



REQUEST FOR DIRECTION

Meeting: September 22, 2025

Alberta Environment Compost Regulations

DESCRIPTION:

Alberta Environment and Protected Areas (AEPA) received a call from a resident of Claresholm in January with concerns about our north end storage/compost area. Although the initial concern was dismissed, AEPA began asking questions about our compost program.

The town does not have an official compost program, but we do provide an area for residents of Claresholm to dispose of yard waste. Town Crews have limited involvement in the compost area, mostly just cleaning the area and moving piles.

AEPA requires all compost areas to be registered with the province. With this regulation comes new requirements, including total weight limits, material testing, ground water testing, and the area being staffed when open to the public. Administration has been in talks with AEPA since February trying to remedy the situation but has not been successful. Administration has reached out to multiple like size communities, and all have similar compost area as Claresholm with none having any issues with AEPA.

DISCUSSION/OPTIONS:

Option 1: If the Town of Claresholm were to comply with the new AEPA regulations it would come with a new large financial obligation. The area would require a liner under the compost pile, the site would have to be properly fenced with the ability to lock. Periodic ground water and material testing would come with an increased cost, and either a new staff member will need to be hired, or we would lose capacity with our existing staffing numbers. Administration can research options and report back to Council.

Option 2: If the Town does not want to comply with the regulations, the compost area will need to be shut down. A secure fence and gate will need to be constructed, the existing materials will need to be disposed of, and the residents of Claresholm will not have a local option to dispose of their yard waste. If we were to close the location, a large amount of that yard waste would be put in the garbage, greatly increasing our tipping weights at the landfill, resulting in a cost increase and adding an extra burden to the landfills capacity.

Option 3: Administration can try to coordinate a meeting with Rebecca Shultz, the minister of Alberta Environment and Protected Areas, at the November Alberta Municipalities conference to further inquire into the Town's options.

Administration is seeking direction from Council on this issue, with a recommendation that the Town pursue Options 1 and 3 simultaneously.

Moved by Councillor _____ to direct administration to explore Option x for the Town's north end compost/storage area.

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1.) Code of Practice for Compost Facilities

PREPARED BY: Jace McLean – Director of Infrastructure

APPROVED BY: Abe Tinney – CAO

DATE: September 4, 2025
