



STAFF REPORT

To: Electoral Area Services Committee

Date: 2025-02-13

From: Allison Neill, Engineering, Utilities and Community Services Technologist

Subject: Fraser Valley Regional District Sewer Systems Regulation, Fees and Charges Establishment Bylaw No. 1768, 2025.

Reviewed by: Sterling Chan, Deputy Director of Engineering
Tareq Islam, Director of Engineering & Utilities
Jaime Van Nes, Director of Legislative Services
Kelly Lownsborough, Director of Corporate Services & CFO
Jennifer Kinneman, Chief Administrative Officer

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Fraser Valley Regional District Board give three readings and adoption to *Fraser Valley Regional District Sewer Systems Regulations, Fees and Charges Establishment Bylaw No. 1768, 2025*

BACKGROUND

A sewer use bylaw is a regulatory bylaw that ensures the sanitary sewer system operates within standards established by the Province of British Columbia. The main objective of the bylaw is to control the discharge of pollutants to the sewer systems so as to protect the sewer collection system from corrosion, damage and obstruction; protect the wastewater treatment process from upset; optimize wastewater treatment efficiency; reduce maintenance costs; keep staff and communities safe; and, and protect the environment.

The Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD) owns and operates six (6) community sewer systems - North Bend, Morris Valley, North Cultus, South Cultus (Aquadel), Popkum (Minter Gardens), and Baker Trails. In order to harmonize the related sewer system bylaws, staff are recommending to advance one bylaw which would provide the terms and conditions in which the systems may be operated as well as the user fee rates. This approach is similar to that was previously taken with *Fraser Valley Regional District Water Supply Systems Regulations, Fee and Charges Establishment Bylaw No. 1631, 2021*.

DISCUSSION

The proposed bylaw cited as the *Fraser Valley Regional District Sewer Systems Regulations, Fees and Charges Establishment Bylaw No. 1768, 2025* standardizes the terms and conditions across all the sewer systems. This bylaw is not intended to impact day-to-day use for the existing sewer system

customers nor will it change the rate of the user fees for customers. The proposed bylaw was drafted with the intention of setting overarching standards regarding the regulations to connect and use the sewer systems.

The following are the key provisions within the proposed bylaw:

1. Provides for a comprehensive list of restricted substances and prohibited wastes that cannot be discharged into the sewer systems. Although wastewater treatment plants can remove most harmful substances, it cannot fully remove some chemicals that could potentially get discharged into the environment. This could result in negatively impacting the collection system and treatment process, endangering the safety of workers and contaminating the environment.
2. Outlines the powers and duties of the FVRD. It includes a section for a penalty in the amount of a maximum of \$2,000 and a minimum amount of \$200 which can be applied for non-compliance with the terms and conditions of the bylaw. A penalty is just one of many tools the FVRD can use to deter non-compliance. **The FVRD's preferred approach is educating the public about the reasons for conforming to the regulations.**
3. Provides for the administrative process for connecting to a FVRD sewer system as well as the associated fees for a connection. A potential customer must now submit an application to the FVRD with all the prescribed information. Once approved, a sewer service connection permit is issued and a final inspection of the connection is completed by FVRD operational staff.
4. The proposed bylaw will include the fees associated with the connection to an FVRD sewer system.
5. Sewer Usage Fees

The sewer usage fees are unique to each sewer system. The Popkum (Minter Gardens), and South Cultus (Aquadel) systems are funded exclusively through taxation and therefore do not have sewer usage fees. Costs related to the Baker Trails system are billed directly to the Baker Trails strata council. The North Bend, Morris Valley and North Cultus systems are funded through a combination of taxation and user fees as defined in their respective local service area establishment bylaws. The sewer usage fees for North Bend, North Cultus and Morris Valley are included in Schedule B of the proposed bylaw *Fraser Valley Regional District Sewer Systems Regulations, Fees and Charges Establishment Bylaw NO. 1768, 2025*. The proposed bylaw will reflect the updated usage fees for 2025 as follows:

Electoral Area A - North Bend Sewer System

The 2025 Financial Plan contemplates this service area's total revenues increasing from 2024 to 2025 by \$4,230. This increase has been spread out proportionally between taxation and user fees. The changes to the user fee rates in proposed bylaw *Fraser Valley Regional District Sewer Systems Regulations, Fees and Charges Establishment Bylaw No. 1768, 2025* support decisions made during

the Financial Planning process and provides the authority to charge these rates, which are expected to increase user fee revenue by \$1,050. The increases to the 2025 budget are to address increasing operations costs driven by inflation.

