



**TOWN OF MINTO**

**DATE:** April 7, 2017  
**REPORT TO:** Mayor and Council  
**FROM:** Bill White C.A.O. Clerk  
**SUBJECT:** Pager, On Call Out Rates

**STRATEGIC PLAN:**

12.7 Demonstrate innovation in all aspects of municipal business acknowledging the importance of training, succession planning, transparency, communication and team-based approaches to municipal operations.

**BACKGROUND:**

The Town has one staff member on call 24 hours a day 7 days per week. Staff must wear a pager to receive after hour calls, and must be at home or in close proximity as well as physically and mentally ready to respond to emergencies for that period. Call outs can occur for many reasons such as sewer pump failures, watermain breaks, power outages, traffic accidents and similar. While mostly water and sewer operators are on-call, if an incident requires traffic control they will call out foreman, lead hands or operators in other functions.

The current policy is that employees receive \$18.00 for being on-call for 24 hours. If they are called out they are paid time and one half for an hour minimum, provided they have received pay for 40 hours that week. If a call out is during a statutory holiday on-call employees receive two times their hourly rate for a minimum of one hour.

The following are pager rates and minimum call outs for some other municipalities:

Municipality	Standby Pay per day on-call	Minimum call outs
<b>Minto</b>	<b>\$ 18.00 per day</b>	<b>1 hr Minimum</b>
North Wellington	1hr operators wage per day on-call	2 hr Minimum
North Perth	\$ 25 per day	3 hr Minimum
Centre Wellington	\$ 28.50 per day	2 hr Minimum
Mapleton (OCWA)	\$ 45.75 per day	4 hr Minimum
Mapleton (Roads)	\$ 20.00 per day	2 hr Minimum
Durham/Neustadt (AWWA)	\$ 28.50 per day	3 hr Minimum
Hanover	\$ 20.00 per day	3 hr Minimum
West Grey (Roads and Collection )	\$ 22.85 per day	2 hr Minimum
Erin	\$ 25.00 per day	3 hr Minimum
Guelph Eramosa	\$ 32.88 per day (\$1.37 per hour)	3 hr Minimum
Arran-Elderslie (Chesley,Tara,Paisle)	\$ 25.00 per day	4 hr Minimum

**COMMENTS:**

A 24 hour 7 day per week on-call service is needed to ensure water and sewer systems operate properly all the time, and to deal with incidents and emergencies after hours (hydro lines down, traffic control during fires etc.). While call-outs are infrequent, wearing a pager is unpleasant especially during bad weather or where family matters are involved. Staff can be called in the middle of the night, at family functions or during sporting or volunteer activities. Being on-call impacts spouses and kids, especially if child care is needed. Since \$18 has been the going rate since at least 2007 a change is needed.

It is suggested the pager rate be equal to one hour of the employee's regular wage. On call staff varies from an Operator 1 to Foreman, which produces an average rate of \$33.21 per day (instead of \$18.00). Paying at that rate increases cost for pager service about \$5,550. Pro-rated to begin May 1 the added cost in 2017 would be about \$3,700 which can be absorbed in the existing budget given staff changes and maternity leave this year.

Regarding minimum on-call times, municipalities vary between two to four hours. It is recommended the minimum call out remain one hour as most incidents are less than that. Supervisors all take steps to manage calls by ensuring the closest staff is involved and time claimed is reasonable. Using the example of an employee making \$30 per hour called out for 20 minutes, the Town would pay \$45 for the call out (time and a half) in addition to the \$30 pager rate. The operators, lead hands and foreman feel this change is acceptable.

The Town appreciates those who are on-call and available to respond to emergencies. It is recognized wearing a pager and being available 24 hours a day should be compensated reasonably.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

The cost of providing pager service 24 hours a day 7 days a week is \$6,570 (\$18.00 X 365 days). The \$18 callout rate has been in place since at least 2007. If a change is made to pay one hour wages for providing pager service an increase of about \$6,000 will be needed for this service in 2018.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

THAT Council receives the C.A.O. Clerk's April 7, 2017 report Pager On Call Out Rates and approves an amendment to the policy beginning May 1, 2017 to pay a rate equal to one hour of the on-call employee's pay, payable in addition to the hourly rate paid for a minimum one hour call out.

Bill White C.A.O. Clerk