

# Utility Rates & Billing

The Town of Irricana is committed to strong fiscal management, including revenue collection, budgeting, and expenditures. A critical aspect of fiscal management is understanding the cost of services being delivered and taking action to control them.

In preparation of the 2023 Town Budget, Administration undertook an analysis of Utility Services and identified significant items requiring resolution. These items, detailed in the 2023 Town Budget Report, were:

1. The rate setting logic for water and sanitary did properly account for major costs to operate the system, such as maintenance and repairs, water plant operations, labor costs, and contracted services. As a result, approximately \$130,000 in costs were being subsidized through property taxes.
  
2. Despite contract rates for collection and transportation remaining fixed, disposal costs (i.e., Tipping fees) for solid waste and recycling had increased by approximately 25% year-over-year due to a similar significant increase in the weight of materials. Further, costs to access the Rocky View County Waste Transfer Site had not previously been factored in. Cumulatively, approximately \$60,000 in costs were being subsidized through property taxes.

To address these significant shortfalls and eliminate subsidies through property taxes, utility rates were adjusted to better reflect the actual cost of service delivery.

	Water Rate (m3)	Sanitary Rate (m3)	Change/Bill
<b>Previous</b>	\$4.73	\$1.58	-
<b>100% Recovery</b>	\$5.09	\$3.22	\$49.63**

\*\*Average Utility Customer (23m3 usage bi-monthly)

	Solid Waste	Recycling	Change/Bill
<b>Previous</b>	\$21.85	\$13.68	-
<b>100% Recovery</b>	\$32.69	\$21.79	\$18.95



**Comparison to Aqua 7 Communities (Urban)**

	Average	Irricana	Beiseker	Acme	Carbon	Linden
Service Fees	\$ 30.18	\$ -	\$ 58.90	\$ 32.00	\$ 30.00	\$ 30.00
Water	\$ 107.30	\$ 117.07	\$ 96.14	\$ 109.25	\$ 116.05	\$ 97.98
Sanitary	\$ 42.53	\$ 66.65	\$ 38.41	\$ 30.65	\$ 38.75	\$ 38.18
Garbage	\$ 34.54	\$ 32.69	\$ 32.25	\$ 38.00	\$ 39.75	\$ 30.00
Recycling	\$ 15.87	\$ 21.79	\$ 9.95	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Bi-Monthly Bill</b>	<b>\$ 230.41</b>	<b>\$ 238.20</b>	<b>\$ 235.65</b>	<b>\$ 209.90</b>	<b>\$ 224.55</b>	<b>\$ 196.16</b>
w/o Recycling	\$ 214.54	\$ 216.41	\$ 225.70	\$ 209.90	\$ 224.55	\$ 196.16

\*\*2023 Rates, All Communities

**What Can Make a Meaningful Impact?**

**1. Investing in infrastructure to reduce water distribution system losses (Town Priority)**

Municipal distribution systems routinely lose between 10 and 50% of the water that flows through them, with Environment Canada estimating the average losses at 13%. The Town’s loss rate in 2022 was approximately 23%.

**2. Managing residential water consumption**

Leak detection makes a huge difference, the drips and small leaks add up fast! The average home loses up to 35m<sup>3</sup> per year, with a leaky toilet wasting over 20m<sup>3</sup> per month.

Outdoor landscaping can increase usage by 30% to 40% in the summer months. Rainwater collection, avoiding overwatering, and applying water in the early morning or late afternoon/evening are top tips for managing consumption.

**3. Reducing curbside collection weight**

Repairing, reusing, or re-homing items can help reduce what goes into waste bins, and heavy (or bulky) objects like building materials and small appliances are better suited for the Waste Transfer Site wherever possible.

Yard waste like wet grass clippings, soils, and wood waste also add up quickly. Composting yard waste can make a big difference, with the average family of four eliminating over 500kg per year (including food waste).