

# 2021

# IRRIGATION UPDATE



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Eastern Irrigation District

## Vision Statement

The Eastern Irrigation District is dedicated to providing water security to the area and managing the District's diverse resources in a manner that will provide the greatest economic, social, and environmental benefit.

## Mission Statement

The Eastern Irrigation District will divert and convey water through a maintained and continually improved infrastructure system while providing good stewardship of District lands and promotion of agriculture and the local economy in a collaborative, informed, sustainable, and fiscally responsible manner through District policy and practices.

### OFFICE CLOSURE

The EID Office will be closed for Christmas and New Year's holidays at noon on Thursday, December 23<sup>rd</sup> and will reopen Tuesday, January 4<sup>th</sup>. Regular office hours are 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., with front reception being closed from 12:00 noon – 1:15 p.m.

Where Water  
Works Wonders

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# IRRIGATION UPDATE

## Results of Irrigation Applications for 2022

Following is a summary of the annual irrigation development project applications. A total of 39 applications were received. Projects were evaluated and given a rating based on criteria and weighting from Irrigation Acres Bylaw #951 (2021).

### IRRIGATION APPLICATIONS – FOR PROJECTS TO BE COMPLETED BY SEPTEMBER 30, 2022

	Total Applications	Approved Applications	Denied Applications	Approved Acres
Parcels below Newell & Crawling Valley Reservoirs (60% of the 2,000 acres/year max or 1,200 new acres)	8	8	0	1,049
Parcels not below Newell & Crawling Valley Reservoirs (40% of the 2,000 acres/year max or 800 new acres)	31	3	28	774

Additional details can be found in the November 30, 2021 minutes once approved and posted in December. Landowners with projects requiring 50 or less irrigation acres to be added to existing irrigation parcels may submit applications throughout the year; the results of these applications are also noted in the minutes posted throughout the year. Call Staci Connauton, Land Administrator - Assessment, Water and Lands at 403-363-1376 to apply.

### Alberta Irrigation Information . . .

[Alberta Irrigation Information 2020](#)  
[Why Alberta Irrigation Matters](#)

## 2021 Water Usage

Reservoirs are in good shape overall. The level of Lake Newell was drawn down this season approximately 1.5 ft below winter levels for construction purposes. Cumulative precipitation to date depicts 2021 being similar to 2019 and 2000, well below the long-term average; however, late August rains relieved most of the late season irrigation demands. Diversion for the year was approximately 550,000 ac-ft, and when including Lake Newell's draw down of approximately 25,000 ac-ft, total water volumes required this year amounted to 575,000 ac-ft. See the following table showing comparative data. 55 parcels reached the maximum limit of 24".

### WATER DIVERSIONS

Year	Acres Being Irrigated	Acre Feet Diverted
2021	309,789	575,000
2019	305,859	509,000
2017	301,309	521,200
2000	281,758	675,000

### Behind the matter...

Previously shared in Expansion Limit materials, and as stated in the Maximum Water Delivery Bylaw #907 (2016), a maximum of 24" of water per acre may be conveyed to any point of delivery, with the **full operational use across the District required to be an average of 18"/acre or less to the farm gate to stay within the District's licensed volumes.** This model permits water users to irrigate some heavier demand crops, because the balance of lower demand parcels ensures the District remains under the maximum limit. In 2021, the District delivered an average of 14.5" to the farm gate.



Fall harvest.

# IRRIGATION UPDATE

## Farm Improvement Policy – Removal of Funding for Section 8.0 and Section 9.0

Over the past 5 years, the District has approved over \$7.5 million in Farm Improvement grants. Water users are reminded that in June 2020 the Board approved removal of funding expenditures for:

- Section 8.0 (upgrades such as panels, pumps, nozzles, and pivot modifications), and
- Section 9.0 (corner arms and subsurface corners)

as set out in the Farm Improvement Policy to take effect September 30, 2022. If you wish to take advantage of the grant within the remaining timeframe, you must submit a complete application on or prior to September 30, 2022. Call Staci Connauton at 403-363-1376 for further information or to apply for a grant. [see website for policy](#)

## General Assessment – Penalty for Unreconciled Parcels

From Board direction in early 2016, a general assessment was conducted of all irrigated parcels to identify any discrepancies in the assessment roll prior to expansion modelling. The District has been working with landowners to reconcile parcels with excess irrigation and encroachment issues. Of the approximate 3,500 parcels within the District, over 2,300 parcels required no change. The District contacted landowners of the remaining 1,200 parcels requiring changes and resolved nearly all the identified issues. As of September 2021, only 4 landowners and 5 parcels remain to be resolved.

