



New waste collection system proposed for town

The operations department is evaluating the benefits of implementing a new four-day waste collection schedule that will reap positive results for residents.

The new schedule would eliminate garbage pick-up on Mondays. “With the new automated garbage collection system, we can now service the entire town in four days,”

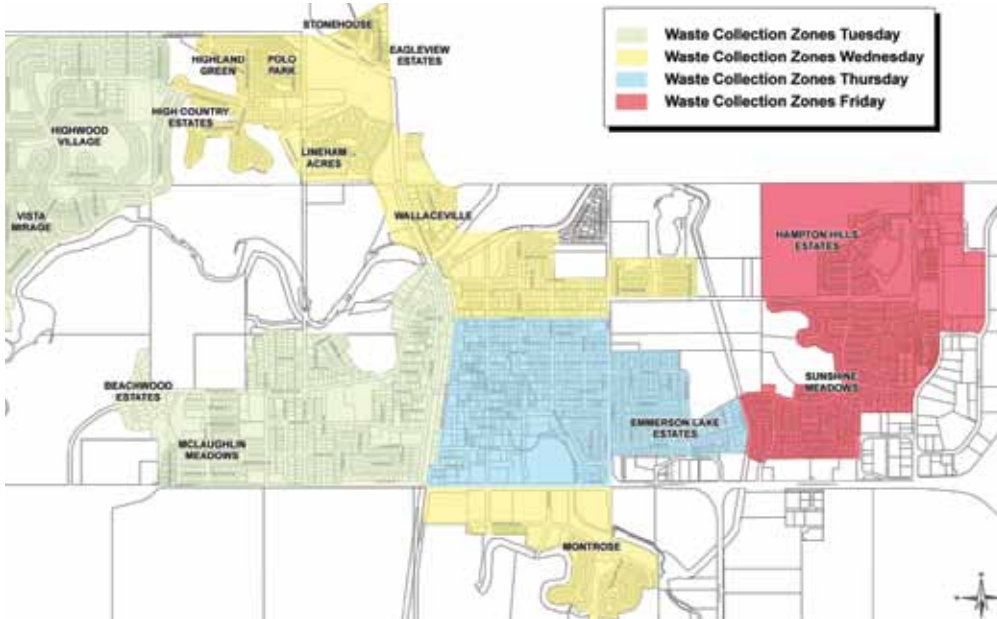
said Dean Downey, manager of operational services.

There are a number of positive spin-offs with the new system. As most long weekends fall on a Monday, any residents whose regular pick-up was scheduled on this day had to shift to another day every time there was a statutory holiday. The new schedule eliminates the need for any adjustments.

Cost savings and a positive environmental impact are additional benefits of the new system. “This moves us much closer to full cost recovery for this utility,” said Downey. “The fees charged for this service have not covered the entire cost and for years, it has been necessary to use tax revenue to subsidize it.”

The new schedule was presented to council during the Feb. 28 regular council meeting. If approved, the revised waste collection system will be implemented by the first of April. Changes include moving anyone on a Monday collection day to Tuesdays and moving Montrose collection to Wednesdays.

Complete information and timelines for implementing the new system will be published prior to its implementation.



The map shows the revised pick up schedule in the proposed four-day system.

Town tackles organic waste management

In its ongoing efforts to create a sustainable community, the town is digging into household garbage to find the treasures in our organic trash.

“Almost 40 percent of garbage is actually organic material that can be composted,” said Joe Angevine, waste and recycling supervisor. “That’s tons of material going into a landfill that could be converted to nutrient rich soil for our yards and gardens.”

On Feb. 28 the waste and recycling department made a presentation to council requesting the implementation of a pilot organic recycling project for 2011. Two options were presented to council: to implement a curb-side pilot program or to promote a do-it-yourself system where residents are supported in composting their own organic material.

“With the first option, we would request 100 volunteers to participate in a pilot project before we consider expanding it to the entire community,” explained Angevine. “We would want to determine whether this type of program will be successful in High River before implementing it.”

The organics program would be coordinated for a Thursday pick up so it would rarely be affected by long weekends or holidays.

The second option focuses on the use of a Bokashi composting system. This anaerobic system utilizes a specialized type of bran that is added to any kitchen waste and essentially turns it into a nutrient rich soil conditioner that can be added to any lawn or garden. “The great thing about the Bokashi system is that there are no restrictions on what can be included,” said Angevine. “Dairy or protein products are always excluded from regular composting programs but the Bokashi system allows almost all biological material to be recycled.”

Council requested a demonstration to increase their understanding of how it works. They were also interested in finding solutions for members of the public who do not have access to a yard to bury the composted material.

If one of these initiatives is approved, it would be introduced by the end of May or early June.

