

Quarterly ITEMS OF INTEREST

Town of Birch Hills

May 2020

BIRCH HILLS CONNECT



Connect is a new Municipal Communication system that allows the Town to share community information with residents on a regular basis and on multiple platforms. The system will keep you alerted on the latest news, events, weather, and emergency alert messages from Canada's national emergency alerting system



Register With Us

STEP 1

Go to www.birchhills.ca under "Birch Hills Connect" select "Register With Us"



Choose How

You can choose how you want to receive information. We want to use what best fits your life whether it be emails, text messages, phone calls, or a combination of platforms

STEP 2



Choose What

You can choose what kind of information you want to receive. If you're interested in being notified about emergencies, road closures, changes with garbage pick-up, water advisories, community events, that's what we'll send you!



STEP 3



Stay Informed & Involved

Connect will take care of the rest! You won't have to worry about being uninformed and can focus on participating in our community

STEP 4

The Town would like to thank everyone who has went over and above helping your neighbours and friends during these trying times.

We would like to wish everyone health, safety and compassion during this 'new world' we know as the COVID pandemic.

In This Issue

- COVID-19 Update
- Spring Clean-up Week
- E-mail Invoicing
- Fall Clean-up
- Holiday Hours
- Backyard Burning
- Municipal Street Lights
- Utility Payment Methods
- Property Assessments & Taxation
- Cats at Large
- Town Staff
- Water & Sewer Billing
- Elm Tree Pruning
- Household Water Valves
- Website

Please register at www.birchhills.ca under the 'Birch Hills Connect' tabs. Please remember your password in order to make any changes to your settings — The Town does not receive any passwords — If you forgot your password, please follow the steps under 'Change Account Settings' and there will be a place to click "forgot password".

We ask that you register today and share this information with all your local contacts, so we can register as many residents as possible.

Municipal Communication System — Birch Hills Connect

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) INFORMATION

COVID-19 — Message from the Town of Birch Hills

COVID-19

Everyone can play their part!

On April 23, 2020, Premier Scott Moe and Saskatchewan's Chief Medical Health Officer Dr. Saqib Shahab announced the Re-Open Saskatchewan plan. Phase One of the Re-Open Saskatchewan plan begins as early as May 4, 2020.

For more information from the Government of Saskatchewan or to review the Re-Open Saskatchewan Plan, please visit: www.saskatchewan.ca/COVID19

The Town of Birch Hills is asking everyone to help protect our community. Please adhere to the Province's Re-Open Saskatchewan plan as best as you can. There are still many regulations in place. All these measures help flatten the curve and every individual needs to do their part to assist in reducing the spread of COVID-19.

We want to thank all our residents and businesses for doing your part to flatten the curve. We are all in this together. If you aren't concerned about contracting COVID-19, be concerned that you may pass it to your family, friends or grandparents who may have compromised health — they may not be as lucky as you!

The Town Office remains closed to the public. We will be reviewing this throughout the Re-Open Saskatchewan plan. If you are looking to make a payment, the following payment options are available to you:

- Cheque (via mail)
- Online Banking (if available through your bank)
- E-Transfer to birchhills.town@sasktel.net and please note what your payment is for
- Credit card over the phone by calling the Town Office at 749-2232

Please call the Town Office if you have any questions.

Thank you for everyone's cooperation!!

Town Office Statutory Holiday Hours

The Office is currently closed to the public but is still available for telephone calls and e-mails. Please take note that the Town Office will be closed on the following statutory holidays:

May 18, 2020 for Victoria Day

July 1, 2020 for Canada Day

August 3, 2020 for Saskatchewan Day

Holiday Hours

Paying your Water & Sewer Utility Bill made easy!

You can pay your utility bill by cheque, cash, debit, credit card, preauthorized debit, online bill payment, or E-transfer.

You can also receive your utility bill by email. Email consent forms can be obtained on our website or at the Town Office.

PREAUTHORIZED DEBITS— your payments can be withdrawn out of your account on the 20th of each month. Please fill out a PAD agreement if you wish to utilize this method of payment.

ONLINE BILL PAYMENTS— through any Credit Union affiliate, CIBC, Scotia Bank, TD Bank.

E-TRANSFER— sent to birchhills.town@sasktel.net (password is not required)

Town of Birch Hills Municipal Staff

Tara Gariepy,
Chief Administrative Officer

Nola Nevland
Office Assistant

Michele Harris
Office Assistant

Darren Peterson
Acting Foreman

Rob Meng
Maintenance Labourer

Brad Douglas
Maintenance Labourer

Zachary Pitzel
Recreation Director

Adam Morrison
Recreation Facilities Manager

Hubert Parent
Town Maintenance & Recreation



Spring Clean-up Week

Spring Clean-up Week

The Town has declared **May 11th through May 16th** as Spring Clean Up Week.

