Comment: 19 March 2024 Mayor Gillingham and Councillors,

Re: Budget for Water, Waste and Environment Committee: Water Meter Renewal Project and the "Advanced Water Meter Solution Business Case"

Please ensure that the business case " Advanced Water Metering Solution Business Case":

1) Includes details on the Opt-out program as per the Winnipeg Public Service report on opt-outs. The USA New York State Senate now has a bill before it which would be a model that Winnipeg could follow (The bill number is S5632A (Senate) or A 9148 (Assembly): https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2023/S5632/amendment/A

2) Also that it includes estimates on costs for full opt-outs (numbers could be based on the pilot project conducted in River Heights) and how the City would recover costs from those with analog meters.

3) Analog meters such as we have now (or similar to) are required for a true opt-out. Simply turning off the radiofrequency (RF) emitting component does not necessarily turn off electromagnetic emissions and interference by some smart meters which can harm people's health.
This has been investigated. For example please see: New Critical Problem with 'Smart' Meters. Just When You Thought It Was Safe to Opt-Out. https://defiltersllc.com/new-critical-problem-with-smart-meters/?v=93b46a3fc67d

We also repeat our request to have this project be included as part of the "Public Engagement" City of Winnipeg webpage.

Generally the public has not had the time to fully examine this issue. The full business case " Advanced Water Metering Solution Business Case" was not available until a few days before March 14th 2024 and the report upon which much of the business case was based was not available to the public until last month. Meanwhile this was passed by council in November 2023. This report had to be obtained through a Freedom of Information request (FIPPA) and some of the key the sections on costs were redacted.

Transparency in the process and opportunity for adequate public was lacking for this wireless radiation emitting technology project which has been approved (November 2023) will bring into our homes and expose Winnipeggers 24/7 for the foreseeable future. Health Canada's guidelines for human exposure limits are based on 6 minutes exposure – see Table 5.
https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/publications/health-risks-safety/limits-human-exposure-radiofrequency-electromagnetic-energy-range-3-300.html

Furthermore, we do not know what the peak levels are and how this can affect human health. Health Canada has not conducted any studies on potential health effects on smart meters even though exposure to emissions from wireless transmitting meters have been reported to have harmed people's health across Canada.

I would be glad to provide details. Please contact me at ehamanitoba@gmail.com

Sincerely,
Margaret Friesen M.Sc.
Director, Environmental Health Association of Manitoba
