

## WATER AND SEWER BILL ABATEMENT PROCESS

### TOWN OF SCITUATE DPW

#### REASONS FOR WATER AND SEWER ABATEMENT:

1. **Mathematical:** misreads, excessive time between reads or billing errors. (The Water Department recalculates the bill and the correction shows up on the following bill. The Department handles this internally.)
2. **Water Quality Issue:** In instances where the Water Department flushes the house service due to water quality a resident can apply for an abatement.
3. **Leaks:** A leak occurs and the resident receives an abnormally high water/sewer bill relative to historical usage. The Water Superintendent determines that it is reasonable that the leak could have gone undetected. The resident must make a written request and submit proof that the leak has been repaired. The Water Superintendent makes a recommendation to the DPW director who makes the final decision on abatement.
4. **Hardship:** The resident receives an abnormally high water/sewer bill relative to historical usage. Resident or family member caretaker requests an abatement based upon the financial impact on the resident. The Water Superintendent makes a decision on the abatement request. This will be a one time only abatement that shall not exceed 75% of the total bill.

#### CALCULATING THE PROPOSED ABATEMENT:

1. In cases of elevated unforeseen water usage the Water Department will review historical usage up to 5 years for the resident to establish baseline usage. A standard abatement of 26% will apply to overage. In cases where unforeseen usage exceeds 3 times historical usage 74% of the elevated usage will be abated.
2. If it is determined that the excess water did not entire the sewer system (Example would be a leak in cellar pipe versus a leaking toilet.) The recommendation will generally be to abate the full amount of the excess sewer charge (High sewer billing period minus baseline usage multiplied by 100%.)
3. In cases of hardship abatement will be calculated as described above.

#### SUMMARY OF ABATEMENT PROCESS:

1. Consumer requests abatement.
2. Water Department analyzes and calculates recommended abatement.
3. DPW Director reviews recommendation and approves or rejects request.
4. Town Administrator reviews recommendation and approves or rejects request.
5. Water Department executes abatement and adjustment appears in next quarterly bill.
6. Only one abatement can be assessed per bill.
7. Updated abatement policy shall only be applicable back to residents last billing cycle