Please have your compostable material bundled and available for pick-up in your back alley where back alley access is available. Also, please keep your compostable paper bags and branches in a manageable size and weight. Loose material or material in plastic bags will not be picked up.

Also, please remember pick-up is weather permitting. If it is raining, your material cannot be picked up and our compost site is not accessible. The Town will continue to pick-up when the weather cooperates.

The transition going from plastic bags to compostable paper bags has went extremely well. We thank everyone for their understanding and patience while the town does their best to deliver this service to the community.

GO GREEN! Receive your invoice by email



The Town sends out approximately 450 utility notices each month and we currently have approximately 77 customers signed up to receive their invoice by email.

Receiving your invoice by email will ensure you receive your invoice in a timely fashion. Currently, our local mail has to travel to Saskatoon before it is sorted and delivered to your post office box.

Sending our invoices by email saves the town time, paper, envelopes and postage.

BURNING

Please remember there is absolutely no burning within the Town of Birch Hills. You are able to purchase an 'Open Air' Fire Pit Permit in order to have a fire pit in your back yard. The permit allows you to burn fire wood and is only a one time payment of \$5.00 for as long as you own your property.

Now that nicer weather is upon us, it has been brought to the Town's attention that many individuals are burning leaves, grass and debris in their yards. This causes a lot of smoke and an unpleasant smell. Please be considerate of your neighbours as this is not allowed in Town.



Birch Hills Property Assessments & Taxation

2020 Property Assessments and Property Taxes

The Town of Birch Hills has prepared the property assessments for 2020 and the assessment notices were mailed on April 9, 2020. Only properties with changes to the assessment will receive a notice. If there was no changes to your property assessment, you will not receive a notice.

Due to the Government of Saskatchewan's Minister's Order from the Ministry of Government Relations, the assessment period has been extended by 30 additional days. Therefore, if you wish to appeal against your assessment you must file by 4:00 pm on June 10, 2020.

Tax Notices will be mailed this month. The Town has received notice that the School Division has not made a change to their mill rate and upon completion of the Town's budget, Town Council also chose not to change the mill rate from last year. Therefore, 2020 taxes will not change if you haven't had a change to your assessment.

TAX ARREARS

The total amount of unpaid municipal & school tax arrears is **\$177,007.53**. These arrears include \$11,194.80 from 2014; \$25,381.59 from 2016; \$33,086.40 from 2017; \$49,619.66 from 2018; \$57,725.08 from 2019.

Taxation is one of the Town's main revenue sources and we thank all those who keep their property taxes current. This helps council to determine funding for infrastructure, services, programs, etc. now and for the future. If you haven't done so already, please look into having your property taxes paid promptly.

CATS

Remember to not let your pet cats run at large!!! With the warmer weather we know your pet cats are itching to run outside. We are facing another issue with many cats running loose around town. Pet cats are required to be licensed in town and there are fines for failure to license and running at large.

Please remember, if you are trapping stray cats on your own accord or taking stray cats in that you don't intend on keeping, it is not the responsibility of the Town to collect and dispose of these cats. If you are continuously feeding and caring for a stray cat, the animal becomes your responsibility — whether you adopt it or find it a home.

Municipal Street Lights

Report Street Light Outages

Did you know that the Town of Birch Hills has 143 Street Lights? Did you know it is a flat rate per street light whether the light is working or not?

These street lights are owned and maintained by SaskPower and are considered residential street lighting.

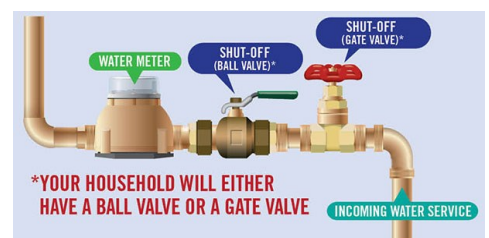
If you notice a street light not working, contact SaskPower at www.saskpower.com and follow the links OR call 1-888-757-3637 OR contact the Town Office. Your assistance in reporting street light outages helps the Town make sure they are receiving the services that are being paid for.

Town of Birch Hills Street Lights

Household Water Valves

Every month when you get your water bill, exercise the water valves in your house. Under the sinks, toilets and especially the main valve coming into the house.

Over time these valves will seize up and not work when you need them to.





What's The Big Deal About Flushing Paper Towels, Tissues, Wipes, Fats, Oils & Grease Down Your Toilets & Drains?

The Town cautions residents that only toilet paper should be flushed down the toilet, and not other kinds of wipes or paper products. Even wipes that are marketed as "flushable" wreak havoc on the Town's sewer pipes as they take too long to decompose.

