

## PETERBOROUGH UTILITIES COMMISSION

### CUSTOMER SERVICE AND ACCOUNT POLICY

#### POLICY

All customers of PUC shall be subject to the customer service and account rules as stated where applicable. These rules enable customer service to bill and collect water and sewer charges in an effective and efficient manner while providing consistency and equity to our customers.

#### Collection of Water Rates

##### Non-Metered/Metered Rates

Where an owner or occupant account for metered water rates remains unpaid 7 days (7) days after the due date, a notice of non-payment is to be hand delivered to the premise to which the service is supplied. If the account remains unpaid twenty-two (22) days after the due date, the water may be turned off, or the arrears may be added to the collector's tax roll and collected in the same manner as taxes.

##### When the Meter does not Record Properly or Cannot Be Read

In the event of a water meter failing to record properly, or where the meter-reader is unable to obtain a reading, the person or persons liable to pay the meter rates are liable to pay the same for an amount of water estimated.

##### Remedies for Non-Payment of Metered Water Rates

Where an account for metered water rates remains unpaid, Peterborough Utilities Commission or through their billing agent may proceed in any or all of the following ways to collect such rates using the following methods:

#### Turning Off Water

(a) The Peterborough Utilities Commission or the billing agent may cause the water to be shut off and not turned on again until payment is made of all metered water rates outstanding, plus a fee for turning off the water and turning on the water, or water may be turned off where a meter has not been installed, or

(b) the amount of all metered water rates remaining unpaid for twenty-two (22) days after the due date may be entered on the collector's tax roll and collected in the same manner as taxes, and are subject to the same interest and penalties as for taxes. Prior to the arrears being tax rolled a letter will be sent by ordinary prepaid mail to the owner of the premises advising them of the arrears to be tax rolled and providing fourteen (14) days to make payment. If payment is not made within the fourteen (14) day period the arrears and applicable service fees will be tax rolled.

### When Premise is Vacated

Whenever any premise having a water service becomes vacant, the owner is required within twenty-four (24) hours of vacancy to notify in writing, email or fax, the Peterborough Utilities Commission via their billing agent Peterborough Utilities Services to shut off the water at the street line and shall pay a fee for same and the same fee is to be paid by the owner for turning the water on again as set forth in the current rate schedule. If notice is not received within twenty-four (24) hours of vacancy the water/sewer service and applicable fees will be billed directly to the home owner until notice is provided to Peterborough Utilities that a change in billing is required and the new applicant has applied for service.

The property owner is held responsible for full payment for all water that passes through their water meter regardless of whether they reside at the premise. The City's Sanitary Surcharge and Wastewater provides the authority to levy a sewer surcharge for sewer services provided to a property.

### Back-billing

A "Back-Bill" represents charges not previously billed for service that was actually delivered to the premise, during a period before the current billing cycle where the original billings are discovered to be too low (under-billed). The discovery may be made by either the Customer or the Utility (i.e., the City). The cause of the billing error may include any of the following reasons or combination thereof:

- (a) stopped meter;
- (b) metering equipment failure;
- (c) missing meter now found;
- (d) switched meters;
- (e) double metering;
- (f) incorrect meter connections;
- (g) incorrect use of any prescribed apparatus respecting the registration of a meter;
- (h) incorrect meter multiplier;
- (i) the omission/application of an incorrect rate or service;
- (j) incorrect reading of meters or data processing; and
- (k) tampering, fraud, theft or any other criminal act.

Peterborough Utilities Commission, directly or through its' billing agent, Peterborough Utilities Services Inc. (PUSI), notifies the Customer by mail, phone or by a personal visit of the reason for the back-bill.

Peterborough Utilities Commission, on a majority of occasions, limits bills for services rendered to no more than twenty-four months before they became aware of the circumstance, error or condition that caused the under-billing.

At the discretion of the Manager of Finance and Customer Service, (or designated delegate), this limitation may not apply in the following situations where there is evidence of:

- a) fraud and or theft of service situations;
- b) that, despite notification of a problem causing potential under-billing, the Customer refuses access to the property to allow for maintenance to metering equipment; and
- c) the Customer was aware of the cause of the under-billing and knowingly failed to notify the Utility of the problem.

For residential Customers, the back-bill will also be limited if there has been a change in property ownership to reflect when the current owner takes over the account.

The Peterborough Utilities Commission or its billing agent offers Customers an optional payment arrangement to pay a back-bill. If requested by the Customer, the repayment term will be equivalent, in length, to the back-billing period. The repayment will be interest free and in equal instalments corresponding to the normal billing cycle. However, delinquency in payment of such instalments will be subject to the cancellation of the repayment term and the full balance will become due and payable.

Approved:   October 24, 2013