



WATER INFORMATION NEWSLETTER

IN THIS ISSUE:

- **SPRING WATER TURN ON DATE**
- **2007 ANNUAL MEETING & BOARD OF DIRECTORS**
- **DISTRICT STAFF**
- **RIG WATER POLICY**
- **FIELD DRAINAGE AND WATER QUALITY ISSUES**
- **NEW ON FARM IRRIGATION SYSTEMS**
- **PUBLIC NOTICE – WEED CONTROL PROGRAM**
- **PARTNERS IN HABITAT DEVELOPMENT (PHD)**

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SPRING WATER TURN ON DATE



Though it is hoped that we get sufficient spring moisture to avoid an early water turn on date, the District will be ready if required. However, irrigators should take note of the following Board of Director approved policy statement:

“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.”

It should be clear that 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.

Irrigators who are planning on seeding in April or who are looking at irrigating prior to seeding should consider this policy when making those types of decisions.

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.

It should also be noted that even when the District turns water into the main canal, there may be certain sub-lateral canals that are not ready to receive water due to maintenance or rehabilitation work. District staff always makes their best efforts to ensure all

canals are ready to run water in the spring but due to unforeseen circumstances, delays may occur from time to time. When this has occurred in the past, the District has greatly appreciated the patience of the irrigators affected.

However, even the BRID has some staff turnover each year with this year being no exception. Henry Reimer, Vauxhall Area Supervisor is retiring after over 35 years of service on this irrigation project going back to PFRA days. With Henry’s retirement it was decided to reorganize somewhat, which has resulted in reducing the number of supervisors and increasing the labour force.

2007 ANNUAL MEETING & BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The 2007 annual meeting was held on March 13, 2007 with 15 irrigators in attendance.

Previously there were three area supervisors being Butch Porter, Henry Reimer and Denis Odland. There will now be only two area supervisors with Butch Porter as the West Division Supervisor adding Gerald Drist’s ditchrider area to his responsibilities and Denis Odland will be the East Division Supervisor adding Phil Wiebe’s and Ernie Crowson’s ditchrider areas to his area.

It was announced at the annual meeting that three of the director’s terms expired this year. In Areas #3 and #6 Mr. Dennis Orsten and Mr. Harold Unruh were returned to the Board by acclamation and in Area # 5, the area immediately around Vauxhall, Mr. Art Lanser was elected by acclamation. Mr. Richard Ferguson as the outgoing director was awarded a plaque at the meeting thanking him for his service on the Board of Directors.

In the West Division, Butch Porter will be training two new ditchriders who have been hired to replace Bruce Montgomery and Rob Robulak. The new ditchriders in those areas will be Lonnie Howg in the Bruce Montgomery area and Kelly Howg in the Rob Robulak area.

The current directors are: Term Expires

In addition Rob Zalik of Vauxhall has been hired on fulltime to assist with the labour crews and to perform the role of substitute ditchrider when required.

Division #6 - Northeast Vauxhall / West Hays Area
Harold Unruh – Chairman March, 2010

Division #2 - West Enchant/ Travers/Lomond Area
Ron Schlaht – Vice-Chairman March, 2008

Division #1- Headworks Area
Glenn Logan – Director March, 2009

Division #3 - Enchant/Badger Lake/Stone Lease Area
Dennis Orsten – Director March, 2010

Division #4 - Circle Hill/New West Area
Frank Malesan – Director March, 2008

Division #5 - Vauxhall Area
Art Lanser – Director March, 2010

Division #7 - East and South Hays Area
Walter Unruh – Director March, 2009

Management would like to thank Butch and Denis for taking on these additional responsibilities and to wish Lonnie, Kelly and Rob the best of luck in their new positions. We are quite pleased with the new recruitments and expect the irrigators will find them to be excellent to work with.

RIG WATER POLICY



The Board of Directors have had a past policy that whenever water came off of an irrigated parcel of land for rig activity, the BRID automatically charged the drilling company a rig water fee.

DISTRICT STAFF

The BRID has been quite fortunate in not having a very large turnover of staff. It is felt that the District has good people working for the irrigators and it is something management strives to continue.

The directors have recently made a significant change to this policy by approving the following statement: “Any water lying on private land is the sole responsibility of the landowner to dispose of and unless the water was conveyed directly or indirectly

from the BRID infrastructure, the BRID will not collect any conveyance costs for the usage of that water.”

However if a significant portion of water being impounded or contained on an irrigated parcel came from the BRID irrigation works, which would include runoff from flood irrigation, then there will still be an industrial drilling purpose water charge if the water is used for that purpose.

If the water is mostly spring or rain runoff, then the BRID would not have any industrial water charge for the usage of the water.

FIELD DRAINAGE AND WATER QUALITY ISSUES

There is currently considerable interest in the quality of water in Alberta streams and rivers and what is happening within the irrigation districts has not missed the scrutiny of the public. Alberta Agriculture has established a water quality testing program throughout most of the irrigation districts with 2006 results yet to be reviewed with the BRID.

