

School Bus Safety Week

October 17-23, 2021



Safety is job one - Chinook's Edge prioritizes school bus safety every day of the year. As part of the regularly scheduled bus evacuation drills in the last few weeks, all students who ride Chinook's Edge buses took part in a step by step drill.

"I'm new to the role, but not to the division. Everyone here has been so supportive and helpful as I've settled in. I feel respect from the bus drivers because I, too, drove a school bus for 10 years. My dad spent his entire 40-year career as a school bus driver, so it's really been part of my life all along. I think our drivers know the level of appreciation I have for them, because I know the job they do."

A new system of cameras and digital radios with GPS were installed on all Chinook's Edge buses over the summer. Primarily for safety purposes, the system is also an insurance requirement. An added benefit is the ability to inform RCMP of vehicle infractions, in an effort to keep roads around school buses as safe as they can be for students. In September, their first month of use, the system documented eight unsafe vehicle infractions near school buses. Most commonly are cars that continue driving past when red lights are flashing on the bus.

"If the system prevents one child from being injured, they've done their job," said Corinne.

The Chinook's Edge Transportation Department has been busy in these first six weeks of the school year. The team has welcomed a new Transportation Director, they have documented multiple vehicle infractions on new bus cameras, and they are currently completing their annual bus evacuation drills which needed to be modified to meet Covid-19 restrictions.

"It has been a busy, but successful startup," said Director Corinne Varga, whose expertise was already familiar to Chinook's Edge from her seven years as Assistant General Manager with Prairie Bus Lines - which provides contracted bus service to schools in the northern part of the division.



On location - Lorraine, a school bus driver in Didsbury, leads students from Ross Ford Elementary through their bus evacuation drill. Covid restrictions required the drill to be provided completely verbally this year, but all aspects of the safety requirements were maintained successfully.

Chinook's Edge runs 115 school bus routes each day, and over 3,000 students rely on the bus. During this School Bus Safety Week, we thank everyone involved in getting them to school safely!

Don't forget! The annual Bus Safety Poster Contest deadline is October 29th.