

NOVA SCOTIA UTILITY AND REVIEW BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF THE PUBLIC UTILITIES ACT

- and -

IN THE MATTER OF AN APPLICATION by the **NEW MINAS WATER COMMISSION** for Approval of Amendments to its Schedule of Rates and Charges for Water and Water Services and its Schedule of Rules and Regulations

BEFORE:  Bruce H. Fisher, MPA, CPA, CMA, Member

ORDER

The New Minas Water Commission applied to the Board for approval to amend its Schedule of Rates and Charges for Water and Water Services and its Schedule of Rules and Regulations.

After due public notice, a hearing was held on January 9, 2024.

The Schedule of Rates and Charges attached hereto as Schedules A is approved, for Water and Water Services, supplied on and after April 1, 2024.

The Schedule of Rules and Regulations, as filed in response to IR-40, attached hereto as Schedule B, is approved effective April 1, 2024.

The Board directs the Utility to include the water consumption by meter size data in the subsequent rate study.

DATED at Halifax, Nova Scotia, this 15th day of March, 2024.



Clerk of the Board



SCHEDULE A

NEW MINAS WATER COMMISSION

SCHEDULE OF RATES FOR WATER AND WATER SERVICES

(Effective for water and water services rendered on and after April 1, 2024)

RATES

Bills are due within 30 days of the date rendered as shown on the bill.

When payment is made after 30 days from the date rendered as shown on the bill, an interest charge of 1.5% per month will be applied to the amount in arrears.

1 RATES FOR METERED SERVICE

(a) Base Charges

| <u>Meter Size</u> | <u>Quarterly</u> |
|-------------------|------------------|
| 5/8" | \$30.09 |
| 3/4" | \$39.93 |
| 1" | \$59.62 |
| 1 1/2" | \$108.84 |
| 2" | \$167.90 |
| 3" | \$325.40 |
| 4" | \$502.59 |
| 6" | \$994.77 |

(b) Consumption Rate
\$0.773 per thousand litres

2 PUBLIC FIRE PROTECTION SERVICE

The Village of New Minas and County of Kings shall pay to the Commission annually for Public Fire Protection Services a total amount defined by the following formula:

The sum of (a), (b), and (c), where:

(a) = 42.608% of the depreciation charged to expense by the New Minas Water Utility in the immediately preceding fiscal year.

(b) = 33.265% of the operating expense excluding depreciation incurred by the New Minas Water Utility in the immediately preceding fiscal year.

(c) = 0.000% of the rate base of the New Minas Water Utility as at March 31 of the immediately preceding fiscal year.

The total Fire Protection charge shall be divided between the Village and the County of Kings based on the following formulas:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Village Share} &= \frac{\text{Total Fire Protection Charge}}{\text{Total number of hydrants in the Village and County}} \times \frac{\text{Total number of hydrants in the Village}}{\text{Total number of hydrants in the Village and County}} \\ \text{County Share} &= \frac{\text{Total Fire Protection Charge}}{\text{Total number of hydrants in the Village and County}} \times \frac{\text{Total number of hydrants in the County}}{\text{Total number of hydrants in the Village and County}} \end{aligned}$$

3 SPRINKLER RATES

\$0.35 per year per sprinkler head.

**SCHEDULE B
NEW MINAS WATER COMMISSION**

**RULES & REGULATIONS
GOVERNING THE SUPPLY OF WATER AND WATER SERVICES
BY NEW MINAS WATER COMMISSION
(Effective April 1, 2024)**

1. In these Rules and Regulations, unless the context otherwise requires:
 - a. the expression "Commission" or "Utility" shall mean the New Minas Water Commission;
 - b. the expression "Secretary" shall mean the secretary of the New Minas Water Commission;
 - c. the expression "Customer" shall mean a person, firm or corporation who, or which, contracts to be supplied with water at a specific location or locations.

2. CONTRACTS

No water service shall be furnished until a regular application form has been signed by the prospective Customer.

