

SION IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

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To All Property Owners

January 4th, 2016

We would like to take this time to wish everyone a prosperous and healthy New Year!

New Changes - There has been more changes in the past few months as follows.

- We have now relocated to a bigger location to accommodate our growing needs and easier access for everyone.
- Dan Koochin is our new Water Operator as Darryll has moved on to take an offer of full time position with School District 51.
- We have moved up our tax bylaw submission for the 2016 taxation year to last Nov/15 so that everyone will now know in advance what their tax will be for the 2016 year. Previously this would not have been decided until April/May of this year.
- Steve Rezansoff was no longer able to complete his term (2016) and resigned as a board trustee in July/15.

For our new property owners we would like to introduce ourselves as Cassandra Thomas and Heather Smith in the SION Administration Office. Dan Koochin is our full time Water Operator and will have 2 part-time employees to assist him when necessary. They are Gary Lawrence and Willie Condruk.

Our current Board members along with their status are now as follows:

Ron Subotin – Chair (ends 2016)

Larry Jmaiff – Vice Chair

Roy Stevenson – Secretary

John Zibin – Trustee (ends 2016)

Vacant – Trustee (ends 2016)

At this time we would like let everyone know that our AGM will be held end of April 2016 and it will be at that time that 3 trustees will be appointed for the next term. If you are interested please be sure to let us know!

Being a trustee does not take a lot of time – meetings are held monthly and generally 1 – 2 hours in the evening and trustees are paid an annual stipend per attendance.

We now have our own office phone number which is 250-444-7139 and is also our **emergency phone number for after hours and weekends** – these calls will automatically be forwarded to Water Operator on call. Since we are not in the office full time you may leave a message and we will get back to you or you could email any issues, questions, etc. Emailing is the preferred method.

Everyone received a break in the tax/toll rates for 2015 year with no increase. We have said that for year Jan-Dec2015 would not see any increases for water taxes or tolls - unless there were unexpected costs – and that 20% penalty charges will be incurred only on outstanding balance as of end of day Dec31, 2015. **For the 2016 year the 20% penalty charges will be effective as of the due date shown on your 2016 toll and tax invoices.**

A reminder to everyone that as per ByLaw 59 written permission from SION Improvement District is required for in-ground or above ground pool. If you have a Pool and you do not show a Swimming Pool Annual tax on your invoice then please notify SION office immediately for correction to avoid penalties.

You are also required to contact us if you are putting in an underground sprinkler system.

Section 25 (a) of ByLaw 59 states:

No person receiving a domestic service shall use water for water stock, filling of swimming pools, underground sprinkling systems or reservoirs, or for any other purpose other than that required for normal domestic use, except by written permission of the Trustees, which shall state the purpose, time and use and quantity of water to be used and additional charges, if any, and any special works required to be altered or installed.

Due to increased cost associated with maintaining the integrity of the water distribution system along with increased electrical fees, rate increases for the 2016 year have been decided. Additional toll categories have been added to accommodate the variety of water usage.

The categories are as follows:

Single Dwelling	32.00 per month
Additional Single Family Dwelling	33.00 per month
Swimming Pool	60.00 per Annual
Business or commercial establishments	35.00 per month *new
Restaurants or Coffee Shops	40.00 per month *new

Two invoices are enclosed – one for Jan-Dec 2016 Water Toll and one for the 2016 Annual Irrigation Tax. These invoices will only show what is being billed – annual water taxes or water tolls – and will not show any other items that may still be outstanding. These will be due in full by the due dates shown on the invoices except for those on SION's scheduled payment plan list. A statement of outstanding balance is included showing all payments rec'd as of end of day Jan 3/16.

Payments received after Jan 3/16 will not show on this statement.

Please check for accuracy in mailing addresses, names, etc. We would also like to have everyone's email address so that we may email you these statements and invoices to save on postage and envelopes.

Moving forward - we will continue to offer monthly payments and now have a form enclosed for you to complete if you wish to have automatic monthly payment deductions. The SION office must be notified if you wish to be on the payment plan and we will let you know the minimum monthly amount required in order for outstanding balances to be paid in full by Dec31/16. Property owners that are on the scheduled monthly payment plan will have the (MPP) as part of their name on the invoices. Note that the monthly payment plans are only for Tax and Tolls –any other invoices that you may receive are due upon receipt.

Those who are not on the SION scheduled monthly payment plan will be charged the 20% penalty charges **if unpaid for longer than 30 days past the due dates shown on the invoices.** We would like you to know that while we are willing to discuss payment solutions with you to help you achieve this goal we cannot forego the penalty charges on unpaid balances.

Our Year in 2015 - Due to last summer's dry conditions and water demands SION incurred a 36% increase in the electrical consumption for providing water for the year 2015 versus 2014. The current climate changes are forecast to continue with extended summer dry spells and less snow pack to replenish our aquifers which creates a drought situation.

The Pumphouse 2 Upgrade Project at 4507 Centre Rd (as part of our infrastructure planning in conjunction with the Fortis upgrading of the transformers at this site) was completed in Oct 2015.

The Reservoir #1 Cleaning Project on Spencer Rd was completed in Oct 2015. We tried a new approach last year and went with a company that uses divers to clean the interior of the reservoir. This method eliminated the necessity of SION having to drain the reservoir prior to having it cleaned professionally and then to refill it – a process that could take 2 - 3 days. The new method took one day, required no draining of reservoir and resulted in savings of total costs over previous method.

2016 Year - Pumphouse #1 Upgrade is tentatively scheduled for the 2016 year.

Meetings will be held in the coming months to discuss plans for infrastructure planning and for reclassification of land use. The recent droughts and forest fires have prompted SION to implement a proactive wildfire management plan along with a drought management plan.

We will continue with creating a Master Plan for an infrastructure renewal and upgrade system for our ageing infrastructures (wells and pumps) so that we know what the expected costs will be in the future. This includes continuing with our audit of infrastructures and noting any anomalies.

As per Usual - In order to keep our water system up to date it means we need to continue to invest in training and to be active participants in organizations that are relevant to our industry as a Water Improvement District – the goal is to continue with our stewardship to 'ensure the quality and quantity of your water from the source to your tap'.

It is through these organizations that we will be looking to educate ourselves on new products, technologies, and other means to be more streamlined in an effort to reduce costs, maintain/better the quality of our water and provide a sustainable infrastructural future. To be able to network with other improvement districts gives us a chance to learn from other districts experiences. Continued changes are anticipated in the future. These are paid for by revenue received thru the annual water taxes and tolls.

Creating a Master Plan for an infrastructure renewal and upgrade system for our ageing infrastructure (wells and pumps) so that we know what the expected costs will be in the future. Spending money now to have this plan in place will save us money in the future to gradually update all wells and pumps as needed on a timely basis. This includes communication and monitoring technologies and software tools to monitor real-time information from the wells and pump houses.

There are water right licenses that need to be maintained in case they are needed in the future so that we can tap into other water sources if necessary. Water samples are collected and sent weekly to an accredited testing facility in Kelowna to ensure they are within the guidelines of the water quality parameters.

In closing we would like to thank you for your participation as we try to make a better system that works for both you and SION. Please continue to give suggestions about how we can serve you better via email or on our website. We would love to have our customers be more involved in future plans for good water stewardship!

Thank you!
 Staff and Board Members
 SION Improvement District

“The thing that is glaringly obvious in a cost versus consumption comparison is that there is an almost linear inverse relationship between the price of water and the amount of water consumed.”

