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# Clarke Daily News

News and Events in Clarke County Virginia

**Archive of Published Articles**  
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## Water Haulers Draw Cheap Pool Water in Berryville

July 23, 2010 by [Michael Dowling \(Edit\)](#)

Summertime and swimming pools go hand in hand, but in Berryville you may have to take out a loan if you hope to fill your pool with town water. However, a disparity in fee application actually makes it more expensive for residents to draw pool water from the town system than for businesses from other jurisdictions.

On Monday July 19th, Bell Transport of Sterling Virginia was observed drawing water from an unmetered hydrant on the town water system. Perplexed, CDN investigated the matter with a call to the Berryville town offices. The representative from the town told CDN that this was indeed allowed by the town. When asked, "How do you meter what they draw?" the response was "They just tell us whenever they draw a load from the system."

Seeking further clarification CDN contacted the Town Manager Keith Dalton. He outlined the policy for bulk water hauling as follows:

- If the request is from a new hauler then the public works director inspects any trucks that will connect with the system for necessary back flow devices
- If it is a repeat customer then the town staff verifies with the Public Utilities Department that it will be acceptable to sell bulk water. If the water supply is low or the town is under water restrictions the hauler will be denied access to town water.
- Haulers must draw water from the hydrant on the Public Works Site. A hydrant meter is attached to the hydrant prior to use.
- Water is billed at \$6.57 per thousand gallons

Mr Dalton added a footnote that :

Bell Transport is permitted, with prior approval, to draw water from other locations on the system. This is done to benefit the town. The locations are chosen to provide freshening of the water in that area. This permits sale of water that would otherwise need to be flushed out on to the ground or into the storm water collection system. As for billing in this instance, the hauler reports to the town the number of truck loads that are drawn and the town bills for that amount. VDOT is also permitted to withdraw from other parts of the system.



Bell Transport of Sterling, Virginia draws water from the town system Monday July 19th

While the honor system seems odd for a business (residential use is metered), the town's policy seems to be in order with one exception. Bell Transport is based in Sterling, Virginia and is paying less for pool water than residents of the town. This is because residents must **pay water and sewer rates** to fill pools. This means the rate for a business drawing water from the town system is **\$6.57/1000** gallons and the rate for residents is **\$17.57/1000 gallons**. In the past, Berryville's policy was to provide relief for pool owners by exempting the sewer fees for pool water because swimming pool water was not processed into the sewer system. However, the sewer fee waiver policy was rescinded two years ago when the last rate hikes were put into place.

CDN asked the town manager, "Why are residents who use water to fill pools or other uses that can be verified as not going into the sewer system forced to pay the water + sewer rate and businesses from other jurisdictions do not?"

Dalton said, "That matter has not been reviewed by Town Council, but I will bring it to their attention."

Town council's next meeting is Tuesday August 10th which includes a public hearing on the proposed sewer rate increases.

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## Comments

[Emily](#) says:

[July 23, 2010 at 11:43 am](#) ([Edit](#))

Very interesting article. Thank you for the information.



it's dry says:

[July 23, 2010 at 12:44 pm](#) ([Edit](#))

I say we increase the price of water for companies drawing it to fill pools because of the drought.



it's dry says:

[July 23, 2010 at 2:10 pm](#) ([Edit](#))

Oh and temporarily increase the cost of municipal water so that people will hopefully realize that no matter how much you water it, nothing will grow straight out of the sidewalk.



Fact Checker says:

[July 23, 2010 at 3:59 pm](#) ([Edit](#))

Excellent investigative journalism! This article is shining a light on the way our local government really works, and your photograph speaks volumes!

The Public Hearing in August will be interesting.



Bubba D says:

[July 24, 2010 at 9:28 pm](#) ([Edit](#))

I've seen these trucks for years now and wondered why they were drawing their water from a fire hydrant which is somewhat tucked away. Are water customers paying more to subsidize this shady arrangement?



The Shocker says:

[July 25, 2010 at 5:33 pm](#) ([Edit](#))

Who is surprised that the town/county is doing more to help others than their own citizens? Disappointing, but not surprising....



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