

## Westlock News

### Green fund idling; Roughly \$87,000 has been collected via town's \$4 bi-monthly surcharge

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A green fund worth roughly \$87,000 could be used to offer rebates on installing low-flow toilets or energy efficient furnaces as early as this summer, mayor Bruce Lennon says.

Plans for spending the money -- generated from a \$4 bi-monthly surcharge on business and household utility accounts --have yet to be finalized, Lennon noted.

However he expects administration to table a proposal for using the fund by summer.

"We're not going to re-invent the wheel," the mayor said, noting the town would likely duplicate an initiative that has proven successful elsewhere.

The green fund emerged on the heels of initiatives such as **Project Porchlight**, which last spring helped distribute compact fluorescent light bulbs to households across town.

The fund dovetails with plans to brand the town as a sort of green haven, Lennon recalled.

"In terms of marketing our town and showing that we're progressive, we felt that we could be the greenest town north of Edmonton."

Last year also saw the town roll out a revamped recycling program in concert with the shift toward automated garbage collection.

The untapped fund is also in line with efforts to promote water conservation, the mayor pointed out.

In that respect, the town upped its per-cubic-metre cost for water from .64 to \$1 last September. As the regional water line -- on which tenders close next month -- comes online, Lennon expects the price of water to jump higher still.

"We anticipate costs are going to be slightly higher than what they are now," he said.

In council chambers last Monday, the mayor expressed concern that the town had yet to push forward with another green initiative.

Administration, meanwhile, signalled it would come up with a policy for tapping the as-yet untouched sum by summer's end.

That could involve rebates for low-flow toilets or energy efficient furnaces. It could also mean changing bylaws to green the town's building codes, Lennon noted.

"It's time to do something that's out there and concrete," he said Wednesday. "I have concerns as the mayor (that) if we're going to have this green fund, we better do something with it."

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