

# Water Dispatch

Water information and commentary

Spring 2018

## District Water Quality Rated Excellent

For water to be useful for irrigation, we don't just need enough of it, we need to make sure it's clean as well. The Alberta Agriculture Annual Water Quality Report is in for 2017, and the samples from the WID have again been rated as excellent.

The water quality testing is performed several times each water season at multiple sites in the District. The sampling evaluates a number of factors which can diminish the quality of water in excessive amounts, including bacteria, chemicals and sediment loads. An overall index out of 100 is calculated, which balances the factors to give an overall picture of water quality.

"The average water quality in the District improved four points, from 89 to 93 this year," said WID's Water Master, Brian Sander. "85 out of 100 is considered excellent. These results are better this year than last year, and better than the five-year average, so we're moving in the right direction."

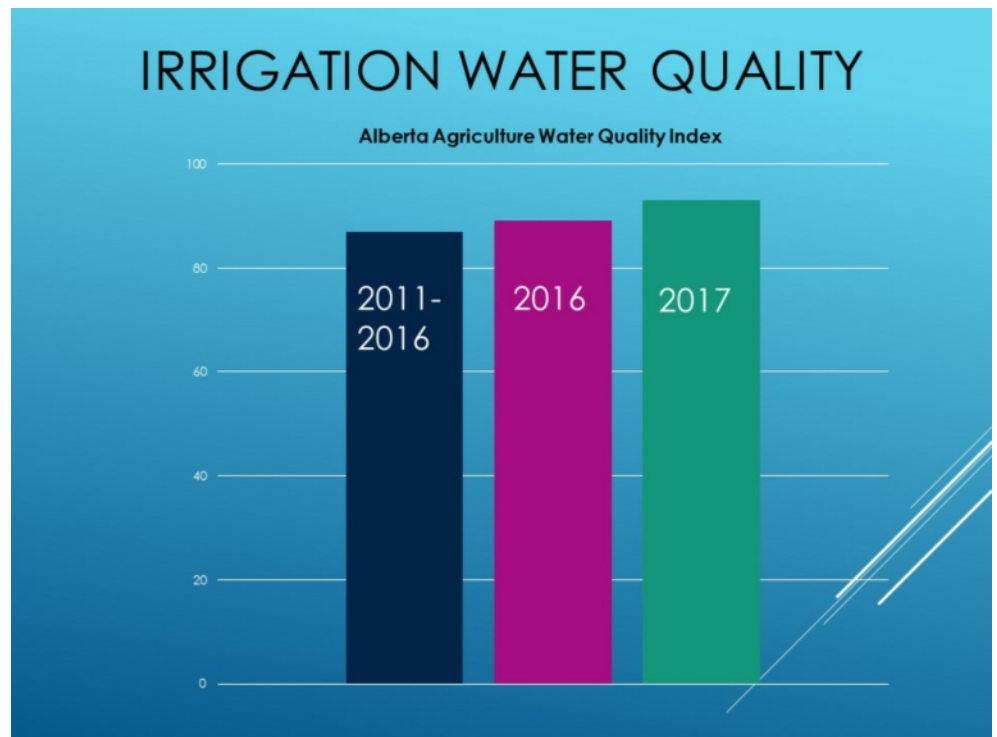
Despite the results to date the WID must remain vigilant to ensure that water quality is protected for irrigation in the future. Current and future challenges to water quality in the District include rural runoff as well as increasing urbanization within

our boundaries. The WID is undertaking specific initiatives to address these challenges.

The WID is working with the City of Calgary, City of Chestermere, Rocky View County, Town of Strathmore and Wheatland County to ensure stormwater is separated from the irrigation canal systems. This project, known as the Cooperative Stormwater Management Initiative, has received \$7.6million in grant funding for the design and construction of this system. This system will ensure that

municipalities are able to develop while preserving the quality of irrigation water.

Additionally, the WID has partnered with Wheatland County and received \$200,000 in funding from the Province to construct livestock exclusion fencing and install off-site watering systems to ranchers in the area. These programs will reduce the opportunities for livestock to directly access areas adjacent to the canal, resulting in improved water quality.



Water quality in the WID is steadily improving over time

## **WID Establishes Limit to Address Over-irrigation**

Efficient water usage is crucial to ensure the availability of water for existing District irrigators, as well as increasing the likelihood of future expansion of irrigation in the District. Water savings have been generated by a variety of programs including system upgrades by irrigators, storage expansion, rehabilitation of canals, and installation of pipelines. Another component of this strategy is the implementation of a water use limit to ensure irrigators and livestock and domestic users are using water responsibly.

