

Town, AECL sign deal for water

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Deep River's largest employer will soon be its thirstiest customer as well.

Town council passed a bylaw last week which will see the municipality provide drinking water to AECL's Chalk River Laboratories via a water main running down Balmer Bay Road.

The "AECL Water Supply System," as it is referenced in the bylaw council passed, will connect with the CRL distribution system at the fence line in the east end of town.

From there it will be metered, with AECL paying the town 75 cents per cubic metre.

AECL will be paying the bulk of the costs associated with the project, which has been in the works since 2006, when the Crown corporation first provided funding to the town for capacity upgrades at its water treatment plant.

Under terms of the agreement council signed off last week, AECL will front the full cost of an estimated \$320,770 in upgrades to the town's low-lift pumping station, increasing its capacity to 14,500 cubic metres per day.

AECL will also pay 100 percent of the costs of upgrading a portion of the town's water distribution system along McElligott and Banting Drives.

Those upgrades will see the installation of approximately 800 metres of 300 mm in diameter water main, with an estimated cost of \$413,000.

In addition to bearing the full brunt of the costs associated with the above upgrades, AECL will also pay 50 percent of the cost to upgrade the water main between the town's water treatment plant and Brockhouse Way.

The total cost of replacing roughly 488 metres of 250 mm water main piping with 400 mm water main is pegged at \$210,910.

No timeframe was announced last week for completion of the project, which runs under auspices of a 40-year agreement for provision of drinking water to the plant site.

Mayor David Thompson did say at last week's meeting, however, that he hopes to be able to cut a ribbon marking the project's completion before council's term of office expires in 2014.

"What's good for AECL is good for the town of Deep River," Thompson said during passage of the bylaw.

Thompson also called the agreement "monumental" and noted that it virtually doubles the town's customer base for potable water, while at the same time providing enough revenue to plan for the eventual replacement of the town's water treatment plant many years down the road.

The agreement, the mayor continued, will also ensure that Deep River will be able to hold the line on water rates for residential and commercial property owners within its municipal boundaries. "The only real loser is the Culligan man," Thompson said.