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# Newsletter

May 2025 Edition

# THE LAW OF THE LAND

ELECTION

86

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TO CONTROVERSY IN COLD LAKE FIRST NATIONS GOVERNANCE**

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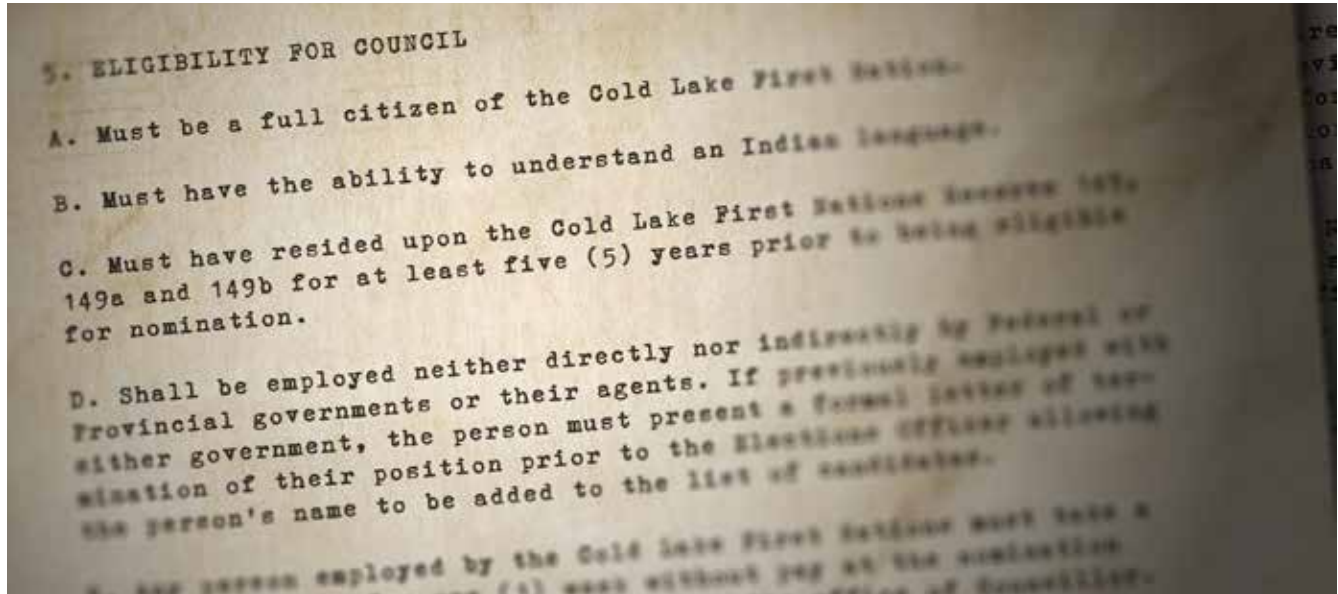
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# The Legacy of the 1986 Custom Election Law

In the spring of 1986, Cold Lake First Nations (CLFN) entered a storm of controversy that would shape its democratic framework for decades to come. We would make history by electing the first “White Chief” and the response would be the new “86 Election Law”.



~A section of the "Custom 86 Election Law".

The election of Elaine Janvier, a non-Indigenous woman, as Chief was a flashpoint for our community still grappling with the tension between colonial legal systems and Indigenous identity-based governance.

The Controversial Election of 1986 Elaine Janvier, a Caucasian woman married to a Treaty-status man, had worked as the office manager for CLFN and was widely respected for her administrative skills. Under the federal Indian Act, her marriage granted her Treaty status, thereby making her legally eligible to vote and run for office. With the sudden resignation of then-Chief Maynard Metchewais and four out of six council members, a by-election was called.

Janvier was elected by a margin of just one vote, making her the first non-Indigenous person ever elected as Chief of Cold Lake First Nations, and one of the first in Canada. Her victory was covered widely in national media.

The backlash was immediate and profound. Many CLFN members expressed outrage that someone without Indigenous bloodlines—despite legal Treaty status—could lead the Nation. Tensions quickly escalated into community protests, meetings, and formal challenges to the legitimacy of the election. Citing division and unrest, Elaine Janvier resigned from her position shortly thereafter.

