

Red Deer River MUNICIPAL USERS GROUP

UPDATES/ BRIEFINGS FOR COUNCIL:

December 2018 (Volume 2)

1. **ALBERTA UTILITIES CONSUMER ADVOCATE: *UNDERSTANDING YOUR WATER BILL***. [Click here](#) for information that can be shared with your ratepayers.

What am I paying for?

Three main charges can make up your water bill: water, wastewater and drainage.

Fixed fees include:

- **basic monthly water service charges** for the cost and maintenance of your water meter, as well as for the costs of reading the meter monthly and issuing your bill;
- **basic monthly wastewater service charges** for the wastewater treatment services which is the cost to treat sanitary sewer water;
- **basic monthly drainage service charges** covering the cost of maintaining the sanitary sewer and the stormwater system; and
- **stormwater charges** for collecting the unmetered water (rainwater or melted snow) that flows off your property into the sewer system.

Variable fees include:

- **cost of water (or basic service charge)** used based on your water consumption. It covers the cost of drawing water from the water source, treating, pumping and delivering the water to your house. The average urban household uses 15.1 cubic metres of water each month.
- **wastewater charge** based on the amount of water consumed by your household each month; and
- **sanitary drainage charges** for the cost of collecting and treating the wastewater on the amount of water consumed by your household each month.

Who sets water rates?

- The municipality where you live owns, operates and maintains the water utility, including the meters and water infrastructure, such as pipes and water treatment plants. As owner and operator, the municipality establishes all customer rates, as well as the policies and procedures for administering these rates.
- Your municipal council approves the yearly budget for utilities as part of the operating budget. The municipality forecasts the number of customers, amount of water to be used, and the demand placed on the system from small and large-scale customers. The approved budget determines the amount of revenue the municipality must recover through utility rates.

2. Some close calls but, invasive mussels kept at bay this year.

Eleven boats were found to be carrying the fast-breeding and highly destructive aquatic invaders. [Click here](#) for full details.

3. Interest in Source Water Protection

Recently, the Alberta Water Council expressed the importance of source water protection and the need for integrated action to protect source waters, or in more general terms - to protect water quality. There are three reasons why municipalities need to be concerned about the quality of source waters, and thus the need to act to protect source water quality.

(1) As demands, both within and outside the Red Deer River Basin, for water from the Red Deer River increases and the amount of water available for future allocation to municipalities in turn decreases, there is a growing need for municipalities to be jointly vigilant on the quality and quantity of water in the Red Deer River, as well as the use of water.

(2) The cost to supply and maintain potable water to residents and businesses continues to greatly increase. Not only do municipal water systems require the injection of funds to maintain and upgrade the delivery system, but more and more regional cooperation in the supply of safe, potable water offers effective alternatives to the many water supply and quality issues that municipalities face, not only today but also in the future.

(3) Sustainable communities (environmentally, socially and economically) are dependent on the availability and provision of safe, secure potable water. It is becoming increasingly necessary to monitor water quality and to address activities that affect water quality, including point source and non-point source pollution, in order to maintain and, wherever possible, enhance the water quality in the Red Deer River and its tributaries.

Above information is from the RDRMUG Toolkit for Protecting Source Water Quality in the Red Deer River Watershed. [Click here](#) for full report.

4. RDRWA Christmas Campaign

RDRWA has an agreement with ATB to support their Christmas Fund Campaign.

Your support makes a real difference! For every dollar you give to the RDRWA, ATB will increase it by 15%. This allows us to continue our work in ensuring our watershed remains sustainable, healthy, and dynamic. If you would like to make a small gift to RDRWA, please donate below. [Click here](#) for information and to donate.

For more information or clarification please feel free to contact K. Ryder, Executive Director at execdir@rdmug.ca or visit www.rdrmug.ca

Next RDRMUG Meeting: January 17, 2019 (will include **AGM and Election of Officers** for 2019). *Member's Alternates, other elected members or administration are welcome at all RDRMUG meetings.*

Thanks to everyone for their continued support to the Red Deer River Municipal Users Group.

Merry Christmas and a Happy Healthy 2019 to All.
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