Landowners now who have parcels identified with unauthorized irrigation acres (acres in excess of assessment) that wish to continue irrigating those acres are required to apply for irrigation development through the standard process for the identified acres, and if the project rates high enough to be approved, must:

- meet all requirements (soils testing, etc.), and
- pay 150% of the new acre rate in place at the time of application,

to purchase the acres.

If the landowner does not apply for irrigation development, or the project is not approved, the landowner must cease irrigating the identified acres.

Under the *Irrigation Districts Act*, districts must maintain an assessment roll of all irrigated acres, terminable acres, annual agreement acres, and their legal description locations, as well as corresponding landowner names and addresses within its boundaries. The District encourages clear communication be made with the office for any changes in irrigation infrastructure. When there is any question as to a parcel's official assessment, please contact Staci Connauton at 403-363-1376.

### NEED SOILS?

All proposed projects need to be reviewed according to the parcel's historical soils information and various other criteria. If you have been advised that soils testing is required on your parcel, or have any questions, please call Staci Connauton at 403-362-1400.

#### Land Classification for Irrigation in Alberta

- [https://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/agdex705/\\$file/560-3.pdf?OpenElement](https://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/agdex705/$file/560-3.pdf?OpenElement)

#### Registered Agrologists

- <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/list-of-consulting-agrologists-for-land-classification-for-irrigation-development-in-alberta>



## Irrigation Recording And Management App (IRMA)

On a smart phone, tablet, laptop, or computer, water users may access IRMA's mapping layer to view their parcels' real time water usage as well as the flow rates being used to calculate water usage for the current water season. Planned future enhancements to IRMA include smoother and more convenient usage on a smart phone, personal water consumption reports, map-based water ordering, and the ability to send out District notifications to water users. Other in-house advancements have improved Field Staff capabilities, communications, and reporting, and plans are to integrate the District's infrastructure automation system.

View IRMA at: <https://gis.eid.ca/maps/irma.html>

### Irrigation Usage Details (YTD)

### Crop Details

Crop Type	Irrigation Method	Acres
AL3-ALFALFA 3 CUT	Sprinkler - Wheel-Move <2 Lats>	60
CAN-CANOLA (OIL)	Sprinkler - Wheel-Move <2 Lats>	77
WWT-WINTER WHEAT	Sprinkler - Wheel-Move <2 Lats>	17

# IRRIGATION UPDATE

## Upcoming Rehabilitation Projects

Over the past 20+ years, the District has directed over \$400 million (mostly from oil & gas revenues) into infrastructure rehabilitation. This \$20 million/year average has resulted in a conveyance system of 13 storage reservoirs, 1,300 km of pipelines, 750 km of canals, 2,000 km of drains, and over 2,500 water control structures. In recent years, an emphasis has also been put on automation (control structures, potential for systems, and IRMA – Irrigation Recording & Management App).

Potential rehabilitation projects are rated using policy guidelines and through consultation with Engineering and Operations. Through policy, the projects are preliminarily planned and presented to the Board in a 3-year format, then fully engineered and presented for final review and approval by the Board prior to the construction season. As is typical for the EID, almost all projects continue to be designed, managed, and constructed in-house by EID staff. The District has approved the following rehabilitation projects for this construction year:

[see website for maps and supplementary info](#)

### CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS – 2021/2022 CONSTRUCTION SEASON

Project	Status	Approved Estimate
<b>Earthworks</b>		
West Bantry Canal <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Phase 2</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the West Bantry Canal serves 21,798 irrigation acres through a total length of 10 km</li><li>• it has a bed width of 7 m and a flow of 410 cfs</li><li>• the project has been separated into 3 phases</li><li>• Phase 1 was completed in the 2019/2020 construction season</li><li>• Phase 2 will be completed this fall, for a total length of 2.5 km</li><li>• Phase 3 is planned for 2022/2023 under IRP</li></ul>	\$650,000
<b>Pipelines</b>		
Scott Pipeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• currently serves 3,809 acres</li><li>• main inlet moved and stilling pond constructed</li><li>• converting canal to 17 km pipeline with laterals</li><li>• adding 889 additional pivot acres to the pipeline and will have the potential of adding 3,000 future irrigation acres</li></ul>	\$16,324,000
13-H West Bantry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• serves 175 acres, currently flood</li><li>• converting canal to 900 m of closed pipeline</li></ul>	\$377,000
08-A & 08-B Springhill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2 extensions totalling 6 km of pipeline</li><li>• to reduce inefficiencies of creating artificial spill, the project converts 393 terminable acres off Matzhiwin Creek to irrigation acres from a closed gravity pipeline</li></ul>	\$924,000
12 Springhill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• serves 5,118 acres</li><li>• twin 54" PVC pipe will replace 1.2 km of existing canal</li><li>• 1.8 km canal bank will be lifted and rehabbed</li><li>• existing check structure will be modified</li></ul>	\$4,674,000
<b>Structures</b>		
2021/2022 Structure Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2 check/drop structures to be replaced</li><li>• 2 nose pieces to be replaced</li><li>• 5 gabion (rock) walls to be added to existing settling ponds</li><li>• 1 structure to have the culvert replaced and a new gate added</li><li>• 1 structure to have the gate replaced</li></ul>	\$950,000



# IRRIGATION UPDATE

## Proposed Snake Lake Reservoir Expansion Project

Preliminary Estimate - \$170,000,000 Potential Government Funding – 30%

- The proposed project will increase the reservoir live storage by approximately 53,000 acre-feet to 67,000 acre-feet.
- Currently, 140,000 irrigated acres are either unsupported by a reservoir or receive limited reservoir support.
- Approximately 50,000 of these acres are downstream of the Snake Lake Reservoir. The expansion project will reduce the unsupported acres in the District by 35%.
- The remaining 90,000 acres will continue to be unsupported by a reservoir, but will see increased indirect support due to the increase of acres being supported from the Snake Lake Reservoir expansion.
- Environmental and engineering investigations are underway, meetings with affected landowners are ongoing, and discussions with government officials on the regulatory approval process are occurring.

Revenues received from the sale of irrigation acres since the passing of our 2021 Expansion Limit Change Bylaw on March 8, 2021 are pledged towards repayment of our low interest loan associated with the Alberta Irrigation Modernization Program (the "AIM Program") announced in 2020 for funding of District modernization and storage projects. As of September 30, 2021, we have received approximately \$16.39 million (\$10.24 million by way of loan and \$6.15 million by way of Government of Alberta grant) through the AIM Program. Below is a table summarizing, as of September 30, 2021, the applicable revenues received to date and which are pledged for repayment of the loan.

### CAPITAL ASSETS REVENUE

	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter [Mar]	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter [Apr-May-Jun]	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter [Jul-Aug-Sep]	Cumulative [Mar 8 to Sep 30]
Irrigation Acre Purchases	\$0	\$727,650	\$2,127,400	\$2,855,050



Pivot Irrigation.

# IRRIGATION UPDATE

## Drainage Program

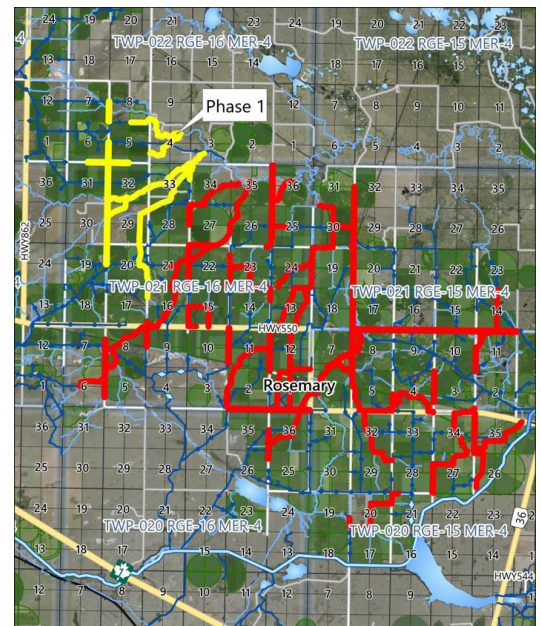
Previously managed independently, the County of Newell and the Eastern Irrigation District partnered in 2011 by pooling funds and beginning work to improve the drainage system in the most pressing areas of the County/District. An equal financial commitment from both parties, presently at \$1 million each, has enabled over 240 km of rehabilitation work in the communities of Cassils, Scandia, Rolling Hills, Rainier, and Millicent.

