

Coaldale Town Council Discusses Drought Conditions in Southern Alberta

As Coaldale receives its water supply from Lethbridge, the Town will be required to adopt the same water conservation measures and/or water restrictions adopted by the City.

During its February 5, 2024, Committee of the Whole (COTW) Meeting, Coaldale Town Council discussed drought conditions in southern Alberta and what actions the Town might be required take to help conserve water this summer.

Just before Christmas, Minister of Environment and Protected Areas, the Hon. Rebecca Schulz, sent a letter addressed to municipal leaders across the province in which she asks them to take action.

As the letter explains, there are essentially two reasons why Alberta is currently in a significant drought. The first is that last summer, “several water basins reached critical drought conditions due to low rainfall and high temperatures.” The second is that the world is “currently experiencing El Niño, a global phenomenon occurring for the first time in seven years” that is “causing less snow and rain, along with higher temperatures, heightening the potential for significant drought into spring and summer 2024, particularly in southern Alberta.”

To deal with this potential significant drought, the province has already gone ahead and organized a Drought Command Team and created a first draft of a 2024 Drought Emergency Plan. But according to Minister Shulz, “municipal action” will also be needed.

In accordance with Minister Shulz’s letter, the City of Lethbridge passed a motion during its January 23, 2024 Council Meeting directing City Administration to work in partnership with the province and regional partners on proactive measures to address current water supply concerns, and to prepare options on programs to incentivize water conservation including, but not limited to economic incentives, xeriscaping options for existing public spaces, and potential changes to design standards for new developments.

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Town will be required to adopt the same water conservation measures and/or water restrictions adopted by the City. However, during its February 5 COTW Meeting, Coaldale Town Council also briefly discussed adopting measures and/or incentives of its own, depending not only on the severity of the situation but on considerations related to securing and expanding Coaldale’s long-term growth horizon, as well.

“As of right now, it’s looking like this summer is going to be an exceptionally dry one,” said Town of Coaldale Mayor Jack Van Rijn. “A number of water basins are experiencing critical water shortages due to low rainfall and high temperatures last summer - including the Oldman River basin, which is where Coaldale’s water supply ultimately comes from. And so, in the spirit of provincial and regional cooperation we thought it would be a good idea to get ahead of this now and signal our support for the City’s forthcoming water conservation plan. At the same time, we see this as an opportunity to start discussing what, if anything, the Town of Coaldale can or should do to supplement those measures. At the end of the day, the amount of water we use also has long term growth horizon implications for the Town. The fact is that when we use less water, we stand to expand our growth horizon, and so if there are ways to make sure we’re using water more efficiently as a community, we want to consider those as well.”

What’s Happening in the Community?

On Saturday, March 9, the Coaldale Figure Skating Club will hold its annual Carnival, this year titled “Look in a Book”, at the Coaldale Arena. The event will begin at 1:00pm and include door prizes. There is a \$5 entrance fee. Children 5 and under are free.

Town of Coaldale Unveils Official Logo for the 2024 Southern Alberta Summer Games

The logo brings together imagery that not only pays homage to the history of the Games, but also, to Coaldale's Birds of Prey Nature Center and the Town's historic slogan, "Gem of the West".



On Friday, February 9th, the Town of Coaldale unveiled the official logo for the 2024 Coaldale & Lethbridge County Southern Alberta Summer Games (SASG).

By combining the silhouette of a great-horned owl with those of athletes playing SASG sports inside the facets of a gemstone, the logo brings together imagery that not only pays homage to the history of the Games, but also, to Coaldale's Birds of Prey Nature Center and the Town's historic slogan, "Gem of the West".

"In designing the logo, we not only wanted to showcase major SASG sporting events like basketball, baseball, and track and field, but also, Coaldale's identity as a Town", said Mark McIntosh, Southern Alberta Summer Games Coordinator for the Town of Coaldale. "This is why we decided to use the silhouettes of a great-horned owl and a gemstone. They're symbols that on the one hand identify Coaldale as home to the Alberta Birds of Prey Nature Center and that on the other hand recall Coaldale's historic slogan, "Gem

of the West".

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the SASG was the largest consecutively running sporting event in western Canada. Each year saw thousands of athletes and coaches from 13 regions across southern Alberta compete in playoffs to determine regional representatives.

As for the 2024 Games, they mark the first Games that Coaldale and Lethbridge County will host since 1997 and the 51st Games after a 4-year long hiatus. "From 2020 to 2023, the SASG were put on hold due to the Covid-19 pandemic", said Russ Tanner, Director of Recreation & Community Services for the Town of Coaldale. "So it's really an honour for Coaldale and Lethbridge County to have been chosen to bring them back to life and to welcome all of the coaches and athletes who've been patiently waiting for their return."

The 2024 Games will take place from July 3-6 and feature both individual and team sporting events for all ages in and around Coaldale. They will also overlap with the opening of Coaldale's new multi-use recreation centre – a 55,000 square foot recreation facility that will stand as a centerpiece for recreation, sports, and special events in southern Alberta.

"As a Council, we can't wait to extend a warm welcome to all of the athletes and coaches participating in the 2024 SASG", said Town of Coaldale Mayor, Jack Van Rijn. "This spring, we'll be opening a brand-new state of the art multi-use recreation centre and the Games provide a perfect opportunity for Coaldale to showcase this facility. We expect it will play a prominent role in hosting the event and look forward to seeing so many people come through its doors."

To learn more about the 2024 SASG, including about how to volunteer, please contact the Town of Coaldale's Southern Alberta Summer Games Coordinator at mark.mcintosh@coaldale.ca or by phone at 403-345-1324.