

MD OF PINCHER CREEK: BEAVER MINES WATER AND WASTEWATER

ON-PROPERTY WORK UPDATE

MD of Pincher Creek
December, 2022



AGENDA

- ▶ Mandatory Connections to Water System
 - ▶ What is changing?
 - ▶ Why will connections be mandatory?
- ▶ Private Property Work Responsibility of Property Owner
 - ▶ What is changing?
 - ▶ Why is it changing?
 - ▶ Why is this changing now?
 - ▶ What supports will be provided?
 - ▶ When can I connect?
- ▶ Next Steps

MANDATORY CONNECTIONS

WHAT IS CHANGING?

- ▶ Connection will be required by January 1, 2027, or 3 years from acceptance of wastewater flow, whichever is later
- ▶ Utility bylaw update underway, public hearing: January 10, 2023
- ▶ MD will issue a letter confirming the final required tie-in date
 - ▶ Applies to Hamlet of Beaver Mines



MANDATORY CONNECTIONS

WHY WILL CONNECTIONS BE MANDATORY?

- ▶ Septic system failures
 - ▶ AHS letters have indicated there are serious concerns regarding drinking water quality
 - ▶ 5 letters received between 2014 and 2022



The groundwater table in the area is very shallow making it particularly susceptible to contamination from sewage. Sewage harbours many disease causing organisms specifically E. Coli, a bacteria that can cause serious illness or death (e.g., the Walkerton tragedy in 2000).

... Despite this, results of water tests show there is persistent contamination from both E. Coli and Total Coliform bacteria (commonly used as an indicator of contamination).

By connecting to the new system, residents will limit groundwater contamination and avoid potential negative health impacts from consuming contaminated groundwater.

- ▶ Wastewater connection legislatively required for new water distribution systems

MANDATORY CONNECTIONS

WHY WILL CONNECTIONS BE MANDATORY?

- ▶ Large capital and resource investment by ratepayers
 - ▶ \$14.1M total, \$3.4M useable for other projects
- ▶ Infrastructure will have ongoing operational and maintenance costs
 - ▶ Lower utility usage costs
- ▶ More efficient system operation



ON PROPERTY WORK WHAT IS CHANGING?

- ▶ Private property work responsibility of landowner
 - ▶ Hire and pay contractors
 - ▶ Responsible to ensure contractor complies with permit and inspection requirements
 - ▶ Direct liaison regarding scope of work



ON PROPERTY WORK WHY IS IT CHANGING?

- ▶ Legal consultation indicated unacceptable level of risk
 - ▶ Municipal contractors on private property for bylaw enforcement
 - ▶ Municipal Government Act prohibits MD from “being a bank”
 - ▶ Damaged relationships in event of disagreements on quality/scope of construction or use of certain contractors
 - ▶ No assurance on securing preferred pricing



ON PROPERTY WORK

WHY IS THIS CHANGING NOW?

- ▶ Bylaw changes required to support connecting
- ▶ Legal implications were reviewed in depth during change
- ▶ Development of on-property Tender made risks clear



Unacceptable level of risk to ratepayers

ON PROPERTY WORK

HOW WILL THE MD SUPPORT OWNERS?

- ▶ Utility Service Guidelines, outlining requirements and direction around:
 - ▶ Permits & inspections
 - ▶ Construction
 - ▶ Decommissioning existing systems
- ▶ Pre-authorized contractors
 - ▶ Allow application on owners behalf



ON PROPERTY WORK

WHEN CAN OWNERS CONNECT

- ▶ MD will issue an exact date
 - ▶ When wastewater treatment system can take flow
 - ▶ Anticipated Autumn 2023
- ▶ Owners may start work (excluding municipal connection) prior to connection allowance
 - ▶ Must not connect to MD infrastructure prior to MD allowing connection
 - ▶ Meter cost will be waived if connection is complete within 90 days



NEXT STEPS

UTILITY BYLAW

- ▶ Will bring changes into effect
- ▶ Reading 1 of 3 passed November 22, 2022
- ▶ Public hearing planned January 10th, 2023 prior to 2nd reading

Time for input is now

adminutility@mdpincercreek.ab.ca



Questions

SUMMARY

- ▶ Mandatory Connections to Water System
 - ▶ Connections required within Hamlet within 3 years from wastewater flow acceptance
 - ▶ Concerns regarding area water quality and desire to keep utilities affordable
- ▶ Private Property Work Responsibility of Property Owner
 - ▶ 20 year financing not an option
 - ▶ Unacceptable level of risk to have MD complete private property work
 - ▶ Utility Service Guidelines in development along with pre-authorized contractor process
 - ▶ Connection anticipated Autumn 2023. No connection allowed until MD issues date
- ▶ Utility Bylaw Public Hearing January 10th, 2023