Monitor your utility bills online

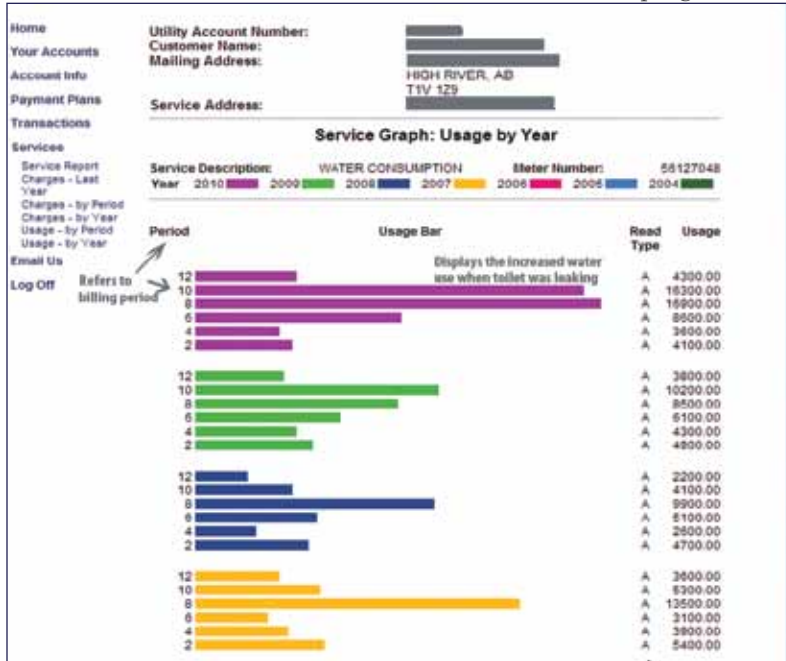
With High River's new eServices initiative residents can now monitor their water consumption online.

The service can be accessed online through the High River website, www.highriver.ca under the eServices heading. Residents will need their customer number, which is located in a box at the top right-

hand side of their their bill in order to register for online access.

Once residents have registered and received their password, they can check their utility accounts and compare their consumption history "It's another way that residents can control their utility bills," said Operations Manager Dean Downey. "If they keep track of their annual usage, they can see when their use is higher and why."

The following diagrams demonstrate how the service can pinpoint problems.



One graph view, illustrating water usage over several years. The spike during the number 10 and 11 billing period in 2010 reflects a five-day water leak that added \$75 to the water bill.

Service To	Days	Read Type	Usage (Imperial)	Charge	Total	
2010	12	01	A 70.49	4300.00	0.25 15.00	
		10	01	A 207.21	15300.00	1.28 78.10
		09	02	A 272.50	18900.00	1.05 65.07
		08	01	A 140.99	9600.00	0.58 36.37
		04	01	A 69.90	3600.00	0.44 26.87
		02	09	A 69.49	4100.00	0.47 27.45
2009	12	01	A 62.30	3800.00	0.44 27.10	
		10	01	A 167.21	10200.00	0.86 40.31
		08	02	A 137.10	8500.00	0.57 35.06
		06	01	A 100.00	6100.00	0.48 29.77
		04	01	A 70.49	4300.00	0.45 27.68
		02	09	A 83.05	4900.00	0.48 28.37
2008	12	01	A 36.67	2200.00	0.41 25.24	
		10	01	A 87.21	4100.00	0.45 27.45
		09	02	A 159.90	9900.00	0.84 39.39
		08	01	A 83.61	5100.00	0.47 29.61
		04	01	A 42.62	2600.00	0.42 26.71
		02	00	A 78.33	4700.00	0.47 29.14
2007	12	01	A 59.62	3600.00	0.42 25.38	

Electronic version of a typical residential utility bill. This is how it appears through the e-Services feature.

Have you booked your leak detection consultation?

Have you booked your appointment to talk to an expert about saving money on your utility bill?

"Detecting leaks and fixing them right away is one of the best ways to lower your water bill," said Colin Andrews, the town's utility representative who is doing on-site consultations for residents and businesses. "People don't realize how much money a dripping tap can cost them. A leak of one drop per second can add up to 840 litres of water per month."

Helping customers lower their water bill is the reason the town initiated the Water Conservation and Leak Detection Educational Program.

The program gives individuals the opportunity to take control of their utility bill by understanding and managing their water usage.

Andrews is available to make on-site visits to homes and businesses where he will provide specific information on how to determine if and where leaks may be happening, how to read a water meter, and strategies for increasing water use efficiency.

Appointments are approximately 45 minutes to an hour, depending on the size of the building and how many questions customers have.

"One of the best ways to monitor water usage is to check your water meter regularly," said Andrews. "If a person notices a sudden spike in the amount of water being used, this usually indicates a leak. The sooner it's found the less money goes down the drain - literally."

Appointments for an on-site visit can be booked by email at waterconservation@highriver.ca. or by phone at 403.652.4657.

Save a tree, choose electronic billing

Instead of walking to the mailbox to retrieve your utilities bill, have it sent to you by email.

It's not only more convenient, it's also more environmental. Electronic bills now include the Tips from the Town newsletter, so you won't miss any of the information normally found in your billing statement.

To register to have your billing statement emailed contact corporateservices@highriver.ca.