



CORPORATE REPORT
The Corporation of the Town of Wasaga Beach
Meeting Date: 7/17/2025

DATE: 6/20/2025

SUBJECT: Water Conservation Rebate Program

CONTACT: Shannon Stewart, Deputy Treasurer

REPORT NUMBER: 2025/07/17-12

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** the report titled: Water Conservation Rebate Program, to the Council meeting of July 17, 2025, be received; and
2. **THAT** Council discontinue the Water Conservation Rebate program effective September 30th, 2025; and
3. **THAT** the funds previously allocated to this program be redirected to assist in managing overall water operating costs.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- The Water Conservation Rebate program was introduced in 2010 to encourage residents to replace older toilets with low-flow models as a water conservation measure.
- The program has been successful, distributing over \$370,000 in rebates, however, virtually all toilets sold today are required to meet low-flow standards. Most rebates are now for low-flow toilets that are replacing existing low-flow toilets making the rebate unnecessary for water conservation.
- This report recommends discontinuing the program and reallocating the funds to the general water operating expenses.

BACKGROUND:

In 2010, the municipality implemented a water conservation program for property owners who replaced existing toilets with low-flow models. At that time, standard toilets used between 13 and 20 litres per flush (Lpf), while low-flow toilets used approximately 6 Lpf. This significant difference supported the municipality's efforts to promote water conservation.

This program was available to replacement units only and not to new house builds.

Since the program's launch, more than \$370,000 in rebates have been issued, contributing to a reduction in household water usage across the community.

DISCUSSION:

The rebate program was introduced at a time when the market included a mix of high- and low-consumption toilet models. The financial incentive played a key role in encouraging homeowners to choose low flow options when purchasing replacement toilets leading to a reduction in the per household water consumption. When property owners submitted a rebate form along with a receipt for their purchase, a credit would be applied to the related water/sewer account.

Today, however, regulations have caught up. The National Plumbing Code of Canada and the Ontario Building Code now require that all new toilets sold use no more than 4.8 Lpf, with many models using as little as 3.8 Lpf. This means the rebate is no longer serving its intended purpose of encouraging conservation as homeowners have no choice but to purchase low-flow toilets.

As the program has achieved its original goal, staff recommend discontinuing it. Redirecting the associated funding to general water operating expenses will allow the municipality to support broader utility operations and assist in keeping water rates stable for residents.

Setting the final date for submitting rebate claims to September 30th, 2025 will give residents that were planning to purchase a new toilet in 2025 or who have already purchased a toilet but have yet to submit their application, time to get these done.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

The annual budget savings from the discontinuation of this rebate program would be redirected to general water/wastewater system operating expenses. There are no costs associated with ending the program.

Term of Council Priorities:

This proposal is in line with the Well Run pillar – Financial Sustainability action items 74 and 76 for the Term of Council Priorities (TOCPs).

CONCLUSION:

The toilet rebate program successfully promoted water conservation during a time of transition in the marketplace. However, given that all new toilets sold today are already low-flow by regulatory requirement, the rebate is no longer needed. Discontinuing the program and reallocating the funds will support the municipality's ongoing efforts to manage operating costs and maintain affordable water rates.

Authored by:

Shannon Stewart,
Deputy Treasurer

Appendices:

None