



Evacuee Re-entry Guide

Robb, Mercoal and Peers area

**Continue following our website (yhcounty.ca) and social media for updates.
Download the Alberta Emergency Alert app for lifesaving notifications.**

If there is an active fire within 30 m (100 ft) of your home, call 911, let them know you are in the fire zone and leave the area immediately.

A fire crew will be sent to your location.

Welcome Home

You are returning to an area that was affected or had the potential to be affected by wildfire. Returning home may be stressful and emotional. This handout is intended to help you understand what to do upon returning home and provide resources to help you get back to your normal routine.

We want to recognize the community for your patience and cooperation as we navigated evacuations and uncertainty. This was a crucial part in helping our crews protect lives, property and livestock.

We are grateful to fire crews and first responders from Yellowhead County, Alberta Wildfire and from across the province for their dedication in fighting these fires and keeping our communities safe. We also want to recognize the efforts of our Incident Management Team, the Town of Edson for accommodating our evacuated residents and everyone who played a role in the response to these wildfires.



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Safety First

Safety (or residents and first responders) remains our top priority. Be aware of hazards when returning home.

- **Areas affected by fire can pose significant hazards.** Use extra caution around:
 - **Trees, power poles and power lines – these may be unstable and at high risk of falling, especially if roots or branches have been burned.**
 - **Deep burning ash pits in forested areas.** An ash pit is a hole in the ground filled with ash, possibly containing hot embers, often found near the base of trees and in areas with deep soil. **Do not step in or around it.**
- Fire Apparatus, water tanks and equipment may still be positioned in the area. Please give them space to work and don't drive over fire hoses.
- A wide dozer guard and fire break are being dug around edges of the fire to limit the spread.
- Adhere to any restricted areas and directions given to you by first responders – they are here to keep you safe.
- A Fire Ban remains in place
 - Prohibited:
 - All outdoor wood fires, including wood campfires on public and private land, designated firepits and backyard firepits
 - Barbecue charcoal briquettes
 - Fireworks and exploding targets
 - Allowed:
 - Propane fire pits and natural gas-powered appliances
 - Indoor wood fires

Tree safety following wildfires (“Danger Trees”)

After a wildfire, it's crucial to be mindful of the dangers from damaged trees, known as **“Danger Trees”**. Trees can be severely damaged by a wildfire in many ways, including to their roots, trunks and branches. The environment surrounding the trees (such as scorched earth), can also affect them.

Prevent serious injuries by being aware of these hazards and take precautions to stay safe:

- Check the tree's location and whether it's leaning or tilting.
- Look for visible damage to the outside of the tree.
- Examine the canopy of the trees to ensure that there are no overhead hazards.



- Inspect the tree's limbs, stems and roots for signs of deterioration. **Burned roots can cause the tree to become unstable and fall.**
- Even if the tree appears to be in good condition, it may have internal damage that could weaken its structure.
- Watch out for wildlife that may have been displaced from the trees.

Always exercise caution when in a treed area following a wildfire.

Contact an arborist for assistance with trees on your property. If you notice damaged trees on municipal or public property, please contact Yellowhead County.

Mental health

Evacuating from your home can be stressful and disruptive. Alberta Health Services (AHS) has supports and resources to help:

- Visit www.ahs.ca/wildfire
- Call the Mental Health Help Line: 1-877-303-2642 (24/7)
- Call Health Link at 811 or 1-866-408-LINK (5465) for health advice or information on health services, including mental health services

Transportation assistance

If you require transportation home:

- Call the Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) at 1-833-334-4630 to register for pickup.
- Advise staff if you have specific needs (e.g. wheelchair accessibility).
- Pickup will be from the reception centre at the Edson Holiday Inn (4520 2 Ave). We will communicate the timing to you when you register.

FCSS support

Family and Community Support Services Staff (FCSS) will be available to assist residents with any immediate supports they may require:

- Peers Multiplex
 - Tuesday, June 3 from 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm
- Robb Multiplex
 - Wednesday, June 4 from 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm

FCSS support services can also be accessed by calling 1-800-814-3935.



Steps to take when you return home

If you smell gas, exit your home **IMMEDIATELY** and call your utility provider or 911.

Safety

- ☐ Check for electrical hazards (ie. exposed wires, downed power lines/poles) and contact FORTIS at 1-866-717-3113 (24-hours) immediately if you notice any.

Natural gas

Natural gas was turned off in the evacuation. Please see below for details on service restoration:

- ☐ In **Robb**, you may relight your own appliances. If you need help, call Yellowhead Gas at 780-723-4214.
- ☐ In **Peers**, ATCO will be going door to door tomorrow to restore natural gas service. In the event you are not at home when we visit, information will be left at your door. If you need additional assistance, please call ATCO at 310-5678.

Electricity

Electricity was lost to Peers for approximately 12 hours during the wildfire response. Please consult page 5 to determine how to manage any food in your fridge/freezer. Its advisable to dispose of any food in your fridge due to the length of the outage.

- ☐ If the electricity in your home is off, check your main electric panel and breaker. Moving any tripped switches to the 'on' position may restore electricity.
- ☐ If this doesn't work, call Fortis at 1-866-717-3113 (24-hours).

Water (drinking and household use)

There was no service interruption to potable water services.

- ☐ Run one of your taps for 1-3 minutes to refresh the taste.
- ☐ Check your water and sewer systems including sump pumps and livestock watering devices.
- ☐ If you have a private septic system, check the area around your system for damage or sewage leaks. Contact a sewage disposal professional if you find damage to your septic system.