3. LIFE OF CONTRACTS

Standard contracts shall be for a period of one year and shall be self-renewing from year to year, expiring on one month's written notice by either party.

4. BILLING

Bills shall be rendered quarterly for meter rate and fixture rate service, with the exception that bills to metered service Customers whose average consumption exceeded 50,000 gallons per month in the preceding 12 months, may be billed monthly. All bills shall be payable when mailed by the Utility to the Customer and shall be paid within thirty (30) days after the date shown on the bill. If the contract is entered into or terminated at any time other than a regular billing date, the amount to be charged to the Customer shall be the pro-rata proportion to the next month of the regular base charge for the billing period, plus the consumption charge, if any.

5. PAYMENT OF BILLS

Bills are due within 30 days of the date rendered as shown on the bill. When payment is made after 30 days from the date rendered as shown on the bill, an interest charge of 1.5% per month, or part thereof, will be applied to the amount in arrears.

6. LIABILITY FOR PAYMENT OF WATER BILL

An agreement is deemed to exist between a Customer and the Utility for the supply of water service at such rates and in accordance with these Regulations by virtue of:

- a. the Customer applying for and receiving approval for water service;
- b. the Customer consuming or paying for water service from the date that the Customer who is a party to an agreement pursuant to subsection (a) (the Customer of record) moves out of the premises, in which case the Customer of record shall remain jointly and severally liable for the water service account up to the date the Utility is notified that the Customer of record wishes to terminate the supply of water service.

A property owner who rents or leases a property or self-contained unit to a tenant or lessee shall be the Customer. The property owner shall be required to open an account for the provision of water at the property that is rented or leased. The Utility acknowledges the previous practice of permitting tenants to be Customers and the fact that there are likely still some tenant Customers of the Utility. That said, the Utility shall no longer accept applications from tenants and those tenants who are currently Customers shall remain jointly and severally liable, along with the property owner, for the costs of the water service.

7. ESTIMATING WATER METER READINGS

In the case of metered service Customers who are billed quarterly, meters shall be read in at least two of the four quarters; normally, the second and fourth; and subject to Regulation 8, each billing for these quarters shall be based upon the meter reading with adjustment for any earlier estimated reading. The Commission may, at its option, estimate the reading in the alternate quarters based on the actual consumption in the previous quarter. In the case of metered service Customers who are billed monthly, meters shall be read monthly.

8. ESTIMATED READING FOR BILLING PURPOSES

If the Commission is unable to obtain any meter reading required for billing purposes, after exercising due diligence in the usual practice for meter reading, the bill for that service shall be estimated in accordance with the best data available, subject, however, to the provision that in no circumstances will an estimated reading be used for more than three consecutive billing periods. The Commission shall notify the Customer by registered mail that arrangements must be made for the Commission to obtain a reading and failing such arrangements, the Commission may suspend service until such arrangements are made. When the meter reading has been obtained, the previous bill or bills shall be adjusted accordingly.

9. ADJUSTMENT OF BILLS

Any Customer desiring to question their bill must do so in writing to the Administrator within the thirty-day period allowed for payment of bills

10. SUSPENSION OF SERVICES FOR NON-PAYMENT OF BILLS

The Utility shall have the right to enter into Customer's premises within reasonable hours to suspend service to Customers whose bills remain unpaid for more than forty days after date rendered. The Customer shall pay the sum of \$50.00 for reconnection after each suspension. Such connection shall not be made until all arrears are paid. If, after final notification of shut off is given, field staff visit the Customer's premises with shut-off orders and effect payment of all arrears the same or following business day, a charge of \$25.00 shall be levied against the subject Customer's account

11. RESUMPTION OF SERVICE

In all cases where water has been turned off at the request of the Customer for non-payment of bills, or for any other reason, it shall not be turned on again until the sum of \$10.00 has been paid to the Secretary, together with all arrears of water rates.

