



Policy #16 – Utility Maintenance

Approval Date: September 21, 2011

Policy Statement

Water and sewer lines shall be maintained at all times to ensure that safe and ongoing public utilities are available to residents.

Purpose

While recognizing its financial limitations, this policy is to define the role of the Village of Delia in its response and its liability with respect to these utilities.

Application

1. The Village shall be responsible for the operation and maintenance of all Utility Mains.
2. The property owner shall be responsible for the operation and maintenance of service connections from the property line to their residence.
3. The following sections from the Village's Utilities Bylaw must be referenced to clearly illustrate responsibility as it relates to this policy:
 - a. The Owner is responsible for all costs related to the construction and installation of any Service Connection. An application in writing must be made prior to the commencement of any new Service Connection.
 - b. The Owner is responsible for all costs associated with the repair and maintenance of the Service Connection. Where excavation is necessary for the repair and maintenance of a Service Connection, no work shall be commenced by an Owner without written approval of the Village. The Village will be responsible for the costs of maintenance and repair to the Service Connection, only if the repair is required because of faulty workmanship or construction or blockage caused by freezing.
 - c. The Village may construct, maintain or repair a Service Connection and the Village may enter any land or building for that purpose. Any costs incurred by the Village for such construction, maintenance or repair shall be the responsibility of the Owner.

Response to Sewer Back Up Reports

1. Public Works shall respond to a report of a sewer back-up as soon as reasonably practical.
 - a. Initial Check: The Village staff shall first check the Sewer Main to determine its rate of flow. A normal rate of flow within the Sewer Main indicates that the blockage is in all likelihood within the sewer pipe service. An abnormally small amount of flow, or no flow, may indicate that the Sewer Main is obstructed.
 - b. Obstruction in Sewer Service Pipe: If the blockage is within the sewer service pipe, the attending staff member shall determine if the problem may be due to tree root infiltration of trees planted on Village property adjacent to the privately owned property.

- If the blockage is within the sewer service pipe and there are no trees on adjacent Village property, the attending staff member shall advise the Owner or Occupier of such. Costs associated with clearing the service shall be the responsibility of the Owner. It is not the Village's responsibility to clear the blockage.
- In areas where the Village has planted or given permission to be planted, trees or bushes in the Village boulevard adjacent to the privately owned property, the Village staff shall determine if roots from these trees infiltrate the sewer service pipe.

If there is potential for tree root infiltration, the attending staff member shall, within a timeframe which is reasonably practical, attend the property with root cutting equipment and clear the sewer service pipe at the Village's expense.

- c. Back Up Flow Preventers: Property owners and/or occupiers shall be advised that sewer back up flow preventers are mandatory under the current building code and they would be advised to have such a device installed in the floor drain.

Response to Water Break Reports

1. Public Works shall respond to a report of a water break as soon as reasonably practical.
 - a. Initial Check: The Village staff shall first inspect the area reported as a water break.
 - b. Area Leaking After the Curb Stop: The CAO shall advise the Owner or Occupier that the water break is after the curb stop. Costs associated with fixing the leak shall be the responsibility of the Owner. It is not the Village's responsibility to fix the break. Staff will shut off the water at the curb stop.
 - c. Area Leaking Before or at the Curb Stop: The staff member shall take the steps necessary to repair the water break.
 - d. Area Leaking Before or at the Curb Stop Caused by damage outside the Municipal Operations: The CAO shall advise the Owner or Occupier that the water break was caused by damage not related to municipal operations. The Village shall take the necessary actions to repair the leak and the Owner shall be responsible for the costs associated with the repair.

Meters

1. Public Works will respond to a report of a broken water meter as soon as reasonably possible.
 - a. Initial Check: The staff shall first inspect the meter reported as broken.
 - b. Replacement: If it is determined that the meter is indeed broken, and was caused by damage not related to municipal operations, the meter shall be replaced as soon as reasonably practical. The Owner shall be responsible for the costs associated with the meter and all related supplies.
 - c. If it is determined that the meter has stopped working due to age of the unit, the meter shall be replaced as soon as reasonably practical. The Village shall be responsible for the costs associated with the meter and all related supplies.

Staff Safety

1. In the course of determining the cause of service interruption for any water or sewer service calls or the clearing of a sewer blockage, staff may be required to enter onto a property. At all times, the staff will follow caution with respect to health and safety. The property Owner and/or Occupier is responsible to have the sewer clean-out and floor drains within a property clear and accessible.

In performing their duties staff shall not be expected by the property Owner and/or Occupier to:

- a. Enter an area or building, which they consider hazardous to their health; this includes too much build-up of sewage around the sewer clean-out, floor drains and working area;
- b. Be responsible for the clean-up of water or sewage wastes within a property;
- c. Move household appliances or furniture, remove fixtures or walls to access a working area;
- d. Perform plumbing or gas fitting duties.

Repair Costs

1. Costs related to any services resulting from repairs not caused from municipal operations shall be invoiced as outlined in the current User Fees & Charges Bylaw.

Liability

1. Pursuant to the provisions of the Municipal Government Act and amendments thereto, the Village will neither admit to, nor be held liable for, any direct or indirect damages to property as a result of the operation or non-operation of the sewer or water system, regardless of season.

In extenuating circumstances, where responsibility is unclear or impossible to establish, further measures may be taken as necessary at the direction of Village Council.