

RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF FRANCIS NO. 127

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2017 NEWSLETTER

ADMINISTRATION OFFICE HOURS

The RM office is open Monday to Friday 9:00am – 4:30pm (closed during the noon hour). Every effort is made to have the office open during all regular business hours, but there are times where training, conventions or scheduled vacation time may mean that the office may be closed—please ensure to call ahead if planning to visit.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

Regular Council meetings are held in the Council Chambers at the RM office in Francis on the second Thursday of each month beginning at 9:00am. All meetings are open to the public to attend; however, if you wish to formally address Council, please contact the Administrator no less than 24 hours prior to a council meeting to be put on the agenda as a delegation. Any change to a meeting date is posted a minimum of 24 hours in advance.

YOUR COUNCIL

		Primary	Secondary
Reeve	Clayton Schmidt	(306)539-9355	(306)762-4712
Division 1 Councillor	Ernie Gutzke	(306)699-7082	(306)957-4526
Division 2 Councillor	Barret Gaetz	(306)533-2626	(306)957-4310
Deputy Reeve/Division 3 Councillor	Richard Morley	(306)539-2028	(306)245-3424
Division 4 Councillor	Patrick Poissant	(306)722-7607	n/a
Division 5 Councillor	Daryl Hoffman	(306)537-0651	(306)762-2176
Division 6 Councillor	Dave Schaeffer	(306)527-8911	(306)885-4510



YOUR STAFF

Administration

Administrator Megan Macomber
 Office Assistant Karen Anderson

Contracted Personnel

Weed Inspector Bob Baker
 Pest Control Officer Fred Paslawski

Road Maintenance Crew

Foreman Darren Solie
 Road Maintenance Crew Trent Duesterbeck
 Road Maintenance Crew Chris Wild
 Road Maintenance Crew Mark Kress
 Road Maintenance Crew Shane Chinski
 Road Maintenance Crew Gordon Schaeffer
 Road Maintenance Crew Ted Vogt

2017 MILL RATES

Due to it being a revaluation year where we saw a substantial increase in the taxable assessment, Council has reduced the municipal mill rate from 6.75 down to 4.7 for 2017, in addition to applying mill rate factors in order to keep levies on par with previous years. Both Municipal and Education Mill Rates are listed below:

Property Class	Municipal	Education
Agricultural	0.70 MRF	1.43 Mill Rate
Residential	4.70 Mill Rate	4.12 Mill Rate
Commercial/Industrial	1.75 MRF	6.27 Mill Rate
Resource	1.75 MRF	9.68 Mill Rate

*MRF designates Mill Rate Factor
 Taxable Assessment x Mill Rate ÷ 1,000 x MRF (if applicable) = Taxes

Discount periods are offered in August, September, October and November for early payment that applies to both Municipal taxes and your Hail levy (if applicable).

WHY DID MY TAXES CHANGE?

The RM of Francis, like many municipalities across the province, was affected by substantial changes to property assessment values which ultimately affect taxes. Please consider the following possibilities if you saw a drastic change:

- The provincial government increased the percentage of value of what is taxable on residential property (up from 70% up to 80%) and non-arable agricultural property (up from 40% to 45%).
- The assessment values on agricultural land increased significantly due to it being a Revaluation year in the province that reflects market conditions as of January 1, 2015—think of how land was being bought and sold so frequently only a couple years ago, not only in the RM of Francis but the surrounding area.
- This year, most residential land in the RM (based on a standard 3-acre yard-site) had an urban factor applied to the assessment due to the property's proximity to an urban centre. This increases the residential taxable assessment that any potential exemption you may be entitled to, cannot be applied to (an agricultural exemption is only applicable to the physical residence, not the 3-acre yard-site).
- Although the RM reduced its mill rate on the municipal tax and the province did the same with education mill rates, the education mill rate reductions were not proportionate to the increase in taxable assessment (especially on agricultural land)—in most cases, if you saw a big jump on your total tax bill, it is primarily education tax.

Council worked diligently to try and maintain stability for everyone's property taxes; however, the variables noted above affected ratepayers differently from one to the next and could not be controlled.

SAVE POSTAGE AND PAY YOUR TAXES ONLINE!

