

# MD OF PINCHER CREEK BEAVER MINES

## PROPERTY OWNER SERVICE CONNECTION GUIDE

Updated April, 2024

# INTRODUCTION

The MD of Pincher Creek (MD) is please to announce the Beaver Mines Water & Wastewater Distribution System (BMWWDs) is near operation!

## What is the BMWWDs?

This is the system required to provide piped water and sewer services to the Hamlet of Beaver Mines. Residents now have access to piped water, similar to Lundbreck and Cowley.

The MD began allowing connection in the Fall of 2023. **Connection is mandatory to the water and wastewater systems for Hamlet residents by January 1, 2028.**

We are committed to serving rural residents throughout this program and invite you to contact the MD at [mdinfo@mdpincercreek.ab.ca](mailto:mdinfo@mdpincercreek.ab.ca) or 403-627-3130 if you have any questions or concerns.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS.....	4
SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION .....	10
HIRING A CONTRACTOR .....	11
DESIGN & QUOTE REQUIREMENTS .....	13
OBTAINING PERMITS .....	14
STARTING CONSTRUCTION .....	15
WATER METERS & VALVE TURNING .....	16
CONNECTION PROCESS .....	17
EXISTING SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS .....	18
SYSTEM MAINTENANCE .....	19
HELPFUL INFORMATION .....	20

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## What is the BMWWDS?

This is the system required to provide piped water and sewer services to the Hamlet of Beaver Mines. Residents now have access to piped water, similar to Lundbreck and Cowley.

## What is the process for connecting?

The process starts by submitting an application. There is one form to fill out, including a site plan. It is recommended to select a pre-qualified contractor.

Applications will be reviewed by the MD. If the application is denied, instructions will be given to amend the application for acceptance. Once the application is accepted, the contractor can begin obtaining permits. Construction can then begin, excluding connection to MD infrastructure.

When the work is completed, it will be inspected by a Safety Codes and MD representative. If inspection passes, the connection can be made at property edge and water/wastewater use can begin.

For a more detailed breakdown, see flowchart on page 17.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## Why is it mandatory to connect?

The MD has received multiple letters from Alberta Health Services (AHS) regarding serious concerns about the drinking water quality within the Hamlet due to multiple failed private sewage systems. AHS has advised that water be treated to make it safe for human consumption and has supported installation of potable water and a wastewater systems.

Having all owners connect to the system and decommission their existing septic systems will prevent ongoing and future contamination of groundwater in the area, reducing both environmental and health concerns.

The MD is required to provide service to a wastewater treatment system for Hamlets connected to new water distribution systems per legislated regulation.

The facilities will require ongoing operational and maintenance oversight, which has costs associated with it. Operational costs are, at least partially, recovered through utility bills. Having all users connect will ensure fair rates can be maintained within the Hamlet.

## When can I begin construction of my water and wastewater system?

As of Fall 2023, the treatment system can take flows. After your application is submitted and approved, along with a plumbing permit construction can begin.

Owners and contractors must avoid having any connection points that would allow existing water setups (wells, cisterns, etc.) to backflow to MD infrastructure.

The proposed utility bylaw waives the cost of supplying the meter for owners whom connect to the system by October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why do I need to remove my water softener?

The waste created from ion exchange water softeners have a high concentration of sodium. This is not an acceptable household use to discharge into the wastewater system. Acceptable types of water softeners include salt-free water softener systems.

Can I keep using my existing well for other purposes?

The MD does not regulate or enforce abandonment of water wells through the Utility Bylaw. For owners awareness, Alberta Environment and Protected Areas (AEP) has indicated owners whom have a water well to which a Household Right is claimed but can receive water through a pipeline for Municipal purposes, lose the Household right. AEP regulation states well owners must either reclaim or relicense their well for another purpose.

AEP strongly recommends reclamation of wells as opposed to relicensing. AEP recommends wells be reclaimed or relicensed as soon as reasonably practical after installation of a new system. At time of guideline publication, the MD is not aware of legislative timeframes required for reclamation. Licensed water well drillers can assist with this process.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## Can I keep using my existing septic system for wastewater?

No owner shall continue to use a Private Wastewater Disposal System once connected to the municipal system. During construction and final connection, flow from a private system must not be allowed to connect to the municipal wastewater system.

Owners shall agree to reclaim their septic tank, and indicate the timeline after connecting to the wastewater system in which you commit to do so. An abandoned system that is not reclaimed or removed in an appropriate manner can pose a safety concern, of which the owner would be liable.

In some cases, owners may be able to connect to the Wastewater System at the outlet of the septic tank as opposed to removing, although this is generally not recommended. Private Sewage Installers are qualified to make this assessment and complete installations. They can be consulted regarding individual properties.

