



MEDIA RELEASE

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City of Humboldt
715 Main Street
PO Box 640
Humboldt, SK S0K 2A0

T 306.682.2525
F 306.682.3144
E jennifer.brooks@humboldt.ca
W www.humboldt.ca

2014 City Budget Planning Underway

Phasing-in of utility rate increases continues

(Humboldt, Saskatchewan) – At the Special Meeting of Council held on November 12, 2013, City Council adopted a utility rate increase as part of the City's 2014 Budget. This will result in a 4% increase to the monthly flat fee; a 6.5% increase to the water consumption rate; and a \$1.00 increase to the monthly Storm Water Levy.

"This is simply our continued, phased budgeting approach so that we are able to have reasonable, but necessary, rate increases," said Mayor Malcom Eaton. "We need to ensure we're balancing increases so that they reflect the actual cost of providing these services to our residents, along with planning for future water and sewer infrastructure renewal projects."

Some examples of rate changes to utility users are below:

- Average \$52 bill per month will go to \$55 per month – a \$3 per month increase (5.7%);
- Average \$115 bill every 2 months will go to \$121.50 or \$3.25 per month increase (5.6%);
- Average \$157 bill every 2 months will go to \$167 every 2 months or \$5 per month increase (6.4%);
- Average \$206 bill every 2 months will go to \$219 every 2 months or \$6.50 per month increase (6.3%);
- Average large commercial bill of \$4,200 every month will go to \$4,500 every month or \$300 per month increase.

"For instance, to keep up with the 4% annual increase that SaskWater imposes on the purchase of their water, we have no choice but to integrate that into our rate structures. Add to that the continued maintenance and development of our water and sewer lines, subsidizing this essential service is just not an option anymore," Eaton states.

In 2014, the City will also offer a utility e-billing service so that residents may choose to receive and manage their utility information electronically.

The utility rate adoption is the first of four budget areas to be approved by City Council. Discussion and decisions on the City's tax, capital, and operating amounts have yet to be determined.

The new utility fees will take effect on January 1, 2014.

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For more information, contact:

Jennifer Brooks, Director of Communications & Community Development
T 306.682.2525, ext. 306
F 306.682.3144
E jennifer.brooks@humboldt.ca