In order to pay taxes online, please look for **FRANCIS NO. 127 (RM) - TAXES** as a payee and use your customer number located at the top of your tax notice as the account number. If your customer number is shorter than 4 digits, use zeros to prefix your account number—for example, if your account number is 127, you will enter 0127 as your account number. Affinity, Conexus, Plainsview and Weyburn Credit Unions are able to provide this service. You are also able to pay taxes by E-Transfer where you can email your payment to rm127@sasktel.net, or continue with paying by cheque or cash. Sorry we do not accept debit or credit card payments at the office.



NEW RM WEBSITE IN DEVELOPMENT!

The RM of Francis No. 127 is excited to announce that we are in the works of developing a new website where you will be able to access all the RM information you need. Information that will be made available online will include Bylaws, Meeting Minutes, application forms for development, overweight permits, dust control, ditch-mowing, custom work in addition to any current notices such as information on road restrictions and so much more. Please keep an eye out for an update on the website address and save it to your favorites on your desktop or smart phone for quick access.

FIRE PROTECTION & CONTROLLED BURNS



The RM owns two fire trucks that are housed and operated by the Odessa and Sedley Volunteer Fire Departments in addition to having fire protection service agreements with the communities of Francis, Odessa, Sedley, and Vibank. Please consider the following fee structure and ensure that you have adequate insurance coverage with your provider:

Minimum call-out fee/First Hour = \$800.00

Additional Hours = \$350.00 per hour

Maximum Fire Call Charge = \$15,000.00

REPORT YOUR CONTROLLED BURNS! You run the risk of receiving a bill with a minimum

charge of \$800.00 if it hasn't been registered and unbeknownst to you, someone has called your fire into 911 not knowing that it is under control. To register your controlled burn, please call **1-866-404-4911** with your information and call back when it is complete.

GOPHER CONTROL – 2% LIQUID STRYCHNINE

Some important details and conditions if you are interested in getting 2% liquid strychnine to treat problem gophers:



- Only agricultural producers are eligible to purchase the product by signing a purchasing agreement and returning a product evaluation form back to the RM Office within 21 days of application
- The time to treat gophers is in the early spring (April) when the gophers emerge from hibernation in search of food—any application completed later is not reducing the overall population but is only an attempt to contain the problem at that time, so treat them early!
- Bait is to be mixed with wheat and placed in burrows then covered and **not** to be used in bait stations; please read the instructions carefully when picking up your supply

PERMITS—OVERWEIGHT & PRIMARY

All roads but the 708 (Francis) Grid are classed as secondary weight throughout the year within the RM with the exception of Spring Road Ban season and when by Council resolution, Primary Weight Permits may be issued. All haulers who intend to haul above the specified weight designation are required to contact the RM office to get a permit for the municipal roads therein. **Primary Weight Permits are available as of July 1, 2017 for \$25 per single-trip per vehicle, or \$100.00 per multi-trip (seasonal) per vehicle plus GST.**



RCMP – NON-EMERGENCY REPORTING LINE

To report non-emergencies across the province, you can call **310-RCMP (7267)**. This will still direct you to your local police agency, but leaves 911 free for people in emergencies.

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS - EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE

As mentioned at the 2017 Ratepayer Supper, RM Council is seeking volunteers to be part of a needed Local Emergency Planning Committee for our Emergency Measures Organization. The purpose of this Committee is to establish a municipal emergency plan governing:

- (a) the provision of necessary services during an emergency; and
- (b) the procedures under and the manner in which persons will respond to an emergency.

RM Council cannot fill these positions because ultimately, they are responsible for making decisions during an emergency based on the recommendations of those who form the committee.

Please contact the RM Office if this is something that you are interested in being a part of—all necessary training will be coordinated and provided by the RM.



NEW MAPS AVAILABLE

With the new assessment values from the Assessment Revaluation this year, we have done a complete update of the RM map that we expect to be in at the RM office for pick-up in September. As a ratepayer, you are provided one free map for the latest print. The RM also plans to have the map available to view on the new RM website!

REPORTING PROBLEMS, ADDRESSING CONCERNS, OR EVEN A THANK YOU!

Please contact your Councillor, the Reeve or the RM office if you have an issue or concern that requires addressing. We strive to do our best in serving our ratepayers both fairly and efficiently, but we know that there are times where improvement can be made or it could be a simple misunderstanding that an explanation is needed. Not only do we want to hear about concerns, but also where we have done a job “well done”—positive feedback is appreciated so we know what is working and what can be improved on.