



WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY REPORT

Information ☐	Recommendation ☒	Decision Request ☐	Councillor Activity ☐
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To: Committee of the Whole

Submitted by: 
Todd Richard, Director, Public Works

Date: January 13, 2026

Subject: New Position – Water Meter Technician

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Nova Scotia Municipal Government Act, Section 65 authorizes Council to expend funds for municipal purposes. Financial Services

RECOMMENDATION or DECISION REQUEST

It is recommended for Committee of the Whole to recommend to Council that:

Council to approve; the addition of one full-time Water Meter Technician position to the Public Works Department staff complement effective January 2026.

BACKGROUND

Property ☒	Public Opinion ☐	Environment ☐	Social ☐	Economic ☐	Councillor Activity ☐
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This report recommends the addition of a Water Meter Reader and Technician position to the Public Works Department. The role is critical for ensuring accurate water usage data, supporting billing integrity, reducing non-revenue water loss, and maintaining compliance with municipal and provincial standards. The position will enhance operational efficiency and customer service while addressing growing demands on the water utility system.

The West Hants Regional Municipality operates a water utility serving residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional customers. Accurate metering and timely maintenance are essential for revenue protection, leak detection, regulatory compliance and sewer by-laws. Currently, these responsibilities are distributed among existing staff, creating inefficiencies and limiting proactive maintenance.

DISCUSSION

Justification for Position

Operational Efficiency & Accuracy: The technician will handle meter reading, installation, maintenance, and troubleshooting, ensuring accurate data collection for billing cycles and reducing errors that lead to revenue loss.

Revenue Protection & Water Conservation: By identifying leaks and tampering, the technician will help reduce non-revenue water and improve system integrity.

Customer Service & Compliance: The role provides direct support to customers, investigates consumption complaints, and ensures installations meet municipal specifications and backflow prevention standards, along with sewer backflow prevention standards and compliance with sewer by-laws.

Regulatory Requirements: Compliance with Safe Drinking Water Act, Canadian Drinking Water Guidelines, and Nova Scotia Building and Plumbing Code requires specialized knowledge and consistent monitoring.

NEXT STEPS

Pending approval of Council, staff will proceed with advertising for the new staff position.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The estimated annual cost, including wages, benefits and overtime, aligns with the pay scale provided. This investment is expected to be offset by improved billing accuracy, reduced water loss, and enhanced customer satisfaction.

The salary for this position will be funding through the Water Utility and Sewer System annual operating budget and will have no impact on the general tax rate. If council were to approve of this position the funding requirement for this year would be between \$8 and \$16 thousand.

Funding Requirement	Total	2 Months	1 Months
All inclusive	98,000	16,333	8,167

There is a need for this position, and benefits outlined above will have impacts going forward on revenue. It will also be more proactive in meter maintenance reducing estimate time frames, which will result in more current figures.

Additionally with the upcoming rate studies in 2026-27, should council approve this, it would be captured in the new rates. It is also supported through recommendations from AWWA audit, and Board to continue efforts toward the reduction of unaccounted for water and improved leak detection.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Council may choose not to proceed with the staff recommendation.
2. Council may choose to wait for the organizational review

ATTACHMENTS

Job Description attached.

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REVIEW

(For use if report is from a Councillor. CAO to provide additional comments on background, department/staff responsible and workload, budget, options, preferred strategy. State "Not Applicable" if report is from staff which already incorporates CAO review.)

Report Prepared by:



Todd Richard, Director of Public Works

Report Approved by:

Mark Phillips, Chief Administrative Officer



WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

JOB DESCRIPTION Water Meter Reader and Technician

Position Title: Water Meter Technician

Department/Division: Public Works

Reports To: Manager Environmental Operations and Water and Wastewater Supervisor

Direct Reports: No

Pay Level: hourly (rate depends on qualifications, trade & certification)

Classification: Full-Time, Unionized Position

Revision Date: December 2025

POSITION SUMMARY

Reporting to and under the direction of the Manager of Environmental Operations and Water and Wastewater Treatment Supervisor, the Water Meter Reader and Technician is responsible for accurately reading, installing, locating, maintaining, testing and repairing water meters and transmitters for residential, commercial, industrial and institutional customers. The Technician troubleshoots and corrects issues related to water meters. This role ensures the integrity of water usage data, supports billing accuracy, and contributes to the efficient operation of the Municipality's Water Utility.

