

May 18, 2021

Whitelaw Spring Truckfill Station Dispensing Fee– Information Update

In view of the inaccurate information circulating on various social media sites, Council of the MD of Fairview #136 would like to provide the following information for clarification.

The MD of Fairview #136 purchased the Whitelaw spring quarter of land (NW-35-81-1-W6) on Nov. 14, 1975, paying \$25,000. The parcel of land was NOT DONATED and there was NO RESTRICTION OR CAVEAT on the purchase to ensure the public would not be charged for use and access to the spring water. As the titled owner of the quarter of land, the municipality has the right to regulate access to the property and the spring water, the same as any other titled landowner. As a municipal water well license holder for 2 water wells on the property, the MD is bound by all conditions and regulations from Alberta Environment related to allowing use of the water by and to the public.

The municipality is NOT CHARGING FOR NON-POTABLE WATER. Customers will be charged a monthly dispensing fee which will be based on the amount of water that passes through the truck fill station infrastructure as activated through the customer's ACCESS CODE and PIN number associated with the electronic metering system. Charging a fee based on water usage ensures that customers are paying based on the workload on the infrastructure – not how many times the system is used.

When the truckfill station was installed, Council of the day discussed the possibility of charging residents and non-residents for use of the system. At that time, Council opted to not charge a fee for use of the truck fill station. Every year, during the annual budget discussion, the sitting Council discusses the Fees and Rates Bylaw and makes any changes they feel are necessary to pass a balanced budget which is required per provincial government law. During the 2021 budget discussions, the sitting Council made a decision that users of the truckfill station should pay a user fee for the facility they are choosing to use, in order for the municipality to recover some of the costs of operating the facility.

The dispensing fee applies ONLY to use of the truck fill station when accessing water by entering your customer ACCESS CODE and PIN number. The open culvert will continue to be available to the public at no cost.

Further to the information being shared regarding oil and gas industry taxes, it is important that MD residents are aware that CNRL DOES PAY PROPERTY TAXES to the MD. The provincial government has recently implemented a 3 year assessment and taxation exemption to NEW oil and gas developments in Alberta but this is only for new development. The provincial government had proposed drastic reductions to oil and gas industry assessment in the summer of 2020 which would have resulted in major tax revenue losses to rural municipalities. They have since re-evaluated that plan and instead opted for the 3 year tax exemption on new developments until such time as a new assessment formula suitable for municipalities as well as the industry can be determined. Oil and gas infrastructure developed prior to 2021 will be assessed and taxed as usual until the provincial government makes their changes.

Council of the Municipal District of Fairview #136 encourages residents to contact the municipal office or any councillor to keep informed of accurate information.

Thank you
Reeve Peggy Johnson