

River Breakup Advisory Update

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Issued by: River Forecast Section, Water Management Operations

River Breakup Advisory Update for Athabasca River from the Town of Athabasca to Fort McMurray

Alberta Environment has issued a **River Breakup Advisory Update** for the Athabasca River between the Town of Athabasca and Fort McMurray. Cooler temperatures and recent snowfalls have slowed down river ice breakup processes from initial estimates.

Conditions for river breakup are re-developing on the Athabasca River. The ice cover is continuing to deteriorate and increased water levels due to snowmelt runoff are occurring.

There are a variety of ice conditions ranging from solid ice cover to open areas along the river between the Town of Athabasca and Fort McMurray. River ice conditions and water levels can change rapidly.

Every year at breakup there is potential for ice jam formation and flooding along the Athabasca River. An analysis of the current conditions suggests that there is an average level of risk for ice jam and flooding during breakup this year.

Information regarding river ice breakup in Fort McMurray is available from the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo through their website at <http://www.woodbuffalo.ab.ca> or from a recorded message on their telephone hotline (780) 799-8000.

Additional information from Alberta Environment is available at <http://environment.alberta.ca/forecasting/ForecastersComments/index.html> and at <http://www3.gov.ab.ca/env/water/ws/RiverIce/Index.html>

With the onset of warmer Spring temperatures, ice breakup will occur in Alberta's rivers. This may result in the formation of ice jams, but not always. The location and occurrence of ice jams, and possible associated flooding, are very unpredictable. Local authorities are advised to monitor the ice covers and water levels in the rivers in their communities.

Alberta Environment is monitoring river conditions closely along the Athabasca River. This advisory is in effect for 14 days and will be updated if there is any change in conditions.