This crisis prompted a swift response—one that would leave

a lasting impact. Cold Lake First Nations moved to establish its own Custom Election Law, a framework believed at the time to better reflect traditional values, cultural identity, and community-defined citizenship, rather than relying solely on federal criteria under the Indian Act.

## The Birth of the 1986 Custom Election Law

By May 1986, CLFN introduced what would become known as the Custom Election Law, or the “1986 Election Law”. This community-led framework sought to prevent similar controversies by establishing clear eligibility criteria for voters and candidates, including:

- Age 21+ (later recognized

## The Legacy of the 1986 Custom Election Law (cont)

as inconsistent with the Canadian Charter)

- Full citizenship in CLFN and 5 years residency
- Language requirements (Chipewyan or other Indigenous languages)
- Ancestral lineage from Treaty 6 signatories
- Disqualification of federal/provincial government employees

These restrictions reflected a desire to assert self-governance and protect the community's identity and political integrity. However, over time, several provisions became legally vulnerable or administratively problematic.

### Legal Challenges & Electoral Reform Attempts:

In 2014, CLFN faced legal scrutiny in the case of Jacko v. Cold Lake First Nation, where the Federal Court found parts of the 1986 law to be vague and in need of clarification—especially regarding residency rules and transparency in appeals.

To address this, CLFN launched the Denezi Nalt'si Electoral Reform Commission in 2017. Through consultations and community meetings, a new election code was drafted. However, the 2018 referendum to approve the updated law failed,

as it did not receive sufficient support from the electorate. This marked the second failed attempt to modernize the election process. A follow-up opinion poll in 2019 showed mixed community support and highlighted a lack of engagement or clarity in the reform process.

### Ongoing Challenges with the 1986 Law

While the Custom Law remains in effect, its shortcomings have become more apparent in today's legal and political context:

**Voting Age:** Still listed as 21+, conflicting with Section 3 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which allows all Canadian citizens age 18+ to vote.

**Residency Rules:** Disenfranchise off-reserve members despite their citizenship and cultural ties.

**Language & Ancestry Clauses:** May exclude qualified candidates and conflict with non-discrimination protections under Canadian law.

**Employment Restrictions:** Blanket bans on government employees may violate labour rights and democratic access.

These issues have made our elections vulnerable to appeals, internal disputes, and external scrutiny—especially as more members live off-reserve and seek equal participation in our Nation's governance.

### The Path Forward: Balancing Tradition and Inclusion

The spirit behind the 1986 Custom Election Law was one of self-determination and community protection—values still central to Cold Lake First Nations. However, nearly 40 years later, legal norms, demographics, and social expectations have evolved.

While reform attempts have fallen short, many community leaders now recognize the urgent need to update the Election Law to:

Lower the voting age to 18

Include off-reserve members

Treat Indigenous language fluency as an asset, not a barrier

Replace broad employment bans with conflict-of-interest safeguards

Create a clear, fair appeals process

A modernized law would better reflect CLFN's values while complying with Section 35 of the Constitution Act and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), now enshrined in Canadian law.

The next Chief and Council election is scheduled for early June. Stay tuned to [clfns.com](http://clfns.com) and CLFN's official communication channels for official nomination dates, voting procedures, and candidate announcements.

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## Reconnecting with Ha Tuwe: A New Path Forward for Cold Lake First Nations

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**CLFNS has launched a new orientation process for anyone—members or guests—seeking access to the Cold Lake Air Weapons Range (Ha Tuwe), a vital and sacred part of our traditional territory.**

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~ Late Elder Maynard Metchewais on the shores of Ha Tuwe.

This initiative isn't just about safety—it's about honouring our deep connection to the land, preserving our culture, and exercising our rights under Section 35, including the right to hunt and fish.

