

CHAPTER VII

WATER

ARTICLE 1 IN GENERAL

SECTION 1 PURPOSE

The following rules and regulations made by the Bellows Falls, Vermont, Village Corporation Water Utility will, upon application for or acceptance of service, constitute a contract between the customer and the utility. The customer will be considered to express his consent to be bound thereby, and to take water only for purposes stated in the application and at the established rates.

The Board of Trustees, acting as Water Commissioners, pursuant to the Village Charter, shall:

- (1) Set all rates of the Bellows Falls Village Water Department, including penalty for late payments.
- (2) Have authority to restrict use in emergencies as they deem necessary.
- (3) Have final authority in all matters pertaining to Bellows Falls Village Water System.

SECTION 2 DEFINITIONS

- (1) Utility: refers to the Bellows Falls Village Corporation Water Department.
- (2) Customer: shall be taken to mean any person, firm, corporation, government, or governmental division who has applied for and is granted service or who is responsible for the service.
- (3) Main: means a water pipe, owned, operated and maintained by the utility, which is used for the purpose of transmission or distribution of water but is not a water service pipe.
- (4) Service Pipe: is the pipe running from the main to the premises of the customer.

ARTICLE II APPLYING FOR SERVICE

SECTION 1 APPLICATIONS FOR WATER SERVICE

Applications for service are to be made at the office of the utility on forms which will be provided by the utility. Such application shall be made by the owner of the premises.

There shall be two types of service:

(1) Standard Service Contract

A contract for service between the utility and customer when the service meets the conditions of the Department as stated below.

(2) Limited Service Contract

A contract between the utility and the customer for service when the locations of the service falls in a pressure zone of below 20 p.s.i.

ARTICLE III INSTALLATION, CONNECTION

SECTION 1 WATER MAINS

No new water main installation either for domestic or fire prevention use will be undertaken by the Village of Bellows Falls Water Department. Any additions to the existing system will be at the owner's expense and strictly adhere to the Village Water Department, AWWA, and Ten State standards.

Mains will be installed, chlorinated and tested by AWWA standards and Ten State standards before being accepted by the Village and the installer or developer will be liable for said lines for a period of one year.

Pipe shall be no less than Class 52 ductile iron or comparable AWWA approved, size specified by the Water Department. Pipes shall be laid and buried with proper cover and compaction. All bends and gates shall have proper thrust blocks behind or beneath each bend or gate. All lines shall be properly tested and chlorinated before being accepted by the Village. All gates and fittings (hydrants, etc.) shall be of a make and design approved by the Village. All gates on the system will open to the left with gate boxes brought to the road level, (Village to supervise said work). There will be no cost to the Village.

SECTION 2 WATER CONNECTIONS

Services will be made with no less than 3/4" type "K" copper or brass. Again, buried and compacted properly to the property line; to be paid by property owner. Connection of larger size will be made by outside firm at no expense to the Village. All materials will be furnished by the property owner. Any repairs to be made as a result of tap to be paid by the property owner.

SECTION 3 SPRINKLER LINES

All lines installed and designated to be fire protection lines shall be subject to a separate billing. Said lines are to be used for fire protection only, and at no time are they to be tapped for an illegal connection such as for domestic use.

ARTICLE IV AVAILABILITY

SECTION 1 AVAILABILITY OF SERVICE

The acceptance of an application will be contingent upon the existence of a water main in the public way, or in a private way, or other property upon which the property to be served abuts.

ARTICLE V SERVICE CONNECTION, METERS

SECTION 1 SERVICE CONNECTION TO MAIN

The Village Water Department shall make, at the customers' expense, all taps up to and including 3/4".

All taps of larger size will be made by an outside firm with the Village Water Department supervising the work. All taps, pipes, fittings, etc. are to be at consumers' expense. All 3/4" taps will be of either "K" copper or brass. The applicant for a service connection will be required to deposit with the utility, in advance of construction, the sum of \$150.00. When the installation has been completed, the cost of such service shall be determined. Should it be found that the deposit is in excess of the actual cost, such excess shall be refunded to the customer. If the cost exceeds the deposit, then before the meter shall be connected, the applicant shall pay the deficiency.

SECTION 2 OWNERSHIP AND MAINTENANCE OF SERVICE PIPE

All new service pipes, within the limits of the highway or right-of-way, shall be installed, owned and maintained by the customer. From the limits of the highway right-of-way to the building, the service pipe shall be installed, owned and maintained by the customer.

For all existing services the liability of the utility shall end at the corporation stop regardless of location.

A service pipe requested and installed for future use shall be financed in full by the customer until utilized, at which time the customer will be refunded the original cost of that portion normally financed by the utility.

When it becomes necessary to thaw a frozen service pipe, it shall be paid by the customer. All work done on a service between the Corporation stop and the meter shall be approved by the utility.

