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PROPOSED CHANGES TO WATER AND SEWER RATES

TAKE NOTICE that pursuant to Section 12 of Ontario Regulation 244/02, the Municipal Council of the Town of Fort Erie intends to pass a by-law at its meeting of Monday, February 13, 2006 to increase the water and sewer rates associated with the distribution, collection and treatment of water and wastewater. The current and proposed rates are as follows:

*per cubic metre	2006 Water Rates	2005 Water Rates	2006 Sewer Rate	2005 Sewer Rate	2006 Combined Rate	2005 Combined Rate
Base Rate	\$ 17.48	\$ 16.49	\$ 27.39	\$ 26.72	\$ 44.87	\$ 43.21
Consumption Rate*	\$ 0.774	\$ 0.730	\$ 0.837	\$ 0.817	\$ 1.611	\$ 1.547

The total combined increase per typical customer using 19 cubic metres per month is \$2.88 or 3.96%.

All water and sewer related fees and charges as provided for under By-law No. 27-05 will increase proportionately according to the table above including base rates for various metre sizes.

Council met on January 10, 2006 in a Public Budget Meeting to consider the 2006 water and sewer rates.

Rationale

The proposed Town's 2006 Water and Sewer Budget, includes gross billings of \$11.719 million to Fort Erie water/sewer customers. The increased customer billing rates for 2006 are based on estimated billings for treatment costs from the Region of Niagara of \$7.184 million. Treatment costs for 2006 are based on expected increases in Regional treatment rates of 10% for water and 5% for sewer. Should the Region approve different treatment rates, the Town billing rates will be adjusted accordingly. The Region intends to consider the water treatment rates on February 9, 2005.

In addition to increased treatment costs, the gross billing increase reflects increased wages and increased debt servicing charges from watermain and sewermain construction. The Town's funds are used to cover costs associated with:

- maintenance and repair of the distribution system
- monthly billing and collection
- provincially mandated requirements for water quality assurance
- regulatory requirements
- capital replacement program

Further information is available at no cost to any member of the public upon request by contacting the Director of Corporate Services.

Before passing the by-law to increase the water and sewer rates, Council will hold a public meeting on **Monday, February 13, 2006 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Council Chambers at Town Hall, at which any person who attends has an opportunity to make representation with respect to the matter.

Any person wishing to make representations at the public meeting is encouraged to register as a delegation with the Clerk by **1:00 p.m. Friday, February 10, 2006** (905-871-1600 ext. 204). Written comments will also be received by the undersigned up until **1:00 p.m. Friday, February 10, 2006** either by mail, email or hand delivery. Failure to register does not preclude representations to the Council.

Dated at Fort Erie, Ontario this 10th day of January 2006.

Carolyn J. Kett, Town Clerk
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The Times – January 14, 2006

Margaret Neubauer, Director of Corporate Services
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