



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: October 18, 2017

City invites your feedback on proposed water and sewer rates

Residents and businesses are invited to an **OPEN HOUSE Wednesday, November 1st from 3:00-8:00 pm. at the Castlegar & District Community Complex** to learn about and provide feedback on the City of Castlegar's proposed water and sewer rate structure. Now that most water and sewer customers have water meters, the City is taking the next step toward equitable consumption-based rates that will conserve water and reduce peak demand to extend water and sewer system lifespans.

"Please join us at the open house to learn more about the proposed rate structure," says Mayor Lawrence Chernoff. "Your feedback is important and will help better inform decisions about how we can create more sustainable water and sewer systems."

Come anytime between 3:00pm and 8:00pm to view the displays, enjoy refreshments, and learn about the proposed rate structure with City staff and our technical expert from Urban Systems. Take in one of our presentations at 4:00, 5:00, 6:00 and 7:00pm., which will outline the proposed structure and what it means to residential, multi-family, and industrial/commercial/institutional (ICI) customers.

Provide your feedback on the proposed rate structure by filling in our feedback form at the open house. Or, if you can't make it, simply go to our website at www.castlegar.ca/waterandsewer to see the display panels, review answers to Frequently Asked Questions, and fill in the online feedback form.

"For the past year, homes and businesses in Castlegar with water meters have been receiving information on their quarterly utility bills showing how much water they've been using," says Chris Barlow, the City's chief administrative officer. "The information gathered from our local community, along with water industry best practices and lessons learned from other communities, has helped us develop a made-in-Castlegar rate structure that is equitable for all user groups."

Successes in other communities show that water meters combined with consumption-based rates conserve water and provide opportunities to save on costs – both for customers and utilities. Customers can control the amount of water they use and, therefore, the amount they pay. Communities benefit by conserving water, extending the lifespans of their water and sewer systems, and by gradually building reserves for future upgrades to aging infrastructure. Updated rates will also ensure financial stability in water and sewer operations.

Research shows that consumption-based rates are a key tool to reducing water use. As stated in the recent POLIS report entitled *Worth Every Penny: A Primer on Conservation-Oriented Water Pricing*: "The typical Canadian household on a flat-rate system uses an average of 467 litres per person per day. This compares with 266 litres per person per day in households with consumption-based rates." This is 14 cubic metres per month compared to 8 cubic metres per month.

Proactive communities in BC's interior using meters include Rossland, Sparwood, Grand Forks, West Kelowna, Lake Country, Oliver, Penticton, Summerland, Peachland, and Lumby.

For more information on the open house and water conservation measures for your home, backyard, or business please, visit our website at www.castlegar.ca/waterandsewer

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