

Silverhawk Utilities Inc. Annual Newsletter



Volume 10, Summer 2017



TREATMENT PLANT PERFORMANCE 2016

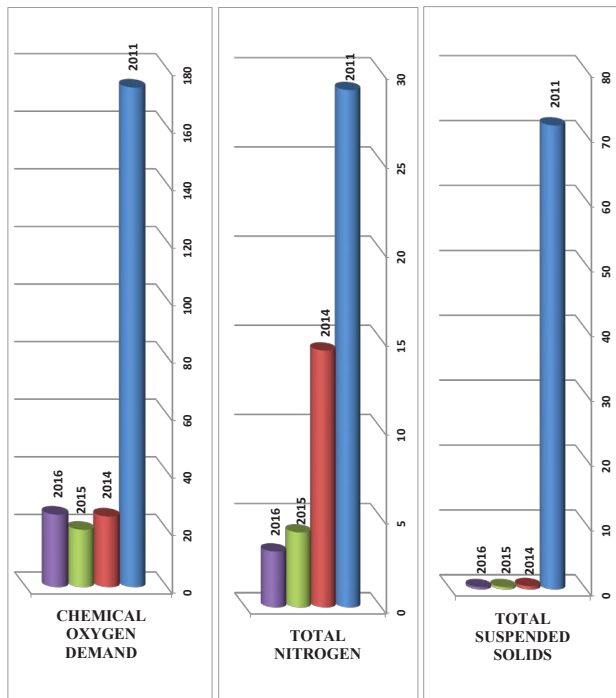
Throughout the last year the Silver Star Sewage Treatment Plant has been operating at a very high efficiency, with the water quality consistently exceeding the mandate outlined by the Ministry of Environment (MOE). With the average flow of sewage to the plant having increased during the last few years, the treatment plant is now classified under plants that process more than 500 m³/day. As a result, the MOE has requested that additional laboratory testing be conducted on the effluent by a third-party lab, which has somewhat increased our operating costs. Considering that the effluent is consistently of high quality, Silverhawk is currently pursuing having the MOE Director allow in-house tests to avoid the additional cost of contracting a third-party lab.

With the effluent being classified under Unrestricted Public Access (being free from pathogens, etc) and with the processed water vol-



umes increasing, Silverhawk has been studying the implementation of using it for general purpose at the village. The effluent has already been used for irrigation near the treatment plant and third-party reports indicate that all the parameters in the soil are well within

the acceptable range. Using this reclaimed water will help reduce consumption of potable water for services and irrigation applications, and will further Silverhawk Utilities commitment to green initiatives on Silver Star Mountain.



ANNUAL FIXED FEE - BUILDING BYLAW

Silverhawk Utilities is pleased to provide the following clarification on how the Annual Residential Fixed Fee is charged to properties on Silver Star Mountain. Under the Regional District of North Okanagan Building Bylaw No. 2670, 2015 Section 606 (2) it states: *“Where a water connection is made at Silver Star Mountain to a duplex, or a single family dwelling and a suite, the owner shall install a water meter appliance to each dwelling unit.”*

To ensure that Silverhawk Utilities policies are aligned with the Bylaws governing Silver Star Mountain, the following change has been made to our Sewer Tariff:

“Regardless of whether or not there is physically a second meter installed on the property, a second fixed fee will be charged for all properties that are a duplex, or a single family dwelling and a suite.”

While the majority of properties at Silver Star Mountain already adhere to this bylaw and are being charged accordingly by Silverhawk Utilities, there are a few that need to be reassessed. If you have received an invoice with a second fixed fee and have questions or concerns, please contact our office at (403)289-3198.

COD (mg/L)				TN (mg/L)				TSS (mg/L)			
2011	2014	2015	2016	2011	2014	2015	2016	2011	2014	2015	2016
173.5	24.5	19.91	25.2	29	14.4	4.2	3.13	71.5	0.5	0.35	0.35

TAKE THE LEAKY TOILET TEST

If you suspect your toilet is leaking here is a simple test you may want to try. The leak may be caused by a failing flapper, tank to bowl gasket, float ball or fill valve. There are a variety of toilets on the market which have different floats and valve sealing arrangements, but leakage usually comes from the same few causes.

Why check for leaks? - Most toilet leaks are silent and a leaking toilet can waste 2,500 liters a month - enough to fill your bathtub 28 times! You pay for all this wasted water. Checking for toilet leaks twice a year will only take you a few minutes and could equal big savings on your water bill.

Unsure if your toilet is leaking? Take the leaky toilet test. A positive dye test in your toilet bowl means your toilet valve is leaking, whether a flapper, or plunger style toilet, this is where your repair will need to happen. If your dye test comes back negative and you still suspect a problem likely your water level is too high and you need to check your overflow.

What to do when you find a leak? - You could hire a plumber, visit a hardware store for repair tips, or watch a YouTube video with detailed instructions.

How often should you check for leaks? - Check your home for leaks twice a year. Even new toilets can leak and most toilet leaks are silent so it's important to add checking for leaks to your regular home maintenance schedule. Be aware that time-released toilet bowl cleaners that sit in your tank (rather than flush-released ones) can speed up the deterioration of parts in your toilet and cause leaks. If you use these products, you should check your toilet for leaks more frequently.

2016 SERVICE YEAR RATES

The Sewer Rates for the 2016 Service Year have increased in the amount of 2.95% over the previous year. Some of the items associated with higher operating costs for the 2016 Service Year are:

- Increased operational costs associated with a more advanced treatment plant.
- Higher costs associated with the requirement for de-watering the sludge in cell #1.
- An increase of costs associated with third-party lab testing which was required by the Ministry of the Environment.

EDUCATIONAL TOURS OFFERED

Silverhawk Utilities will be offering educational tours of the Wastewater Treatment Plant. These educational tours will include a comprehensive description of the process that is involved in treating wastewater, a tour of the inside of the plant and what regulations and laws are being followed to treat effluent to the highest standards. The tour will be conducted by one of Silverhawk Utilities Certified Wastewater Treatment Operators who have hands-on experience. Please contact our Silver Star office (250) 558-9877.

1) DROP



Put several drops of food colouring into the toilet tank, and wait ten minutes.

2) PEEK



Look in the bowl. If the water changes colour, you've got a leak.

3) REPAIR



And save! If the water colour changes, your toilet is leaking and needs repair.

VACANT LOT FEES

The Regional District of North Okanagan (RDNO) has recently adopted the Silver Star Water Fees Imposition Bylaw No. 2734, 2016. One item of note within the Bylaw is how vacant lots at Silver Star Mountain are being charged for water fees. In the past it was collected via property taxes as the "Ad Valorem Tax". The elimination of this tax would result in vacant lots not paying any fees for water. Instead, the definition of the Infrastructure Base Fee has been amended to include all vacant lots. While vacant lots don't use water or create wastewater, the infrastructure required to provide those services is ready and available for when a property is to be developed. This infrastructure must be maintained and made available in the same capacity as a developed property.

For the last ten years, Silverhawk Utilities has been using this same method of charging for wastewater fees on vacant lots in the form of our Annual Residential Vacant Lot Fee. We are pleased to have both Silverhawk and the Silver Star Water Utility aligned in how these fees are charged to customers.

PROTECT OUR WATER

Please do your part by not pouring any chemicals, cooking oil, grease or materials down the sink or toilet that can be harmful to the environment. A list of restricted materials can be found on our website at www.silverhawkutilities.com, or if in doubt please contact our utility at (250) 558-9877.