## Can the MD do the work for me and payback through my utility bills?

The MD considered these options, but determined it would not be feasible. Therefore, this is not an option. A list of pre-authorized contractors can be found on our website. The MD cannot provide financing to owners.

## Can I hire my own contractor whom is not pre-qualified?

Use of pre-qualified contractors is strongly recommended. However, owners may use other contractors, at their discretion. Connection will still remain dependant on the contractors ability to meet the requirements of *Utility Bylaw 1344-22* and its associated *Utility Services Guidelines*.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## How much will it cost?

Owners are encouraged to reach out to multiple contractor(s) to obtain formal pricing. The MD will charge the actual cost of the water meter + 5% for residents whom do not connect to the water system within 12 months of allowed connection. This cost is expected to be about \$720. There will also be a plumbing permit fee (\$105) and a water and wastewater inspection fee (\$275).

## When do I need to connect by?

Under Bylaw 1344-22 Schedule B & C Sections (2)(1), the MD has made connection within the Hamlet mandatory for all properties by January 1, 2028.

## What happens if I choose not to connect?

This is not an option. Owners in the Hamlet must connect to both the water and wastewater systems. Owners whom do not connect shall be subject to penalties under Bylaw 1344-22 and the MD will have the right to go onto owner property and enforce connection to the systems.

## I am concerned about managing this process, can my contractor help?

We understand the process may be overwhelming.

If you prefer, you may authorize your contractor to act on your behalf (or represent you) during the application and construction process by indicating so on your initial application. Please be aware of any risks involved with sharing personal/private information.



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



**I have more questions!**

Please email the MD office at [admininfra@mdpincercreek.ab.ca](mailto:admininfra@mdpincercreek.ab.ca) or call 403-627-3130. We are here to help guide you through the process and appreciate your patience as we navigate the installation of water and wastewater services.

# SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

The connection process begins by submitting an application.

## STEP 1

Fill out the application form. These can be found on the MD Website. You can also make arrangements to pickup the forms at the MD Office (1037 Herron Avenue, Pincher Creek, AB). A blank site plan is included with the application form that must be filled

### ► Beaver Mines Private Service Connection Application

We recommend selecting a contractor prior to submission to assist with the required Site Plan with the Application Form.

## STEP 2

Email the completed application to [admininfra@mdpincercreek.ab.ca](mailto:admininfra@mdpincercreek.ab.ca). The application can also be dropped off in person at the MD office.

If additional guidance is required, please contact the office at 403-627-3130.

We are happy to help with this process.

## STEP 3

Once approved, you and your contractor may proceed with a plumbing permit submissions and a request for a water meter. Call or email the MD to request a water meter.

# HIRING A CONTRACTOR

Owners are recommended to select a pre-qualified contractor from the MD's list:

<https://mdpinchercreek.ab.ca/content.php?p=731>

To become pre-qualified, a contractor must review *Utility Bylaw 1344-22* and the associated *Utility Services Guidelines*. The contractor must then submit a request for pre-qualification indicating their area of oversight, qualifications, and expertise. Subsequently, they must complete a questionnaire that tests their knowledge.

Becoming a pre-qualified contractor does not forego any of the above requirements. Note that the MD will not be checking financial stability, insurance, and safety track records regarding Contractors.

Refer to the link below for more details regarding the pre-qualification process.

<https://mdpinchercreek.ab.ca/content.php?p=732>

If a contractor is not included on this list, you may still use them. Connection will still remain dependent on the contractors ability to meet the requirements of *Utility Bylaw 1344-22* and its associated *Utility Services Guidelines*.

# HIRING A CONTRACTOR

To ensure work is completed properly:

- ▶ Get quote(s) from contractor(s). We have provided a blank quotation sheet to assist owners with this process, if desired.
- ▶ Enter into a written contract that includes:
  - ▶ A detailed scope of work
  - ▶ Project timeline
  - ▶ Expected date of completion
  - ▶ Payment schedule
- ▶ Confirm and note the following when selecting a contractor:
  - ▶ Contractor has necessary expertise, insurance, and safety qualifications
  - ▶ Contract is between owners and the contractor only
  - ▶ Upgrades to existing plumbing and electrical systems throughout homes are not guided by the *Bylaw* and *Utility Services Guidelines*. Owners are responsible to ensure systems are capable of operating with upgraded water and sewer systems
  - ▶ All work must be carried out under current OH&S requirements

# DESIGN & QUOTE REQUIREMENTS

Contractors must design the system according to the site conditions and the service needs of the house.