The irrigation districts are the largest consumptive users of surface water in Alberta and not only need to be a leader in water use efficiencies, irrigation districts need to ensure water quality is not reduced as it is delivered to irrigators and other users.

The makeup of delivery and drainage canals as they wind through the irrigation areas, provide an excellent drainage system for many landowners. In fact, in the past the BRID actively approved and installed numerous drain inlet pipes to drain irrigation return flows and low field areas. In these cases, the landowner is responsible to ensure that their operations do not contaminate the water in the canals. The same canals that drain these areas also deliver water to other users for irrigation as well as domestic use and eventually back to the rivers.

The Board of Directors have decided that it is time that the BRID take a more firm stand on the issue of field drainage and what is to be allowed to be drained into its canal system. It has been noted previously that there are countless drain inlets in the delivery and drainage canals that drain fields on a regular basis and maybe a lot of them should not have been

allowed. However, the directors feel that though it is hard to go back and reverse decisions, it is easy to change direction to try and ensure the integrity of the water in the canals is not compromised any more than what it may be now.

Drain Inlets - The District is very concerned about the water being delivered to its users so have passed a new policy which states that no new drain inlets are to be installed in any delivery or drainage canal at a location where there are water delivery points to any water users downstream of that location. In addition, no new drain inlets will be allowed to be installed anywhere in a canal without a written approval permit from the BRID and which would state certain conditions.

Low Area Pumping - At various times of the year there may be excessive snow or rain runoff that accumulates in low areas where it would be typical for the landowner to try and pump the water into a canal to get rid of it. The directors have approved a policy that states that at any time a landowner wishes to get rid of runoff water by pumping it into a canal, the landowner must obtain consent from the District before they will be allowed to do that. One of the most visible indicators of polluted water is when it is contaminated by manure, so if the water looks bad BRID staff are to assume it is bad and are not allowed to give approval to pump the runoff into a canal.

If a landowner is denied approval to pump water into a canal but then can show through testing that the water does not contain microorganisms typically found in manure, then approval to pump the water into the canal will be granted. Testing can be done in Lethbridge for a nominal fee and with a 3 to 5 day turnaround.

Existing drain inlets will be monitored and if anyone appears to or has the potential to contaminate the canal water, BRID staff will be discussing the issue with the landowner to see what corrective action can be taken.

It is recognized that these new policies do have some weak points in that they do not address all the existing drain inlets and they may appear to be pointing fingers at the livestock industry instead of other contaminants such as fertilizers and pesticides.

There is no doubt that fertilizers and pesticides can contribute to water pollution but identifying them is difficult and expensive. For now the BRID is concentrating its efforts on eliminating or reducing drainage into the canals from cattle wintering sites and fields spread with manure.

At times these policies can and most likely will be controversial but the District feels it has a responsibility to its water users and the public to keep the water in its system at as good a quality as possible. All irrigators would recognize the importance of clean water to their families and their operations and the BRID hopes that its users will support these new policies.

NEW ON FARM IRRIGATION SYSTEMS

A number of years ago, the District started tracking individual irrigation parcel water usages a lot closer than previously. This usage is tracked using an estimated flow number for each irrigation system and then recording the number of days or hours that water is delivered to each system.

As on farm irrigation systems change, we need to change the flow rate to match the new system which is in just about all cases a new pivot being installed. If we can get the actual new sprinkler package information from the irrigator, we will change the flow rate to match that information.

If no information is given to the office when a new system is installed, the office will automatically use a flow rate of 1100 US gpm for that new system. All irrigators are asked to provide the office or their ditchrider the correct flow information so that the water usage records are correct.

If an irrigator wishes to have their flow checked, the District does now have a clamp on flow meter that allows us to check the actual flow rate on existing pumps. Please contact your ditchrider or Dave Cholka at the office if you are interested in having this done.

PUBLIC NOTICE
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.

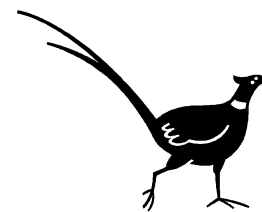
Applications for broadleaf control will begin in May and continue until the end of September. For aquatic weed and algae control, treatments will begin May 24th and continue until the first week of September. Affected water users will be notified before the aquatic applications begin. The weed control 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 BRID to use chemicals on the right of way adjacent to their land.

Any questions regarding this activity please call David Cholka at the Bow River Irrigation District Office at (403) 654-2111.

PARTNERS IN HABITAT DEVELOPMENT (PHD)



2007 will be the fifth year that the BRID has been involved in this program, which was created to re-establish lost wildlife habitat within the irrigation districts. Plantings provide good quality nesting cover for ground nesting birds, wildlife travel lanes and protective cover from predators, winter cover, and a reliable food source. Guided by the expertise of the PHD Wildlife Habitat Technicians, projects and activities are flexible and tailored to the needs of the individual landowners and their farming operations.

A brochure from PHD will be mailed out to irrigators with more information on this program.