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Property bill could include water basin assessment fee

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August 06, 2014 6:00 am • By Dylan Woolf Harris

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CARLIN — When Thomas Burney opened his property tax bill last week, he was surprised with a new charge.

Water, he said.

Burney pays the City of Carlin for water in a consolidated bill that includes sewer and garbage, however, so he was curious why the county had included the fee.

It turns out the money Burney pays will go to monitoring the Marys Creek water basin where his property is located, according to the Nevada Division of Water Resources.

And he's not alone.

County Assessor Katrinka Russell confirmed that residents in 10 water basins pay a similar assessment. Property owners living in three of those basins — Marys Creek, Elko Segment and Pine Valley — will see the charge for the first time, she said.

Mark Sivazlian, engineer with the Nevada Division of Water Resources, said the division designates and monitors many water basins in the state, and the assessment helps cover the costs.

The system is designed so that people living in the specific water basins are the ones paying for their assessments, which can be ordered for a wide range of reasons.

First the division designates a basin, Sivazlian said, then if warranted the state engineer can issue a plan to mitigate concerns. In many cases, no action is taken after a basin is designated.

"The process of determining if a basin is suitable (for designation) goes through several steps and checks and balances," he said.

The division said most of the assessments will be minimal.

Burney said he was charged \$4.46 on each of the three parcels he owns — two of which, he

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