



Utility Policy

P 17 -2013

CITY OF WARMAN

**Utility Policy
P17-2013**

Passed by Resolution at the

Regular Meeting of Council held on November 25th, 2013

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March 26, 2018, January 27, 2020

This policy shall come into force and take effect on the date of adoption.

January 27, 2020

Date

City Manager

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1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of the Utility Policy for the City of Warman is to provide clear guidelines to the Utility Clerk and to the front desk staff while keeping consistency among residents of Warman.

2.0 WATER AND SEWER RATES

- 2.1 Water and sewer rates may increase as SaskWater increases the cost of water. A minimum charge for water and sewer will be billed to any household using 1,750 gallons per month of water or less. Refer to the current bylaw schedule for exact current rates.

3.0 WATER METER READING

- 3.1 Water meters are read remotely approximately the 15th of every month. These actual readings are used to bill accounts. In the event that a reading cannot be taken remotely, the resident will be notified by door tag and arrangements made to obtain a meter reading or change the meter head. Estimate utility bills will be mailed until the resident makes the above arrangements with the City.

4.0 RECYCLING FEES

- 4.1 Recycling fees will be charged on the utility bills. Refer to the current bylaw schedule for exact current recycling rates. These rates are subject to change.

5.0 BILLING PROCEDURE

- 5.1 The billing of residential and commercial utility accounts is done monthly. Invoices are mailed within the first five business days following the month which is being billed. Example: January billing will be mailed within the first five business days of February.

6.0 PAYMENT PROCEDURE

- 6.1 All utility bills are due the last day of the month following the billing period. A late fee of **2.5% per month** will be charged to the applicable account on overdue amounts.
- 6.2 The City accepts cash, debit, online payments, personal cheques or money orders. Credit Cards, and third-party cheques will not be accepted.
- 6.3 Pre-Authorized Payment (PAP) is offered as per the PAP Agreement.

7.0 ENFORCEMENT OF PAYMENT

7.1 Enforcement of payment will be completed (bi-monthly)

The enforcement process will comprise the following:

Accounts in the enforcement process will have received subsequent utility bills, which indicate past due balances;

A reminder notice will be mailed on the first day of the collection month (February, April, June, August, October, December)

- A courtesy phone call may be placed to the phone number on file for account holders without a consistent history of requiring enforcement;
- A shut off notice may be hung on the addresses that have not paid their account as per the date on the reminder notice, except for those reached by phone as indicated in the note above;
- Water may be shut off.

8.0 NON-PAYMENT PROCEDURE

8.1 Service may be disconnected without notice at the discretion of the Utility Clerk in accordance with this polic

In the event that water service cannot be shut off at the street, or that shut off at the street will disrupt attached units in multi unit dwellings, property owners will be contacted to arrange a time for public works to enter the home and seal the meter.

8.2 Once the water is turned off, a \$50 reconnection fee will be added to the account.

8.3 Where the resident has unpaid utilities at their previous address, service may be disconnected at their current address.

8.4 If a cheque is returned by the bank NSF and the account is overdue, water service will be disconnected. Payment of returned cheques must include an NSF fee and cannot be made by cheque.

8.5 At any time during the collection process, the City of Warman reserves the right to use the services of a collection agency, pursuant to the powers outlined in *The Distress Act*.

8.6 A one-time extension can be given upon request. One-time extensions cannot exceed the last day of the month in which service will be discontinued. One-time extensions given upon request will be done only one time every three years. An exact payment date must be given. If payment is not made on that date, services will be discontinued without notice. Prior to granting an extension to lease holders/tenants, property owners may be contacted by the City.

8.7 In the event of unpaid arrears from renters, the City may require the account holder to be in the name of the property owner, with all invoices being mailed directly to the property owner.

9.0 RE-CONNECTIONS AFTER SHUT OFF DUE TO NON- PAYMENT OR BY REQUEST

9.1 In order to have the water turned back on, the account and the \$50 reconnection fee must be paid in full.

9.2 Reconnections are done Monday to Friday between 8:30 am and 3:45 pm
Reconnections are not done after 4:00, or on holidays or weekends.

