

## **1. PURPOSE**

This policy sets out the circumstances under which residential customers of the Cumberland Water Utility can apply for a billing adjustment due to a water leak on the property and establishes the method used to quantify the adjustment.

## **2. APPLICATION**

This policy applies to owners of residential properties.

## **3. DEFINITIONS**

- 3.1 Billing period:** A 3-month period for which water consumption is billed by the Cumberland Water Utility.
- 3.2 Chief Administrative Officer:** The Municipality's Chief Administrative Officer or their delegate.
- 3.3 Director of Public Works:** The Municipality's Director of Public Works or their delegate.
- 3.4 Director of Finance:** The Municipality's Director of Finance or their delegate.
- 3.5 Customer:** Owner of a residential property, and the property is connected to the Cumberland Water Utility.

## **4. POLICY**

- 4.1** No adjustment or credit will be applied to a water bill except for as set out in this Policy or in the Schedule of Rates for Water and Water Services for the Cumberland Water Utility, set by the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board.
- 4.2** A customer is eligible to apply to the Municipality for an adjustment if:
  - a)** they are an existing metered customer and:
    - i.** the volume of water used by their property during a billing period is at least twice the average of the volumes used during the same billing period in the previous year; and
    - ii.** the cause of the increased usage is a water leak on the property; and

- iii. the customer has been advised by the Municipality of a leak detected by their meter.
- b) they are a new metered customer with at least one other quarter of metered billing history for the property and:
  - i. the volume of water used by their property during a billing period is at least twice the volume used during at least one other quarter; and
  - ii. the cause of the increased usage is a water leak on the property.
- c) they are a new metered customer with no metered billing history for the property and:
  - i. the amount of their water bill increased from the prior billing period by at least 50%; and
  - ii. the cause of the increase is a water leak on the property.

**4.3** To be eligible to apply for an adjustment:

- a) The customer must repair the water leak within 14 days of being notified or learning of the leak. Notification includes receiving a water bill that shows the increased water usage or receiving written or verbal notice from the Municipality of increased water usage. The 14-day deadline may be extended by the Director of Public Works in their discretion if the customer has made reasonable efforts to repair the leak or in other extraordinary circumstances.
- b) The customer must apply for the adjustment within 14 days of repairing the leak by submitting to the Director of Finance a completed “Water Leak Adjustment Request Form” attached to this Policy, along with documentation showing that the leak has been repaired.
- c) At the time the customer applies for the adjustment, the water account for the property must not be in arrears, or if it is in arrears, there must be payment arrangements in place that have been approved by the Director of Finance.
- d) The Municipality must confirm that the leak has been repaired, by reading the water meter to verify that water usage has returned to normal volumes.
- e) The leak must be the result of inadvertence, accident or oversight. Adjustments will not be approved if the water leak:
  - i. occurred in a residence that was unoccupied for 72 consecutive hours or more;

- ii. was caused by a third party from whom the customer is entitled to receive compensation; or
- iii. was the result of vandalism or damage arising during construction or renovations.

**4.4** If the Chief Administrative Officer approves an application for adjustment:

- a)** For existing metered customers and new metered customers with at least one quarter of metered billing history, the Municipality will calculate an adjustment to the customer's water account for the property as follows:

Water adjustment amount = Excess water volume x Price of water;

- b)** For existing metered customers and new metered customers with at least one quarter of metered billing history, the Municipality will calculate an adjustment to the customer's sewer charge, if charge is based on volume, for the property as follows:

Sewer charge adjustment amount = Excess water volume x Sewer rate

- c)** in (a) and (b) above:
  - i. "Excess water volume" is the difference in cubic metres between the volume of water used during the billing period when the leak occurred and the volume of water used during the same billing period in the previous year;
  - ii. "Price of water" is the Consumption Rate per cubic metre applicable to the water usage rate charged to the customer for that quarter as prescribed in the Schedule of Rates for Water and Water Services for the Cumberland Water Utility, set by the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board;
  - iii. "Sewer rate" is the sewer rate set by the Municipality, in \$ per cubic metre.
- d)** For new metered customers with no metered billing history, the Municipality will adjust the charge to the previous flat rate bill.

**4.5** The Municipality will, at the discretion of the Director of Finance, pay or credit the amount of the adjustment in one of the following ways:

- a)** Credit the amount of the water adjustment amount to the customer's water account for the property (in which case the Municipality will transfer the amount of the water adjustment amount to the Cumberland Water

Utility) and credit the amount of the sewer charge adjustment amount to the customer's sewer charge account; or

- b) Pay the total of the water adjustment amount and the sewer charge adjustment amount to the customer.

**4.6** An application for an adjustment does not extend the time for payment of water bills or sewer charges. A customer who has applied for an adjustment must continue to keep their water account in good standing by paying water bills as they become due or making payment arrangements with the Municipality that are approved by the Director of Finance.

**4.7** A customer may not receive more than one adjustment to their water account or sewer charges for any one property. If an adjustment has been made for a property that has since been transferred to a new owner, that owner is eligible to apply for an adjustment for the property in accordance with this Policy.

**4.8** This policy will be retroactive to April 1, 2023.

**Clerk's Annotation for Official Policy Book**

Date of Notice to Council Members of Intent to Consider (7 days minimum): December 13, 2023

Date of Passage of Policy: December 20, 2023

Date of Notice to Council of Intent to Consider the Amended Policy: August 22, 2024

Date of Passage of Amended Policy: August 28, 2024

I certify that this Policy was adopted by Council as indicated above.

Deputy Clerk *Amanda Hennean*

Date: September 4, 2024

## Municipality of the County of Cumberland

### Water Leak Adjustment Request Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a Property Owner?    \_\_\_\_\_ Yes                      \_\_\_\_\_ No

Do you live on the property?    \_\_\_\_\_ Yes                      \_\_\_\_\_ No

Have you received a leak adjustment before?                      \_\_\_\_\_ Yes                      \_\_\_\_\_ No

Where did this leak occur? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Who repaired the leak and on what date(s)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Submit your request form, with copies of all receipts related to the repair to the  
Director of Finance:

Municipality of the County of Cumberland  
1395 Blair Lake Road  
Upper Nappan, NS B4H 3Y4  
Email: [customerservice@cumberlandcounty.ns.ca](mailto:customerservice@cumberlandcounty.ns.ca)

If you require additional information about the Municipality of the County of Cumberland Water  
Leak Adjustment Policy, please visit [www.cumberlandcounty.ns.ca](http://www.cumberlandcounty.ns.ca)

For Office Use Only

Application Complete?    \_\_\_\_\_ Yes                      \_\_\_\_\_ No

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Administrative Officer Authorization (or delegate): \_\_\_\_\_