



**Town of Bassano Water Service
PUBLIC NOTICE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

December 20, 2018

The purpose of this Public Notice is to first, advise citizens and businesses that the Town of Bassano plans to transition to a user pay water utility model in 2019. And, second, to advise citizens and businesses that the Town of Bassano invited Newell Regional Services Corporation to the table to discuss the viability of transferring municipal water assets to the Corporation.

Part 1

Over the years, the Town of Bassano’s water utility has been heavily subsidized by property taxation. This process is not sustainable. As a result, the town plans to restructure the water utility. A user pay model will be applied on June 30, 2019 to ensure the full cost of the water utility is recovered by users. Full cost includes the treatment and delivery of water, maintenance of the distribution system, basic operations and a capital reserve transfer.

What exactly does this mean for the user?

1. Water users will only be charged for the water in which they consume. Charges will be based on a per cubic meter fee.
2. The public works department will be installing water meters on every property in town. This includes all mobile homes, residences, businesses, public and private institutions.
3. Base rates and flat fees will no longer be applied to water utility accounts once the new fee structure is adopted.
4. The water utility system will no longer be subsidized through local property taxation.

On December 17, 2018, town council gave first reading to Utility Rates Bylaw 884-18 with the following fee structure:

	2018 Current	2019 Proposed	2020 Projected	2021 Projected
Newell Regional Services Corp. Fee	\$ 0.85	\$ 0.90	\$ 0.95	\$ 1.00
Town of Bassano Fee	\$ 0.30	\$ 1.45	\$ 1.45	\$ 1.46
Combined Per Cubic Meter Rate	\$ 1.15	\$ 2.35	\$ 2.40	\$ 2.46

Mayor Wickson and Council realize that the user pay model may require operational adjustments for users which is why implementation will not occur for six months. Mayor Wickson, Council and Interim CAO Davis are available to answer any questions or concerns that the public may have regarding the new user pay model. It is important to us that residents are informed, are educated and understand the reason for adopting a new model. To restate above, the purpose of this new model is cost recovery of the utility so that it is not subsidized through property taxation.

Also, be advised, that effective January 1, 2019 and until such a time that Bylaw 884/18 is adopted, a \$0.10 increase will be applied to every water rate defined in Utility Rates Bylaw 878/17.

What can you do as a water user to reduce your overall water consumption?

1. Use low flush toilets.
2. Use energy efficient appliances (e.g. dishwashers and washing machines).
3. Water plants, flowers and gardens with rainwater or recycled water.
4. Check the settings on private irrigation systems to ensure watering occurs only as required.
5. Complete routine maintenance on your personal assets (e.g. ensure there are no water leaks on your premises. A running toilet can easily consume over 100 cubic meters of water in a week).
6. Limit the length of your showers.
7. Adopt sustainable business practices.

Part 2

It is important that local governments find ways to improve service delivery to gain efficiencies. The council and administration of Bassano completed a thorough investigation into each of the municipal departments as part of the multi-year budget process. Assets and liabilities were considered, and we had to ask, what is the best use of our resources and do we have the capacity in house to operate various functions effectively?

Having considered this, the Town of Bassano has invited Newell Regional Services Corporation to the table to discuss a long-term solution for the ownership and maintenance of the water distribution system. The invitation will be considered by the board in late January and if in agreement, negotiations will begin.

Ongoing updates will be made available regarding both items. You can find information on these topics and other items by:

1. Viewing the municipal website (www.bassano.ca) or “Like” us on Facebook.
2. Print information (e.g. bi-monthly newsletters, Press Releases, media).
3. Attend a town hall meeting, observe monthly council meetings, or talk to an elected official/administration.