

What are invasive species *and how you can help eradicate them?*

An invasive species is a species that is not native to the area in which it is found and has been introduced (whether accidentally or intentionally) from elsewhere. A species labeled as “invasive” typically means that because it did not originate in the ecosystem it is “invading”, and will likely be able to out-compete native species for resources to live and multiply. Invasive species are not necessarily animals, there are highly threatening plant species that can take over an ecosystem.

In Alberta, examples of invasive species include the brown rat, pet goldfish dumped when they become inconvenient, flowering rush that infests freshwater habitats and hawkweed – both the meadow and the decorative orange variety.

The majority of invasive species control is directed by the Alberta and smaller local governments, who collaborate with volunteer groups and landowners, in particular farmers, to improve coordination and communication – two key actions in decreasing invasive species risk.

In 2016, a smart phone app was introduced that farmers, and all Albertans, can download - EDDMapS Alberta, which stands for Early Detection and Distribution Mapping System.

Nicole Kimmel, Alberta Agriculture weed specialist commented that the app gives the ability for anyone who finds a suspicious plant to compare it with anything the government is looking for. An app user takes photos of the weed with a smartphone and the program uploads the photos to EDDMapS.

A verifier in Alberta reviews the images to check and confirm the weed species. Once verified and correctly identified as an invasive species, the verifier notifies the jurisdiction responsible. The app automatically picks up the GPS co-ordinates of where the weed or invasive species was detected, so ongoing reported locations appear on the EDDMapS Alberta website.



If you think you've seen an invasive species, please report the sighting!

Only working together will we succeed in protecting Alberta's ecosystem!

Downloading the app is easy and free

Simply visit:

www.eddmaps.org/alberta

and follow the instructions.

If you have no interest in apps or using web programs you can also report unusual weeds the old-fashioned way by showing a sample to Agricultural Services at the County of West Wetaskiwin or contacting the Director of Ag Services, Stephen Majek @ 780.361.6226.



For power troubles or service requests, contact: FortisAlberta (the distribution system operator for West Wetaskiwin REA): Toll-free: 1-855-333-9473 or 780-310-9473

For REA inquiries contact:
West Wetaskiwin REA
R.R. #1 Station Main,
Wetaskiwin, Alberta T9A 1W8
Phone: 780-335-9378 (WEST)
E-mail: westwet@telus.net
www.westwetaskiwinrea.com

For billing or account inquiries contact:
Battle River Power Coop
Box 1420
Camrose, Alberta T4V 1X3
Toll-free: 1-877-428-3972
E-mail: brpc@brpower.coop
www.brpower.coop

Summer Lightning Storm Safety

Did you know?

Canada averages over 2 million lightning strikes each year and that annually between 9 and 10 people are killed and over 160 people are injured by lightning. More than 94% of lightning related deaths and 74% of injuries have occurred between June and August (summer season). Additionally, the vast majority of deaths/injuries occur in the Thursday to Saturday period. The school of thought is this is related to higher rates of outdoor activity (i.e., weekends).

If you hear thunder, take shelter immediately. If you cannot find a sturdy, fully enclosed building, get into an all-metal vehicle (not a convertible) as it is the metal cage that protects you from lightning. Regrettably this guideline is becoming a challenge for some farmers caught in their fields as tractors and other large farm equipment, traditionally made out of steel, are being replaced with materials like fiberglass and plastic.

If you shelter indoors, stay away from electrical appliances and equipment, doors, windows, fireplaces, and anything else that will conduct electricity, such as water—so delay taking a shower, doing laundry, or washing the dishes by hand. Being indoors does not guarantee your safety.

Use battery operated or cordless devices only as electrical current from the lightning strike will travel through wires and cords using the path of least resistance. If your equipment is directly connected to a power source and or internet feed, then you are not safe. If you are using equipment with no wire connecting it to a power source (e.g., wireless laptop), then you are safe.

If caught outside away from safe shelter, do not stand near tall objects such as trees, poles, wires and fences or anything made of metal, avoid open water and take

shelter in a low-lying area, keeping an eye out for possible flooding. Note that picnic shelters, dugouts, and small buildings without plumbing or electricity are not safe. If caught on the water, quickly get to shore.

If you are in your vehicle during lightning, do not park under tall objects that could topple, and do not get out if there are downed power lines nearby. You are safe inside, but you may receive a shock if you step outside. If you see a downed powerline, call 911 or your system operator, FortisAlberta @ 310-WIRE (310-9473).

Once in, or at, the safest location available to you, remain there for 30 minutes after the last rumble of thunder is heard before resuming any outdoor activities. Remember, every time you hear thunder rumble you need to restart the clock until 30 minutes has passed.

If you encounter someone that has been struck by lightning, it is important to note that lightning-strike victims carry no electrical charge; however, victims may be suffering from burns or shock and should receive medical attention immediately. Call 911 and if breathing has stopped, administer mouth-to-mouth or cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

Remember

***when thunder roars,
go indoors!***

Regulated
Rate
Option



The Regulated Rate Option (RRO) may increase or decrease from month to month as it is priced on the open market and subject to many factors relating to supply and demand. It is not a 'regulated' rate, rather is a default rate. If you do not have a contract with an electricity retailer, then you are on the RRO. For June 2019, RRO is priced at \$0.06205 per kWh, reflected on your enclosed orange bill. For July 2019, the Battle River Power Coop monthly rate as calculated under the RRO regulation is \$0.06800; the billing rate charged to WW REA members is \$0.06800.

It is very important to note that your electrical distribution system provider will always be the West Wetaskiwin REA, regardless of who supplies your electricity. Members will not be disadvantaged in any way based on their retailer choice.

For a list of energy retailers, contact the Utilities Consumer Advocate: 310-4-UCA (310-4822) or www.ucahelps.alberta.ca. If you do not have a contract with an electricity retailer, then you are on the default Regulated Rate Option (RRO). The RRO rate is listed on www.westwetaskiwinrea.com

Information on West Wetaskiwin's Code of Conduct Regulation Compliance Plan can be found on our website: www.westwetaskiwinrea.com