Payment will not be taken by public works employees and must be made at City Hall

9.3 The City is not responsible for any damage caused should the water line freeze.

10.0 WATER DEPOSIT

10.1 The water deposits to be charged to water users (homeowners, renters and businesses) shall be set out as per the Water and Utility Bylaw.

10.2 Water deposits must be made by the account holder. Meter installation and/or water service will not be provided until full deposit is paid. The account holder is the person responsible for payment of the utility account. In the event that uncollected utility amounts are not covered by a deposit, the City reserves the right to transfer these uncollected amounts to the landowner's tax roll, pursuant to The Cities Act, 2003.

10.3 Water deposits, less a \$20.00 administrative fee, will be refunded to residents who meet the following requirements:

- a) Resident owns the property and is not renting or leasing the property
- b) Resident has remained in good standing and has not received a collection call or a collection door letter from the City for two consecutive years

A form will be sent to residents with each December utility bill and must be filled out, signed and returned prior to February 15th annually. The deposit will then be refunded by March 31st. Deposit refunds will only be made between January and March of each year.

Alternatively, the deposit may be held in trust and refunded in full against the last billing

10.4 Contractors building five houses or more may apply for a floating deposit. The floating deposit represents one deposit made for all homes. Floating deposits will be extended only if the account is not in arrears. Floating deposit will be refunded upon request of the builder.

10.5 Multi-unit dwellings which have; separate meters, curb valves and billing addresses will be required to submit a deposit in the amount of the applicable above stated rate per unit.

10.6 Multi-unit dwellings which either do not have separate meters, curb valves or billing addresses will be required to submit one deposit in the amount of \$1,000 which will be returned after two years with no late payments. These units will be required to pay utility

bills collectively under the condo association name or other arrangement as deemed by the Utility Clerk.

11.0 CONNECTION PROCEDURE/APPLICATION FOR A NEW RESIDENT

- 11.1 A Water and Sewer Application must be filled out by the resident prior to connection. Application can be made by telephone, email or in person. Information required for application is name, civic address, mailing address, phone number, and move in date. A time to read the meter and turn on the water will be arranged for a time when the owner, renter or representative will be at the residence. A water meter deposit must be paid prior to moving in to ensure that the water is left on.

12.0 DISCONNECTION PROCEDURE FOR RESIDENT LEAVING WARMAN

Arrangements must be made for water shut off and last read prior to leaving Warman. Information required for disconnect include name, civic address, forwarding address and move out date. If arrangements are not made, the resident remains responsible for the water consumption until such time as a new application and water deposit are made by the new resident.

13.0 TRANSFER PROCEDURE FOR RESIDENT MOVING WITHIN WARMAN

Arrangements must be made for readings to be taken and for water to be shut off at old residence and turned on at the new residence prior to moving. In the event that the deposit required at the new residence is higher, the difference must be paid. If water is required at both homes for more than two weeks a second deposit must be collected. If the property is not owned by the applicant, a second deposit must be collected. Water at the new residence may be shut off if a balance is left outstanding at the old residence. Deposits will in no case be transferred for accounts in arrears.

14.0 WATER METER MAINTENANCE

- 14.1 The Public Works Department will repair or replace water meters where necessary, at the discretion of the City, at no charge to the resident.

Where repair or replacement of water meters is necessary due to physical damage to the meter caused by the resident's negligence, a new meter will be installed by the City and the resident will be charged the cost of the meter and the cost of the labour to do the work which will be added to the utility account.

15.0 CONSUMERS WITH SHALLOW WATER LINES

- 15.1 Residents who have shallow water lines and who have a history of problems with water lines freezing shall be required to leave a tap dripping at all times in the winter months to avoid water lines freezing. Credit will be given to these residents for the extra water consumption. These residents are identified at the discretion of the Public Works Department and are notified each year by letter.

16.0 BILLING INQUIRIES

16.1 All billing inquiries and concerns regarding water and sewer charges will be handled by the Utility Clerk. Billing concerns should be reported as soon as possible after the receipt of the utility bill. The Utility Clerk, along with the public works department, will recheck billings, readings, etc. to ensure accuracy of billings.

17.0 METER TESTING

17.1 Water meters are an important component of the municipal water system. Every household, business and facility that is connected to the municipal water service located within the City of Warman is equipped with a water meter to track water usage and to ensure that residents are being billed only for their consumption.

If a resident feels that their meter is inaccurate, their meter can be tested by an independent company. If the test shows that the meter is reading within accepted accuracy rate, the resident is responsible for the testing cost. If the meter was reading inaccurately, the City will be responsible for all testing costs and will adjust the previous billings(s) if deemed necessary upon a full review of the account.

18.0 NAME OR MAILING ADDRESS CHANGE

18.1 Residents wanting a name removed from an account must first have the person whose name is being removed fill out the 'Change of Name' form.

18.2 Residents requesting a name added to an account, must complete a Change of Name form.

18.3 Residents requesting a change of mailing address must complete a Request to Change Mailing Address form.

19.0 OFFENCES AND PENALTIES

19.1 Any person who

- (a) wilfully or maliciously interrupts the City of Warman in providing water services;
- (b) wilfully or maliciously discharges water so that it is wasted;
- (c) without authorization of the City of Warman, opens or closes any hydrant or obstructs free access to any hydrant;
- (d) adds harmful or offensive matter to be added to or deposited into the water or waterworks or source of supply or in any way fouls the water or commits any wilful damage or injury to the works or pipes;
- (e) wilfully tampers with a meter so as to alter the amount of water registered by the meter;
- (f) attaches any line or pipe to the property of the City of Warman or obtains or uses

- water service without the consent of the City or Warman;
 - (g) wilfully hinders, interrupts or cuts off the supply of a water service;
 - (h) throws items down the sewer lines;
- is guilty of an offence and is liable to a fine of \$500.00 plus repair of damages incurred including the cost of water consumed.

20.0 WATER RATIONING AND LIMITATIONS

- 21.0 Water rationing and limitations may be imposed by the City of Warman in cases where the water supply is low. (Bylaw 93-08).

21.0 SERVICE CONNECTIONS

- 21.1 In cases of multi-unit dwellings, every unit must have a separate lead in water line, water meter, shut off valve per meter and curb valve. If a multi unit building has only one meter that building will receive only one bill.
- 21.2 In the event of a multi unit dwelling without a curb valve to each dwelling the account must remain in the name of the Condo Association or the property owner.

22.0 USE OF A COLLECTION AGENCY/CREDIT MANAGEMENT

- 22.1 The City of Warman reserves the right to the use of a collection agency

23.0 ACCESS TO WATER METERS

- 23.1 Persons authorized by the City are entitled to free access at all reasonable time to any parts of any land or buildings to which water/sewer service is provided for the purpose of:

- (a) reading meters;
- (b) erecting or installing meters or appliances and removing, altering or replacing any of them as circumstances require;
- (c) conducting sampling tests;
- (d) inspecting any service lines, connections, meters or appliances;
- (e) maintenance and repair

Arrangements will be made with the landowner to gain entrance to the property.

The resident has the right to request evidence of the person needing access to prove their employment or authority with the City for access.

- 23.2 Service to persons contravening this section may be disconnected and the reconnection fee will be as stated in Bylaw.

24.0 NSF CHEQUES

- 24.1 NSF cheque fee is \$20.00 and is subject to change.

24.2 After two NSF cheques are returned to the City, cheques will no longer be accepted from the cheque writer.

24.3 Water service will be discontinued in the event that an NSF cheque is written, and water payment is past due.

24.4 Payment of an NSF cheque and NSF fee cannot be made by cheque

25.0 UTILITY WRITEOFFS

25.1 Permission must be received from Finance Manager prior to writing off to uncollectable.

26.0 BULK WATER

26.1 No person shall hook on to City of Warman municipal water system without the permission and direction of the public works and the utility department or administration

26.2 Bulk water consumed shall then be billed out at the overage rate

27.0 METER INSTALLATION

27.1 The following is required prior to installing a new water meter:

- a) Approved Plumbing Permit
- b) Water Deposit
- c) Service connection paid in full and inspection document signed by City Official
- d) Completed application for Water and Sewer service

27.2 Meter installations/Water Service may be delayed in the event of arrears with the City. The meter will be installed and water service granted once full payment of arrears is received.

This policy shall come into force and take effect on the date of adoption