



WATER INFORMATION NEWSLETTER

BRID ADDRESS & WEBSITE
 P.O. Box 140
 807 – 7 Avenue North
 Vauxhall, AB T0K 2K0
 Phone: (403) 654-2111
 Fax: (403) 654-4197
 Website: www.brid.ab.ca

IN THIS ISSUE:

- ◆ SPRING WATER TURN ON DATE
- ◆ NEW POLICY
- ◆ 2008 BOARD OF DIRECTORS
- ◆ TYPES OF IRRIGATION AUTHORITY

- ◆ DISTRICT WATER POLICIES
- ◆ ANNUAL MEETING REPORT
- ◆ PUBLIC NOTICES: -WEED CONTROL
- ◆ -MAGNICIDE APPLICATION

SPRING WATER TURN ON DATE

This is the standard notice that the BRID has been putting in the spring newsletter for a number of years now. Irrigators should take this information into consideration when making seeding decisions. “If dry soil conditions are present in the District and the weather is conducive to running water, then the earliest date to be considered for canal operations is April 23rd.”

April 23rd is the earliest date for water turn on at the main canal headgates. Once it is turned on at the headgates, it still takes a few days to get all of the laterals and pipelines filled and ready for irrigation. Depending on the weather the actual date could be much later than this. The reference to when the weather is conducive to running water refers to situations where colder temperatures could limit the ability of the District to get canals ready to run water or situations where low temperatures would limit the hours pivots could operate, making water delivery operations very inefficient.

In these situations, water turn on dates will be later than April 23rd, regardless if dry soil conditions are present.

NEW POLICY – INCENTIVE TO CHANGE FROM FLOOD TO SPRINKLER

As with everything in life, things change and BRID policies are no different. For a number of years there have been suggestions that the BRID should be encouraging irrigators to change from flood to sprinkler irrigation, this has especially come into question when the district is replacing that irrigator’s supply canal with a pipeline.

The current pipeline design standards of the district when doing rehabilitation is to supply 2.5 cubic feet per second (cfs) to a sprinkler irrigated ¼ section and 6 cfs to a flood irrigated parcel of the same size. This can add significant costs to pipelines, as high as \$50,000 per parcel, and by having the irrigator change their irrigation method; the district could save those costs. Another concern is that at some point in time the flood delivery is most likely going to be changed to a sprinkler delivery resulting in the pipeline being over designed with costs by the district being wasted. This has actually happened on more occasions than the district likes.

To assist with cost savings when rehabilitating a canal and replacing it with a pipeline, the Board of Directors have recently approved an incentive policy to pay an irrigator \$60 per irrigation acre when the irrigator switches their irrigation method from flood to sprinkler irrigation, if their canal is scheduled to be replaced with pipeline. The conversion can happen at any time prior to construction, as long as the delivery canal is on the then current BRID 3 year canal rehabilitation schedule. Though this incentive is not large, it is hoped to be enough to sway a flood irrigator to change and result in savings to the district. The directors have made this policy retroactive to the end of the 2007 water season so as to include anyone that made a change this past winter and if they are on a canal scheduled for replacement with a pipeline over the next three years.

Anyone with questions about eligibility should contact the BRID General Manager, Richard Phillips.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The district has a staggered election format for the seven director areas and each is for a three year term. In 2007, three of the director areas were up for election, in 2008 two were up, in 2009, there will be two more and in 2010 we start over with the three original areas.

For 2008, Areas #1 and #4 were up for election with Ron Schlaht being returned to the board for Area #1 by acclamation and John DeVries being elected by acclamation for Area #4. The former director for Area #4, Frank Malesan, decided not to run after serving three terms on the board.