Ha Tuwe has always been central to who we are. It was heartbreaking when our people were forcibly removed from the area in 1952. But in 2001, after years of legal effort, we regained access and entered into a formal agreement with the Government of Canada. That agreement affirmed our inherent rights and outlined shared responsibilities. This new orientation is our way of upholding our part—ensuring that everyone who enters the CLAWR does so with knowledge, respect, and care. Our Lands and Resources Department is leading the orientation. It's now mandatory for anyone who wants to access

the range, and it covers everything from safety rules to the cultural and historical significance of the area, to the Department of National Defence regulations. You can complete it online at [clfnlearning.com](http://clfnlearning.com).

But this is just one piece of a bigger picture. Our Nation is committed to responsible land stewardship. The Lands and Resources team works every day to ensure any agreements with government or industry align with our values and protect our lands. We've also partnered closely with the DND to safeguard traditional land use within the CLAWR.

We're also investing in our youth and our future. Not long ago, almost 40 students and staff from Cold Lake High School joined us for a knowledge exchange trip to our traditional hunting and fishing areas in the CLAWR. With guidance from our Elders and staff,

students learned how to fish the traditional way and even helped monitor water quality. These are more than just field trips—they're life lessons rooted in our identity.

Events like our annual Heritage Days, held at the historic Suckerville Site, bring our community together through hands-on learning: trapping, canoeing, fishing, sundown cabins—you name it. These moments are powerful reminders that our culture is alive and thriving, passed down from generation to generation.

This new orientation process isn't just a policy—it's a promise. A promise that we will care for our lands, honour our agreements, and ensure that every member of our Nation can access Ha Tuwe with the knowledge and respect it deserves.

The orientation is available online at: [www.clfnlearning.com](http://www.clfnlearning.com)



## **NOTICE: Temporary Closure of Integrated Services**

Please be advised that the Integrated Services Building will be closed starting at 12:00 PM on May 5 and will reopen on May 9.

During this time, FCSS staff will be away attending a retreat focused on training and professional development. We appreciate your understanding as we take this opportunity to grow and better serve our community.

Phone coverage will still be available during this closure and handled by Mattea Scanie.

Thank you for your patience and continued support!

*Cold Lake First Nation  
Urban Office  
»»»»» Dene Language Class »»»»»*

**May 21  
May 28**

**5 - 7pm**



We invite you to join us for an engaging evening  
dedicated to learning our Dene language  
facilitated by Julie Rough

**UNIT 110 - 10525- 170st  
CLFN FCSS Edmonton Sub Office**

Light refreshments provided  
Contact Sierra @ 780 - 343 - 1094 for more information



## FCSS Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
4	5	6 Mens flower bed making / Regalia 6:30-8:30 pm	7 Womens planting for community garden 6-8 pm	8 Regalia 6:30-8:30 pm	9	10 Ebay mothers day brunch and Bingo
11	12 Seeding flowers and vegetables as a family send kit home	13 Building flower beds mens night/Regalia 6:30-8:30 pm	14 Prepping flower pots and community garden 6-8 pm	15 Regalia 6:30-8:30 pm / Autism workshop @ fcss	16	17
18	19	20 Community garden prep / Regalia 6:30-8:30 pm	21 womens night community garden prep 6-8 pm	22 Regalia 6:30-8:30 pm	23	24
25	26 Couples paint Night paint each other	27 Community garden flower beds building/ Regalia 6:30-8:30 pm	28	29 Regalia 6:30-8:30 pm	30	31
1	2	Notes Womens Group-Mens Group- <u>Family Event</u> -Workshops-Couples nights				

