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Agenda Item #7
Staff Report #JWDC 2007 - 12

**REPORT TO JUAN DE FUCA WATER DISTRIBUTION COMMISSION
MEETING OF TUESDAY, 6 NOVEMBER 2007**

SUBJECT AMENDMENTS TO THE WATER DISTRIBUTION LOCAL SERVICE CONDITIONS, FEES AND CHARGES BYLAW

PURPOSE

To propose amendments to the Water Distribution Local Service Conditions, Fees and Charges Bylaw.

BACKGROUND

The Water Distribution Local Service Conditions, Fees and Charges Bylaw details the conditions under which water service is provided in the Juan de Fuca water distribution service area and details applicable fees and charges. Periodically amendments are recommended to update, clarify in light of experience and generally improve the bylaw. This year a number of amendments are proposed and are identified in the attached copy of the bylaw (Attachment 1). Justifications for the amendments, other than housekeeping changes, are provided below.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Recommend to the Board the amendments to the bylaw.
2. Do not amend the bylaw.

Proposed Amendments

Section 9 – ‘Where a Connection Will and Will Not Be Established’ (Page 4)

- The amendment gives staff more flexibility to administer the bylaw requirements when extenuating circumstances arise.

Section 11 – ‘Properties at Elevations Higher Than CRD Water Services Waterworks’ (Page 5)

- The proposed amendment allows the use of booster pumps but subject to the approval of the General Manager.

Section 13.1 - ‘Installation of Pressure Regulating Devices’ (Page 5)

- The amendment clarifies the customer is responsible for installing a pressure regulating device on their property.

Section 17 – ‘Minimum Allowable Size of Supply Pipe to Property’ (Page 6)

- Properties with con-conforming service connections installed prior to Bylaw regulations have not been required to upgrade the service. The amendment will ensure service lines will be upgraded to meet minimum requirements upon redevelopment.

Section 34 – ‘Supply and Maintenance of Water Meters’ (Page 9)

- In situations where the water meters are located in a mechanical room, CRD Water Services will allow customers to install the water meter and only pay for the actual cost of the meter.
- Subsection 34.1, 34.2, 34.3 have been amended to clarify water meter installations.

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Re: Amendments to the Water Distribution Local Service Conditions, Fees and Charges Bylaw

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Section 40 – ‘Responsibility for Cross Connection Control and Backflow Prevention’ (Page 11)

- Sub-sections 40.1 and 40.2 have been added to emphasize circumstance in which backflow prevention is required.

Section 46.1 – ‘Installation of Fire Hydrants’ (Page 12)

- To clarify that CRD Water Services will install fire hydrants on existing water mains at the request of local fire departments.

Section 53.4 – ‘Provision of Construction Documents’ (Page 14)

- There have been an increased number of instances of developers proceeding with construction of water infrastructure before approvals have been obtained from CRD Water Services and Vancouver Island Health Authority. The amendment is to highlight that service may be denied if proper approvals have not been obtained.

Section 72.1 – ‘Provision of an Inspector for Subdivision Extensions’ (Page 18)

- The amendment is to better define the requirements for inspection of the works constructed by the applicant.

Section 75 – ‘Defects/Required Repairs to Extension’ (Page 19)

- A proposal to increase the minimum charge to \$2,000 for warranty bonds on developer projects. This ensures there is an adequate deposit on hand to cover costs of any leaks, breaks, or defects in the waterworks extensions.

Section 93.4 – ‘Payments’ (Page 22)

- There have been several instances where customers pay electronically or at a financial institution using the incorrect customer account number. Despite being informed of the error, some customers continue to make payments using the incorrect account number. A fee of \$5.00 per transaction in order to transfer the payment to the correct account is proposed to eliminate repeat offenders.

Section 113.2 – ‘Construction Policy’ (Page 26)

- This amendment is to recover the cost of replacing water meters damaged during construction.

Section 120.5 – ‘Adjustments to the Water Bill for Leaks in the Waterworks’ (Page 27)

- CRD Water Services has been quite liberal with the kind of water leaks that qualify for an adjustment. The proposed amendments are to put the onus on the customer to maintain their water fixtures and installations. Two amendments are proposed. The first is to eliminate a leak adjustment for all internal plumbing, including faucets and toilets. The second is to eliminate adjustment for leaks on irrigation systems. Water leaks in irrigation systems have increased due to an increase in installations in new developments, aging infrastructure, malfunctioning timing equipment, systems not designed and installed by a certified irrigation specialist and lack of regular maintenance.

Section 122 – ‘Charges for Alterations to Existing Water Supply Services’ (Page 28)

- The amendment requires payment in advance for services requested to avoid collections on accounts in arrears.

Schedule A – ‘Connections and Connection Charges’ (page 31)

- A rate change for service connections is proposed to include the cost and installation of the meter with the service connection charge. Meter costs vary according to the meter size and have not been properly reflected in the past with a single charge in Schedule C. The meter cost has been removed from Schedule C and added to the service connection rates.

Schedule C – ‘Miscellaneous Fees and Charges’ (Page 33)

- A number of increases in Fees and Service Charges to reflect increasing costs specifically:
 - Adjustment/Relocation of a 19mm Meter Box – increase from \$200 to \$250 reflects the increase in labour, material and fixed costs associated with service calls.
 - Transfer of Water Service (Change in Customer) – increase from \$15 to \$20 reflects the increase in time required and associated labour costs to complete property ownership changes. More frequently CRD Water Services is not notified when property changes hands or when tenants move. More time is spent maintaining the customer data base through British Columbia Assessment Authority’s change in ownership notification.
 - Water Meter Change/Replacement at Customer’s Request – increase from \$200 to \$250 – reflects the increase in labour, material and overhead costs associated with the service call.

With the high level of development activity in the service area, staff are increasingly encountering illegal or unapproved connections particularly on construction sites, usually without backflow prevention, as well as Applicants proceeding with work prior to approval of the proposed works. As these practices result in increasing amounts of unaccounted for water use, loss of revenues, pose a health risk to water customers, and have implications for the long term durability of the distribution system, it is proposed to undertake a comprehensive review of the bylaw in 2008 to ensure that the bylaw provides the necessary authority to ensure compliance with its requirements.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Juan de Fuca Water Distribution Commission approve the proposed amendments to the bylaw.

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