The average usage for all parcels in the WID was 13 inches for the 2017 water season and the WID has established the maximum water application on irrigation acres to be 18 inches per acre. A

\$20/acre-inch penalty will be imposed for water use exceeding the limit. For this year only, a grace period allowing 24 inches is set to allow irrigators time to adjust.

“The purpose of this program is not to limit responsible irrigation,” explained WID General Manager, David McAllister, “it is to address inefficient irrigation practices in order to make more water available to everyone.”

Irrigators can ensure water usage is measured accurately by contacting their ditchrider 48 hours before turning their system on, and 24 hours before turning off. They can also contact the WID for a free measurement of the flow delivered at their turnout.

Livestock watering users will have a limit of five acre-feet,

and household yard and garden users one acre-foot.

“Livestock watering and household yard and garden users can improve their water efficiency by implementing initiatives like installing dugouts or off-site watering systems,” said McAllister.

Grant funding may be available for specific efficiency improvements. For further information on these programs, please contact the WID.

“The WID is interested in working with all water users to ensure that their water usage is accurately measured and that they are employing best management practices to ensure water efficiency,” said. McAllister.

**For a free measurement of the flow delivered at your turnout, contact:  
Assistant Water Master, Joey Mordy  
403-325-0244**

## **Construction Update**

### **Rehabilitation of the Standard Lateral:**

The Standard Lateral on the Secondary B canal was constructed with buried plastic liner and armoured banks. The project started at the Standard/Glenrose split and continued for 11km east.

### **North Cluny Tailout Project:**

Five km of closed pipeline was installed, as well as a spillway back to the natural channel.

## **Let Us Know!**

**Just a reminder that all water users must give 48 hours' notice before turning their system on, and 24 hours' notice before turning off.**

**Equipment broke down? Needs service?  
Let your Water District Supervisor know as soon as possible.  
See back page for contact information.**







## ***Irrigation Efficiency Program Funding Increased***

The WID’s Irrigation Efficiency Program approved 32 applications for funding to convert pivots from high-pressure to low-pressure. The water savings associated with the conversion of these pivots will be so great on an annual basis that the Board of Directors adjusted the funding available for the program. They increased the funding from \$50,000 to \$175,000 to support the level of interest, .

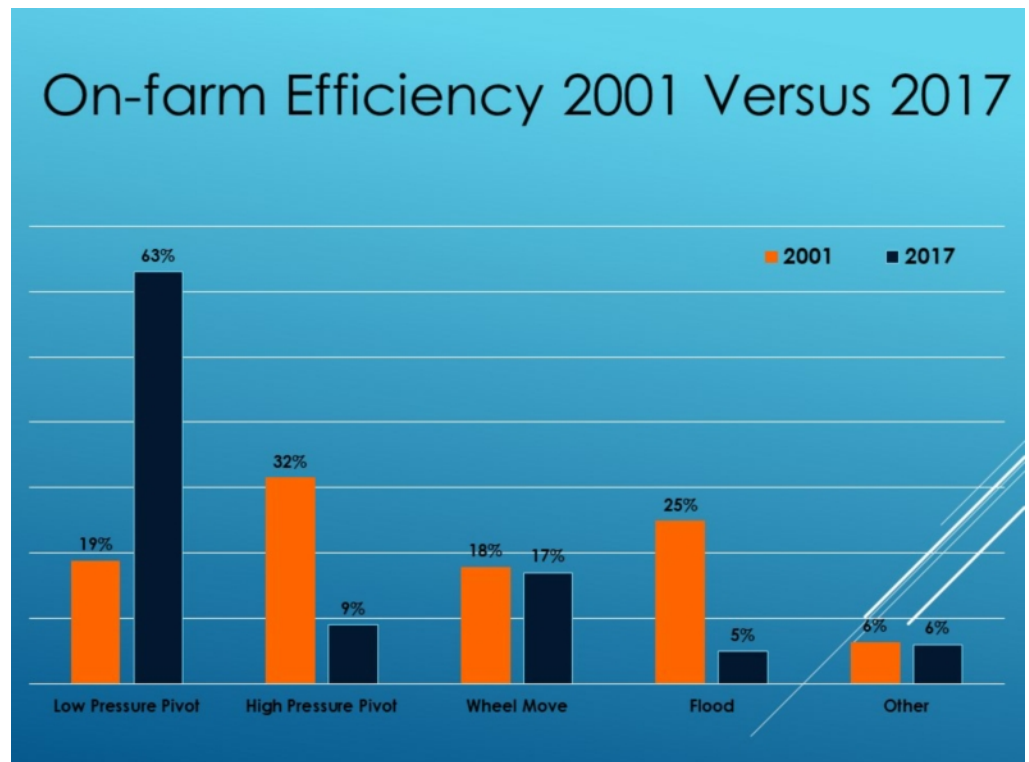
“This program aided in converting over 3800 acres of irrigated land, with the potential to save over 500 acre-feet of water per year in years with conditions similar to 2017,” said WID’s Water Master, Brian Sander.

