

Water on the way: Bear River water line begins to take shape

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BY: ERIN BULLER, Herald Editor

With a milder than expected winter, crews with Allied Construction out of Utah have made good progress working on the Bear River Joint Powers Board Water Line in the past six weeks.

Since late December, crews have been completing some of the preliminary work such as boring under the railroad tracks in Evanston and rerouting the Bear River on the 22-mile pipeline project, which will wind its way through the nine miles between Evanston and Bear River, crossing under U.S. Highway 89, crossing under the Bear River three times and under the railroad tracks once.

Bear River town Mayor Robin Rhodes said it's exciting to see what took more than five years of work, getting millions of dollars together in funding, rights of way and agreements complete, finally begin to take shape.

"We have one crew working right now," Rhodes said. "But in the next two weeks we'll have one to two more begin working. When they begin laying the main line, there will be four to five crews working."

He said they've given the contractors until Nov. 1 for "substantial completion," which means the pipeline will be up and running, but may still need some odds and ends completed.

Dec. 1 is the "turn-key" deadline for total completion.

"My hope is to get people water way before December," Rhodes said. "Those that are hauling water just hope to have it done before it freezes again so they don't have to haul water in another winter. That's a royal pain for them."

Tap sign-up deadline

He said the joint powers board has set a March 15 deadline for residents and businesses to sign up for taps with a lower fee.

Right now the fee for a residential tap is \$20. After March 15, that fee will jump to \$5,000.

Commercial tap fees right now are \$125, but after the deadline they too will jump to \$6,125.

"We have to set the deadline because the contractor has to order meter pits and he needs to know how many taps to order," Rhodes said.

He said the system and fee structure was set up based on 400 residential taps and 40 commercial. Right now, they're about 50-60 taps short of that goal.

Rhodes said the water line will have a capacity for 414 taps to begin with.

He said the fee structure will be \$56 for the first 2,000 gallons of water each month. After that the fee will be \$3.25 per 1,000 gallons per month.

For commercial use the base rate will be anywhere from \$37.50 to \$97.66, depending on what size line is required. That base rate will not include a certain amount of water and the monthly fees will be anywhere from \$3.75 to \$9.76 per 1,000 gallons, depending on line size.

"That's about middle of the line in the state," Rhodes said.

