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Dear Shellwood Water System Customer:

As you may know, the Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) recently worked with a consulting company to review the operation, maintenance and long-term planning of the CVRD's water and sewer systems. A key area identified as needing improvement was communications with our customers! We recognize the need for improvement in communication and will provide you with more regular updates on system improvements, rate adjustments, operational malfunctions, watering restrictions, etc. As the simplest and most cost effective way to provide this communication is through email, we encourage you to sign up to 'Notify Me' on the CVRD's website at www.cvrld.bc.ca/utilities to start receiving email notifications on your water system.

The complete report of the Utility review is available for viewing on the CVRD website.

Moving forward, the following provides a review of the system over the past year and a summary of proposed future works.

2016 Review

Operation of the System

- The new treatment building and new reservoir were brought online at the end of 2015; electrical works were completed in 2016.
- The option of bringing a secondary well online was explored (Well 3, Rock Drive and Well 2, Rock Drive/Entrance Avenue) but due to poor water quality and quantity these options were not pursued.
- The new reservoir (offering ten times more capacity than the old reservoir) delayed Stage 3 watering restrictions until August 5 (July 8 in 2015).
- Three watermain breaks occurred within the system; one at the end of Rock Drive and two on Shellbeach Drive.

Regular Maintenance/Sampling

- Routine weekly bacteriological samples of the water were taken and submitted to Island Health for analysis; as well, a complete test of the water system was performed which included analysis of physical parameters, nutrients, bacteriological and metals. Results for both of these are available on the CVRD website at www.cvrld.bc.ca/utilities
- Flushing of the watermains was completed in March. Flushing uses high velocity water to clean out any sediment in the pipes that may lower the water quality.

Additional Expenses

- Unexpected expenses resulting from the extra staff time and material costs involved with the watermain repairs;
- Electrical work for completion of the water treatment building; and
- Additional laboratory costs for testing of the secondary wells.

Water Quality

- Concerns of discoloured water were expressed by some residents. The discolouration in the water is from the elevated levels of manganese in the source water.
 - Please note, although the discoloured water is visually unappealing, there are no health concerns at the levels of manganese present in the water. The addition of a sequestering agent will be explored in 2017 as a form of treatment.

Moving into 2017**Water Leaks from the Recent Cold Weather**

The recent cold weather may have caused water lines to freeze and break resulting in water leaks in irrigation lines or outside taps. Customers are reminded that it is the homeowners' responsibility to maintain and repair the portion of the water service line and plumbing system located within your property boundaries. The CVRD is responsible to maintain and repair the service from the watermain (located in the street) to your property boundary.

Rate Increases/Switch to Quarterly Billing

- User rates will be increasing by \$42/user/month in 2017. This increase is required to cover a deficit budget as a result of:
 - A small deficit carried over from 2015; and
 - Unanticipated additional expenses, outlined previously.
- All expenses must be paid for by the users of the system. As there are very few users on the Shellwood Water System (26), dramatic rate increases can result from relatively moderate expenses. Once the deficit has been eliminated, and assuming no more unanticipated expenses, rates will be reconsidered for 2018. Long-term, a reserve fund will need to be established for extraordinary expenses and system replacement.
- The billing cycle will change from semi-annual (every six months) to quarterly (every three months). This will provide more evenly spaced billing cycles between summer and winter and will give homeowners quicker notification of service leaks. Billing dates will be approximately February 1, May 1, August 1 and November 1.

Pilot Project for the Treatment of Manganese

- A six-month pilot project using a sequestering agent for the treatment of manganese is proposed for 2017 and will commence following final approval from Island Health. The product has been successfully used at two other CVRD-operated water systems for the treatment of manganese.
- The sequestering agent is a polyphosphate blend that is NSF ANSI Standard 60 certified for use in municipal water system.
- There will be no increase in costs for the pilot project as the equipment used will be borrowed from another system, but if the community wishes to continue with the product, additional costs may be necessary.
- We will communicate to customer the starting date for the pilot project through 'Notify Me' so be sure to sign up at www.cvr.bc.ca/utilities.
- During the pilot project please provide us with any feedback on the water quality as both positive and negative feedback is valuable.

Required Future Works

There is currently no scheduled dates for the following upgrades as the work will need to be added to future budgets:

- The replacement of the motor, pump and pipe-works of the production well is required as the existing pump was installed in 1976 and is at the end of its life-cycle.
- Upgrades to the production well, and the development of a well head protection plan, are both needed to meet current standards.
- A secondary source (well) is needed to provide additional capacity and enhanced security of supply to the system.

If the community would like, we can schedule a public meeting to further discuss the water system and answer any questions. Please contact me at 250.746.2530 if you are interested in attending a public meeting or if you have any questions. Please be sure to sign up to 'Notify Me' to stay connected with your water system.

Sincerely,



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