

THE CORPORATION OF THE
MUNICIPALITY OF GREENSTONE

POLICY MANUAL

SECTION: Corporate Services **SUBJECT:** **WATER AND SEWER
BILLING
COLLECTION POLICY**

EFFECTIVE DATE: **May 8, 2017**

AUTHORIZATION: 17-84 (Section 12 removed by By-law 23-14)

This policy shall provide a directive for collection procedures for accounts in arrears and those with special charges.

1. A Water/Sewer Service Record (Tenant Form) (Form 1) must be completed for all changes in service or no changes will be made in the billing. The current owner is responsible for all amounts billed until such time as the Land Registry office advises the Municipality of new ownership. It is the responsibility of the owner(s) to inform the Municipality of any change of address.
2. A charge shall be levied, in accordance with the Municipal Fees and Charges By-law, for any water supply connection and disconnection including those initiated by the Municipality due to collection action.
3. A charge shall be levied, in accordance with the Municipal Fees and Charges By-law, for any water supply connection and disconnection outside of regular working hours of Public Work Staff - 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. (Monday to Friday). Recognized

Statutory Holidays and other designated holidays by the Municipality are considered outside of regular working hours.

4. A penalty charge of 15% per annum (1.25% per month) shall be imposed on all bills not paid by the specified due date of the month in which bills are issued.
5. If the account is one (1) full billing in arrears, a reminder sticker (Sample on Form 2) will be added to the next billing advising of possible disconnection if not paid in full or payment arrangements are not made by due date. Utility reminders (Overdue Notices) for all accounts in arrears are to be mailed within two weeks following the billing due date.
6. If the account is two (2) full quarters in arrears, a letter (Form 3) is sent by prepaid mail advising that the water supply to the property shall be turned off if not paid in full or payment arrangements satisfactory to the municipality are not made by due date. This letter will be provided to the owner(s) and tenants (if applicable) not fewer than seven (7) calendar days before the proposed shut-off.
7. Under Section 398 of the Municipal Act 2001, in the case of fees and charges for the supply of a public utility, unpaid fees and charges may be added to the tax roll of the property to which the public utility was supplied. Any fees still outstanding 30 days following the termination of service shall be added to the tax roll of the owner on record and the owner shall be advised in writing (form 6). On the first month after the due date, interest will be charged at the rate of 1.25% per month (15% per annum) on any balance of unpaid taxes including utility arrears added to the tax roll.

8. A list of properties that require water disconnections will be approved by the Office Manager or designate and the water disconnection notices will be submitted to the Public Services Department for action. (Form 4). Charges as per item 2 and 3 above will apply.
9. Before water is turned back on, the arrears must be paid in full or a payment plan, approved by the Director of Corporate Services or designate, is established. If a customer has defaulted on prior payment plans, payment in full is required.
10. If the Municipality is holding any monies owing to the customer, such as accounts payable cheques, these amounts will be applied to the customer's water arrears, with notification to the customer.
11. Effective December 1, 2014, where a metered user is presented with a water/sewer bill which is clearly not representative of normal consumption, and where the metered user can clearly demonstrate that timely corrective actions were taken to mitigate the amount of water lost, the Municipality will allow, once in a four year period, an adjustment downwards to an amount equal to the average billings for the previous two quarters.
12. Section 12 of Policy 17-84 was removed by By-law 23-14 effective July 1, 2023.

13. The ability to purchase municipal property or other municipal services will be restricted if the ratepayers property taxes or water and sewer accounts are not current.

14. Meter Testing at the Customer’s Request:

- a) Public Works Department will be contacted to verify meter consumption readings and to ensure the meter is in working order by performing a physical check of the installed meter.
- b) Upon written request from the owner and payment of a deposit as stipulated in the Municipal Fees and Charges By-law, the meter will be removed by Public Works and tested for accuracy. If the meter is found to be within acceptable limits of accuracy, as deemed by the testing authority, it shall be considered to register correctly and the complete cost for removing, testing and reinstalling the meter will be charged to the owner less deposit already recorded.
- c) If the meter is found to register inaccurately, as deemed by the testing authority, no charge shall be applied for the cost of removing, testing and replacing the meter and the customer will be entitled to a credit or refund in the amount of the deposit paid. In addition, the Municipality shall authorize a reduction or refund to the Customer, equal to the additional water consumption incurred by reason of the excess percentage in the reading based on the consumption for the three (3) months prior to the test or last quarterly billing, if such data is available or otherwise as calculated or estimated by the Municipality. In no case shall any refund or reduction be made which would reduce the water rate below the minimum rate established by the Municipality.

15. Council may, at its discretion, change, alter or suspend any part of this collection policy.