

Memorandum

TO: City Council
FROM: Todd Jagoe , Utilities Supervisor
DATE: December 1, 2025
SUBJECT: Accept the quote from Leak Locators of Montana for leak detection equipment
ITEM NUMBER: 8.j
SECTION: CONSENT AGENDA

REQUESTED MOTION

To accept the quote from Leak Locators of Montana for the purchase of leak detection equipment in the amount of \$23,603.00

INTRODUCTION

Staff has been researching equipment used to find water main and sanitary sewer force main leaks and is recommending the city council accept the quote from Leak Locators of Montana.

DISCUSSION

Currently the city relies on a consultant to help locate underground water and sanitary sewer force main leaks. Equipment is used to listen for particular sounds that are made where a leak is occurring. The equipment has been proven to be accurate in determining leak locations reducing the time required to find the leak and the area that is disturbed to fix the leak. This reduces the time required to complete the repair and restoration of the disturbed area which also helps to reduce the overall cost.

Scheduling the consultant on short notice, when a leak occurs, can be challenging and may delay the repair or cause scheduling issues with contractors, if they are required to complete the repair. These issues can be magnified when conditions are challenging such as in the winter when temperatures are below freezing.

The cost of using the consultant for leak detection varies between \$350.00 and \$900.00 per incident, depending on the difficulty and severity of the leak. Our records indicate that the cost for this service has averaged \$4,500 per year over the last few years. Additionally, the same contractor is used during the spring and summer months to perform routine hydrant listening that can help find leaks in the system that have not been detected. This service has averaged \$5,000 per year over the same time period.

Equipment to perform the leak detection can be purchased, which would eliminate the issues associated with hiring a consultant but training and experience would be required to use it effectively. At this time the utility division is in a unique position to maximize the benefits of in house leak detection if the equipment were purchase. We are fortunate to have an employee on staff who previously worked for the consultant for ten years and possesses the knowledge and experience required to operate the equipment effectively. Additional staff would also be

trained to use the equipment.

Given our in house staff is proficient with a particular type of equipment, the quote presented for consideration is for that type of equipment. Based on an average annual cost of \$9,500 for leak detection consulting services, the pay-back period on the initial purchase price of \$23,603.00 is less than three years. Purchasing of the equipment would be funded from the water and sewer supplies enterprise funds.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the city council accept the quote from Leak Locators of Montana in the amount of \$23,603.00

ATTACHMENTS

[Leak Locators of Montana Quote](#)