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New courthouse opens in Red Earth Creek

The province is opening a new and larger courthouse in Red Earth Creek to improve access to justice for residents of the Slave Lake region.

The new facility will house the Provincial Court of Alberta circuit court location in Red Earth Creek, and is a significant upgrade to the community's previous modular courthouse, which opened in 1987.

The new courthouse has more courtroom space and enhanced security, and it includes closed-circuit television and space that can be used for Indigenous smudging ceremonies.

"We are committed to investing in frontline services that Albertans depend on. The new Red Earth Creek courthouse will increase access to justice for area residents, and we are proud to make this crucial investment in northern Alberta."

- Marlin Schmidt, Acting Minister of Justice and Solicitor General

"This courthouse will further improve the ability of the Provincial Court to connect with and serve the northern and Indigenous communities."

- Terrence J. Matchett, Chief Judge, Provincial Court of Alberta

"I'm so proud that our government is improving access to justice services for rural and northern Albertans, and pleased to see this much-needed upgrade to the Red Earth Creek courthouse. This investment means a larger, modern and more secure court facility for residents of Red Earth Creek and the surrounding area, and the new smudging space is part of our ongoing commitment to reconciliation."

- Danielle Larivee, MLA, Lesser Slave Lake

“This is a welcome improvement for our community. It means we don’t have to travel to major centres for a new courthouse. It will also greatly enrich surrounding communities.”

- Bernadette Sharpe, Chief, Loon River First Nation

“We are pleased to have this beautiful new courthouse right here in Red Earth Creek. This new facility will bring improved services to the area.”

- Brendan Powell, councillor, MD Opportunity

As a Provincial Court of Alberta circuit location, the new courthouse will hold criminal and youth hearings in Red Earth Creek two days per month, with judges, Crown prosecutors and court staff travelling to the community from larger urban centres.

In addition to Red Earth Creek and surrounding areas, the courthouse serves the Indigenous communities of Peerless Lake, Trout Lake and Loon Lake.

Quick facts

- The new building is part of a multi-year, \$70-million courthouse renewal project to upgrade 16 court facilities across the province, including in First Nation communities.
- The new courthouse cost about \$5 million.
- It is almost four times as large as the old one: 604 square metres compared to 160 square metres.
- The useful lifespan of the new courthouse is 25 years.
- In the 2016-17 fiscal year, there were 126 cases and 233 charges commenced in Red Earth Creek. Over the same time period, there were 42 trials scheduled and 21 trials heard.
- Red Earth Creek Provincial Court sits the first and third Tuesday of each month and hears criminal, traffic, family, and child, youth & family enhancement matters.
- Judges and court staff travel from High Prairie and Crown prosecutors travel from Slave Lake to service the Red Earth Creek circuit court location.

Multimedia

Photos: Red Earth Creek Courthouse

Media inquiries

è **Veronica Jubinville**

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Press Secretary, Justice and Solicitor General