

Post-flood debris removal

FACTS AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

What is debris?

Debris refers to natural plant and woody debris. It also includes man-made debris such as household and farmyard materials.

Alberta Environment considers natural vegetative and woody debris to be part of normal aquatic ecosystems.

Who owns Alberta's rivers and creeks?

In Alberta, the rivers and creeks are owned by Albertans. The Government of Alberta manages the province's water resources on behalf of its citizens.

Alberta Environment sets policy and legislation to ensure the quality and quantity of our water resources.

Who is responsible for removing debris from the creek?

There is no one person or government department responsible for the removal of debris. The decision to remove debris, including beaver dams, rests with the landowner where they feel the debris is cause for concern.

What is the role of the landowner?

The landowner may be an individual or a local authority, such as a city, county or the provincial government.

If the landowner believes that removal of debris is necessary, it is his or her responsibility to ensure that any necessary authorization is obtained from Alberta Environment.

Landowners planning to remove debris should contact Alberta Environment prior to conducting work to ensure they do not require authorization.

Do I need approval to clean out the creek if the debris is from the flood?

In many cases, landowners and local authorities may remove the debris themselves without a formal authorization.

However, depending on the location and nature of the removal, Alberta Environment may need information from the landowner to confirm that no authorization is required. That's why it's important to contact Alberta Environment before the removal.

The clean-up of debris away from rivers and creeks does not require authorization from Alberta Environment.

What is Alberta Environment's role in debris removal?

Alberta Environment staff will conduct inspections to assess concerns of local landowners where potential blockage of a stream is identified.

We will also assist landowners by guiding them through any required authorization process. This process has been specifically tailored to quickly address the needs of flood-impacted landowners.

Who does the physical work of removing debris?

Alberta Environment is a regulatory agency and will not physically remove debris. We will assist landowners and local authorities in getting their work done in a timely manner.

If debris removal is substantial, the landowner may need to hire a contractor to ensure the removal is completed adequately.

Where flood debris seriously congests a creek or creates a public safety hazard, the Disaster Recovery Program may be able to assist with the cost of removal. Before beginning any work, contact the program at 1-888-671-1111.

For more information on debris removal contact Alberta Environment's Lethbridge Office at: 1 403-381- 5322.

Alberta Environment is responsible for managing the province's water on behalf of Albertans.

Alberta Environment empowers landowners and municipalities to remove the debris themselves and notify us by letter.