## English Bay Center Calendar

Sunday Dagka	Monday Dagkare	Tuesday Nakotape	Wednesday Tahdape	Thursday Dydape	Friday Tuchdidape	Saturday y Dufad
1				1 Food Pantry 10-1 Sober Social 5:30-7:30 PM	2 Brenda, LPH Mobile Wellness, Jody L, RSW Mobile Social Supports 8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Breakfast at 10 Community Night from 4-6 (team catches with willows)	3 Woman leveling up 10-4 PM
4 Cultural Camp @ Berry Point 5 <sup>th</sup> -9 <sup>th</sup>	5 Mary Oblefield, HP Tabatha Ashdown, LPH HP Assistant 1-3 p.m. Elders Lunch & Social 12-3 Women Leveling up 5-8 PM	6 Beaded Nights with Jamin 4-7 p.m. supper included Baby Moccasins & Tufting Continued	7 Employment & Training of noon Liberator 11-1 PM Angela psychologist 8:30-12 Samantha A. Dene Wellness Soup & Bannock Noon Woman leveling up 5-8 PM Denesijine Language Class 1-3 PM @ Berry Point	8 Food Pantry 10-1 Evening Denesijine Language Class 5-7 PM @ Berry Point	9 Brenda, LPH Mobile Wellness, Jody L, RSW Mobile Social Supports 8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Breakfast at 10 Community Night from 4-6 Paid ID	10 Mother's Day Lunch & Bingo 12-4 PM Woman's Leveling Up 10-4 PM
11 Mother's Day Cultural Camp @ Berry Point 12 <sup>th</sup> -16 <sup>th</sup>	12 Mary Oblefield, HP Tabatha Ashdown, LPH HP Assistant 1-3 p.m. Elders Lunch & Social 12-3 Woman Leveling up 5-8 PM	13 Beaded Nights with Jamin 4-7 p.m. supper included Baby Moccasins & Tufting Continued	14 Employment & Training of noon Liberator 11-1 PM Angela psychologist 8:30-12 Samantha A. Dene Wellness Soup & Bannock Noon Woman leveling up 5-8 PM Denesijine Language Class 1-3 PM @ Berry Point	15 Food Pantry 10-1 Evening Denesijine Language Class 5-7 PM @ Berry Point	16 Brenda, LPH Mobile Wellness, Jody L, RSW Mobile Social Supports 8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Breakfast at 10 Youth Day (No School Friday) Bullying workshop Cooking workshop	17 Woman leveling up 10-4 PM
18	19 Mary Oblefield, HP Tabatha Ashdown, LPH HP Assistant 1-3 p.m. Elders Lunch & Social 12-3 Woman Leveling up 5-8 PM	20 Beaded Nights with Jamin 4-7 p.m. supper included Beaded earrings	21 Employment & Training of noon Liberator 11-1 PM Angela psychologist 8:30-12 Samantha A. Dene Wellness Soup & Bannock Noon Woman leveling up 5-8 PM Denesijine Language Class 1-3 PM	22 Food Pantry 10-1 Evening Denesijine Language Class 5-7 PM Sober Social 5:30-7:30 PM	23 Brenda, LPH Mobile Wellness, Jody L, RSW Mobile Social Supports 8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Breakfast at 10 Community Night from 4-6 Archery	24 Woman leveling up 10-4 PM
25	26 Mary Oblefield, HP Tabatha Ashdown, LPH HP Assistant 1-3 p.m. Elders Lunch & Social 12-3 Woman Leveling up 5-8 PM	27 Beaded Nights with Jamin 4-7 p.m. supper included Beaded earrings continued	28 Employment & Training of noon Liberator 11-1 PM Angela psychologist 8:30-12 Samantha A. Dene Wellness Soup & Bannock Noon Woman leveling up 5-8 PM Denesijine Language Class 1-3 PM	29 Food Pantry 10-1 Evening Denesijine Language Class 5-7 PM	30 Brenda, LPH Mobile Wellness, Jody L, RSW Mobile Social Supports 8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Breakfast at 10 Youth Night from 4-6 Outside activities	31 Woman leveling up 10-4 PM

## Social Development Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Intake Drone Program	2 No Intake Drone Program	3 Drone Program
4	5 No Intake Staff training	6 No Intake Staff training	7 No Intake Staff training	8 No Intake Staff training	9 No Intake File Review Home Visits	10
11	12 No Intake Monthly sign up	13 Intake	14 Intake CRA @ band office 9-12	15 Intake	16 No Intake File Review Home Visits	17
18	19 STAT Holiday	20 Intake	21 Intake	22 Intake	23 No Intake File Review Home Visits	24
25	26 Intake	27 Intake	28 Intake Cheque Release	29 Intake	30 No Intake File Review Home Visits	31

