

city of

Wetaskiwin

PRESS RELEASE

City of Wetaskiwin expresses concern over provincial dispatch error

Feb. 4, 2020

(Wetaskiwin, Alberta) – On Wednesday, January 27, 2021, an emergency medical call originating from Wetaskiwin resulted in a concerning provincial Alberta Health Services (AHS) dispatch error.

A serious 9-1-1 call was placed requesting an ambulance to a Wetaskiwin-based location. This call was taken by the province’s Central Communications Centre—located in Edmonton—who then mistakenly mobilized an ambulance to a similar address in the City of Leduc instead of Wetaskiwin. When the ambulance arrived on scene in Leduc, the attending medical staff discovered there was no patient and had to confirm the address with central dispatch. An ambulance was then subsequently mobilized to the correct address in the City of Wetaskiwin—arriving 10 minutes after the original call was placed.

“The safety and protection of our residents is an uncompromisable priority,” said City of Wetaskiwin Mayor Tyler Gandam. “We are actively working with the City of Red Deer, Red Deer dispatch, Alberta Health Services dispatch, and the City of Leduc to ensure this doesn’t happen again.”

This dispatching error took place shortly after the Province began consolidating Alberta’s EMS dispatch services earlier this year. Many municipalities remain concerned that this consolidation will result in hampered communication and slower response times—increasing the risk that Alberta residents in need of emergency medical assistance may not receive it until it is too late.

Follow up meetings are planned with the agencies involved to ensure that an integrated, coordinated system with built-in checks and balances is firmly in place in order to mitigate any potential future issues.

About the City of Wetaskiwin

Wetaskiwin is a secure, connected, and inclusive community home to a diverse population of 12,655 people. Located only 30 minutes south of the Edmonton International Airport, the City of Wetaskiwin provides a high quality of life through ample recreation opportunities, diverse cultural activities, and a modernized, business-friendly downtown.

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