

# Utility Newsletter

## February 2011



**SUN PEAKS UTILITIES UPDATE**– Sun Peaks Guests are enjoying a great skiing and boarding year. The Utility is happy to report that at this mid-way mark through the busy season, all of the Utilities are operating as planned and budgeted.

2011 will see Sun Peaks Utilities address new requirements related to our community's new municipal status. This newsletter will provide summary information on the items that impact you, as well as updates on on-going activities that we introduced in this newsletter last year.

### UPDATES FROM 2010

**Composting Project** – We have now submitted our application under the Provincial Government's Organic Matter Recycling Regulations (OMRR) to start a composting project at the Wastewater Treatment Facility. The process is slated to produce Class A Compost (<http://www.compost.org/standard.html>), similar to products like OgoGrow© that are safe for public use in gardens, landscaping, re-forestation, and parks. We plan to use the dewatered biosolids from the wastewater treatment plant and woodchips from fallen trees cleared from ski runs for the first phase of the process. The application also allows for other organics to be composted in the future. For more information on the provincial government regulations, visit <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/codes/omr/index.htm>.

A full copy of our application is available on the Utilities' web site at [www.sunpeaksutilities.com](http://www.sunpeaksutilities.com). We will keep you updated on the application process as we move forward.

We have investigated a number of different composting technologies, to identify the best option that is compatible for year round use in our sensitive alpine environment. We are in the final stages of technology selection, and expect to be able to present to the Utilities' Board of Directors for project and financing approval in March. This will allow us to confirm an operation budget for Fiscal 2012 and determine if any sewer rate change would be required.

Sun Peaks Utilities will host a **Community Open House at 3 pm on Saturday April 2<sup>nd</sup>** at the Cahilty Lodge, to review all of the Utilities (water, sewer and gas), present our plans, and discuss any potential rate changes.

**Future Gas Rate Changes** – In 2010, the Utility applied to the BC Utilities Commission (BCUC) for a limited gas commodity price increase. This was granted December 1, 2010. As part of The Commission's decision, they requested that we relook at the Gas Cost Recovery Account by the end of May 2011 (this is the account that cushions the customer from rapid fluctuation in the market price of gas) and report back on whether a further increase in the commodity price is required. Unfortunately, the usual drop in propane commodity prices that we see in the late winter has not yet materialized. It is most likely that we will be preparing a rate increase application for submission to the BCUC in May. We will continue to keep you posted in the Utility Newsletters.

**HST and Residential Energy** - While you now see the HST on your gas bill, qualified residential customers also see an instant rebate on the same bill. This rebate is known as the Residential Energy Credit and it ensures that the addition of HST does not cause an increase in the cost of home heating. If you think you are eligible for the rebate, but don't see it on your monthly Utilities' bill, please call the Utilities office at 250-578-5490, or contact us via email at [info@sunpeaksutilities.com](mailto:info@sunpeaksutilities.com).

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More information on the Residential Energy Credit and Rebate Program for consumers can be found at [http://www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/documents\\_library/notices/HST\\_Notice\\_010.pdf](http://www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/documents_library/notices/HST_Notice_010.pdf) (including which properties are considered eligible for this rebate). You can also visit [www.cra-arc.gc.ca/gncy/hrmnztn/bc/menu-eng.html](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/gncy/hrmnztn/bc/menu-eng.html).

### NEW ITEMS FOR 2011

**Municipal Tax on Water and Gas Utilities** – Section 353 of BC's Local Government Act requires all Water and Gas Utilities to pay 1% of their gross revenues to the Municipality, to cover the property taxes for water and gas pipelines buried on property within the municipality. Sun Peaks Utilities has been advised by Sun Peaks Municipality that this tax became applicable to us upon incorporation. We are currently investigating whether this will cause an impact on rates for these two utilities in future. The relevant section of the Act is listed at [http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws\\_new/document/ID/freeside/96323\\_13](http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/96323_13).

**Fire Suppression Rate** - The Water Utility has started discussions with Sun Peaks Municipality to determine the best method to use in establishing a reasonable and fair Fire Suppression Rate. The Fire Suppression Rate is what the Utility charges the Sun Peaks Fire and Rescue Services for the supply of water, and maintenance of the water system that has been built to deliver water for fire suppression services (hydrants, increased water mains, larger pumps, larger reservoirs, etc.). There are various methods in use across North America to calculate this rate. Some utilities account for it wholly out of water utility rates, some fully through property taxation (larger properties pay more) and some use a hybrid method of usage and revenue provided through municipal tax.

This is a very complex subject and the best method for one municipality and utility is not necessarily the best method for another. Fire Suppression is one of the major factors that make up the Water Utility rates, and we hope to have the review process completed by the fall of 2011. We will keep you advised of our progress via our web site [www.sunpeaksutilities.com](http://www.sunpeaksutilities.com) and the Utility Newsletters.

Should you have any questions on these or any other utility matters, please contact us call the Utilities office at 250-578-5490 and press 1 or via email at [info@sunpeaksutilities.com](mailto:info@sunpeaksutilities.com).



**Mark your calendar! December 2011 is "50/20"** – Join everyone at Sun Peaks for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Tod Mountain and 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Nippon Cable/Sun Peaks operating this great mountain resort. If you would like to get involved or provide some interesting history tidbits, please contact the 50/20 Committee at [reception@sunpeaksresort.com](mailto:reception@sunpeaksresort.com) or 250-578-7222. Stay tuned for more details and please join everyone at Sun Peaks for the year long **50/20 Celebration** starting in October 2011!

**Sun Peaks helps raise money for Australian flood survivors** - With the help of over 30 Sun Peaks businesses and individuals who donated or held fundraising events in the past week, just over \$4,000 was raised for the Premier's Relief Fund in Queensland, Australia. For more information, visit [www.qld.gov.au/floods/donate.html#international](http://www.qld.gov.au/floods/donate.html#international).