

May 16, 2011

Province assists Slave Lake residents and fire response

Edmonton... The Government of Alberta is working closely with local municipal officials and agencies to ensure the safety of residents evacuated from the Slave Lake wildfire.

Slave Lake issued a mandatory evacuation for all residents last evening. Evacuated residents have been directed to the following locations:

- Westlock Community Hall, 10711 104 Ave.
- Athabasca Multiplex, #2 University Dr. **(now full)**
- North Edmonton, M.E. LaZerte High School, 6804 144 Ave.

“Our hearts go out to the community of Slave Lake which has been devastated by these wildfires and our first priority continues to be the safety of residents,” said Municipal Affairs Minister Hector Goudreau. “We have been working directly with the municipality and nearby communities to ensure residents are evacuated to safe locations away from any danger.”

“I want to assure the residents of Slave Lake that we will be there to work with the community as they recover and rebuild.”

“It has been heart wrenching to see how quickly this wildfire moved and the effect it’s had on our community,” said Mayor Karina Pillay-Kinnee, Town of Slave Lake. “Our local emergency staff are working hard in very difficult circumstances, together with the Government of Alberta and many other agencies, and we are grateful for this support.”

The Government of Alberta’s emergency response actions include:

- Buses have been sent to assist evacuees who do not have access to transportation.
- 29 patients were evacuated from Slave Lake General Hospital to hospitals in Westlock, Boyle and Athabasca. All long term care patients have also been evacuated to area facilities.
- Reception centres and disaster social assistance have been established in neighbouring communities.
- Approximately 70 firefighters from the greater Edmonton area are on route to assist.

Any family members who are looking for information on where medical patients were moved can call Alberta Health Services at 1-866-301-2668.

A number of Alberta agencies and departments are responding to a number of wildfires across the province including Sustainable Resource Development, Municipal Affairs (Alberta Emergency Management Agency), Transportation and Alberta Health Services.

Information about wildfires in Alberta is available on Facebook, at the site ‘Alberta Wildfire

Info.' Status reports are also available at the Sustainable Resource Development website at <http://www.srd.alberta.ca/Wildfire/WildfireStatus/Default.aspx>.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: Emergency management and wildfire officials will hold a technical briefing at 10:30 a.m. at 14515 122 Ave., Edmonton.

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