Below is a summary of the changes to the user fees included in *Fraser Valley Regional District Sewer Systems Regulations, Fees and Charges Establishment Bylaw NO. 1768, 2025*

Category of User	Semi-Annually Charge (2024 Rate)	Semi-Annually Charge (Proposed 2025 Rate)
Residential	\$184.87	\$196.70
Commercial	\$1.32/m ³	\$1.40/m ³

Electoral Area C – Morris Valley Sewer System

The 2025 Financial Plan **contemplates this service area’s total revenues increasing** from 2024 to 2025 by \$13,920. This increase has been spread out proportionally between taxation and user fees. The changes to the user fee rates in proposed bylaw *Fraser Valley Regional District Sewer Systems Regulations, Fees and Charges Establishment Bylaw No. 1768, 2025* support decisions made during the Financial Planning process and provides the authority to charge these rates, which are expected to increase user fee revenue by \$5,100. The increases to the 2025 budget are to address increasing operations costs driven by inflation.

Below is a summary of the changes to the user fees included in *Fraser Valley Regional District Sewer Systems Regulations, Fees and Charges Establishment Bylaw NO. 1768, 2025*

Category of User	Quarterly- Charge (2024 Rate)	Quarterly- Charge (Proposed 2025 Rate)
Residential	\$81.03	\$84.84

Electoral Area E – Baker Trails Sewer System

The 2025 Financial Plan contemplates total revenues for this service area increasing from 2024 to 2025 by \$9,410. The changes to the user fee rates in proposed bylaw *Fraser Valley Regional District Sewer Systems Regulations, Fees and Charges Establishment Bylaw No. 1768, 2025* support decisions made during the Financial Planning process and provides the authority to charge these rates. As there is no taxation related to this service area, the increase to revenue comes exclusively to these changes to user fees. The increases to the 2025 budget are **an increased transfer to the service area’s Capital**

Reserve and to address increasing operations costs driven by inflation. It should be noted that these user fees are billed in arrears and will not be charged to residents until January 2026.

Below is a summary of the changes to the user fees included in *Fraser Valley Regional District Sewer Systems Regulations, Fees and Charges Establishment Bylaw NO. 1768, 2025*

Category of User	Annual- Charge (2024 Rate)	Annual- Charge (Proposed 2025 Rate)
Residential	\$911.46	\$971.40

Electoral Area H - North Cultus Sewer System

The North Cultus Sewer System is funded via a combination of a parcel tax, user fees in the form of a utility bill as well as user fees that are directly invoiced to the Cultus Lake Park Board (CLPB). Debt servicing expenses are paid by residents via the parcel tax and are directly invoiced to the CLPB. Operations and asset management expenses are paid by residents via utility billing and are directly invoiced to the CLPB. The changes to the user fee rates in proposed bylaw *Fraser Valley Regional District Sewer Systems Regulations, Fees and Charges Establishment Bylaw No. 1768, 2025* support decisions made during the Financial Planning process and provides the authority to charge these rates, which are expected to increase user fee revenue by \$341,000. The increases to the 2025 budget capture the operation of the new North Cultus Lake Wastewater Treatment Plant, which is scheduled to commence operation in early 2025. It should be noted that these user fees are billed in arrears and will not be charged to residents until January 2026.

Below is a summary of the changes to the user fees included in *Fraser Valley Regional District Sewer Systems Regulations, Fees and Charges Establishment Bylaw NO. 1768, 2025*

Classification	Annual Charge (2024)	Annual Charge (Proposed 2025)
1. Operation Recovery		
Residential	\$575.00	\$1,180.64
School	\$2,013.00	\$4,132.23
Recreational	\$575.00	\$1,181.64
Church	\$863.00	\$1,770.96
Office	\$575.00	\$1,180.64

Gas Bar	\$863.00	\$1,770.96
Restaurant	\$863.00	\$1,770.96
Retail	\$863.00	\$1,770.96
Other Commercial	\$863.00	\$1,770.96
DFO Laboratory	\$2,875.00	\$5,903.19
2. Capital Reserve (Asset Management) Recovery		
Residential	\$155.00	\$187.85
School	\$541.00	\$657.48
Recreational	\$155.00	\$187.85
Church	\$232.00	\$281.78
Office	\$155.00	\$187.85
Gas Bar	\$232.00	\$281.78
Restaurant	\$232.00	\$281.78
Retail	\$232.00	\$281.78
Other Commercial	\$232.00	\$281.78
DFO Laboratory	\$773.00	\$939.26

Additionally, the 2025 rate for the capital improvement connection improvement fee has been adjusted to reflect the current number of properties within each service area as well as any capital debt repayment budgeted in 2025. The proposed capital improvement connection fees for 2025 are as follows:

	2024 Rate	Proposed 2025 Rate
Capital Connection Improvement Fee	\$3,430.00	\$4,201.68

The proposed bylaw will not affect the overall revenue streams collected for the sewer service areas nor will it affect the amount paid on utility bills by system users.

COST

The adoption of bylaw *Fraser Valley Regional District Sewer Systems Regulations, Fees and Charges Establishment Bylaw NO. 1768, 2025* is necessary in order to achieve the revenue targets put forward in the 2025 budget for the North Bend, Morris Valley, Baker Trails and North Cultus Sewer Systems.