## Levelling Up Program Calendar




**MAY 2025**

**Women: Levelling Up Program**  
**Ebay Centre, Cold Lake, AB**

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	Women: Levelling Up 10:00am-4:00pm 3
4	Women: Levelling Up 5:00pm-8:00pm 5	6	Women: Levelling Up 5:00pm-8:00pm 7	8	9	Women: Levelling Up 10:00am-4:00pm 10
11	Women: Levelling Up 5:00pm-8:00pm 12	13	Women: Levelling Up 5:00pm-8:00pm 14	15	16	17
18	Women: Levelling Up 5:00pm-8:00pm 19	20	Women: Levelling Up 5:00pm-8:00pm 21	22	23	Women: Levelling Up 10:00am-4:00pm 24
25	Women: Levelling Up 5:00pm-8:00pm 26	27	Women: Levelling Up 5:00pm-8:00pm 28	29	30	Women: Levelling Up 10:00am-4:00pm 31



COLD LAKE FIRST NATIONS

# POW wow

## AUG 30<sup>'25</sup>

ARENA DIRECTOR: RICHARD CROSS  
STICK MAN: WILLIAM FAITHFUL  
PIPE CARRIER: ERNEST STANLEY  
HOST DRUM AND LOCATION: TBD

REGISTRATION: 9AM-12:30PM  
MC: BEN CARDINAL I CO MC: WILLIS JANVIER  
EMAIL: [POWWOW@CLFNS.COM](mailto:POWWOW@CLFNS.COM)





15 Spots available  
Text 780-201-6972  
or call 780-639-9906

**May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025 9AM-3PM**



Join us at the English Bay Center for two workshops for kids ages 6-12 years old for a No School Day.

- Kindness for kids with Jody starts at 10 AM-12 PM
- Cooking class with Jen starts at 12:30 PM-3 PM

Child care is offered, which is why spots are limited. If all spots are filled and you'd like your child to join, you will need to be present with them.

**Drop off is 9 AM**  
**Pick up is 3 PM**



*You're invited!*

# **MOTHER'S DAY BRUNCH**

May 09, 2025

11a.m. - 1 p.m.

#110- 10525- 170St.,  
Edmonton, AB T5P 4W2

Call to RSVP with Sierra  
at 780-343-1094

Limited Space Available

*See you there!*







YOU ARE INVITED TO

*Mother's day*

**LUNCH & BINGO**



**MAY 10, 2025**



**SATURDAY 11 AM - 3 PM @ THE ENGLISH BAY CENTER**



Please register by texting 780-201-6972  
or calling the center 780-639-9906 by  
May 9<sup>th</sup>.



# MENTAL HEALTH WEEK & SOBER SOCIAL

**SCHEDULE** ★

5:30 PM- SUPPER  
6:00 PM- EMERY PERFORMANCE  
7:00 PM- PHOTO & MEET AND GREET

**FOLLOWED BY DOOR PRIZES**



**PRESENTS**  
**EMERY BURNINGGRASS**  
**HOST** ★  
**CHIEF KELSEY JACKO**

**PLEASE STAY TILL THE END FOR DOOR PRIZES**

**MAY 8, 2025** ★ **FOOD** ★ **5:30 PM- 8:00PM**

**SEATS ARE LIMITED**  
FOR MORE INFO: Call the CLFNS DENE WELLNESS  
(780) 594-1471



# CLFNS **Spring** *Markets*

**MARCH 28**  
**APRIL 11, 25**  
**MAY 09, 23**  
**JUNE 06**

Fresh Baking  
Produce  
Crafts  
+More!



CLFNS Administration Building - Back Council Chambers  
10am-1pm

Contact [daniel.mclaughlin@clfns.com](mailto:daniel.mclaughlin@clfns.com) to book your table.



# CULTURAL CAMP @ BERRY POINT

EVERYONE  
WELCOME

.....  
**MAY 5<sup>TH</sup> - MAY 16<sup>TH</sup>**  
.....

