



WHAT WE HEARD REPORT

Water and Wastewater Utility Exclusivity Bylaw

December 2025

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Rocky View County is reviewing a proposed Water and Wastewater Exclusivity Bylaw. The purpose of the bylaw is to establish a consistent framework for how water and wastewater utilities operate within the County, while providing clarity on roles and responsibilities to ensure reliable service for residents and businesses.

Within the County, there are two main types of water service providers

- Franchisees, which are larger, formal utility companies that operate under agreements with the County to provide water and wastewater services. There are currently four franchise agreements with Rocky View County.
- Water co-operatives (co-ops), which are smaller, member-run organizations formed by residents to collectively manage water supply. The County has about 70 co-ops, ranging in size from just a few households to larger operations supporting entire communities.

What the Proposed Bylaw Means

The bylaw would bring both franchisees and co-ops under a consistent framework. In practice, that means:

- **For residents:** More strategic long-term planning, delivering smarter growth, and reducing costly duplication of infrastructure.
- **For co-ops:** Assurance that co-ops remain exempt, continue to operate independently, and are not forced into franchise agreements.
- **For franchisees:** Existing franchise agreements are respected and continue as they are today. For the future, any new or expanded franchise agreements would be approved by Council under this framework, ensuring oversight while maintaining opportunities for private sector involvement.



ENGAGEMENT TIMELINE & APPROACH

Early Communication

The County circulated the draft bylaw to franchisees on June 17, 2025. As water co-ops are not directly affected or impacted by the proposed bylaw, they were not included in the initial circulation.

Notice of the bylaw was also shared with the public through the County's website, e-newsletter, and the *Rocky View Weekly* in advance of the required public hearing process.

Public Hearing

The bylaw was formally presented to Council at the public hearing on July 22, 2025. At the hearing, two utilities and one resident speaking on behalf of a neighbourhood distribution system raised concerns about the bylaw. Comments focused on:

- Lack of early communication
- Requests for more dialogue with the County
- Concerns about potential government overreach

Based on this input, Council directed Administration to carry out additional engagement with both franchisees and co-operatives through open houses and one-on-one meetings.

Engagement Activities

As part of Council's direction, the project team contacted all water co-ops and franchisees with contact information on record. All interested parties were invited to share feedback with the project team via email, letter, individual meetings, and through two open houses.

Rocky View County hosted two open houses on September 18 and November 20 to engage water co-ops and franchisees, providing an opportunity to learn about the bylaw, ask questions, and share concerns. In total, 22 representatives participated across both open houses, with some attending both, including representatives from:

- Alberta Federation of Rural Water Co-ops
- North Springbank Water Co-op
- Highpoint Estates Ltd.
- Langdon Water Co-op
- Rocky View Water Co-op
- Westridge Utilities
- Epcor
- Emerald Bay Water and Sewer Co-op
- Aquatech

KEY FINDINGS:

In total, 107 comments and five letters were shared with the project team outlining the following areas of feedback:

Theme	Indicative Quotes
Bylaw language and definition (40%)	<p><i>“The immediate concern is that in the text, you don’t explicitly say co-ops are exempt.”</i></p> <p><i>“General dissatisfaction with how the bylaw was written.”</i></p>
Autonomy concern and the bylaw reach (21%)	<p><i>“This appears to be encroaching upon us.”</i></p> <p><i>“10 years from now, there could be some pressure on us with this bylaw.”</i></p>
Communication and engagement (16%)	<p><i>“When you send out the notification for engagement, attach the bylaw so we can read it and not hunt for it.”</i></p> <p><i>“Thanks for holding this forum. I had a lot of concern from the previous forum as there was no info.”</i></p>
General comment (12%)	<p><i>“Good to see the County concerned about long term water planning.”</i></p> <p><i>“The concept makes sense from a public perspective. Better coordination, financial benefit.”</i></p>





NEXT STEPS & THANK YOU

The project team will meet directly with interested utilities and co-ops who have requested further dialogue. These sessions will provide an opportunity to explore operator specific concerns in more detail and ensure questions are addressed.

Thank you to everyone who participated in this engagement. Your input is helping shape how the County moves forward with the proposed bylaw.