The design should be based on *Utility Services Guidelines* and applicable codes/regulations.

Here are some tips to ensure acceptable system design and construction requirements:

- ▶ Recommend the quote be broken down into various work items per the example Quotation Template
- ▶ The contractor should agree to provide as-built information
- ▶ The owner should ensure the contractor agrees to provide warranty on the work
- ▶ The quote/agreement should be signed by the contractor and owner



# OBTAINING PERMITS

All water and wastewater connections will require an application prior to the start of work. Each serviced property requires a separate application.

Pre-qualified contractors will be familiar with the permitting process and will obtain permits.

The following information is required for the applications and permits:

- ▶ Site plan
- ▶ Fixture unit-count for the entire home
- ▶ Size and location of water and wastewater services (provided on site plan)

A plumbing permit will be required before construction begins. This is issued and inspected by Superior Safety Codes and must be pulled by a licensed plumber or equivalent.

Some installations may require electrical or other work to be done. Please confirm with your contractor prior to construction start.

# STARTING CONSTRUCTION

Once your application and permits are approved, construction may begin.

Please remember:

- ▶ A copy of approved application, permits, drawings, and specifications should be kept at the construction site during installation of the services
- ▶ The *Private Service Connection Checklist* must be maintained throughout construction and used to track all inspection and turning of the valves
- ▶ Approved applications **DO NOT** constitute approval to **connect to the MD curbstop and stubbed sewer connection or to backfill excavated works**
- ▶ Periodic inspections (before backfill and connection to MD infrastructure, turning water/sewer valves on/off) must be booked with Superior Safety Codes and the MD Utilities Department. Typically Superior only does Wednesday inspections
- ▶ Superior Safety Codes will provide inspection services for checklist items. Arranging construction for minimal inspection visits will improve inspection timelines
- ▶ Work shall be completed on private property. The MD has adjacent Utility ROW's in some areas. These are not owned by the MD and the MD cannot unilaterally grant access for ease of construction
- ▶ The MD of Pincher Creek must conduct a final inspection of the system and is responsible for turning on water curb stops and allowing the flow of waste

# WATER METERS & VALVE TURNING

The property is ready for a new water meter when:

- ▶ An application has been submitted and approved
- ▶ The plumbing permit has been submitted and approved

The property is ready for connection to MD Water and Wastewater infrastructure when:

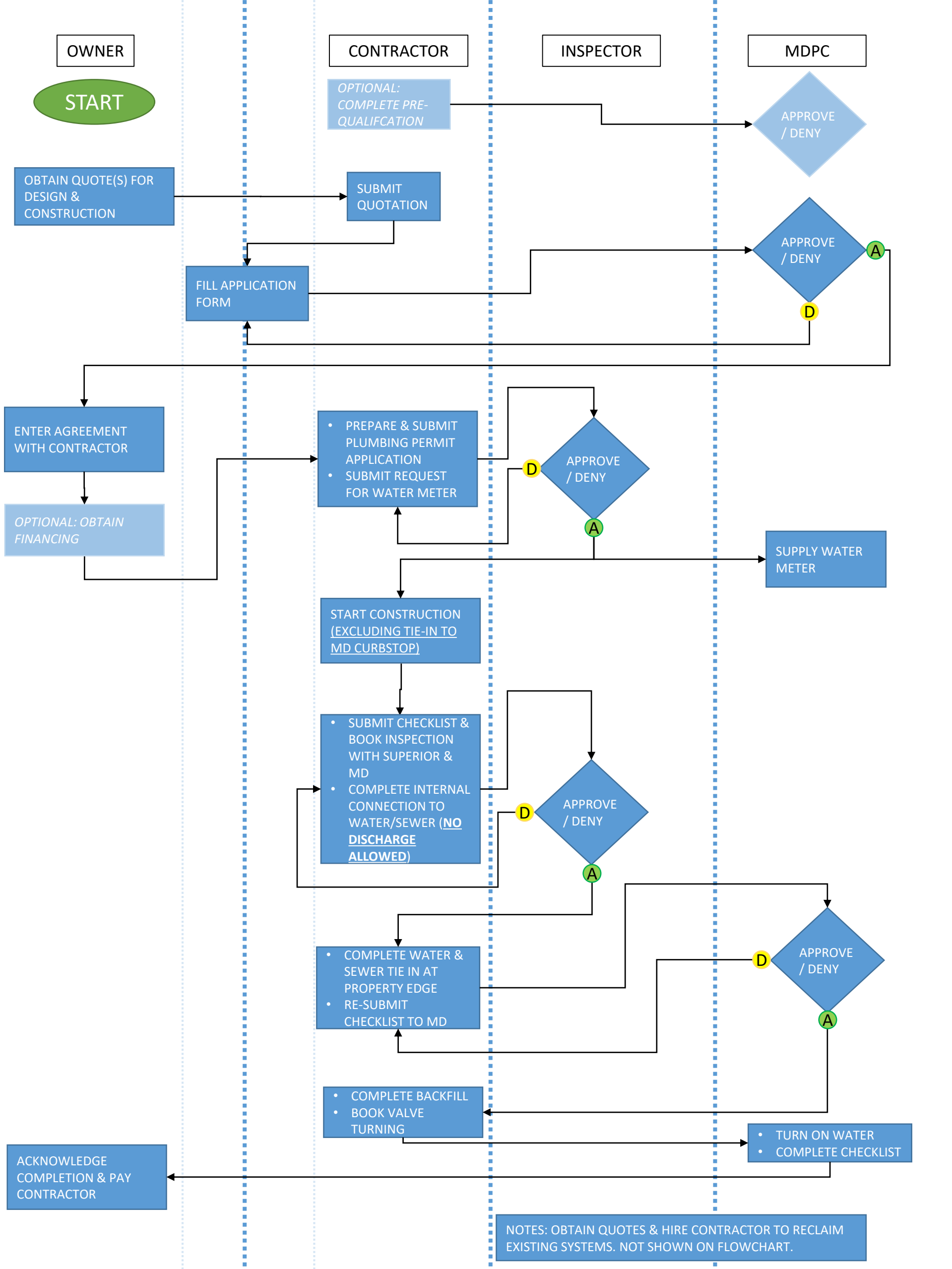
- ▶ The internal installation has been complete
- ▶ The service lines have been flushed and are free of sediment or rocks
- ▶ The building is heated (to prevent freezing of water lines and the water meter)
- ▶ A water PRV and drainage backwater valve have been installed
- ▶ Cross-connection possibility has been eliminated
- ▶ The *Private Service Connection Checklist* has been completed and inspected by Superior Safety Codes