*Spring 2025 Hide Tanning, Denesųtjné  
Language Classes, Crafts, and Medicine  
Camp*

**CAMP AGENDA**  
**MON MAY 5<sup>TH</sup> & MAY 16<sup>TH</sup>**  
**SET UP & TAKE DOWN**

**MAY 6<sup>TH</sup> - MAY 15<sup>TH</sup>**

- 8 AM Breakfast
- 9 AM Smudge
- 9:30 AM Hides
- 12 AM Lunch
- 1 PM Hides

In between there will be other  
activities TBA







**LAKELAND XTREME BRONCS & BULLS**

**MAY 9 & 10**  
**COLD LAKE ENERGY CENTRE**

Get ready for the wildest, toughest, and most thrilling rodeo action  
 Cold Lake has ever seen!  
 For the first time ever, we're bringing the rodeo indoors — and it's all  
 going down under one roof at the Energy Centre!

<b>FRI. MAY 9</b>	<b>SAT. MAY 10</b>
<b>BULL RIDING</b>	<b>BRONCO RIDING</b>
LOCAL BARREL RACERS	LOCAL BARREL RACERS
DOORS AT 6PM + SHOW AT 7PM	DOORS AT 4PM + SHOW AT 5PM

*Support local at the small business market open daily in the Energy Centre Hub.*

**DON'T MISS THE SATURDAY NIGHT CONCERT**  
 hosted by the City of Cold Lake



**Tenille Townes** WITH SPECIAL GUEST **DREW GREGORY**  
 REID FIELD HOUSE | DOORS 7PM | SHOW 8PM

**CONCERT TICKETS PURCHASED SEPERATELY \$75**  
 available at [www.ticketmaster.ca](http://www.ticketmaster.ca)

PROUDLY PRESENTED BY    **PERFORMANCES**   



# KINOSOO CONNECTIONS

**THURSDAY, JUNE 26**  
**4:00 PM - 7:00 PM | KINOSOO BEACH**  
**FREE - REGISTRATION NOT REQUIRED**

Bring your family to experience Cold Lake's vibrant community in a family-friendly gathering that celebrates the rich tapestry of cultures. The event features cultural exhibits, interactive activities, and opportunities to connect with community members, showcasing the diverse threads that make up our community.

**TRADITIONAL DANCE | SONG | STORYTELLING  
GAMES | VENDORS | RESOURCES**

*Celebrating our Diverse Community!*



Canadian  
Race Relations  
Foundation

Fondation  
canadienne des  
relations raciales

For more info, please contact Cold Lake and District FCSS at 780-594-4495 or email [fcss@coldlake.com](mailto:fcss@coldlake.com)





# Trades Open House

May 22, 2025 | Lac La Biche Campus |  
10:00am to 2:00pm

## WHAT TO EXPECT

- Network with Industry and Community Reps
- Lab and Campus Tours
- Learn about Trades and related training
- Trades Application Fees waived, funding partners on site

## FREE LUNCH

Come check out all the exciting programming our Trades department has to offer, including new programs and new opportunities for students. Enjoy a free lunch while you're here!

Contact us:  
780-404-1409



# Emergency Contact List

**POLICE EMERGENCY CALL 911**

**HEALTH LINK**  
**DIAL 811**

**Cold Lake R.C.M.P.**  
**24 Hours 780-594-3301**  
**Office Hours 780-594-3302**

**Victims Services**  
**Dave Zimmerman 780-594-3302 ext.3**

**Emergency Medical Services**  
**911**

**Cold Lake Healthcare Centre**  
**780-639-3322**

**Bonnyville Health Centre**  
**780-826-3311**

**CLFN Emergency Management**  
**780-594-7184**

**CLFN Health Centre**  
**780-594-2473**

**Dene Wellness**  
**780-594-1471**

**FCSS**  
**780-594-7186**

**Youth Center**  
**780-594-7111**

**Le Goff School**  
**780-594-3733**

**Integrated Services**  
**780-594-8723**

**Public Works**  
**780-594-1073**

**Dangerous Goods**  
**24 Hours 1-800-272-9600**

**Poison Centre 24 Hours**  
**1-800-332-1414**

**CANADA SUICIDE PREVENTION**  
**988**

**Power Outages Atco Electric**  
**1-800-668-5506**

**Gas Emergencies Northeast Gas**  
**780-826-4002**

**Alberta One-Call**  
**1-800-242-3447**

**Petro Canada Station**  
**780-594-1661**