

Capital to install 1,000 water meters

Water and sewer utility chair says things on schedule for two big projects

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- BY DAVE STEWART

The City of Charlottetown will spend \$ 475,000 this year to install another 1,000 water meters on homes.

Water and sewer utility chairman Eddie Rice said the program has been going well so far, with close to 900 homes already on the metered system.

“We had a great run at the start of people wanting to sign up because they’re seeing savings,” Rice said.

The councillor noted that while the program is mandatory in the sense that everyone has to be hooked up by the end of 2019, no one is being forced onto the system anytime soon.

“We’ve decided because it’s an election year,” Rice said, referring to the municipal vote in November to elect a new council, “and I’ll be perfectly honest, because it’s an election year we’re not doing mandatory (metering). We’re asking people to volunteer and we’ve gotten volunteers.”

Water meters is one of a number of conservation measures the city has undertaken. Others include programs for rain barrels, toilet replacements and water conservation kits. The utility is also offering help for people who are buying water conserving washers.

Rice also said the sanitary and storm water separation project is on

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Coun. Eddie Rice

schedule for completion early in 2015.

The chairman is also happy with progress on the new water supply.

“We’re moving ahead at a pace that I’m happy with, not as fast as some people would like but at a speed which we’ve got control, and we’re creating employment over a longer period of time in the city.”

This year, the utility will finish most of its work on the new well field at a cost of just over \$ 2 million.

Rice said a financial plan to address the remaining work involving a connection to the existing infrastructure and construction of a water storage standpipe is currently underway and will be presented to council in the next few months.

It will cost about \$ 12 million, cost- shared by the three levels of government, to finish the new water supply.

“We’ve got our portion of it together pretty well. We are going to give you a report on where the rest of the money will be (coming from). We’re ready application wise for the feds and the province; we’ve got support from both in informal ways.”

The provincial and federal governments are still working on signing an agreement that will see \$ 440 million flow to P. E. I. municipalities over the next 10 years for project such as the capital city’s new source of water.

When the new source in Miltonvale is hooked into the system, it will take pressure off the city’s only current source of water in Winter River.