SECTION 3 INTERIOR VALVING

Every service must be provided with an operable valve on each side of the water meter installation. Such valves shall be protected from freezing. Cost of these valves shall be borne by the customer.

SECTION 4 METERS

Ownership of all water meters which are used to make measurements of water upon which charges are based shall be vested in the utility.

- (1) General - All water sold by the utility shall be on the basis of meter measurements or as otherwise provided for in its rate schedules as adopted by resolution of the Board of Trustees, and the utility may install meters whenever deemed expedient.

The customer may receive water through a meter upon written application to the utility. The size of the meter will, in all cases, be determined by the utility. Premises once served at meter rates will not be restored to a flat rate.

- (2) Meter Setting - All meters shall be set, as nearly as possible, at the interior wall on the service side of the building, and the customer shall provide and maintain a clean, dry, warm and accessible place therefore. The customer is responsible for installing the appropriate fixtures to allow for the meter to be set in a horizontal position. All meters that are 2" and larger shall have a bypass approved by the utility, to allow the meter to be changed or tested without interruption of service. Such fixtures will be provided by the customer at no cost to the utility. The cost of the meter shall be borne by the utility.

The owner of the premises shall provide a meter location which will protect the meter against all injury including heat and freezing. In the case of a damaged meter, the utility shall immediately ascertain the cause and extent of such injury, and shall forthwith assess against the account of said owner a charge of the amount necessary to return such meter to first-class condition.

In any case where the accuracy of registration of any meter is challenged by any customer, said meter shall be tested on the following basis only: The customer shall sign an agreement to pay-for the work of removing, testing and replacing such meter. If tests show that such meter is accurate within 2% for such meter, the customer shall be held liable for the cost of such removal and test. If, the meter tests above the limits specified, the utility shall assume all costs of such removal and test and shall adjust the billing in question in an equitable manner. If a meter gets out of order and fails to register, the consumer will be charged during such failure at the average consumption as shown by the meter when it was in good order.

All water passing through a meter will be charged for whether used or wasted.

No person except utility personnel shall disconnect any meter, or place, replace, move, remove or disturb any meter in any manner whatsoever, provided, however, that this article applies only to the meter itself and not to any connecting fixtures or pipes, and provided, further that this article shall not be construed to render the utility liable for any portion of any service.

ARTICLE VI CHARGES

SECTION 1 DEPOSITS

When deemed necessary, the utility may require a deposit to guarantee payment of current water bills. Such deposit shall not exceed the estimated amount of two billing periods, nor shall it be used as payment in full or in part of a delinquent bill while the customer still requires service in the same location for which said deposit was paid.

No deposit shall be refunded until the customer has established suitable credit.

SECTION 2 DISCONTINUANCE OF SERVICE

Bills for water service are due and payable when issued, and shall be considered delinquent when unpaid after thirty days. Service may be discontinued for delinquency in payment of water bills or for violation of any rule or regulation contained herein.

Service may be discontinued to any customer in accordance with the standards and procedures set forth in Chapter 129 of Title 24 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated known as the "Uniform Water and Sewer Disconnect Act". The utility, on disconnect or reconnect, may charge all fees and costs permitted by that Chapter or the laws of the State of Vermont. (See Appendix A)

SECTION 3 AVERAGED BILLS

When the meter reader, on the normal meter reading date cannot gain access to the premises, an invoice will be rendered, based on average water use.

SECTION 4 SUSPENSION OF BILLING

Any customer whose premises are to be closed for an extended time, but where service is still desired, may so notify the utility in writing and if arrangements satisfactory to the utility are made, no bills will be sent for collection during the period the premises are vacant. When the premises are again occupied, the customer will be billed for the period during which the premises were closed.

ARTICLE VII USAGE

SECTION 1 CROSS-CONNECTION

No cross connection between the public water supply system and any other supply will be allowed unless properly protected in accordance with the policy of the State Department of Health and no new cross connection may be installed without the approval of said department and the utility.

In addition, no connection capable of causing back flow into the public water supply system through plumbing fixture, appliance, or waste outlet, having direct connection to waste drains will be permitted. If the owner of such a connection does not make adequate corrections within a time limit specified by the utility, service shall be discontinued.

SECTION 2 GENERAL SERVICE CONDITIONS

No customer shall obtain water from any hydrant or other fixture of the utility without the previous consent of the utility.

Any customer shall maintain, at their own expense, the plumbing and fixtures with their own premises in good repair and protect them from freezing.

All customers having direct pressure water devices, including but not limited to hot water tanks, or secondary systems supplied by automatic feed valves, should have installed and maintained in operating condition appropriate vacuum, temperature, and pressure relief valves or cutouts in the water system and/or secondary system to prevent damage to the water device or secondary system, or their appurtenances should it become necessary to shut-off the water main or service, or should a pressure failure occur for any other reason. Water service supplied to any customer not providing such protective devices will be strictly at the risk of the customer. The utility will not be held liable for damage resulting from the lack of, or failure of such protective devices.

