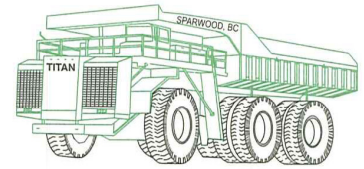




DISTRICT OF SPARWOOD

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HOME OF THE WORLD'S LARGEST TRUCK

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

May 14, 2010

Dear Citizens:

Enclosed is your tax bill for the Year 2010 which reflects an average increase of 8%. The average residential tax increase that applies to the District of Sparwood alone is 4%. 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 \$1087.95 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 5, 2010 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 deferral program available. In response to the severe economic downturn, there are also new deferral programs designed for persons in financial difficulties and for families raising children. Please feel free to contact the District if you have any questions regarding your eligibility for the deferral 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.**

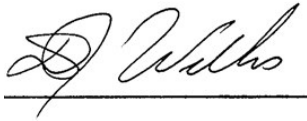
The construction of the second walking bridge over the CP Rail Tracks will begin this year with completion set for early Spring of 2011. Once completed a connection from Sparwood Proper to Sparwood Heights will provide a healthy alternative for those who wish to walk or bike into town.

2010 is a repaving year, and many streets have been identified. Work will commence over the summer months and although there will be minor inconveniences keeping our infrastructure in good shape is a long term benefit to the community.

Council and Staff initiated and will complete a branding process for the District of Sparwood. Our consultants have been collecting public comments and over the next few months will come up with a fresher identity for Sparwood, based on their findings.

You will see a flurry of construction throughout the community this year, which is a testament to the healthy and vibrant condition of our town.

I would like to thank those residents who share our vision to move our town forward. I would also like to thank and commend the hundreds of volunteers who get involved in our community in a variety of ways – your contribution and upbeat attitude makes Sparwood a great place to live.



David Wilks
Mayor

HOW YOUR TAX DOLLARS ARE SPENT

Breakdown of a \$1,000.00 tax bill – being the 2010 tax levy on a single family home assessed at \$157,360
This summary ignores local improvement levies and the home owner grant

District of Sparwood:		Regional District of East Kootenay:	
Council	10.39	RDEK administration	9.96
Administration	56.05	Elk Valley Transit	1.92
Bylaw enforcement	0.39	Noxious weed control	0.41
Fire department	30.42	Planning	4.39
Animal control	1.94	Airport	0.42
Building inspection	0.74	Parks	1.43
Other protection	6.25	9-1-1 & Victim Assistance	3.87
Public works yard & administration	22.09	Libraries	2.52
Roads/drains/sidewalks/greenbelts	36.38	EV Emergency Planning	2.68
Snow removal	22.83	Elk Valley waste – this levy is for the debt repayment of transfer station construction and the closure costs related to the old landfills.	41.92
Street & decorative lighting	11.38	Total RDEK taxation	69.52
Waste management (mainly paid through user billings)	12.42	School District #5	393.75
Public health	2.47	Regional hospital district	37.56
Cemeteries	3.19	Police tax	42.13
Planning department	29.88	BC Assessment	10.45
Economic development	30.75	Municipal Finance Authority	0.03
Recreation department	110.04	Total taxes to other governments	553.44
Library	10.78	GRAND TOTAL TAX	\$1,000.00
Other recreation & culture	1.20		
Debt	0.03		
Reserve transfers (future capital)	46.94		
Total District of Sparwood Tax	446.56		

SPRINKLING REGULATIONS

As part of Sparwood’s ongoing water conservation program and to address reports from the Ministry of Environment that indicate that the snowpack in the Kootenay Region is well below normal this year, the District is preparing for what could be a very dry summer along with a high risk fire season.

Please familiarize yourself with the following 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. **Let’s all be Water Wise**

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