



## City of Quinte West Water/Sewer Policy

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### POLICY

The Corporation of the City of Quinte West follows a prescribed administrative policy to ensure the prompt, effective and efficient collection of all water and wastewater charges that are due to the Corporation.

### PURPOSE

The Quinte West Water/Sewer Policy provides the procedures that are followed by the water and wastewater billing clerks and finance staff to ensure prompt, efficient and courteous service to the ratepayers of the municipality, provide proper billing of the water and wastewater rates as per by-law fees and apply the collection procedures on a consistent manner to all ratepayers.

### PART 1 - DEFINITIONS

1. **Building** of Corporation shall mean a structure supplied with water and/or wastewater services.
2. **Consumer** shall mean the owner or occupant of any property which is serviced by, connected to, and who takes water from a Municipal water system and/or discharges waste to a wastewater system.
3. **Council** shall mean the Municipal Council of the Corporation of the City of Quinte West.
4. **Customer** means the owner, tenant or occupant of premises who has signed an application for service to receive water or wastewater services from Quinte West water.
5. **Meter** means the water meter supplied and owned by the Municipality to measure the quantity of water utilized by customer.
6. **Billable Unit** shall mean a unit, as determined by the municipality, which is being supplied or is to be supplied with water and/or wastewater services.

7. **Multiple Unit Building** shall mean a single building served by a single water service pipe, and containing two or more dwelling units or two or more commercial or industrial units or any combination thereof.
8. **Municipality** shall mean the Corporation of the City of Quinte West.
9. **Occupant** shall include any lessee, tenant, owner, the agent of a lessee, tenant or owner, or any person in possession of premises.
10. **Owner** shall include every person, partnership, corporation or other legal entity that is the registered owner of the premises being supplied with municipal water or waste water service by the City.
11. **Tenant** shall mean one that pays rent to use or occupy land, a building or other property owned by another.
12. **Premises** shall mean the property being supplied or to be supplied with water or wastewater services and includes the portion of a multiple occupancy premises separately supplied.
13. **Water** means potable water that is fit for human consumption.
14. **Wastewater** means the composite of water and water-carried wastes from residential, commercial, industrial or institutional premises or any other source.
15. **Appointment** meaning date and time scheduled with municipal staff.
16. **Contractor** means a person or company that undertakes a contract to provide materials or labour to perform a service or do a job.

## **PART 2 – ESTABLISH/FINALIZING WATER/WASTEWATER ACCOUNTS**

To establish a new account, all arrears must be paid on any/all previous active and/or inactive accounts and an application for service must be completed. This application must be completed by all property owners, including the owners of properties which are occupied by tenants.

### **When no account currently exists (including new builds):**

- Services are billed to contractor beginning the date water/wastewater services are turned on by municipal staff.
- If water/wastewater services are turned on by anyone other than municipal staff, the contractor is charged a flat rate from the date of service installation and/or inspection.
- The property owner/purchaser is required to complete an application for service. The owner will be contacted by a Water Billing staff member to arrange an appointment to install a water meter.

**Customer Owned Property:**

- a) Requests to finalize account when new owner has completed an application for service:
  - Read meter and change customer information. A fee, as per the current Consolidated Fee By-Law, will be charged to the new customer for new account setup.
- b) Requests to finalize account when we have no information on new owner:
  - Read and leave door hanger. Customer is given five (5) calendar days to contact the office and make necessary arrangements before service may be disconnected.

**Rentals:**

- a) Request to finalize account when a new tenant has signed for services:
  - Read the meter and change customer account information.
  - Tenants are required to complete an application for service prior to the date they will assume responsibility for the water/sewer account. A deposit in accordance with the current Consolidated Fee By Law will be added to the first bill issued to the tenant. Failure to pay the deposit by the due date indicated on the first bill will be subject to account closure and/or disconnection of service.
- b) Request to finalize account when no new tenant has signed:
  - Read and leave door hanger. Customer is given five (5) calendar days to contact the office and make necessary arrangements before service may be disconnected.
  - In the event that no new tenant signs for the account, the account will automatically revert to the owner's name after 5 calendar days.

**PART 3 – COLLECTIONS**

- Bills are due 21 days after the date of issue.
- When an account is set up on the Pre-authorized Payment Plan, payment will be withdrawn on the due date indicated on the bill.

- If the account remains unpaid after the due date, penalty will be added as per the current Consolidated Fee By-Law and collection procedures will commence. These procedures may include one or more of the following:
  - reminder notice
  - final notice
  - door hanger
  - addition to tax roll for amounts over \$20.00
  - disconnection
  - Collection Agency
- If disconnection occurs, notice will be given to Water/Wastewater Superintendent/ Manager of Revenue/Mayor's Office.
- Reconnection will occur once the account has been paid in full including reconnection fee as per the current Consolidated Fee By-Law.
- If unable to disconnect a tenant for any reason and the account is a minimum of 2 bills past due, the account will be finalized and a new account established in owner's name.
- A fee according to the current Consolidated Fee By-Law will be applied for all returned items which have been returned by the bank.
- Failure to receive a water/wastewater bill doesn't exempt customer from penalty charges. Any billing sent by ordinary mail or via e-billing is considered delivered to and received by the addressee within 3 business days.

#### **PART 4 –FROZEN WATER METER**

- A customer is responsible to heat the space where the water meter is housed. If the meter freezes or breaks due to neglect, the Owner of the property will be responsible for the cost of replacing the meter.
- Municipal staff will install the new meter once the premises has been properly heated and/or insulated and all pipes thawed. Municipal staff will remove and dispose of the old meter.
- The municipality is responsible for the maintenance and repair of water meters excluding when meter has been vandalized or frozen.
  - Any other leak must be repaired by the owner at owner's expense

## **PART 5 – OTHER**

- **To Winterize**
  - A reading is taken when the water service is turned off at the street by municipal staff and the account is finalized. A fee as per the current Consolidated Fee By-Law is charged to customer's account when service is turned on or off for the season.
  - The customer is not charged for services while the water remains off at the street.
  
- **For Demolition**
  - An appointment with municipal staff is required to read and remove the meter and turn water off at the street.
    - A final bill is rendered after the meter has been read and removed from premises.
  
- **To Turn off/on & Seal/Unseal Meter**
  - Applicable charges as per the current Consolidated Fee By-Law will apply when any of these services are provided by the municipality.
  - These charges will be billed directly to the property owner.
  
- **High Consumption**
  - Unaccountably large variances in consumption are reviewed by municipal staff and may result in the meter being re-read and or a letter being sent to customer advising of possible leak/broken meter
  - The municipality may allow for one adjustment to one bill per calendar year on a residential account for an eligible leak.
  - For adjustment request to be considered, customer must submit the following prior to due date indicated on the bill.
    - Receipts for repair if applicable
    - Written request for adjustment
    - Any other documents requested by municipal staff.