No customer shall utilize any service pipe of interior plumbing as the building electrical ground, unless such grounding is in accordance with Section 250-26 Paragraph C of the National Electrical Code.

SECTION 3 NO LIABILITY FOR INTERRUPTED OR UNSATISFACTORY SERVICE

If, by reason of temporary shortage of supply or for the purpose of making repairs, extension, connections, or placing or replacing meter, or for any reason beyond the control of the utility, it becomes necessary to shut off water in a main or service, the utility will not be responsible for any damages occasioned by such shut off and no adjustment of rates will be allowed unless the interruption is in effect for a continuous period in excess of ten days, in which case a proportional adjustment of rates will be made. Notice of shut-off will be given when practicable, but nothing in this rule shall be construed as requiring the giving of such notice.

The utility will not be responsible for damage caused by discolored water or unsatisfactory water service which may be occasioned by cleaning of pipes, reservoirs or standpipes, or the opening or closing of any valves or hydrants, or any abnormal condition, unless caused by the lack of reasonable care on the part of the utility. The utility will not be responsible for meeting unusually high water quality standards for specialized-or industrial customers.

The utility will attempt to maintain standard system pressures not exceeding 175 p.s.i. and will not be required to render service where normal system pressures maybe expected to fall below 20 p.s.i. In the event that a prospective customer desires service with the full understanding that normal system pressures may fall below that limit, service will be rendered only upon completion of a limited service contract. Where a customer feels that the system pressures within the above range are higher than his plumbing or apparatus can endure, it shall be the responsibility of the customer to install a suitable pressure reducing device.

SECTION 4 WATER CONSERVATION

The Board of Trustees may, from time to time, establish temporary restrictions on use of water by utility customers when it determines that conservation or protection of present or future water supplies make such restrictions necessary. Restrictions on water usage may take affect two days after adoption by the Trustees at a regular or special meeting or immediately in an acute emergency.

The Trustees may establish fines or surcharges for violation of duly adopted restrictions not to exceed \$100 per violation. Each customer shall be responsible for violations occurring at its service locations.

Notice of violation shall be given by the Village Manager or his designee, to customers within 10 days after the date of the violation. Said notice shall state the nature of the violations, the surcharge to be added to the customer's bill and the date by which any appeal of said surcharge shall be filed with the Board of Trustees. Customers shall have 10 days after notice is mailed, or otherwise delivered to appeal said surcharge

Fines and/or surcharges levied under this Section may be added to the customer's next water bill; or may be assessed after the expiration of the appeal period.

SECTION 5 BACK PAYMENT REQUIRED UPON DISCOVERY OF UNAUTHORIZED USE

In all cases where anyone is found using the water of the Village Water Department in any manner without paying for such, as for instance; uncharted or an abandoned service, such person must pay all back bills from the time they assumed ownership of the property and all costs in connection with same within fifteen (15) days of discovery of the illegal connection.

SECTION 6 FLUCTUATION OF PRESSURES BY CUSTOMER'S APPARATUS

No customer shall install or use water consumption apparatus which will affect the utility's pressure of operating conditions so as to interfere with the service of another customer. Where a customer has or proposes to install an apparatus which requires water in sudden and material quantities, impairing the pressure to the detriment, damage, or disadvantage of other customers, the utility reserves the right to require such customer to install devices or an apparatus which will confine such fluctuation of demand and pressure within reasonable limits determined by the utility.

The applicant also agrees to furnish the utility with drawings showing revisions to piping or appurtenances whenever the same are made.

The annual charge for private fire protection service shall be made in accordance with the schedule of rates on file at the office of the utility.

The utility expressly reserves the right to determine the necessity for and the advisability of, granting any application for this special service, and the right to determine the size of the service pipe which will be granted; depending upon the size of the street main, the available pressure on the main, and the nature and capacity of the fire protection equipment within the building.

SECTION 7 NOTICE OF SERVICE (ON AND OFF)

When requested by the customer twenty-four (24) hours notice shall be required for letting on water or turning off water to any service, and such service shall take place only during the regular business hours of the utility.

The charge for this service will be as established by resolution of the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 8 EMERGENCY

Water may be let on or off to any service at any time when, in the opinion of the utility a condition of emergency or great need exists.

However, such let on or off shall not operate to excuse or forgive any charges or other liability assessed against the property so served.

SECTION 9 FILLING OF SWIMMING POOLS OR TANKERS

A service charge shall be charged to anyone from outside the water system for pool or any other use. The reason for such a charge is amount of water and labor reimbursement to Village. People on Village system may fill pool from regular house connection and consumption will show on the meter.

The charge shall be made for every trip the Serviceman has to make to the hydrant.