



DISTRICT OF SPARWOOD

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HOME OF THE WORLD'S LARGEST TRUCK

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

May 14, 2009

Dear Citizens:

Enclosed is your tax bill for the Year 2009 which reflects an average increase of 4.4%. The average residential tax increase that applies to the District of Sparwood alone is 2%. The balance of the increase goes to other jurisdictions, such as the School District, Regional Hospital District, Policing, and Elk Valley Waste. A breakdown of what your taxes are paying for is detailed on the back of this letter.

The typical Sparwood home will be paying taxes of \$1089.56 after the Home Owner Grant. This represents one of the lower tax billings in the Kootenays and this Council will strive to continue on that trend.

For those of you who are new homeowners or new to the Province, please make yourself familiar with the B.C. Home Owners' Grant provisions. Also, note that even if you cannot pay your entire account by the **July 6, 2009 deadline**, you should **claim the grant before the deadline** because the 10% penalty is calculated on the total amount of current taxes owing.

In addition, for home owners who are over 55 or disabled and have difficulty paying their taxes, there is a provincial tax deferment program available. In response to the severe economic downturn, there is also a new deferment program designed for persons in financial difficulties. Please feel free to contact the District if you have any questions regarding your eligibility for the deferment programs, home owner grant or any other items that may be unclear on your tax bill.

For those who find it difficult to visit the District Office during the regular hours from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., please note that there is a mailbox located at the front entrance for your convenience. Please do not put cash in the mailbox. Post-dated cheques are welcomed and will avoid the last minute rush, but should be identified in some way (highlight the date) so that they are not inadvertently processed as a current item.

In addition, you are now able to pay your taxes and utilities on-line or by telephone banking. **Home Owner Grant applications must still be mailed or dropped off at the office.** If you are out of town and believe that there is not enough time to send your cheque by mail, please contact the Collector **before the due date** to make alternate arrangements to ensure your payment is received on time. Couriers are not always the best option. **The District Office must receive the funds by the due date, post-marks are not considered.**

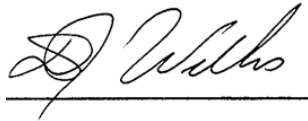
The building of the new pedestrian bridge across the Elk River, which will also be used to attach our sewer and water lines underneath, will start this August as we have now received approval from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to divert a portion of the river so that footings can be poured. This link between Sparwood Heights and Sparwood proper will provide a healthy alternative for getting into town.

Renovations to the District of Sparwood main office will start sometime in June 2009. You will see a huge change to the interior of the building which will allow for a better working environment and provide space for additional employees that have been brought on due to expanded workload.

Council continues to move toward water meters in the District of Sparwood, with the completion of this project slated for the end of 2011. Water is our most valuable resource and it must be protected for future generations to enjoy, as we have.

Whiskey Jack Golf Resort completed deep services on Phase 1 of the development last year and is now moving toward construction of houses on that portion of the development this year. The golf course itself will be sculpted this year and prepped for seeding.

Sparwood has positioned itself to weather the economic crisis due to good fiscal management.



David Wilks
Mayor

HOW YOUR TAX DOLLARS ARE SPENT

Breakdown of a \$1,000.00 tax bill – being the 2009 tax levy on a single family home assessed at \$145,822
This summary ignores local improvement levies and the home owner grant

District of Sparwood:		Regional District of East Kootenay:	
Council	9.59	RDEK administration	10.18
Administration	61.83	Elk Valley Transit	1.91
Bylaw enforcement	0.45	Noxious weed control	0.39
Fire department	34.27	Planning	4.11
Animal control	2.09	Airport	1.37
Building inspection	0.47	Parks	2.16
Other protection	0.92	9-1-1 & Victim Assistance	4.16
Public works yard & administration	18.43	Libraries	2.41
Roads/drains/sidewalks/greenbelts	27.21	EV Emergency Planning	1.82
Snow removal	26.38	Elk Valley waste – this levy is for the debt repayment of transfer station construction and the closure costs related to the old landfills.	50.13
Street & decorative lighting	14.95	Total RDEK taxation	78.64
Waste management (mainly paid through user billings)	6.26	School District #5	373.47
Public health	2.55	Regional hospital district	38.60
Cemeteries	5.07	Police tax	36.79
Planning department	25.53	BC Assessment	9.35
Economic development	23.29	Municipal Finance Authority	0.03
Recreation department	118.36	Total taxes to other governments	536.88
Library	11.18	GRAND TOTAL TAX	\$1,000.00
Other recreation & culture	1.60		
Debt	0.04		
Reserve transfers (future capital)	53.85		
One time transfer to water operations	18.80		
Total District of Sparwood Tax	463.12		

SPRINKLING REGULATIONS

To promote water conservation in Sparwood, the District has implemented sprinkling regulations that are in effect from June 1 through September 30 each year.

Even numbered addresses are allowed to water on even calendar days and odd numbered addresses are allowed to water on odd calendar days.

NEW LAWNS

There will be special permission for those residents who have installed new lawn (seed or sod) for a period of 21 days after installation of the lawn.

ALLOWANCES

These regulations do not apply to gardens, only lawn sprinkling. If a total sprinkling ban is imposed, then watering of vegetables, flowers and shrubs must be done by hand using containers or a hose with a spring loaded shut off. Cars can be washed but must be done with spring loaded shut off on the hose.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Healthy lawns need 2.5 cm of water per week.
- Excessive watering can lead to poor growing conditions and disease problems.
- It is better to water in the morning to minimize water lost through evaporation and wind.

Your cooperation in adhering to these restrictions will be greatly appreciated. Residents are encouraged to conserve whenever possible. *Lets all be Water Wise*

If you have any questions regarding these regulations, please contact the District of Sparwood Municipal Office at 425-6271.