Canada	1-587-337-3200
Mental Health Help Line	1-877-303-2642 (24/7)
Lifeworks Community Crisis Support Line	1-844-751-2133 (24/7)
TELUS Mobility	*611 on your TELUS mobile phone or 1-866-558-2273
TELUS Internet	1-888-811-2323

The County of Grande Prairie's Call Centre has received a number of calls from residents offering support and volunteer services. If you are needing assistance please reach out to the Call Centre at 780-830-5002

For all other inquiries, please call the County of Grande Prairie Call Centre at 780-532-9722.

Supporting materials

- ☐ Alberta Health Services – Returning to Your Home
- ☐ Disaster Recovery Program
- ☐ FireSmart – Last-Minute Checklist for Protecting Your Home and Property from Wildfire
- ☐ Service Canada