

Public Submission dated August 26, 2011 – Pat Bellemare

To whom it may concern

The notice in today's Journal asked for input on the subject of adding a fire water fee to the Epcor bill. Here is my thoughts on the matter.

Adding extra fees to the water bill for the fire water used by the city is nothing short of another "cash grab" by city hall.

When the Land Drainage fees were removed from the tax bill and put on the water bill, I was living in a mobile home and my bill went up by 700% in the first year. Naturally, Epcor increased the fee every year. This changeover benefited landlords greatly while penalizing the renter.

Doing the same thing with the fire water will only further penalize home owners. Many of us are barely getting by as it is now. Who ever it is that does the "wage averages" uses a highly skewed formula which does not reflect the reality for the vast majority of working people.

This changeover is merely yet another means of bleeding the lower middle class into poverty, perhaps to fund more entertainment projects for the wealthy. It is no wonder people would rather commute from other communities than own property in Edmonton.

Currently I live in a condominium which already pays Epcor a monthly fee for the water line. Increasing this fee is ludicrous as it takes a minimum of 3 calls to 911 before a fire truck is dispatched to our address. The fire hall is 2&1/2 blocks from the condominium. Bylaw is not interested in enforcing the bylaws in this neighbourhood, the police take 45 minutes to respond to an "assault in progress", so there is no way we should have to put up with yet more increases to funding for the city.

Please ask city council to step back from this plan and work for the citizens best interests.

Thank you
Pat Bellemare

It is time the city bureaucrats became fiscally responsible with their spending instead of bleeding the citizens dry.