

CITY OF NEWBURYPORT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICES

16A PERRY WAY NEWBURYPORT, MA 01950

> PHONE: 978-465-4464 FAX: 978-465-1623

Policy 2024-01 Water and Sewer Commission Abatement Policy

The City of Newburyport Board of Water and Sewer Commissioners will consider a request for abatement from an abnormally high water and sewer bill caused by an accidental water release that **cannot reasonably be prevented.** The policy will establish an abatement for up to one half of the excess water consumption above normal consumption.

Definitions:

<u>Accidental water release</u>: Means water released from well-maintained plumbing system beyond reasonable past history usage and water was not planned to increase.

<u>Cannot reasonably be prevented:</u> Means regular plumbing maintenance is current and expected release was not foreseen and could not have been prevented.

<u>Normal consumption:</u> Is the consumption planned and is consistent with the average monthly usage over the prior four-quarters.

Water Release Abatement Eligible:

- A one-time pool fill or pool liner replacement within a ten (10) year period for a new pool when water can be proven to not have entered the sewer system. Only the sewer charges are eligible for abatement.
- Ruptured pipe or water system (example water tank) within the property that was not expected and not caused by poor property maintenance, and water did not enter the sewer system. Request for such abatement is only allowed once in a three-year period.

Water Release Abatement Not Eligible:

- Leaky toilet or plumbing fixtures.
- Challenges due to water meter reading.
- Due to property liens, sales, foreclosures or any property oversight negligence.
- Irrigation system.

Requirements to Apply for Abatement:

- All outstanding charges on the account must be paid. Applicant may also offer to make a good faith payment on current bill equal to the amount paid previous quarter.
- Disputed charges paid in the amount equal to the prior year's amount billed during the same consumption period.
- In the event there is no prior year history, the payment amount is calculated based on the number of occupants and the industry average per occupant.
- Request must be submitted within 30 days after the issuance of the bill in dispute.



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WAYNE S. AMARAL, DIRECTOR JON CAREY, DPS DEPUTY DIRECTOR

- Proof the accidental release is fixed and no longer releasing water, with copy of the bill from a licensed plumber that includes a detailed description of the repair. Water Division may request a site investigation to confirm such repairs have been completed.
- Applications received after 30 days of the bill date will be denied.

Procedure to Apply for Abatement

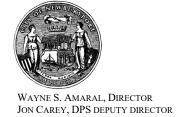
- Complete the Water and Sewer Bill Abatement Application attached to this policy.
- Return the Bill Abatement Application and all supporting documents to the Department of Public Services (DPS) Water and Sewer Business Office at the below location.

DPS – Water/Sewer Business Office PO Box 880 16C Perry Way Newburyport, MA 01950 wsbilling@cityofnewburyport.com

Abatement Decision Process

- Applicants will receive written notification of the Water and Sewer Commission's decision to grant or deny the application for abatement.
- Applicants will have 15-days to appeal the decision in person with the Water and Sewer Commission
 by making such appeal in writing or e-mail at wsbilling@cityofnewburyport.com. Staff will inform
 applicant of the next scheduled meeting and place the applicant onto the next scheduled public meeting.
- If the applicant does not respond with 15-days of the Water and Sewer Commission initial written decision, the decision will be considered final.
- Applicant will have 30 days to pay the balance of the contested bill without any interest charge.

Approved by Water and Sewer Commission on March 27, 2024.



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Policy 2024-01 Water and Sewer Commission Abatement Application

Date:	
Applicant Name:	Phone #:
Applicant Address:	
E: Mail Address:	
Account Number:	
	Bill Date:
	at and attach supporting documentation. Refer to Policy 2024-01 Abatement ked to submit supplementary information and documentation to support the
Signature of Applicant:	Date:
	USE ONLY – Below this line
<u>Date Received:</u> Water R Staff Review and recommendation:	Request: \$ Sewer Request: \$
COMMISSIO	ON USE ONLY – Below this line
Abatement: Approved / Denied	
Commission Chair Signature:	Date: