

MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND

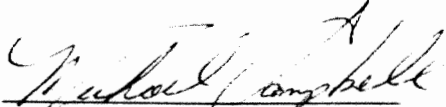
POLICY

POLICY NAME: WATER COLLECTION & CONNECTION

APPROVAL DATE: FEBRUARY 9, 1987

MUNICIPALITY OF RICHMOND

WATER COLLECTION & CONNECTION POLICY


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February 2, 1987

S U M M A R Y

- A. Connections & Disconnections
 - i) Informing Accounting of Changes
 - ii) Accurate written record-keeping

- B. Installation of Services
 - i) Notify Accounting of Connections
 - ii) Ensuring the Municipality is aware of new connections

- C. Late Payment of Bills
 - i) Late Pay Notices
 - ii) Disconnection Notices
 - iii) Review Outstanding Accounts

- D. Illegal Connections
 - i) Finding

- E. Actions Regarding Offenders

- F. Service Charges

A. CONNECTIONS AND DISCONNECTIONS

In discussion with the accounting department, it was decided to commence a "three copy application memo" system. This would consist of one copy being sent to the customer, one to accounting and one retained by Public Works. Each memo to be consecutively numbered and to contain:

- (a) Date of request
- (b) Date of connection or disconnection
- (c) Customer's name and address
- (d) Customer's signature
- (e) Utility name and account numbers
- (f) Location of residence
- (g) Any changes in either name or special instructions

Upon request for a change, the customer shall be given or mailed the form to be filled out and returned with the appropriate fee.

It shall be noted on the form that no action shall take place without the written approval of the Director on the space provided.

The forms shall be consecutively numbered so that any forms sent to the customer will receive a follow-up letter within 30 days should the customer fail to return the form.

The following should be noted on the form:

- (a) The Municipality may refuse to connect a service if an outstanding amount is owed against the premises;
- (b) If anyone other than Municipal Staff connects a service, a penalty of \$100 shall be charged against the property plus an estimated billing for arrears and water shall be disconnected until financial restitution is made.

(c) The Municipality shall perform connections and disconnections of service during normal business hours for a fee. The Municipality may perform such connections and disconnections at other times other than normal business hours if requested to do so by the customer for an additional fee.

(d) The service connection from the property line to the dwelling shall be inspected by Public Works Staff at which time an inspection form shall be signed by Public Works Staff. If the customer fails to have this inspection done, the Municipality shall not be responsible for any blockage, breaks, etc. in the connection that occur after installation.

B. INSTALLATION OF SERVICES

At present the customer is given a copy of the service contract, one copy is sent to the accounting department and one copy is retained by the Public Works Department. This service contract has information such as address, account number, utility, etc. required to begin billing once the customer comes on line.

The Deputy Clerk shall be responsible to maintain a list of property owners who have received service connections. The Deputy Clerk will also be responsible for obtaining written confirmation from the Public Works Director on a quarterly basis prior to each billing which indicates those property owners that remain unconnected even though they have received a service.

C. LATE PAYMENT OF BILLS

Quarterly read-outs of the accounts can be obtained from the

accounting department. Customers with arrears of 6 months to 9 months will be sent "Late Pay Notices". Any account over 9 months in arrears shall be sent a "Disconnect Notice". A disconnect notice will give the people 7 days to repay 50% of the total owed and 6 months to reduce the bill to zero arrears. If unable to pay 50% in 7 days, then a request may be made to Council for a payment arrangement, however, any arrangements will include that arrears are to be eliminated within one year.

D. ILLEGAL CONNECTIONS

Initially, the Public Works staff must try to determine if a problem exists with illegal connections. To do this:

- (1) The councillors of each serviced area shall be asked if they believe that this problem exists in their area.
- (2) Depending on the answer received from the councillor, each district shall be enumerated to determine the actual number of residential and commercial units. With this information the water accounts shall be compared to determine who is and who is not getting billed for water. Once this information is compiled, the councillor shall again be requested to go over the list to determine if there are any errors or omissions. The resulting list of suspect houses shall be investigated by municipal staff to determine if they are connected to the municipal services.
- (3) It should be noted that the only way to prove that a unit is on the municipal services is to:
 - (i) check water shut-off manually or
 - (ii) do a chlorine residual on the water in the house or business

E. ACTIONS REGARDING OFFENDERS

Once a party has been found to have an illegal connection, various methods can be used to dissuade reoccurrence. These methods shall go from the mildest to the extreme with no preference.

- (1) To start billing the offender from the time he is caught;
- (2) To bill the offender for a certain amount of arrears when caught;
- (3) To place an advertisement in the local papers giving a grace period for people to voluntarily turn themselves in or face prosecution;
- (4) To charge the offenders with a criminal offence of stealing from a utility.

F. ADMINISTRATION AND SERVICE CHARGES

The institution of service charges shall become part of the policy. These charges should include:

- \$20.00 - Installation of TRT's
- \$10.00 - Plus cost of materials for repairs
- \$10.00 - Per year for extra service such as TRT's
- \$15.00 - Plus cost of materials for repair of water shut-off,
ie. replacement, finding shut-off, etc.
- \$10.00 - Connections and Disconnections during working hours
- \$25.00 - Connections and Disconnections at times other than normal
working hours