

Okotoks

Overview

In 2006 the population of Okotoks was 46.7% greater than in 2001: 17,145 up from 11,689 (Statistics Canada, 2006). In 2006, Okotoks water consumption was 373 litres of water per capita per day including residential and non-residential uses (Town of Okotoks, 2006a). The Town has set a goal of 315 litres of water per capita per day (Town of Okotoks, 2006c). The Town of Okotoks Water Utility is a self-funded utility system that is moving toward 100% consumption based rate structure (Town of Okotoks, 2006d).

In 1999 Okotoks launched the award winning Future's Sake, a water/waste conservation initiative based on community social marketing principles that included a water conservation education component (Town of Okotoks, 2006d). Other key initiatives in water conservation and efficiency undertaken by the Town of Okotoks include a water efficient fixture retrofit program for municipal buildings, a water fixture bylaw, an outdoor watering bylaw, 100% water meter connectivity, and a water quality monitoring system for the entire Sheep River (Town of Okotoks, 2006d). Okotoks' Water Management Plan includes an aggressive leak detection program (Town of Okotoks, 2006c).

The Town of Okotoks along with Turner Valley and Black Diamond, two communities with which Okotoks shares the Sheep River Watershed, developed the Tri Community Watershed Initiative, which was commended for its effectiveness in 2004 by Bob Sandford the Coordinator of the United Nations International Year of Fresh Water And Wonder of Water Celebrations (Town of Okotoks, 2006b).

Residential

As prescribed by the Water Management Plan, the Town of Okotoks Council approved the 2006 rate structure (here compared with the 2005 rates) that continues to move toward 100% consumption based rate for water (currently the rate is structured at 30% fixed, 70% consumption).

| Description | Unit | 2005 | 2006 |
|------------------------|-------------------|---------|---------|
| Water Fixed Rate | Bi-month billing | \$26.42 | \$18.89 |
| Water Consumption Rate | Per 1,000 gallons | \$3.06 | \$3.66 |

(Town of Okotoks, 2006e).

ICI, Metering, Pricing

Okotoks does not have any specific ICI programs. This is likely due to the fact that the majority of water consumed in the Town is for domestic use or irrigation (Town of Okotoks, 2007).

Okotoks has won the following awards:

- Bow River Basin Council – 2006 Leadership in Sustainability Award
- Federation of Canadian Municipalities - 2006 (Montreal) Sustainable Community Award - Energy / Renewable Energy Winner

- International Awards for Liveable Communities - 2005 (Spain) Silver medal for Communities under 20,000 Gold medal for Solar Initiatives
- Alberta Emerald Award Winners - 1999, 2002, 2005 & Finalists 2004 Government Institutions
- Federation of Canadian Municipalities- 2000 Sustainable Communities Award
- International Dubai Awards – 2000 Top 100 Best Practices
- International Local Council for Local Environmental Initiatives - Finalists 2000

References

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