

COUNCIL REPORT

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| M&C No. | 2018-321 |
| Report Date | November 14, 2018 |
| Meeting Date | November 19, 2018 |
| Service Area | Saint John Water |

His Worship Mayor Don Darling and Members of Common Council

SUBJECT: AquaHawk Customer Portal Launch – Saint John Water

OPEN OR CLOSED SESSION

This matter is to be discussed in open session of Common Council.

AUTHORIZATION

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| Primary Author | Commissioner/Dept. Head | City Manager |
| Pierre LeBlanc | J. Brent McGovern | Neil Jacobsen |

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that this report be received and filed.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is twofold; first it is to inform Council and the public that the AquaHawk Web Portal will be available to metered customers beginning on the week of November 26, 2018. Secondly, metered (industrial, commercial and institutional) customers will be sent informational materials explaining this service and the registration process associated with the service within their next water bill mail out which is planned to occur on November 22, 2018.

PREVIOUS RESOLUTION

M&C 2017-183

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

This report aligns with Council's Priority for **Fiscal Responsibility**.

It also supports Common Council's priority of **Valued Service Delivery** through innovation and technology and creating operational efficiencies.

REPORT

Saint John Water recently completed the implementation of a fully functional, fixed based, radio frequency meter reading system also known as Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI). This system gathers hourly consumption data, which is recorded and stored for a period of two years, from smartpoint radios attached to each individual water meter in the City's water distribution system. The City of Saint John currently owns, and has in service, approximately 3230 meters, 3130 of which are now being read automatically with the AMI system. The remaining meters are still read manually and are scheduled to be fully transitioned and integrated into the AMI system by the end of 2019.

The AMI system has succeeded in facilitating and automating the billing process (collection of meter readings and customer billing) for all the City's metered customers and it has also improved the operational efficiency of Saint John Water. However, a few remaining opportunities exist.

City staff can access historic (period of 2 years) detailed hourly consumption reports for any metered customer connected to the AMI system. Customers themselves, however, are unable to access/monitor their own consumption. At present, customers who are interested in monitoring their own consumption (particularly commercial/industrial customers) have been doing so via multiple phone calls to City staff and a manual data transfer which does not serve our customers well and consumes a lot of staff time with repetitive administrative tasks. For example, this process requires City staff to: field multiple calls regarding water consumption inquiries, gather the necessary data, and create and send consumption reports to customers.

The lack of an effective way for customers to monitor their own consumption is especially troublesome in cases of a water leak. Water leaking on private property can remain undetected until customers receive a high consumption letter from the City. At present this letter is sent to customers as soon as the City notices a rise in consumption, this is typically noticed during the bi-monthly billing process. Customers can therefore experience an unknown ongoing leak for periods up to 2 months which can have a significant financial impact on customers and result in increased water use and therefore costs to the utility – Saint John Water.

AquaHawk is a customer portal solution for municipal utilities that use a fully functional, fixed based, radio frequency meter reading system (AMI). This new software solution helps service providers improve customer engagement, improve client satisfaction by opening data and offering a means for customers to monitor and access their water consumption in real time. It also can contribute to the reduction in operational costs for the utility by reducing system leakage.

SERVICE OUTCOMES

This will provide a service enhancement to metered (industrial, commercial and institutional) customers. With AquaHawk, Saint John Water's metered customers will be able to:

- Register and access their online account(s);
- View their current and historical water usage in graphical format;
- Receive notification via their means of choice (email, text message, cell phone, home or work phone) when potential leaks are detected;
- See an estimate of their bill during the billing cycle;
- See information that has been pushed out by Saint John Water; and
- Set a billing and usage threshold and be notified if they are trending to, or have exceeded their personally set targets.

INPUT FROM OTHER SERVICE AREAS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Saint John Water has been working with the Finance, Information Technology and Communications service areas through the development and implementation of the AquaHawk Web Portal.

ATTACHMENTS

AquaHawk Informational Bill Insert