

SUMMARY

The 2020 Water and Wastewater rates will be increased to reflect the rates approved by the Finance and Administration Committee during budget deliberations. Water and wastewater consumption related rates were increased to reflect an overall rate increase of 4.8% as recommended in most recent Water and Wastewater Long Range Financial Plan.

All other miscellaneous rates were increased by a maximum of 3% in accordance with the Rates By-Law. The exceptions to this are noted in this report.

REPLACEMENT OF WATER METERS

The purpose of this proposed change to the Water / Wastewater Rates By-law 2018-45, as amended by 2019-28, is to allow the AMI Project to move forward without any restrictions or complications. The proposal is that in early 2020, a contractor working on behalf of the City will be entering Residential, Industrial, Commercial and Institutional properties, to remove our old water meters and install new Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI) water meters on an area by area basis. The contractor will be scheduling installations of the new AMI water meter and will require access inside each property in order to install and meet the set target dates for completion of this project. The AMI water meter replacement program is expected to take 2.5 years to complete.

The present Water/Wastewater Rates By-law 2018-45 addresses damaged water meter fees according to the size and age of the water meter. We are concerned that should the contractor, or a CGS water meter installer, discover a damaged water meter during the installation process of a new AMI water meter, an invoice to the property owner for the replacement of said damaged water meter, as per the Rates By-law, may result. This practice may in turn result in difficulties accessing City water meters as the project unfolds resulting in an extension of the project timeline and budget. In order to alleviate concerns property owners may have in receiving an invoice for a damaged meter we are recommending the practice be suspended until such a time as the new water meter is installed and operating under the new AMI structure, at which time the existing bylaw will return to effect, including enforcement. Additionally, any property owners who have not and/or refuse to participate in the meter change out during the project will be charged an additional trip charge and manual meter read charge, similar to our current practice for reading meters and the homeowner will be charged a fee for this service. The proposed changes to the Water/Wastewater Rates By-law will alleviate access issues and assist in successful completion of the City wide meter replacement program.

Commencing with the passing of this By-law, for those residents and owners that have participated in the update to the new AMI system, a new policy will remove the replacement costs for all existing water meters, replacing all existing water meter remote and all trip charge fees. The Rates By-law will address the zero fees to the property owner for existing or older water meters and their appurtenances, but any

damaged (new) AMI water meters or new appurtenances discovered the Rates fees will apply.

The changes to the fees are incorporated into Schedule A of the Bylaw under Section 7.

Wording has been added to the Bylaw in Subsection 12(3) to reflect the owner's responsibilities relating to private plumbing and fixtures and compliance to the Building Code Act (Ontario) and regulations.

The City may request the owner to repair, at their cost, plumbing that may interfere with the safe removal, repair, replacement or testing of a water meter. Non-compliance with this request may result in shut off of the water supply during the aforementioned procedures and the City will not be held responsible for damages to the owner's property arising from such work.

PRIVATE SEWER LATERAL BLOCKAGE FEES

Currently the City charges a fee for the clearance of a private sewer lateral blockage when requested by the owner and performed by the City's vendor of record. That fee is being reduced from \$654 to \$542 to reflect the current tendered price for that service.

There have been instances where the owner has not attended when the contractor has arrived on site or the owner has cancelled an appointment with less than 24 hour notice. In these cases the contractor has billed the City for its time.

Staff is proposing a missed /cancelled appointment fee in the amount of \$50 in the event that the owner does not attend which is consistent with fees in this Bylaw.

BACKFLOW PREVENTION RATES

During 2018 budget deliberations certain user fees were approved through a Business Case. One of those fees was for the supply of Backflow Preventer Test tags to qualified plumbers or back flow prevention plumbers. This would allow for the proper and consistent application of test tags.

The current Backflow Preventer Test Tag rate of \$43 per package in Schedule C-1, Section 12(1)(a) is being increased to \$119, which is the cost to the City. Previously the \$43 covered the cost of 100 tags but now the kit includes 100 tags, seals and seal wires. This increase is reflected in Schedule C-1 of the Bylaw.

HAULED LIQUID WASTE RATES

As part of the Biosolids Plant project, the City built a Hauled Liquid Waste Receiving station to receive septage from septic tanks and holding tanks from customers who are not connected to the City's wastewater infrastructure.

The City charges a fee for the receipt of Hauled Liquid Waste at the Sudbury Wastewater Treatment plant from private systems pursuant to the Sewer Use Bylaw 2010-188 as amended.

A fee was established for waste received from a septic tank and a rate of 50% of that amount for waste from a holding tank. The owner of a holding tank is entitled to apply for a 50% rebate of the per cubic metre fee.

There was a clerical error in the 2019-28 amendment to the bylaw. The rate for Hauled Liquid Waste was input at \$34 per cubic meter for 2019 when it was actually frozen at \$33 pending a review of the rates. As was previous practice all Hauled Liquid Waste from a holding tank will continue to be eligible for a rebate of 50% of said fee.

Staff is currently undergoing a study and analysis of these rates and will bring a report of findings and any recommendations back to Council for consideration at that time.

UNINHABITABLE PROPERTIES

Prior to 2016, uninhabitable properties were granted exceptions to fixed service charges. In 2016 the By-law was revised to charge all vacant lots, including uninhabitable, fixed service charges. That was repealed in 2019. Staff is proposing a friendly amendment to the By-Law that would reflect the pre-2016 situation.