The arrangement provides for irrigation spillways and major drains to be funded by the EID, whereas natural drains and road drains not connected to irrigated land are funded by the County of Newell. It is those drains and road drains adjacent to or draining irrigation land, whether irrigation spill or natural runoff, that are a 50/50 cost share between the EID and the County. The EID completes both the engineering design and the construction work. Any required land acquisition and/or working space agreements are the responsibility of the party or parties to which the drainage applies.

Drains are being designed to work in conjunction for the overall areas, with completed rehabs benefiting individual landowners and the community as a whole. By connecting drainage systems and mitigating problem areas and those susceptible to significant rainfall or snowmelt events, this program assists in safeguarding private and public infrastructure, improves landowner production and efficiencies, and helps to protect landowner investments.

Presently, the program is in the first phase of a 7 year program in the Rosemary area, where 185 km are planned for rehabilitation. Completion of the full design is critical to this area which has seen considerable overland flooding during the spring melts in years past. For information on what is planned, or if you have any concerns, landowners are encouraged to contact Ryan Gagley, Engineering Manager, at 403-363-5645.

Additionally, the EID has cost-share grants for water users to relocate drains whether on the water user's timeline or in conjunction with the Drainage Program. Please contact the EID Office to see how the District may help you and if your request might qualify under these grants.



## Canal/Drain Ownership & Salvage Fishing

As a general guide, the large canals and drains are owned by the EID and public access is allowed unless otherwise indicated. The small and medium sized canals and drains are often not owned by the EID and are not open for public access. In these cases, the EID only has an easement across a private landowner's land for the construction and operation of the water conveyance infrastructure.

Salvage fishing after the canals have been dewatered has always been a popular activity. With the loss of the Fish & Wildlife office in Brooks, you now need to get the salvage licence from the Fish & Wildlife offices in Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, Hanna, Calgary, or Edmonton. The license costs \$5.00 + GST and typically allows you to harvest a set number of sportfish of any size from the dewatered canals using gear (dip net or beach seine) otherwise not permitted.

Please respect gates, instructional signs, and neighbouring landowners when salvage fishing. Use extreme caution if salvage fishing around EID water control structures. The salvage fishing licence does not authorize the construction of fish traps in EID canals or the removal, addition, or relocation of armour (rock) from EID canals. The salvage fishing licence is not valid in locations where the fish may get into a reservoir on their own, typically downstream of the last drop structure before the canal flows into a reservoir.



# IRRIGATION UPDATE

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## Ice Fishing & Trapping

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Ice fishing season is fast approaching. All EID access rules remain in force during the winter. When accessing EID reservoirs keep highway vehicles on established roads and trails. No fires or camping on shore, and pets must always remain under control. If off-highway vehicles are to be used to access the ice, off load from the closest established trail and then take the most direct line on and off the ice.

Use extreme caution when driving on the ice on EID reservoirs. During the 2020/2021 winter, the District was aware of at least a dozen vehicles that went through the ice in EID reservoirs.

The EID permits trapping for fur bearers on EID lands and in EID reservoirs. Coyotes are the fur bearer most frequently targeted in recent times. The EID allows snaring for coyotes, but only traditional locking snares (no spring assistance) may be used, and snaring may only occur between December 1 and February 28.



ice fishing shelter.

## Access Policy & Hunting Permission

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The EID adopted an updated Access Policy for District Owned Lands in June of 2021. The revised policy is much more comprehensive, encompassing all types of access on EID lands and clarifies access rules and penalties for violations.

