

The Lacombe Globe

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June 12, 2007

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- Letters
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- Archives

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LACOMBE POLICE: TRAFFIC STOP

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Cst. Scott A. Lowther
Lacombe Police Service
Tuesday June 12, 2007

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The results in Edmonton were again startling and troublesome. Only 27 per cent of commercial vehicles checked passed inspection. What is even more of a concern is that 47 per cent were of such a serious danger to the general public that they were repaired on site or towed away.

The community of Lacombe is divided by Highway 12 and 2A. Both of these highways are traveled heavily by commercial vehicles, and if the Edmonton results are any indication, those commercial vehicles present a significant concern for our community.

Last year, the Lacombe Police Service hosted a number of small commercial vehicle check stops, with results very similar to Edmonton's. This year, the Lacombe Police Service will be stepping up the pressure on industry in an attempt to increase safety for the members of our community.

This year's checkstop campaign will be greatly different than in years past. Because Lacombe Police officers have been attending other jurisdictions and assisting in their campaigns, we now will have these agencies reciprocating by travelling to Lacombe to assist with our campaign.

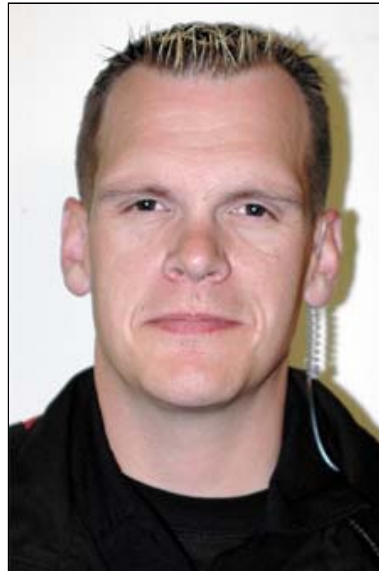
Because of the increase in available human resources, there will be two large-scale, multi-day check stops in our community this summer. The scale of these check stops will be like nothing ever experienced in Central Alberta.

We expect to have between 25 to 40 peace officers in Lacombe checking not only commercial vehicles, but all passenger vehicles as well.

Included in those attending will be traffic officers, who will focus on passenger vehicles, ensuring that vehicles are not in violation of the Vehicle Equipment Regulations.

As mentioned in the last edition of Traffic Stop, these violations will include tinted windows, loud exhaust systems, unauthorized coloured lights, lifted vehicles without fender flares and mud flaps, etc. Members will also be checking documents to ensure proper insurance and registration.

Despite the component of passenger vehicles, the checkstop will be heavily mandated towards commercial vehicle enforcement. Inspection officers will focus in on commercial vehicles not regularly checked at provincial scales. These trucks include everything from gravel haulers, five-ton moving trucks, landscaping vehicles, one-ton conversion trucks, and your traditional tractor trailer units.



Cst. Scott Lowther

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The Lacombe Police Service is also proud to be able to bring the Thermal Eye unit to Lacombe for these stops. The Thermal Eye has been featured on national news programs, as it is the only one of its kind in Canada.

This vehicle will be parked just a few hundred metres away from the checkstop, and will be using its thermal heat source camera and computer equipment to identify safety issues on vehicles before the vehicle even gets to the checkstop.

The operator in the van will notify inspectors of the incoming vehicle, and the identified problem, and by doing so will greatly improve the effectiveness of inspections.

This vehicle is able to detect inoperative brakes, loose lug nuts, under inflated tires, and improperly balanced loads, to name just a few.

Officers will also be checking for overloads, and will be equipped with roadside scales, as overloaded vehicles cause thousands of dollars in damage to our roads each year.

Specialty officers will also be brought in to inspect such things as dangerous goods, alcohol and tobacco shipments, and other specialty loads.

Members of the Alberta Motor Transport Association will also be in attendance to observe the campaign and report the findings industry-wide.

Because there are only a few areas large enough to stage a campaign of this size, numerous police vehicles will be dispatched throughout Lacombe to pull over passenger vehicles in obvious violation, as well as commercial vehicles and direct them to the staging areas for inspection and processing.

These campaigns will make an immediate and significant improvement in the safety of our motoring public and our community as a whole.

These stops will serve notice to those individuals who choose to operate unsafe vehicles of any size in our community.

The Lacombe Police Service and all its partners in this effort thank you for your patience and cooperation during these campaigns. Lastly, please give the officers lots of room to work and remember to drive slowly through these check points.



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