The current directors are:

	<u>Term Expires</u>		<u>Term Expires</u>
Division #6 - NE Vauxhall / West Hays Area		Division #4 - Circle Hill/New West Area	
Harold Unruh – Chairman	March, 2010	John DeVries – Director	March, 2011
Division #2 - West Enchant/ Travers/Lomond Area		Division #5 - Vauxhall Area	
Ron Schlaht – Vice-Chairman	March, 2011	Art Lanser – Director	March, 2010
Division #1 - Headworks Area		Division #7 - East and South Hays Area	
Glenn Logan – Director	March, 2009	Walter Unruh – Director	March, 2009
Division #3 - Enchant/Badger Lake/Stone Lease			
Dennis Orsten – Director	March, 2010		

TYPES OF IRRIGATION AUTHORITY

Over the years, there have been changes in types and terminology of irrigation use. Here is an attempt to clarify these with the following terms and definitions:

1) Water Licence:

Water licences are issued to users by Alberta Environment through provisions in the Alberta Water Act. A water licence for irrigation purposes will allow a user to irrigate specific land withdrawing water from a specific public water source. People irrigating off of a river or stream would have their own water licence. Provisions in the Water Act allow for the transfer or assignment of water licences from one party to another party and must go through an application and approval process with Alberta Environment. Alberta Environment is no longer accepting applications for water licences in the Bow or Oldman River basins.

The Bow River Irrigation District has water licences that allow the BRID to withdraw a specific amount of water and to use that water for irrigation and domestic purposes.

2) Irrigation Acres:

With the water licences that the BRID holds, it can divert water from the Bow River and use that water for irrigation purposes. Individual parcels of land within the BRID are allowed to be irrigated with a specified number of acres and which are referred to as “irrigation acres”. This is governed under provisions in the Irrigation Districts Act of Alberta which is administered through Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development.

“Water rights” is an old term for irrigation acres. If someone uses the term water rights, they are meaning irrigation acres. Irrigation acres are a capital asset to a parcel and unless specific arrangements are made, they are bought and sold with the parcel they are attached to. Irrigation acres are allowed to be transferred or assigned (alternate parcel agreement) to other properties but must be within the boundaries of the BRID and through an application and approval process established by the BRID.

Irrigation acres and water licences are two distinct and different entities and are not interchangeable.

3) Flood Rights:

Every once in a while we still have an irrigator refer to “flood rights”. Again, this is reference to irrigation acres but with the implication by the irrigator that their parcel has rights to flood a specific area or number of acres. There is not and never has been “flood rights”, the BRID has by policy maintained a commitment that if a parcel was being flood irrigated, the delivery canal or pipeline would provide sufficient volumes and elevation to allow for the continuation of the flood practice. Once a parcel is no longer flooded the delivery canal or pipeline only provides for the continuation of the sprinkler method of irrigation. In other words, the BRID provides for the irrigation method or practice currently happening on the parcel.

4) Terminable Acres:

These are similar to irrigation acres but with exception that no capital asset payment has been made to the district, they are non transferrable and they can be terminated by either the irrigator or the district with no compensation. If land that has been irrigated with a terminable agreement is sold, the agreement is automatically cancelled so there is no resale value to the agreement. The new owner of the land could apply for a new agreement, but there may be reasons why the district would not grant one.

5) Annual “Drain” Agreements:

There are provisions in the Irrigation Districts Act for the districts to enter into agreements with landowners to allow them to irrigate on an annual or yearly basis. The BRID uses this provision to allow irrigation to take place with water being drawn from drain canals. These agreements state that if there is water present the landowner can use it, if water is not, the BRID will not deliver water and the landowner cannot irrigate. These agreements are renewed on an annual basis and are non transferrable. If land that has been irrigated with an annual drain agreement is sold, the agreement is automatically cancelled so there is no resale value to the agreement. The new owner of the land could apply for a new agreement, but there may be reasons why the district would not grant one.

DISTRICT WATER POLICIES

Irrigators are reminded of the following Water Order procedures:

Water Orders

- All users must order their water order in advance.
- Once a water order is delivered, the user must take the delivery in a continuous manner until a request is made to stop the delivery.
- To ensure water orders on a Monday, users are requested to put their order in on the previous Friday.
- Unless excess water is in the canal system and the ditchrider is able to conveniently make the water order, users should not expect to have water orders filled on a Sunday.

