

Northern Area D Water Rates FAQ

Is it confirmed that Northern Area D Water Rates have been increased?

Yes, on June 6, 2018, the Regional Board passed a bylaw to amend the water rates to meet the adopted 2018-2022 financial plan as required under the *Local Government Act* to cover the cost of the service.

Here is a comparison of the residential rate changes:

	2017	2018
Unmetered Rate/year	\$ 402.00	\$ 800.00
Metered Rate (per m3)	\$ 1.17	\$ 1.36
Minimum Amount/year	\$ 402.00	\$ 415.00

Will I receive another bill this year?

Yes. All unmetered property owners received a bill in May 2018 for \$402. The outstanding \$398 will be billed in 2 equal portions of \$199 later this summer and in the fall. These bills can be paid as a lump sum or in installments. Any outstanding amounts left owing as of December 31, 2018 will be added to the residents 2019 property tax.

Why are the rates increasing?

The cost for this service has significantly increased in the past 5 years as the cost of purchasing bulk water has increased. Consumption of water has gone up each year as well as the rate that is paid for bulk water. In 2013, the system purchased 621,664 cubic meters and in 2018 we are estimated to purchase 970,547 cubic meters.

What can I do to reduce my water bills?

Practise water conservation. Reducing water use is the most important thing that can be done right now to reduce water system costs. To help promote and educate users on smart water use, the SRD has hired a water conservation educator to work in Area D this summer. They will be hosting community events and working in the community. There is also a dedicated water conservation hotline and email account, **250-203-1820 and water@srd.ca** where residents can ask questions, request more information or report excessive water use.

Why can't I use as much water as I want since I am already paying for it?

The water rates that are being charged in 2018 are based on the amount of water used in 2017. If water use is decreased in 2018, the 2019 water rates will reflect that reduction. If water use continues to increase, the water rates will continue to increase.

Can I install a water meter and move to the metered rate?

Staff are currently preparing a report on universal metering to be presented to the board as an option to reduce water use, as metered water systems use on average 65% less water than unmetered users. Residents wanting to move to a metered rate immediately would be responsible to cover all of the costs to install a meter including labor and materials. Cost estimates range from \$2,000 to \$5,000 depending on the existing water service conditions at individual properties. For more information email engineering@srd.ca or call 250-830-6719.

What is the water charge on my property taxes for?

One third of the cost of the system is paid for through taxation at a rate of \$1 per \$1,000 assessed property value. The average value of property in Area D is \$350,000. This means that an average property will pay \$350 for the water service through taxes plus \$800 in water rates for a total amount of \$1150 for the year.



301-990 Cedar Street
Campbell River, BC V9W 7Z8
Tel: 250.830.6700 Fax: 250.830.6710
Toll Free: 1.877.830.2990
engineering@srd.ca / www.srd.ca



Water Conservation Hotline:
250-203-1820
water@srd.ca

More questions?
Please join us for a

Community Water

Open House

at Hagel Park

June 21st, 5pm—7pm

Are we going to get water meters?

How do we know that lawn watering is the biggest water use?

Are in-ground irrigation systems good or bad?

Isn't the supply unlimited? Is there a drought this summer?

Get more information from trained educators, certified irrigation specialists and Regional District staff.

ONLY ONE INCH! We live in a Mediterranean climate. This means we have wet winters and very dry summers causing water use to double in the summer. Almost 65 percent of this outdoor irrigation is wasted by inefficient watering practices - primarily over watering lawns. These inefficient practices not only waste water but leave your lawn open to damaging conditions such as weed growth, fungus and disease. Your lawn only needs 25 mm (1 inch) of water per week, including rainfall to keep it healthy. It is not physically possible for grass to absorb any more than one inch of water per week.

How do I measure that? You can place a rain gauge or shallow cans (tuna cans work well) in strategic locations and run the sprinkler for 15 minutes. If this puts half an inch of water into the can, then you only need to water your lawn for 30 minutes each week.



Use a tuna can to measure how long it takes to water your lawn one inch.

CUT OUT AND PUT ON YOUR FRIDGE

Stage 2 Restrictions in Effect July 1, 2018

Odd number houses are permitted to water lawns on **Wednesday and Sunday** before 7:00 a.m., and after 7:00 p.m. with a sprinkler or irrigation system.

Even numbered houses are permitted to water lawns on **Tuesday and Saturday**, before 7:00 a.m., and after 7:00 p.m. with a sprinkler or irrigation system.

You may **not** use water to wash sidewalks, driveways or parking lots.

You may water plants, shrubs and gardens at any time of day with a hand-held hose with automatic shut-off nozzle or by using micro-irrigators, or drip-irrigators. You can also wash windows, vehicles and buildings if using a hand-held hose with automatic shut-off nozzle.

Water Hotline: 250-203-1820 water@srd.ca