This program combined with cost-savings associated with the Growing Forward 2 and Canadian Agricultural Partnership made this a cost-effective investment for the irrigators. Applications were based on the size of the existing system, past irrigation activity,

and efficiency of delivery to the farm.

“The impact of the efficiency program will be significant as every acre converted from high-pressure to low-pressure pivot reduces water consumption

by 13%,” said Sander. “The WID will continue to evaluate future efficiency programs to generate additional water savings, allowing more acres to become available.”



***On-farm efficiencies have improved significantly in the WID since 2001***

# Successful Distribution of Irrigation Acres

The WID is pleased to announce the successful conclusion of its recent process for distributing permanent irrigation acres prior to the 2018 water season. This was part of a program designed to ensure that irrigation acres are being actively used and made available to irrigators who are interested in increasing the role of irrigation in their operations.

The District has developed and implemented a consistent process for assessing applications to ensure that the highest level of water efficiency is achieved for the

District going forward. The prioritization of water efficiency for distributing surplus acres ensures more water is available to all irrigators. The factors used to prioritize applications included land classification, conveyance system capacity, conveyance efficiency, on-farm efficiency, and existing irrigation activity on the parcel.

“The WID was encouraged by the level of interest in the advertised acres,” said WID’s General Manager David McAllister. “The Board intends to continue to

work towards making additional acres available including allocating some of the proceeds from the sale to the strategic repurchase of acres.”

The WID has an ongoing review of current acre usage to encourage active irrigation within the District.

“We encourage water users who would like to expand their irrigated operations to apply for any future acre distributions that become available,” said McAllister.

## WID Board of Directors: Notice of Acclamation



Irrigation Districts Act  
(Section 61 (3), (5))

### NOTICE OF ELECTION BY ACCLAMATION

TAKE NOTE that only one nomination was received for the election of a member to the Board of Directors of the Western Irrigation District in Electoral Division 3. When only one nomination is received for an electoral division, the nominee is elected by acclamation and balloting is not required. Therefore, I declare **Richard Page** to be elected as Director for Electoral Division 3 of the Western Irrigation District.

Dated at the Town of Strathmore in the Province of Alberta, this 19<sup>th</sup> day of March 2018.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'David McAllister'.

David McAllister  
Returning Officer

## DID YOU KNOW?

There are two ways that inactive irrigation acres can be activated by a producer who isn't irrigating:

**1. Acres can be permanently transferred to other irrigators. The District maintains a website with advertising for acres for sale. The terms for transfer are agreed upon between the two parties, and the WID must approve the transfer.**

<http://www.wid.net/buy-or-sell-acres>

**2. Acres can be transferred on an annual basis. This allows the ownership of irrigation acres to sit with the original person, but they can transfer them for one year to another irrigator who will use them.**

<http://www.wid.net/copy-of-buy-or-sell-acres>

## WID Board of Directors

<b>Doug Brown</b>	<b>Div 1</b>
<b>Henry Colpoys</b>	<b>Div 2</b>
<b>Rick Page</b>	<b>Div 3</b>
<b>Dan Shute – Vice Chair</b>	<b>Div 4</b>
<b>Ray Kettenbach - Chair</b>	<b>Div 5</b>

## Water Supervisor Contacts

<b>Brian Sander</b>	<b>Water Master</b>	<b>403-325-0493</b>
<b>Joey Mordy</b>	<b>Assistant Water Master</b>	<b>403-325-0244</b>
<b>Derrick McGougan</b>	<b>Chestermere</b>	<b>403-899-4638</b>
<b>Don Brownlee</b>	<b>Carseland</b>	<b>403-899-4641</b>
<b>Joe Friedman</b>	<b>Gleichen/Cluny</b>	<b>403-325-4642</b>
<b>Wes Sproule</b>	<b>Rockyford</b>	<b>403-325-4640</b>
<b>JR Dunbar</b>	<b>Crowfoot</b>	<b>403-325-4639</b>
<b>Jaye Wegener</b>	<b>Strathmore</b>	<b>403-325-4601</b>