



CITY OF ST. ALBERT ADMINISTRATIVE BACKGROUNDER

TITLE: SMART WATER METER OPT-OUT PROGRAM

PURPOSE OF REPORT

On April 1, 2019 Councillor Hughes provided notice in accordance with Section 23 of Procedure Bylaw 3/2018 that she intended to bring forward the proposed motion below.

In order for Council to debate the motion, the motion must be formally moved.

PROPOSED MOTION(S):

That Administration bring to Council recommended amendments to the water bylaw that includes an automated or smart water meter opt-out program, with an opt out fee that does not actually exceed the cost to provide this service.

ALIGNMENT TO PRIORITIES IN COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PLAN:

N/A

ALIGNMENT TO LEVELS OF SERVICE DELIVERY:

Management and Administration of Utility Accounts, management of utility accounts for water, wastewater, storm water and solid waste, with meter readings done by-monthly.

ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL DIRECTION OR MANDATORY STATUTORY PROVISION:

N/A

BACKGROUND:

On April 23, 2018 Administration provided an agenda report outlining background information pertaining to the Fixed Network Automated Meter Reading Infrastructure Project, and requested information to provide an Alternative Meter Reading Program.

Since the information was provided to Council approximately 21,000 standard sized smart meters and approximately 40 large meters have been installed throughout the City. The smart meters have a number of built in inherent tertiary benefits. Due to the nature of the meters, they have the ability to provide a higher level of protection to any backflow from private to public realm informing utility staff when a backflow has occurred and if systems need to be shut down due to potential contamination. Without the real time data capabilities this inherent protection would be limited to when data was collected by meter readers.

As previously presented, there are a number of communities across Canada who offer Meter Readings to supplement conveyed data and/or offer a non-standard service, and endeavor to attribute a user fee for this service.

- Sturgeon County - \$25 per reading
- Beaumont – 35 per reading
- Canmore - \$35 per reading
- City of Vancouver - \$102 per reading
- City of Toronto - \$86 per reading
- Atco gas – 109 per reading
- EPCOR Power - \$15 monthly

Administration can implement a non-standard meter reading program as a component of the water bylaw. A further investigation has been completed in the costing provided in 2018, amendments to the water bylaw would be required, consistent with those recommended in 2018. Costing was based on labor rates and required time to drive to site, complete the necessary work, and/or input any required data into City programs. Administration would require a three month period to provide residents with communication of provided options, update necessary programing and mobilize non-standard equipment, this period would also facilitate utility staff to adapt work flows to accommodate the increased work to incorporate manual data collection requirements.

Anticipated 2019 rates/amendments to the water bylaw Schedule A are shown below:

Fees, Charges and Indemnities

Fee for Non-Standard Meter Reading. If multiple meters (touchpads) exist at the same residence only a single read charge will be applied.	\$35 per read
Fee for Installation of a Standard RF Remote Read Transmitter for customers who currently have a Non-Standard Remote Read Touchpad.	\$35
Fee for removal of a Standard RF Remote Read Transmitter and replacement with a Non-Standard Remote Read Touchpad	\$50

Report Date: May 6, 2019
Author: Kate Polkovsky
Department: Utilities & Environment Department
Chief Administrative Officer: Kevin Scoble