



# Memo

**TO:** Chairperson, Committee of the Whole  
**SUBJECT:** Water Utility Leaks Policy  
**DATE:** February 4, 2022  
**FROM:** Chief Administrative Officer

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## **BACKGROUND**

A policy on water leaks and its management was adopted in 2014 after water metering was instituted. To ensure that the policy is consistent with our goals and that it is fairly applied some revisions are recommended. Revisions are noted in the attached original policy.

If we are to ensure that water is reduced it would be prudent to consider revision of the policy as presented. The strikethroughs are recommended deletions and the additions are highlighted in yellow.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Council consider adopting the revised policy if water, a finite resource, is to be better managed.

Joseph A. Fernandez

## TOWN OF LAKE COWICHAN

### COUNCIL POLICY



**DATE APPROVED:**           **October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

**APPROVED BY:**           **R.137/14 (2)**

**SUBJECT:**                   **Water Utility Leak and Bill Adjustments**

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#### **1. Purpose**

Property owners may experience leaks in their water systems resulting in higher than normal water consumption. This policy outlines the circumstances under which property owners can apply for a leak adjustment and the methodology that will be used to calculate the amount of the adjustment.

#### **2. Policy**

- Adjustments will only be granted for leaks in the main underground water line(s) between the water meter and the residence or building(s).
- Leak adjustments on utility bills will not be made for the following:
  - irrigation and/or sprinkler systems on a property;
  - in-ground or above ground pools, ponds, and fountains;
  - any auxiliary lines connected to the main water line(s); and
  - premises left abandoned or vacated without reasonable care for the plumbing system.
- Tangible proof by way of receipts from a qualified plumbing contractor verifying that all leaks have been repaired is required **must be made** before an adjustment for one-month billing is made. The Town of Lake Cowichan Utility Section reserves the right to inspect the repair prior to considering a leak adjustment.
- If in the normal course of business the Town of Lake Cowichan Utility section becomes aware of abnormal water consumption or any evidence of leaks on any property, the Town of Lake Cowichan will, on a "best effort basis", notify the customer thereof, but accepts no responsibility for failure to do so. Notification may be made by phone message, door hanger, or an insert notification mailed with the utility bill.
- Once the Town receives notification that the leak or leaks between the water meter and the residence have been fixed, the water meter will be re-read to ensure that the leak has been repaired.

Water Utility Leak and Bill Adjustments Policy

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- A leak adjustment credit equal to the overage water and sewer billing for the month with the highest usage will be applied to the utility account.
- The property owner shall still be responsible for the allowable maximum amount of water consumed at the current retail water rate as previously billed on the annual invoice. Normal sewer charge consumptions will also apply for the affected period.
- Leak adjustments shall not be considered for water lost subsequent to 30 days from a property owner becoming aware of a leak or being notified of a possible leak by the Town of Lake Cowichan. Property owners must take immediate action after detection or notification of a water leak to prevent further loss of water. No allowance will be made for utility bills or notification claimed to be lost or not received.
- Only one leak adjustment per property owner and main water line(s) within a two-calendar year period **for an existing building** shall be permitted. A leak adjustment application letter must be submitted within 30 days of the leak notification date. Proof of leak repairs with plumber's invoice must be submitted with the request for a credit adjustment.
- All consumers must keep their service pipes, stop cocks, and other plumbing fixtures on their premises in good repair and order at their own expense.
- Adjustments will only be issued when the utility account is in good standing and no previous amounts due are outstanding.

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Joseph A. Fernandez  
Chief Administrative Officer  
Town of Lake Cowichan

