



## City of Ketchum

News Release  
March 25, 2015

### **Ketchum Water Bonds to Go on May 19 Ballot** *Lower Maintenance Costs Would Offset Cost of Bond Payments*

KETCHUM, IDAHO -- A bond issue to enable Ketchum to discontinue use of aging portions of the water system will go on the May 19 ballot. A simple majority of voters would need to approve the proposal, which is expected to reduce maintenance costs, increase reliability and encourage conservation.

Portions of the community core and the Lewis Street industrial area use pipes installed by Ketchum Springs Water, a private water system that the city acquired in the 1980s.

The Ketchum Springs Water pipes, many of which are more than half a century old, were constructed of wood and steel. They are buried less than six feet deep in some places, meaning that water must be pumped through them to prevent freezing in the winter. This wastes both water and the electricity needed for pumping. Frequent breakages disrupt water service and increase maintenance costs.

In addition, no water meters were installed. Property owners served by this system currently pay a flat rate no matter how much water they use. As part of this project, a water meter would be installed for each property and the rate would be based on usage, as it is in the rest of the city.

Estimates are that the decrease in maintenance expenses would offset the bond repayment costs, said Robyn Mattison, public works director.

The city is eligible to apply for a loan of up to \$450,000 from the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality to convert users onto the city system and install water meters. Under Idaho law, the loan must be in the form of a revenue bond and must be repaid entirely from fees charged to water users, Mattison said. No other tax receipts could be used for this purpose. The 20-year bonds would have a fixed interest rate of 2.75 percent.

While the city would pay for installation of new meters and service lines to the property line, property owners would pay the cost of new or relocated water service lines on private property. Plans are to offer them the option of paying at the completion of construction or over time through assessments.

###

## **About the City of Ketchum**

The city of Ketchum is located in the Wood River Valley in south central Idaho. Founded in 1880 during the mining boom, Ketchum is now regarded as one of the most popular destinations for winter and summer visitors due to its world-class skiing, mountain biking, fishing, hiking, restaurants, art galleries and shopping. The city of Ketchum hosts the famous annual Wagon Days Parade, held on Labor Day weekend, and numerous other year-round attractions. Ketchum is home to more than 10,000 full- and part-time residents. For more information about the city of Ketchum, visit [www.ketchumidaho.org](http://www.ketchumidaho.org).

### **Contact:**

Lisa Enourato  
(208) 720-9766, [lenourato@ketchumidaho.org](mailto:lenourato@ketchumidaho.org)

Jo Murray  
(208) 726-5869, [jo@jomurray.com](http://jo@jomurray.com)