City of Rhinelander

Water and Wastewater Utilities

February 10, 2014

City of Rhinelander Water and Sewer Department Telephone Contact Information:

If there is not risk of health related complications or personal property damage, our Utility Customers are generally encouraged to contact us during normal working hours as indicated below. If there is an immediate Utility Customer concern, the use of the after-hours or weekend telephone numbers are then encouraged based on the times needed. Each contact number listed has means to leave a message:

Normal Working Hours (Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm}	715-365-8600 (Ext. 1)
Weekdays After-Hours (Monday through Friday, 4:30 pm to 8:00 am}	715-361-5201
Weekends {Friday 4:30 pm through Monday 7:00 am}	715-493-1212

Freezing (Trickle) Water Program FAQs:

- The City of Rhinelander goal is to use a normal seasonal program to allow cost credit to trickle water at approved customer locations to best ensure full operation of our water system and minimize the overall expense to all our customers during cold weather conditions. The program is not intended to address deficient private water service constructions, or insufficient heating needed to keep utility systems from freezing within a building. Private utility construction and heating are required and considered an individual customers responsibility.

- During a mild winter, the City program will typically allow program credit for 300 to 500 customers. With this program, an individual customer is instructed to use 150 to 300 gallons per day (pencil-lead stream) of extra water to better ensure area water system freezing does not occur. At the cost of supplying and treating the extra water involved at the current cost of $9.66 per thousand gallons, in effect the City is allowing each of these customers a quarterly credit of $150 to $300. This credit is allowed to forego the expense anticipated for each customer to be to thawed out one time at a similar cost. As a whole in the City Utility, we purposely allow system credit at a $150,000 level to ensure that there is not similar cost otherwise required to thaw services.

- In previous years, the program was typically allowing a program credit for 600 to 800 customers. At that level this appeared unnecessary, so more direction was given. With the amount being directed to flow (pencil–size) combined with count of customers allowed this practice, the additional water supply and treatment exceeded what was necessary and that resulted in at least 100,000 gallons per day extra water being used. By changing the volume of water being used with new direction, the City Utility was estimated to be successful at saving at least $80,000 per quarterly period by evaluating the program and taking those actions.

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Email tkingman@rhinelanderutilities.org

- With this year (2014), a more conservative approach was not possible due to the frost depths exceeding 6 feet depth throughout the City. For a first time in many years, the City Utility has directed a system-wide program water use to all customers and will charge all customers based on their normal average use. The City Utility will experience additional expense to keep the water system functional with use of over 500,000 gallons per day extra water being authorized due to conditions present, and there have been over 200 freeze-ups (or thaws) experienced and several water main breaks already related specifically to this year. So, in order to keep our City Utilities fully functional this year, it is presently being estimated we are allowing quarterly credit in the range of $500,000 as the only feasible alternative. This is a necessary expense that unfortunately will have to be absorbed by all Utility Customers.

- In previous years, if a system-wide use was ever required the City would have had some further complications. Recent City of Rhinelander Utility investments made in the water supply systems and new treatment plant have made these current activities possible at these cost levels. In previous years, if the same type of freezing occurred the systems may not have had all the capacity to perform at currently authorized levels and it is estimated that the expense would have far exceed what is being experienced at this time. By the City Utility investments made, we clearly have reduced the complications and expense that could have occurred otherwise.

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