
Title: Run Water Advisory Billing Policy

Department/Division: Corporate Services

Purpose:

1. To implement a formal billing and acknowledgement system for properties subject to a Run Water Advisory.

Scope:

2. This policy applies to all properties within the City of Owen Sound that are subject to a Run Water Advisory.

Definitions:

3. For the purposes of this policy,

“City” means the City of Owen Sound;

“Historical Usage” means the lesser of:

- i. actual water consumption during the same billing period in the prior year; or
- ii. the average consumption during the three most recent billing periods.

“Prior Account Usage” means the Historical Usage for the prior account holder;

“Run Water Advisory” means a system whereby Public Works staff advise residents of properties with pipes at risk of freezing to run water continuously until further notice is provided by the City;

“Run Water Advisory List” means a data collection of properties and account numbers subject to a Run Water Advisory;

“Run Water Advisory Notice” is a hand-delivered notice advising that a property is subject to a Run Water Advisory;

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“Run Water Advisory Letter” is a letter providing information about billing practices related to a Run Water Advisory;

“Utilities Collection Clerk” is an employee of the City responsible for monitoring, adjusting and billing accounts for water and wastewater to City account holders.

Policy:

Initiating a Run Water Advisory

4. Upon determining that a Run Water Advisory is required for certain properties, Public Works staff are responsible to:
 - a. deliver a Run Water Advisory Notice to the subject properties; and
 - b. notify the Utilities Collection Clerk of new properties subject to a Run Water Advisory.

Billing

5. Where a property has received a Run Water Advisory Notice, the account holder associated with the subject property will be billed based on:
 - a. Historical Usage where the account holder has at least one year of actual usage for the subject property; and
 - b. Prior Account Usage in all other circumstances.

Exceptions

6. Despite section 5 above, no adjustments will be made for a property subject to a Run Water Advisory where:
 - a. Consumption is zero (0); or
 - b. Actual consumption is less than the estimated Historical Usage or Prior Account Usage.

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Run Water Advisory List

7. All properties subject to a Run Water Advisory shall be placed on a Run Water Advisory List by the Utilities Collection Clerk.
8. Upon being placed on the Run Water Advisory List the account holder for the subject property will:
 - a. be provided a Run Water Advisory Letter sent by regular mail to the address on file for the property in the utility account records; and
 - b. receive notice in the form of a comment on the water and wastewater bill that water consumption has been adjusted to compensate for the Run Water Advisory.

Run Water Advisory Letter

9. A Run Water Advisory Letter will contain:
 - a. the date that the Run Water Advisory began for the subject property;
 - b. instructions on how to adhere to the Run Water Advisory;
 - c. a statement that costs related to freezing pipes will be the responsibility of the account holder where the Run Water Advisory in not adhered to;
 - d. instructions on how usage will be calculated;
 - e. a statement that only properties subject to a Run Water Advisory will be charged based on Historical Usage or Prior Account Usage rather than actual consumption; and
 - f. contact information for the Utilities Collection Clerk.

New Account Holders

10. It is the responsibility of a new account holder on a property that is subject to a Run Water Advisory to notify the Utilities Collection Clerk that they have assumed responsibility for water and wastewater charges from the City.

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11. Upon receiving notice under section 10 above, the Utilities Collection Clerk will provide a Run Water Advisory Letter by regular mail to the new account holder and place the property on the Run Water Advisory List.

Ceasing a Run Water Advisory

12. Upon determining that a Run Water Advisory is no longer required for certain properties, Public Works staff are responsible to:
 - a. notify subject properties that they are no longer subject to a Run Water Advisory;
 - b. notify the Utilities Collection Clerk of properties to remove from the Run Water Advisory List; and
 - c. provide a final meter reading for the Run Water Advisory period.
13. The Utilities Collection Clerk will note the account with the date that actual consumption is to be used again for billing purposes.

Revision History:

By-law Number	Date
2020-011	January 27, 2020