Livestock & Wildlife

- Report stray livestock to the Yellowhead County ECC at 1-833-334-4630.
- If wildlife may have taken shelter in/around buildings, leave a door open to allow them to return on their own to their natural surroundings. For injured animals/those unwilling to leave: call a Fish and Wildlife officer at 1-800-642-3800 (24 hours).

Cleaning your yard and property

- Use extreme caution around trees, even if they do not appear burned. If the root system has been burned, the tree can become unstable and fall, leading to serious injury or death.
- [MyHealth Alberta](#) has a comprehensive guide to cleaning your home after a wildfire (scan to view):
 - As electricity to Peers was disrupted for approximately 12 hours during the wildfire response, follow guidance from MyHealth Alberta on how to manage any food in fridges/freezers. Its advisable to dispose of any food in your fridge due to the length of the outage. **Remember, if in doubt, throw it out!**



- Wear the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) including masks, gloves and boots.
- Remember to keep all receipts for cleaning and other expenses to provide to your insurance company for possible reimbursement.
- Debris removal: contact your insurance company and wait until your adjuster gives the go-ahead.
 - The Peers transfer site is closed due to damage and hazards from burned trees
 - Take your debris to the Bear Lake and Pinedale transfer sites
 - Garbage bins will be available at the Multiplex starting Tuesday, June 3.

Cleaning outside of home



Yellowhead County

ash/soot
your

- [Alberta MyHealth](#) has resources on how to properly clean your home after a wildfire:



- Wash your hands if they come in contact with ash.
- Don't eat fruits and vegetables that were growing in your garden during the fire.
- ☐ Fire retardants may have left a red residue on your property. Use water or biodegradable household cleaners.
 - Never use bleach to clean areas where fire retardants have been used
- ☐ Use a hose, sprayer or pressure washer on the outside of your home, driveway, walkway, vehicle, patio, deck, outdoor furniture, trees, shrubs and plants. Rinse off your air intake vents and air conditioner carefully. Do not use air hoses or leaf blowers to clean exterior surfaces because you could blow more ash and soot into your house.
- ☐ Wash children's outside toys, play structures and recreational equipment to remove any residual smoke and ash. Replace sand in sandboxes with clean sand.
- ☐ Soak up any puddles or standing water that has fire retardant materials with soil or sand.
- ☐ Regularly wet down your garden and lawn until the smoke and ash have been diluted or reabsorbed into the air. Ash and soot on plants will continue to smell smoky for some time.
- ☐ Consider adding new, clean soil to gardens if you suspect or know the area was damaged by the fire.
- ☐ Compost from bins that were closed during the fire can be kept and added into your soil as usual. Don't use compost from bins that were open during the fire.
- ☐ If you have a private septic system, check the area around your system for damage or sewage leaks. Contact a sewage disposal professional if you find damage to your septic system.

Cleaning ash/soot inside of your home

- ☐ Wash interior walls and hard surfaces with a steam cleaner or white vinegar.

- or dry clean clothing, linens and bedding.
- ☐ Wash all movable items with a steam cleaner or microfibre cloth. This includes children's indoor toys.
 - ☐ Disinfect and deodorize upholstery and fabric window treatments with spray deodorizing products (available in most cleaning sections at stores). Do not use odour-masking sprays as they only cover up the smell.
 - ☐ Consider steam cleaning items including carpets, window coverings, upholstered furniture and mattresses. Steam neutralizes the odour and carbon film left by 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.

Pet Safety

- ☐ Thoroughly shampoo your pets if they've had contact with smoke, soot, ash or fire retardants. Clean up any puddles that come from shampooing with soil or sand.
- ☐ Don't let animals don't drink water from puddles that have fire retardants, soot, ash or other fire debris.
- ☐ If your pet looks sick from eating or drinking fire retardants or other products left over from the fire, take them to a veterinarian.

Damaged property

Contact your insurance company immediately if your property has been damaged by the wildfire.

Concerned about the structural safety of your home? It's best to seek alternative shelter and wait for a building inspector or contractor to check your home and declare it safe before you enter.

Steps to take if your property is damaged

- ☐ Document as much detail as you can about the damage to your property: take photos and video of the damage.
- ☐ If possible, assemble proofs of purchase, photos, receipts and warranties.
- ☐ Keep all receipts related to cleanup, receipts for your living expenses while evacuated.
- ☐ Ask your insurance representative what living expenses you're entitled to be reimbursed for and for what period of time.
- ☐ Ask for a claim file number.
- ☐ Do not remove any items or alter the structure until your adjuster says it's OK to do so. Debris removal is usually detailed in a homeowners' policy. This typically covers the cost of removing the debris, dismantling, or pulling down the damaged parts of the structure, or removing materials to get into the building or structure.

If you can't remember who your provider is, or you for more details for how to deal with structural damage or loss, contact the Insurance Bureau of Canada to help understand fire insurance coverage:

- 1-844-227-5422 (toll-free)
- askibcwest@ibc.ca
- <http://www.ibc.ca/ab/>

Contacts

Yellowhead County Emergency Social Services – Evacuee Contact Number	1-833-334-4630 <i>(Active only while the event is in progress)</i>
Alberta Health Link	811
ATCO	1-800-511-3447 / 310-5678
AltaGas Utilities	1-866-222-2068
Fortis Alberta	310-WIRE (9473)
Trans Alta	403-267-7110
TELUS Mobility	*611 on your TELUS mobile phone or 1-866-558- 2273
TELUS Internet	Toll-free 1-888-811-2323
Yellowhead Gas Co-op	780-723-4214
Alberta Inspection and Investigation Section (Livestock Mortality Management)	403-755-1474