

Report - Water/Wastewater Complaint and Adjustment Process

The Water and Wastewater Rates and Charges By-law delegates administration to the General Manager, Growth and Infrastructure. The by-law provides for such protocols and procedures to be established for implementation and administration.

An update to the Water/Wastewater Complaint and Adjustment Process has been approved by the General Manager, Growth and Infrastructure including the preparation of a formal protocol document.

The City has been developing this process since October 2017 and implemented on a test basis the protocols through 2018 to determine if they were appropriate.

Some of the process pieces that were tested included:

- A Requirement to submit request in writing detailing information;
- Submission of additional financial information to assist in calculating amount of financial relief (as applicable);
- Template letters detailing complaint, investigation, by-law references and resolution.

Based on the results of the test period, some amendments have been made to the process to improve customer service and response times. The new process has resulted in fewer callbacks from customers.

This Process results in the City providing policies and guidelines, available to the public, that ensures the City conducts business in an open, transparent and accountable manner and in compliance with the Water and Wastewater Rates and Charges By-law.

Service Standards

At its November 20, 2018 Council meeting, resolution CC2018-264 approved the Customer Service Strategy. This strategy focuses on building a service culture, enhancing service effectiveness and service simply accessed through customer service principles. This Process document was created with input from Water/Wastewater, Finance and Greater Sudbury Hydro Plus (GSHP) with the goal to improve the responsiveness of the City to water/wastewater complaints and adjustment requests and supports the customer service principles.

Customer Service Principle	Process improvement
We have agreed upon standards for customer service.	4.5.1 Timelines – Provides service standard expectations for final resolution
We recruit, train and empower employees to provide great customer service and recognize those who go the extra mile.	3.0 Responsibilities - Establishes roles and responsibilities for all CGS staff

Customer Service Principle	Process improvement
We resolve issues on a first contact basis where possible.	<p>4.1 – One call resolution</p> <p>4.2. – investigation required</p> <p>4.5.1 Timelines – when 4.2 applies, provides service standard expectations for final resolution</p>
<p>Our staff are knowledgeable and consistently have the information they need to provide the right answer.</p> <p>A positive customer service culture is part of the City of Greater Sudbury brand.</p>	<p>4.0 Process – Details the necessary information, investigation and response required as part of the process</p> <p>4.3 Categories – Describes the department(s) that are required to participate in a particular type of request</p> <p>4.5.1 Timelines – Provides service standard expectations for final resolution</p>
<p>We are committed to measuring and improving our customer service performance.</p> <p>We use technology to effectively leverage customer service opportunities and address customer service issues.</p>	<p>4.0 Process – All complaints will be managed and documented in ACR(CRM)</p> <p>➤ Improved information on CGSs website</p>

Automated Water Meter Reading

As outlined in the Automated Water Meter Reading (AMR) Feasibility Study from the General Manager of Growth and Infrastructure, presented at the Finance and Administration meeting on April 17, 2018, the implementation of automated water meter readings will also assist in identifying areas of concern and minimizing the financial impact to customers. Some types of issues that the severity should be reduced: high water bill, damaged meters, stopped meters, error in billing due to incorrect readings.

With AMR, customers would have access to real-time personal consumption data and usage, alerts for abnormal water consumption, eliminate periods with estimates. With a three year implementation plan, the process detailed in the attached will assist the City and customers in streamlining intake and resolution which can continue to be used once AMR is implemented. With the implementation of AMR, the resolution time should be reduced (i.e. waiting for actual readings currently every two months).

Info to 3-1-1

As part of the development of this Process, staff worked with 3-1-1 staff to provide them with information to be able to either resolve the issue or to request the required information for the department to be able to more effectively and in a timelier manner respond to the customer's request. 3-1-1 has been provided with the Process document and the questions as noted on the website (see below).

Information on website

In addition to the attached Process document, the City's website (<https://www.greatersudbury.ca/live/water-and-wastewater-services/your-water-bill/>) has been updated to provide additional information and guidance to water/wastewater customers regarding complaints and adjustment requests. Answers are provided to such questions as:

- Who do I contact if I have a complaint or want my bill adjusted?
- What if I don't like GSU's response?
- What information do I need to provide?
- How will I know my complaint is resolved/closed?
- How long will it take to get my complaint resolved?
- What if I don't agree with the City's response?

Refer to attached Water/Wastewater Complaint and Adjustment Process for additional information which will be posted on the City's website.

List of Resources

By-law 2018-45 Water and Wastewater Rates

Automated Water Meter Reading Feasibility Study

<http://agendasonline.greatersudbury.ca/index.cfm?pg=agenda&action=navigator&id=1271&itemid=13798&lang=en>

Customer Service Strategy

<http://agendasonline.greatersudbury.ca/index.cfm?pg=agenda&action=navigator&id=1249&itemid=15518&lang=en>