Failure to Pickup Water Order

-The ditchrider shall:

- (1) Advise the water user that he has 12 hours to pick up the water and that failure to do so will result in the water being shut off unless the water user can explain the reasons for a delay and the reasons are justifiable and it is expected that the water will be picked up in a reasonable amount of time.
- (2) When the water is shut off, the water user will be required to reorder the water again through normal water order procedures.

ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

The BRID’s annual meeting was held on March 11, 2008 with very low attendance. Excluding the directors and staff, there were only 6 irrigators and 6 visitors at the meeting. Though the irrigators were few, the items raised as new business and discussed were many. They included; Lateral A (Vauxhall) canal reaching carrying capacity, annual drain agreements, proposed irrigation development with spill water at Ronalane by an individual farmer, water quality in drains, recent provincial elections and where irrigation may fit in the new political arena, charitable donations and the possibility of BRID supplying raw water trucks (spray) fill stations.

PUBLIC NOTICES

WEED CONTROL PROGRAM

The Bow River Irrigation District will be applying herbicides to control vegetation in or within 30 horizontal meters of open bodies of water owned by the BRID.

Activities will be carried out under approval No. 10409-03 issued by Alberta Environment. This approval expires December 31, 2008. Applications for broadleaf control will begin in May and continue until the end of September. For aquatic weed and algae control treatments will begin May 22th and continue until the first week of September. Affected water users will be notified before the aquatic applications begin. The weed control program is administered by licensed applicators.

<u>Herbicide Used</u>	<u>Purpose</u>
Magnacide H PCP# 10948 _____	Control of submerged aquatic vegetation and algae.
2,4-D Amine 600 } Vanquish (Dicamba) } Vantage (Glyphosate) }	Control of broadleaf weeds, willow, brush, poplar.
Vantage (Glyphosate) _____	Control of cattail and reed canary grass.

The district has a No Spray Zone agreement for any organic growers or water users who do not wish the Bow River Irrigation District to use chemicals on the right of way adjacent to their land.

MAGNACIDE APPLICATION NOTICE

The BRID will be applying Magnacide H to control aquatic vegetation and algae at the following sites:

- ▶ **Travers / Lomond / Badger Lake / Enchant Area**
 - Lateral H TWP 15, 16 RGE 18 – May 28; June 18; July 9 & 30
 - Lomond Lateral TWP 15, 16 RGE 19 - May 27; June 17
 - Lateral D TWP 15 RGE 19 – July 2; July 23
 - Lateral B TWP 14, 15 RGE 18, 19 – Tuesdays; June 24, July 22
- ▶ **Vauxhall / Circle Hill / Retlaw Area**
 - Lost Lake Channel TWP 13, 14 RGE 16, 17 - June 2; June 30; July 21
 - Lateral B TWP 14, 15 RGE 16, 17 – June 10, July 8
 - Lateral A TWP 13 RGE 16, 17 - June 26, July 15
 - Lateral H & H1 TWP 12 RGE 16 - June 9, June 23
 - Lateral C TWP 13, 14 RGE 16 - June 26 & July 15
- ▶ **Hays Area**
 - Lateral R below Scope Reservoir TWP 12, 13 RGE 13, 14 – May 22, June 5, June 19, July 3 & July 17
 - Main Canal below Scope Reservoir TWP 13 RGE 13, 14 – Wednesdays; June 4, June 25, July 16

During the application no water is permitted to enter municipal waterworks systems, water systems used to supply water for household purposes, dugouts or ponds used for livestock watering, dugouts or ponds containing stocked fish. Please ensure that water you have diverted does not apply to any of those categories. An information package about Magnacide H is available from your ditchrider. Organic growers irrigating should contact their ditchrider so they can be informed of any application which could affect organic crops.

If you have any questions regarding the weed control program or herbicide application, please call Dave Cholka at the Bow River Irrigation District office at (403) 654-2111.