In addition, the technician helps detect leaks, tampering, and inefficiencies within the water distribution network. The technician also serves as a point of contact for customers, providing information and support related to water usage and meter functionality. Frequent close collaboration with the finance department is necessary to confirm reading accuracy for billing along with analysis to reduce non-revenue / unaccounted for water loss.

Regular hours of work are Monday – Friday 7:30am-4:00pm (40-hour work week)

JOB DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Meter Reading:

- Accurately read residential, commercial, industrial and institutional water meters on assigned routes, final reads. Hand delivers notices to residents/property owners requiring water meter work or investigations for high / low consumption.
- Record readings using handheld or mobile devices and report anomalies (e.g., leaks, tampering, or meter malfunctions).

- Ensure timely and complete data collection for billing cycles.

Installation & Maintenance:

- Install, investigate and remove water meters and transmitters and upgrade existing ones as required. This includes verifying all Municipal Water Utility equipment for accuracy and function and inspecting for illegal connections or cross-connections.
- Perform routine maintenance, testing, and calibration of meters to ensure accuracy.
- Diagnose and repair faulty meters, transmitters, and associated plumbing components.
- Replace water meters, which involves shutting off water service, draining plumbing, using hand tools for installation, cleaning up, and programming the transmitter to the new meter.
- Program, deactivate, and troubleshoot meters and transmitters (Smart Points / ERT remote reading devices) using electronic programming devices, both indoors and in chambers. Perform repairs to resolve communication or operational issues.
- Perform routine inspections of customers' water / sewer connections and plumbing to assure compliance with municipal rules and specifications. Follow-up with any necessary corrective action or compliance issues.
- Conduct facility audits for number of water fixtures and proper sizing requirements for water meter.
- Maintain meter and equipment inventory and record on our OMS Asset Management software system.
- Manage replacement schedule, record tasks and work orders utilizing our OMS Asset Management Software.

Leak Detection:

- Monitor meter readings and usage patterns to identify potential leaks or irregularities.
- Use specialized equipment and techniques to detect and locate leaks in water service lines and distribution system infrastructure.
- Document findings and actions taken to support system integrity and water conservation efforts.

Customer Service & Communication:

- Respond to customer inquiries and service requests related to water usage, leaks, or meter issues.
- Investigate water consumption complaints by attending properties, checking / testing meters, and assessing fixtures for potential causes of high consumption.
- Provide clear explanations of meter operations and water conservation tips when appropriate.
- Maintain a professional and courteous demeanor in all interactions.

Compliance & Safety:

- Follow all safety protocols and procedures when working in the field.

- Ensure compliance with Municipal specifications for meter installations and backflow prevention devices.
 - Maintain accurate records of all work performed and materials used, using WHRM's asset management software.
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JOB REQUIREMENTS

Education & Experience:

- High school diploma or equivalent required.
- Two years post-secondary technical certification from an accredited college or university considered an asset.
- Previous experience in meter reading, plumbing, or utility work considered an asset.
- Willing to achieve Water Distribution Operator Certification and Cross-Connection Control Certification within a designated time frame.

Skills & Competencies:

- High degree of accuracy and attention to detail, and ability to accurately record data
- General understanding of water rules and regulations, safe drinking water act and Canadian Drinking Water Guidelines. Familiar with the Nova Scotia Building and Plumbing Code.
- Working knowledge of Displacement-type cold water meters (AWWA C700-20), NSF Standards for Water Treatment systems and municipal water systems and water metering systems.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Strong work ethic and positive team attitude
- Basic mechanical and troubleshooting skills.
- Ability to work independently, multi-task, cope with interruptions and work under pressure to meet multiple deadlines, exercise discretion and good judgment. Possess a high level of initiative and personal integrity.
- Working knowledge of Windows and Microsoft Office applications and office equipment, knowledge of GIS, OMS and asset management software, familiarity with handheld data collection devices and possessing proficient computer skills.
- Physical ability to walk long distances, work in tight spaces with low light, lift equipment, crawl, crouch and bend, and work in various weather conditions.

Licenses & Certifications:

- Valid driver's license with a clean driving record required.
- Red Seal Trade in Plumbing is considered an asset.
- Certificate in Cross-Connection Control considered an asset.
- Certification in Water Distribution is an asset.

WORKING CONDITIONS

- Outdoor work in varying weather conditions.
- Exposure to confined spaces, dark spaces, insects, animals, and uneven terrain.
- May require occasional overtime.