

Condo residents feel short changed? on municipal water system: Councillor

By Brock Weir

Aurora has tight controls and regulations on the quality of water that comes into your homes through the municipal system, but when the municipal system ends so too do the Town's responsibilities.

In the cases of condominium developments, however, where the responsibility ends can be a bit murkier and some Council members are calling for clarity.

Councillors once again raised these concerns at last week as they approved increases to the municipal water rate. The quality of water once the municipal system transfers to a system under the jurisdiction of a condo board is a concern Councillor Tom Mrakas says has been raised with him.

Our [water liability] stops at the property line and the condo board takes over, said Councillor Mrakas. There is quite a bit of concern among the residents who live in these condos. They feel, at the end of the day, they pay the same taxes as everyone else and they feel like they are being short-changed as far as safe water and the responsibility the Town has.

When I look at it, with a regular condo building, I can understand the responsibility ends when it gets to the building, but a development even though it is called a condo --- is still almost a subdivision in my mind, and I feel maybe we should look at changing some policies because we should [be] making sure water is safe for those residents. They pay their share of taxes to the Town. I think it is something we need to look at.

Mayor Geoff Dawe said this is an issue he has also heard, adding Ilmar Simanovskis, Aurora's Director of Infrastructure and Environmental Services, has his department looking at the matter to make sure [condo boards] are aware of their responsibilities.

At this point, it is more of a case of the agreement than anything else, said Mayor Dawe. My responsibility at my house is from the property line in. In this particular instance, the property line is somewhat farther away. I can see that there is ample opportunity for confusion.

At last week's meeting, Councillors also called for further information to be distributed to residents across the Town on the water rate increases imposed on Aurora by the Region of York. While this year's water rate brochure is pretty much a done deal to be distributed with this year's water bills, there is some long range communication plans in the works, said Town Treasurer Dan Elliott.