

**WATER AND SEWER COLLECTION POLICY  
MUNICIPALITY OF SOUTHWEST MIDDLESEX**

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**A**     Rates

1.     Water consumption and sewer use will be billed at the rates as adopted by Council from time to time.
2.     Effective for the March 15, 2002 reading, those customers previously on the Melbourne Waterworks System will no longer be charged a meter rental fee.

**B**     Readings

1.     As per the current meter reading contract, a notice card will be left at each water service location for which a reading cannot be obtained.
2.     Customers are responsible for completing and returning notice cards or notifying the municipal office of the current meter reading within seven days of the card being left.
3.     Failure to submit reading cards will necessitate calculation of an estimated reading which could eventually result in a large catch-up at a future time.
4.     Customers are responsible to ensure the accuracy of consumption billed according to the inside meter.
5.     The Municipality shall attempt to obtain a visual inside reading from every meter on the water system that does not have a pro-read once each calendar year.

**C**     Billing

1.     All meters will be read within four days of the fifteenth of the month as dictated in the contract with the meter reader.
2.     Water and sewer invoices will be due on an appropriate date as approved by Council (currently the 30<sup>th</sup> of the month following the meter reading). *(amendment Jan. 29, 2003)*
3.     If the due date falls on a weekend or statutory holiday, the due date will be considered to be the next business day.

**D**     Final Reads

1.     A final reading from the meter itself must be obtained when a tenant vacates a property and also when a property changes ownership.
2.     Customers must provide access to the water meter by Southwest Middlesex staff for the final reading.
3.     Customers must notify the municipality forty-eight (48) hours in advance of a required final read and make arrangements for entry to the building.
4.     Invoices based on final reads shall be calculated as per the policy adopted by Council on November 1, 2001.

**E**     Minimum Billing Charges

1.     The regular minimum water charge shall not apply for any time period during which water to the property has been turned off for any reason.
2.     The regular minimum sewer charge, if applicable, shall continue to be invoiced if water to the property has been turned off for any reason.

**F**     Penalties and Shut Off

1.     No penalty shall be charged on the first three business days of default.
2.     Penalty shall be charged on the fourth day of default *(currently 1.25% per month)*.  
*(amendment Jan. 29, 2003)*

3. Arrears statements will be mailed for all invoices that are sixty days in arrears. *(amendment Jan. 29, 2003)*
4. A final statement will be mailed for all invoices that are ninety days in arrears with the notification that the water supply will be significantly reduced or shut off if the account is still in arrears ten days from the date of mailing of the final statement. *(amendment Jan. 29, 2003)*
5. The water supply to all accounts over one hundred days in arrears will be significantly reduced or shut off until the account is paid in full or a satisfactory repayment plan is in place. *(amendment Jan. 29, 2003)*
6. The water supply to all accounts with a repayment plan that is in default may be significantly reduced or shut off at any time.
7. All water accounts for which the water supply has been significantly reduced or shut off shall be subject to the applicable turn on/off fees.

### **G** Service Charges

1. A service charge shall be added to accounts for each returned cheque. *(currently \$25.00) (amendment Jan. 29, 2003)*

### **H** Security Deposits

1. Tenant customers require a minimum \$150 security deposit in order to set up an account with Southwest Middlesex Utilities.
- 2a. For large commercial and industrial customers, deposits shall be negotiated depending on the type of operation but generally shall be equal to an estimated billing for a three-month period.
- 2b. All owners of tenant occupied properties must ensure that there is adequate shut off mechanisms for each rental unit OR that Section J 1. is enforceable. In the event that such meter becomes inaccessible, the property owner must accept responsibility for all arrears accruing in excess of the tenant security deposit held. *(amendment Jan. 29, 2003)*
2. All water services without a security deposit will be billed to the owner of the property as listed on the latest revised assessment roll.
3. A security deposit is required regardless of whether the tenant is the owner of another property in the Municipality.
4. The Municipality shall notify the owner of a request for final read by a tenant.
5. Effective the day following the final read on a tenant-occupied property, the responsibility for the water service shall revert to the owner of the property, as listed on the latest revised assessment roll, unless otherwise directed by the owner or another tenant.
6. Security deposits shall be cashed by the Municipality, with no interest accruing, and may be used to pay down outstanding water accounts.
7. Deposits shall be refunded upon request when a tenant vacates, minus any deductions for outstanding water accounts or service charges.
8. The municipality may implement collection procedures if a balance remains on an account after the security deposit has been applied.
9. Current tenants with a lessor or no security deposit on file shall not be required to submit a security deposit provided their water account remains up to date. Upon default of any tenant account, the above policies will be implemented.
10. In the event a tenant security deposit cheque is returned by the bank for any reason, Southwest Middlesex Utilities shall proceed as though no deposit has been received and Section H3 shall apply. The owner of the property shall also be notified immediately. *(amendment June 5/02)*