If all goes well, the inspection and connection can all be arranged for the same day.

1) Superior initial exterior and interior inspection 2) connection allowance (contractor installs pipe to MD infrastructure) 3) MD turns on water 4) Pressure and flow test 5) Inspection completion 6) Backfill. The *Private Service Connection Checklist* is required for this process.



# CONNECTION PROCESS



# EXISTING SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

There must be no potential for cross-connection with newly installed private water lines.

## WATER WELLS

Alberta Environment and Protected Areas (AEP) regulation states that well owners shall reclaim or relicense their well for another purpose. The MD does not regulate abandonment, this guidance is provided for owner's awareness based on provincial regulation. AEP strongly recommends to reclaim as opposed to relicense.

AEP recommends wells be reclaimed or relicensed as soon as reasonably practical after installation of a new system. At time of guideline publication, the MD is not aware of any legislative timeframes required for reclamation. Licensed water well drillers can assist with this process.

## CISTERNS, STORAGE TANKS

There is no mandatory requirement to reclaim or abandon cisterns and storage tanks. They can be re-used for non-household purposes or reclaimed, at your discretion.

## WATER TREATMENT DEVICES

Water treatment devices that exchange naturally-occurring minerals in water with salt or any other chemical in the process called ion exchange (also known as Ion Exchange Water Softeners) are strictly prohibited in existing systems.

## WASTEWATER (SEWAGE/SEPTIC) SYSTEMS

Owners must reclaim existing septic systems as soon as reasonably possible upon connection to the municipal system.

# SYSTEM MAINTENANCE

Once connected, the owner is responsible for the costs associated with the main line(s) between the home and the municipal connection point at the curbstop or at property edge (for wastewater).

The Utility Bylaw Schedule A Sections (7),(8) contain full details of the process to be followed in the event of a problem requiring investigation or repair where the exact locations is unknown.

It is important to remember the following:

- ▶ Keep copies of as-built information, manuals and supplier lists
- ▶ Ensure water curbstops and fire hydrants are not blocked by trees, shrubs, or other landscaping
- ▶ Ensure water meters are free to access for maintenance purpose

# HELPFUL INFORMATION

Pre-Qualified Contractors List

<https://mdpinchercreek.ab.ca/content.php?p=731>

Superior Safety Codes

<https://superiorsafetycodes.com/apply-for-permit.html>

Bylaw 1344-22

<https://mdpinchercreek.ab.ca/docs/files/bylaws/Bylaw%201344-22%20Utilities.pdf>

Utility Services Guidelines Homepage

<https://mdpinchercreek.ab.ca/content.php?p=730>