12. SERVICE CONNECTIONS

When application has been made in due form for a water service connection on a street in which a water main is laid, the Utility shall install a service pipe from the water main to the street line. All such pipes shall be 5/8" or 3/4" in diameter, unless the Utility deems a larger size necessary or desirable or if the Customer desires a larger size. If a service of larger size is installed, the Customer shall pay the difference between the 3/4" size and the cost of the larger size.

13. SPRINKLER SYSTEM

In the case of a larger service pipe being required for sprinkler systems or other means of fire protection, the Utility shall, in the same manner as in the preceding paragraph, provide and lay the same from the main to the street line and be responsible for the upkeep.

14. SEASON FOR LAYING MAINS

The Utility shall not be required to lay any service pipe at any season of the year which, in the opinion of the Secretary, is not suitable for the performance of the work.

15. RESTRICTIONS AND PRIVILEGES

No Customer shall supply or permit water to be supplied from any of the fixtures installed in the premises owned or occupied by the Customer to any other premises without the approval of the Utility.

16. IMPROPER USE OF WATER

No Customer shall permit the improper use or waste of water.

17. INSTALLATION OF WATER PIPES IN PREMISES

Every water pipe or fixture hereafter installed in any premises shall be placed as far as possible from any external wall so as not to be exposed to the action of frost or to other injury, and generally shall be installed to the satisfaction of the Utility.

18. METER SERVICE

The Utility shall have the right to meter all services. All meters shall be the property of the Utility.

19. ACCESS TO CUSTOMER'S PREMISES

Representatives of the Utility shall have right of access to all parts of a Customer's property or premises at all reasonable hours for the purpose of inspecting any water pipes or fittings, or appliances, or discontinuing service, or for the purpose of installing, removing, repairing, reading, or inspecting meters. The Utility shall have the right to suspend service to any Customer who refuses such access.

20. FROST-PROOF BOX

When the premises of a Customer are of such nature that a meter cannot be properly installed, or if the premises are not sufficiently frost-proof to guarantee the safety of the meter, the Utility may order the construction of a suitable frost-proof box in which the meter can be installed, the cost of same to be billed to the owner of the premises.

21. METER TESTING

Meters shall be tested by the Utility upon the request of a Customer. If the test shall establish the accuracy to be within 3% either way, the Customer shall pay the Utility the expense of making such test. If the test shall establish there is an error greater than 3% either way, the Utility shall bear all the costs of making the test.

22. INSTALLATION OF METERS

Meters shall be installed and removed only by employees of the Utility and no other person shall install, alter, change, or remove a meter without the written permission of the Utility. The connections for such meters shall be installed to the approval of and without expense to the Utility.

23. DAMAGE TO METERS

Where any damage is caused to a meter by the negligence of the Customer, the same shall be paid for by the Customer.

24. EXTENSIONS

Upon request of the owner of any property situated on any street or highway in which no water main has been laid, for the extension of the water service thereto, such extension shall be subject to payment of a capital contribution by or on behalf of the owner of the property. The amount of the capital contribution shall be calculated as the total capital cost, less the portion thereof supported by external funding. Where more than one owner will be served by the extension, the capital contribution shall be apportioned equally between them.

25. BACK-FLOW PREVENTERS

When any Customer's water system includes a pump or other device capable of producing pressures on the system, the Customer will install a back-flow preventer valve. All costs so incurred initially and for maintenance will be the responsibility of the Customer.

26. WATER CONSERVATION DIRECTIVE

- a. The Commission may implement water conservation measures, if in the opinion of the Commission, such measures will permit the Commission to provide a reliable, continuous water supply to all Customers serviced by the Commission.
- b. During such times as water conservation measures referred to in subsection (a) are implemented, Customers who do not comply with such measures may have their water service suspended during such period as the Commission's water conservation measures are in place.
- c. The cost of turning on a water service suspended pursuant to subsection (b) will be the responsibility of the Customer, as outlined in the approved Schedule of Rules and Regulations for the Utility.