**I** Bulk Water Dispensers

1. A \$150 deposit shall be required in order to obtain a bulk water key.
2. The deposit shall be cashed by the Municipality, with no interest accruing, and may be used to pay down outstanding water accounts.
3. The deposit shall be refunded upon return of the water key and receipt of payment in full of the account, minus any deductions for outstanding water accounts or service charges.
4. The standard minimum monthly water charge shall apply while the key is out.
5. Current key holders with a lessor or no security deposit on file shall not be required to submit a security deposit provided their water account remains up to date. Upon default of any bulk key account, policy I (1.) will be implemented.
6. The use of fire hydrants for filling swimming pools or any other such activities shall be prohibited. Any person requiring a large volume of water for any reason shall obtain a key for one of the bulk water stations and abide by the policies established for those stations. *(amendment Jan. 29, 2003)*
7. In the event of a key holder losing or misplacing a water key, the key holder will be liable for the cost of the replacement key plus a service charge (*currently \$25.00*). This amount will be invoiced to the customer's account and treated in the like manner as water invoices. *(amendment Jan. 29, 2003)*

**J** Meters

1. All customers shall permit access to the inside water meter by Southwest Middlesex staff at all reasonable times as deemed necessary.
2. In the event there is a dispute over meter accuracy, the municipality shall remove the said meter and have it tested by an independent company.
3. The industry's standard range for acceptable meter accuracy is 1.5% above or below 100% accuracy and no adjustments shall be made for any test results within that range.
4. If the meter is found to be registering within the standard range, the customer shall be responsible for all testing costs and for the water consumption as billed.
5. If the meter is found to be registering above the industry standard range, the Municipality shall be responsible for all testing costs. Consumption for a maximum of six months will be adjusted by the percentage of inaccuracy of the meter as per the test result and a new invoice issued.
6. If the meter is found to be registering below the industry standard range, there will be no adjustment made to consumption.
7. As of January 29, 2003 all water meters on the Southwest Middlesex Utilities system are considered property of Southwest Middlesex. Any new connections to the water system will be supplied with a water meter upon purchase of a connection permit. *(amendment Jan. 29, 2003)*
8. All meters which are broken or malfunctioning will be replaced by Southwest Middlesex at no cost to the consumer unless the consumer damages the said meter due to negligence, abuse, or misconduct. *(amendment Jan. 29, 2003)*
9. Any consumer who requires their meter replaced due to damage or abuse as above will be charged for the said meter at the cost of replacement plus an administrative charge (*currently \$100.00*). *(amendment Jan. 29, 2003)*

**K** Connection/Disconnection of services

1. The water supply to customers of Southwest Middlesex may only be turned on or shut off by Southwest Middlesex staff or their agents. *(amendment Jan. 29, 2003)*
2. All requests for water supply to be turned on or off must be at least 48 hours prior to the date the service is required. All requests must be accompanied by the appropriate form as supplied by the municipality. *(amendment Jan. 29, 2003)*

3. A fee will be charged to the customer's account each time the water is turned on or shut off during regular works department hours (*currently \$40.00*). This fee remains payable regardless of the reasons for water connection/disconnection. (*amendment Jan. 29, 2003*)
4. Any turn on or shut off which is performed after normal working hours, will be charged a fee (*currently \$75.00*). This charge shall apply regardless of the reason for the request. (*amendment Jan. 29, 2003*)

#### **L** Appointment Fees

1. Any persons unable to keep an appointment for water services must give 2 hours notice of cancellation. If notice is not given to Southwest Middlesex a service fee (*currently \$50.00*) will be billed to the customer. (*amendment Jan. 29, 2003*)
2. If Southwest Middlesex is called out to make a service call at a residence and the problem is found to be the landowner's responsibility a service charge (*currently \$50.00*) will be billed to the customer. (*amendment Jan. 29, 2003*)

#### **M** General

1. All water and sewer collection policies and actions as adopted by the Southwest Middlesex Council from time to time shall form part of this comprehensive policy.
2. Municipal staff shall deal with all customers in a responsible and courteous manner.
3. This policy was adopted by Southwest Middlesex Council on March 20, 2002 and becomes effective immediately upon adoption.
4. All fees and service charges referred to in this policy are set by Council Bylaw. (*#76/2002*). (*amendment Jan. 29, 2003*)