

Background & Previous Council Direction

This report responds to the Council NOM from 2021. It follows an Administrative Memo that provided an update on short-term progress.

Background

COVID-19 restrictions in the winter of 2020 motivated many Calgarians to seek outdoor recreational opportunities near their homes. Unfortunately, this led to citizens jeopardizing their personal safety and in some severe circumstances the need for rescue was required. As an important component of Calgary's water management infrastructure, storm ponds are designed to collect, hold, and slow down rainfall and snowmelt before it reaches our rivers. They also reduce sediments and pollutants helping keep our rivers and creeks healthy. Although they are situated in and contribute to beautiful open spaces, they are not designed for recreational activities.

Previous Council Direction

Council sought short- and long-term improvements in communications, education, and pond characteristics to ensure Calgarians can live and play in safe surroundings.

DATE	REPORT NUMBER	DIRECTION/DESCRIPTION
2021 December 21	Memo	Initial Findings on Public Safety Investigation into Storm Pond Safety Issued by Nancy Stalker, Director, Water Services, this Administrative Memo outlined progress on the expanded winter public awareness campaign, a summary of findings from the initial investigation, key messages for citizens, and a commitment for a full report focused on actions and recommendations. See Attachment 2.
2021 March 16	PFC2021-0416	Council Notice of Motion (NOM) – Storm Pond Safety Sponsored by George Chahal, former Ward 5 Councillor, the NOM outlined Council's direction to complete an initial public safety investigation into storm ponds in close proximity to high risk areas with a report back on no later than Q4 2021, to complete a full public safety audit of all storm ponds with a report back on or before Q3 2022, and to immediately expand public awareness campaign using communication methods that are culturally appropriate for all Calgarians. See Attachment 3.

Bylaws, Regulations, Council Policies

The recommendations and actions identified in this report and its related attachments have taken into account the principles and requirements outlined in the following Corporate Policy and Bylaw:

Social Wellbeing Policy

This Corporate Policy helps ensure all Calgarians can benefit from City services regardless of identify factors such as age, race, gender, income, or ability.

Stormwater Bylaw 37M2005

Section 11.6 indicates that a Person must not, unless authorized by the Director, Water Services or the Director, Community Planning, (a) enter; or (b) place or remove any plant, animal or object in or from; any facility or structure that is part of the Stormwater System, including a storm pond.