[see website for policy](#)

As part of these revisions the EID is moving towards mandatory written permission for hunting on EID owned lands. It is anticipated that a self-serve hunting permission system will be operational on the new EID website in 2022, but until then hunters have the following options for acquiring written permission:

1. Visit the EID office during reception hours (8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. & 1:15 p.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday – Friday) and fill out the hunting permission letter.
2. Call the EID during reception hours (362-1400) and ask for a hunting permission letter. The receptionist will take your information and email or fax you the letter.
3. Email Daniel Buell, Land Administrator – Habitat, Wildlife & Access at [daniel.buell@eid.ca](mailto:daniel.buell@eid.ca)

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and help in ensuring the EID private lands remain open for public use. If you require additional information, please contact Daniel Buell, Land Administrator - Habitat, Wildlife and Access at 403-363-5618.



Vehicle off designated route.



# IRRIGATION UPDATE

## Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Prevention Program

Invasive species are non-native plant or animal species introduced intentionally or unintentionally from other countries or areas. Aquatic invasive species (AIS) establish in water bodies and are of particular concern to irrigation districts and irrigation farmers. Vegetation such as flowering rush as well as fish species like Prussian Carp, and Zebra and Quagga Mussels continue to be a threat, and all have the potential to negatively impact irrigation infrastructure. Once established, invasive mussels will clog water delivery infrastructure and change the ecological make up of irrigation reservoirs.

As movement of aquatic invasive species into new areas mainly occurs by travelling watercraft, the EID initiated the AIS Prevention Program in 2018. All boaters wishing to access EID reservoirs must follow approved prevention procedures and each year complete a watercraft information form. The District's major reservoirs and downstream canal systems continue to be monitored; no signs of mussels within District infrastructure have been found to date. Additional AIS information and reservoir access rules may be found on the District's website.

Help do your part to prevent the introduction of invasive mussels to this area. To enroll in the program or for more information, contact Brandi Doerksen, Land Administrator – Aquatic Invasive Species, [brandi.doerksen@eid.ca](mailto:brandi.doerksen@eid.ca) 403-363-9694.



REGISTRATION LOCATION	LOW RISK	FROM OUT OF PROVINCE	FROM OUT OF COUNTRY	TOTAL	*HIGH RISK	DISALLOWED ENTRY
<a href="#">Crawling Valley Reservoir</a>	1,245	23	2	1,270	13	4
<a href="#">Lake Newell Resort Marina</a>	304	4	0	308	3	0
<a href="#">Lake Newell Reservoir</a>	1,538	70	2	1,610	28	4
<a href="#">Rolling Hills Reservoir</a>	928	29	1	958	17	4
<a href="#">EID Office</a>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<a href="#">Other</a>	20	0	0	20	0	0
<b>TOTALS for 2021</b>	<b>4,035</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4,166</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>12</b>
TOTALS for 2020	4,229	138	1	4,368	64	15
TOTALS for 2019	2,423	100	20	2,543	82	4

In 2021 the EID registered 4,166 watercraft (sailboats, wakeboard boats, ski boats, fishing boats, kayaks, canoes, paddleboards, and other non-motorized watercraft). Out of province watercraft came from British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, and Montana.



Quagga and Zebra Mussels.

# IRRIGATION UPDATE

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## Revised Policies & Bylaws

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The following noteworthy bylaws and policies have been approved since the last newsletter this spring:

- **Board Code of Conduct**

- The Code of Conduct was approved April 27, 2021. It establishes standards for the ethical conduct of directors relating to their roles and obligations as directors of the EID, as well as the investigation and enforcement of those standards. [see website for policy](#)

- **Vision and Mission Statements**

- The Vision and Mission Statements were revised May 26, 2021, and serve as an update to the previous statement from the 1990's. [see front page of newsletter](#)

- **Access Policy for District Owned Lands**

- The revised Access Policy is much more comprehensive than the previous policy, encompassing all types of access on EID lands and clarifies access rules and penalties for violations. It was revised June 22, 2021. [see website for policy](#)

- **Capital Assets Charges Bylaw #954 (2021)**

- Bylaw #954 was passed on November 30, 2021. It maintains the capital asset charges from the prior bylaw along with the capital construction cost-sharing provisions and interest for late payment. New financing agreements are no longer available as water users should be able to obtain financing at much better rates from a financial institution, and the capital asset charges owed to the District are now pledged for repayment of the loan under the AIM Program. Effective December 1, 2022, and each December thereafter, the capital asset charges will increase by 2% from the prior year. The purchase price the District is willing to pay for irrigation acres sold back to the District will now mirror the capital asset charge for new parcel irrigation acres. [see website for bylaw](#)