Fats, Oils & Grease, known collectively as FOG, represent the most serious enemy of our sewer lines.

When FOG is dumped down the drain, it forms large, thick grease balls that clog pipes. Paper Towels, Tissues & Wipes combined with FOG are a destructive combination.

When FOG forms grease balls that stick to the pipes and paper products that take too long to decompose are flushed, it causes horrible blockages in the sewer pipes and/or causes problems at the sewage plant.

DO NOT:

- Don't pour fat, oil or grease down drains or garbage disposals
- Don't use hot water to rinse grease off cookware, utensils, dishes or surfaces.
- Don't flush paper towel, tissues or flushable wipes.

Please pour grease in an empty can and dispose in the garbage. Please only flush toilet paper down your toilet.



Ulmus (Elm) Tree

Protect Your Elm Trees

Do Not Prune Elm Trees Between April 1 & August 31 Each Year

To reduce the risk of Dutch elm disease (DED), pruning of elm trees will once again be prohibited throughout Saskatchewan from April 1 to August 31.

Elm bark beetles that spread the disease are most active during this time of year. Fresh cuts from pruning can attract the insects and increase the chance of a DED infection.

Proper elm tree pruning outside the annual ban period helps keep trees healthy and better able to resist all diseases, including DED. Removing dead and dying elm wood through pruning also helps reduce places for beetles to breed, and curbs their populations. Throughout the year, including during the ban period, DED-infected elms should be removed promptly.

Provincial regulations require commercial pruners of elm trees to complete a recognized training program or be under the supervision of someone who has. Improper pruning techniques can spread many tree diseases, including DED.

Because of the risk of spreading DED, transporting or storing elm firewood is illegal. Elm wood must be disposed of promptly, using the method and locations chosen by each municipality.

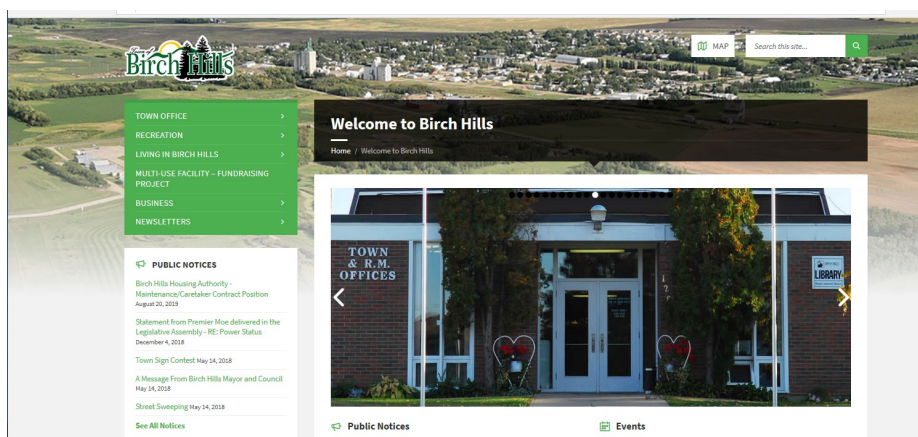
For more information about Dutch Elm Disease Control Regulations and safe elm wood disposal, contact 1-800-SASK-ELM (727-5356).

Town Website

It has already been 4 years since the Town launched their website. We see that the pictures that were supplied at the time are already outdated. If you have some pictures of our great town or any event, and you are willing to share them, please let the Town Office know.

The website requires continuous updates and if you notice that something may have been missed or if you have any ideas on what can be added to the website to promote our town, please send us your ideas.

Any ideas are greatly appreciated!!



With the implement of the Town's new communication system, Connect, we will not be sending newsletters out as often.

We hope to pass important Town related information through the new communication system. And you, as a resident of the Town, can decide what information you would like to receive and how you would like to receive the information.

The system was purchased preloaded with the white pages and the Town provided contact information from our customer listing. You are able to change, add to, or delete this information at any time.

The Town's main goal is to keep our residents as informed as possible.

Contact Us

Give us a call for more information or if you have any questions.

Town of Birch Hills
126 McCallum Avenue
Box 206
Birch Hills, SK S0J 0G0

(306) 749-2232

birchhills.town@sasktel.net

Visit us on the web at
www.birchhills.ca

Regular Town Council meetings are held every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month at 7:30 pm. Agenda items should be brought to the attention of the Administrator no later than the day before the Council meeting.

Elected Town Council

Mayor Dale Pratt
Councillor Barry Evans
Councillor Sharon Rolfes
Councillor John Herd
Councillor Keith Matheson
Councillor Graham Tweten
Councillor Owen Stubbs



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bhwaterplant.wordpress.com