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## **Utility Bill and Property Tax Arrears Recovery Process**

### **Utility Billing**

The Utility Bylaw provides that the water service be disconnected if the account remains unpaid for two months. If we turn the water off for non-payment, a reconnection fee of \$50 plus all the arrears must be paid before the water is turned back on.

If the account is owner occupied, an alternate to the turn off is to transfer the utility account to the tax roll. This is less awkward than turning the water off and being required to pay the arrears all at once. The penalty rate is also lower.

### **Property Taxes**

It is important to recognize that the purpose of the tax recovery process is to provide a means through which the municipality receives the taxes to which it is entitled.

The Municipal Government Act requires that municipalities place a tax notification on all properties that have an amount owing for more than one year. If all the arrears, being any amount other than for the current calendar year, are not paid by the following March 31, the properties shall be scheduled for public auction that year.

If the property is a revenue property, the Village may require that the rent payments to paid to the Village to apply to the tax arrears.

To avoid the public auction, the arrears must be paid in their entirety, or the owner can enter a contracted payment program that will have all the taxes plus estimated future tax levies and penalties paid in a maximum of three years. If the property owner breaches the agreement in any way the property must then be offered at public auction.

A tax notification added to the property title will notify every organization that has any attached interest to the property, such as a mortgage company or financial institution, that a notification has been added. This notification also prohibits the sale of the property as well as the removal or demolition of any improvement on the property.

If the property does not sell at auction the Village may take title to the property.