- **Audio Recording Policy**

- This policy was passed on November 16, 2021. Beginning in January 2022, the District will now audio record Board meetings and upload the recordings onto the EID website for access by the public. This policy establishes the District rules and protocols associated with the audio recording of Board meetings as well as procedures for members of the public wishing to present at a Board meeting. [see website for bylaw](#)

- **Election Date Bylaw**

- The Election Date Bylaw passed November 30, 2021, sets the date for the election, if any, to be held in 2022. If an election is required to elect a Director in Division 2 (Rosemary/Duchess), 4 (Cassils/Brooks), or 7 (Rolling Hills), the election shall be held April 12, 2022. [see website for additional information](#)

### BOARD OF DIRECTOR MEETINGS

Regular Board of Director Meetings are typically held on the 4th Tuesday of each month, with variance to the date as required. Agenda items are prepared in advance and depending on the matter, may require up to several days or a few weeks to research, obtain, and prepare the necessary information. If you have a submission, whether directly from yourself or through staff or a Director, please be sure to contact us well in advance of the preferred Board Meeting in order to determine if it may be possible to schedule your matter on the applicable Board Meeting agenda.



# IRRIGATION UPDATE

## EIDNet – Phase 1 Fibre Project

EIDNet has a network of 18 towers serving more than 1,800 local farms, ranches, businesses, and individuals in community hubs and outlying rural areas. It was established in 1995 to service the local rural areas that would have otherwise been without any internet access, or affordable access. For 25 years, EIDNet has improved and expanded its business, now being the only Wireless Internet Service Provider (WISP) to have unlimited internet usage and guaranteed speeds on all of its service plans.

Internet usage has become an integral part of business and everyday life for our customers, with usage possibilities and demands continually increasing. Similarly, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) states that internet service providers should be able to deliver internet accounts capable of providing 50.0 Mbps download speed / 10.0 Mbps upload speed by the end of 2021. In predicting the increase demand in the bandwidth required by our customers, comprehensive investigation and planning was initiated for an 8 phase fibre optic build. Phase 1 of the project to connect the Brooks, One Tree, Duchess, and Rosemary towers with a fibre network at an estimated cost of \$3,000,000 was approved in 2020. Upon completion of additional analysis and

routing considerations, the project was reconfirmed to proceed. Construction of Phase 1 began in August and is scheduled to be complete this month. The conduit has been installed to the One Tree, Rosemary, and Duchess towers, with the fibre currently being blown in. Phase 2 of the project is to begin in the spring of 2022, with Bantry and Cassils towers being added to the fibre network.

If you have any questions regarding the fibre project, your account, or the services provided, please call the EIDNet department at 403-362-1401. EIDNet also offers custom accounts, access points, point-to-point kits, and the following new service as noted in red:

<https://www.eidnet.ca>

### RATE PLANS AND SERVICES

Available Plans	Download/Upload	Cost/Month	Rate Payer Cost/Month
Fast	6.0 Mbps / 3.0 Mbps	\$65.00	\$50.00
Premium	9.0 Mbps / 3.0 Mbps	\$80.00	\$65.00
Ultra	20.0 Mbps / 4.0 Mbps	\$100.00	\$85.00
<b>Super UT</b>	<b>Up to 50.0 Mbps / 10.0 Mbps</b>	<b>\$120.00</b>	<b>\$105.00</b>
Super Office	50.0 Mbps / 10.0 Mbps	\$300.00	\$285.00



EIDNet Phase 1 Fibre Conduit Installation.

### Did you know...

In the late 1800's and early 1900's, when telephone services were just beginning, the barbed wire fences between farms were sometimes used for makeshift telephone systems.

In 1995, EIDNet was launched, offering EID water users up to 60 minutes of free access per day at 14.4 Kbps. It was the first local internet service, saving internet users from paying long-distance charges to dial-up services in Calgary or Medicine Hat.

Now, over 100 years since the use of fence wire to communicate, EIDNet is launching internet plans with download speeds of up to 50.0 Mbps (50,000 Kbps). My, how times have changed!



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[www.eid.ca](http://www.eid.ca)

All Annual Reports and Newsletters  
can be read online at:

**Please Note:**