



May 2, 2019

Municipalité de Litchfield

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To all concerned,

The Municipality would like to update you on the situation regarding the closure of the Crawford Road Bridge and Crawford, Barrette, Burke and Archie Lake Roads.

On April 26, 2019, the Municipality of Litchfield closed the bridge on Crawford Road due to safety issues, caused by a washout at the bridge, and is prohibiting access to that bridge as well as Crawford, Burke, Barrette and Archie Lake roads. This washout was a “natural disaster” out of our control and some of the effects of the washout are also out of our control. *Should a person or persons decide to access the roads and the bridge it will be at their own risk and the Municipality will not be held responsible.*

Evacuation of residents

On April 26, 2019 an evacuation notice was issued to all residents, occupants and cottagers who were on site at the time. Some residents refused to evacuate after being advised of the risks involved (the inability of emergency services to access them and the potential of the bridge collapsing). Although the residents have been asked to leave and are aware of the dangers involved, they continue to stay and access the bridge on foot and are doing so at their own risk. We cannot force them to leave.

Emergency Services

The Municipality contacted all emergency service departments immediately upon closing the bridge and issuing the evacuation notice. Emergency service departments are aware how many residents remain isolated.

The Sureté du Québec has informed me that they will not be patrolling because the access is closed and unsafe. However they will take measures to find an alternate route in order to respond to a call for assistance.

Our legal advisor has informed us that we cannot ask employees or anyone else to access the bridge due to it being unsafe and the risk of bodily harm.

Access

The isolated residents have made an arrangement to use the ATV trails and the Leslie Park access. *This would only be in the event that the Bridge collapse.* This is not an alternate access route. These trails are not in the Municipality of Litchfield and the municipality is not responsible for that access route or any damages or injuries that could occur. **Due to the safety concerns for all taxpayers,** the Municipality of Litchfield is prohibiting all other cottagers and potential occupants from accessing the closed roads and the bridge until it is deemed safe and is reopened. By controlling the access we are ensuring that there are no isolated persons on the other side of the bridge and therefore reducing the number of people at risk.

Action taken by the municipality

Rest assured that the Municipality is working diligently with a qualified support team (a MRC Foundation engineer, an MTQ Structural engineer and Public Security) to resolve the bridge issue and we will reopen the bridge and roads as soon as possible. The water levels and the bridge stability are being monitored and recorded daily by an engineer. As of May 2, 2019 the engineer has confirmed that there has been an undermining of the bridge footings. Due to the current and high water levels it is not possible to determine the exact amount of the damage. Although the water levels have decreased by 800mm and continue to do so, we must wait until the levels are safe for a thorough inspection.

The municipality of Litchfield asks that you respect the safety measures put in place for your protection. Should you remain at your residence at this time we ask that you please evacuate. Please contact us for assistance by contacting the office at 819-648-5511 or by cell at 819-209-2802. For updates please access the municipal website at: www.litchfield-qc.ca

We thank you for your understanding and co-operation at this challenging time.

Sincerely,


Julie Bertrand

Civil Security Coordinator
Municipality of Litchfield