



## DISTRICT OF TUMBLER RIDGE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021

### DISTRICT OF TUMBLER RIDGE NEW RELEASE CELLULAR AND INTERNET SERVICE DISRUPTION

On Saturday April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021, at approximately 4:00am, the District of Tumbler Ridge and surrounding area experienced a sudden and unexpected loss of internet and cellular services. The initial cause of the outage was investigated by Telus crews that morning where they discovered a rather unique situation had developed near the area of the buried fibre optic cable supplying Tumbler Ridge. A beaver dam was located in vicinity to the line and it appeared that beavers had dug down and chewed through the cable in multiple locations causing the disruption. Telus crews worked throughout the night and following day to re-establish connectivity by approximately 3:30pm on Sunday April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

The District would like to reassure the residents of Tumbler Ridge, that while this event was seen as a major inconvenience for some, public safety services were not significantly impacted as a result of the outage. Emergency services including police, fire, ambulance, as well as the Northern Health emergency room at the TR Health Clinic were all maintained throughout the event. Additionally, the local RCMP detachment was staffed around the clock during the event to provide additional support. With more reliable cellular coverage in the area, many homes have chosen to get rid of their landline telephones in favour of cellular options. This unfortunately resulted in some residents being left unable to call 911 in the traditional manner if they required assistance as landline communications was the only option left intact.

While the outage caused some frustrations throughout the community, there were also many instances of residents assisting each other while acknowledging a common need. Many with landlines allowed others to call loved ones or family members just to let them know they were ok. In at least one instance, a neighbour had to call 911 on behalf of a family as they had no access to a landline. These actions speak to the care and compassion that we as an entire community have for one another. The District appreciates the patience and understanding that



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residents gave throughout the duration of the event and is committed to analyzing our response so that we may learn from the situation.

Events such as this serve as a reminder that residents should be prepared to take care of themselves for a minimum of 72 hours during an emergency. While this event did not meet the average person's definition of an emergency, it should be used as an exercise to determine if you and your family are ready for an emergency. More information about emergency preparedness, including what to pack in your emergency kits, and other emergency planning materials can be found at [www.preparedbc.ca](http://www.preparedbc.ca) or [www.getprepared.gc.ca](http://www.getprepared.gc.ca)

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