

ITEM	10
MANAGER'S REPORT #	13
COUNCIL MEETING	96/05/06

TO: CITY MANAGER 1996 APRIL 12

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING & BUILDING

SUBJECT: THE COLLECTION OF THE ANNUAL CHARGES FOR THE COST OF ADMINISTERING THE CROSS CONNECTION CONTROL PROGRAM.

PURPOSE: To seek Council's authority to amend the Waterworks Regulation Bylaw to provide for a charge to cover the cost of administering the cross connection control program on those properties where a cross connection control device or devices are installed and to remove the existing fee from Appendix A of the Burnaby Plumbing Bylaw.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1) **THAT** Council authorize the City Solicitor to prepare an amendment to the Burnaby Waterworks Regulation Bylaw so as to require the owner of any property on which a cross connection control device has been installed, to pay to the City an annual cross connection control device charge for the processing of the annual test reports required by the Burnaby Plumbing Bylaw.
- 2) **THAT** Council authorize the City Solicitor to prepare an amendment to the Burnaby Plumbing Bylaw so as to remove the existing fees charged for the processing of annual test reports for backflow protection devices from that bylaw.
- 3) **THAT** these amendments be effective 1997 January 01.

REPORT

1.0 BACKGROUND:

In 1992 November, Council authorized staff to proceed with the implementation of a Cross Connection Program to safeguard against the possibility of contaminants entering potable water piping systems in the community. As part of this process, the Burnaby Plumbing Bylaw was amended to require cross connection control devices be installed and maintained in accordance with the standards prescribed in the British Columbia Plumbing Code.

The Plumbing Bylaw was also amended to require property owners to submit annual test reports to demonstrate that the cross connection control devices installed on their property are in good working condition. Appendix A of the Bylaw now stipulates a fee of \$20.00 for the first device and \$10.00 for each additional device for the review and processing of the annual reports. This fee is intended to recover the cost of administering the program.

2.0 THE CROSS CONNECTION PROGRAM:

The Cross Connection Program has been in place now for three years and is working well. Building Department records indicate that approximately two thousand devices have been installed throughout the City since the program was initiated in April of 1993 and it is estimated that the number of devices will increase by about five hundred per year. Annual test results indicate that a percentage of the devices do require routine cleaning and repair before being put back into use which reaffirms the need to continue the process of annual testing.

3.0 FEES

While the program itself has been effective the collection of the fees for the processing and review of the annual test reports has proven to be time consuming and awkward.

The annual test reports are prepared and submitted by certified cross connection device testers who contend that it is the property owner's responsibility to submit the annual processing fees. The Plumbing Inspector must act as a bill collector seeking out the individual property owners to request payment of the fees. Often it takes more time and resources to collect a \$20 or \$30 fee than it does to review and process the reports.

In 1994, the City of Vancouver initiated a fee for the review of test reports to recover costs associated with their Cross Connection Program. Collection of those fees has been successfully achieved through the application of an annual levy on the water bill for those properties with cross control devices. This charge is equal to the amount that would be billed for the processing of the test reports. By collecting this charge with the other utility charges, the Plumbing Inspector no longer has to argue with or pursue the certified testers and owners for payment.

In order to simplify the collection of the charge required to recover the costs associated with our cross connection control program, we are proposing that we bill the property owners for the processing of the annual tests by including it as part of the annual utilities levy for the property sent out in March of each year. If the collection of this charge is to be standardized with the utilities billing, the authority to impose it must be placed in the Waterworks Bylaw. The City Solicitor advises that this is consistent with the authority provided by the Municipal Act for these charges and with Council's approval, Director Finance is prepared to include them as part of the 1997 water rates. To coincide with this the report inspection fee should be removed from the City's Plumbing Bylaw.

To fully recover the costs of administering this program, we are also proposing that the current fees of \$20 for the first device and \$10 for each additional device be replaced with a flat rate charge of \$20 per device with a 5% discount if the payment is made by the due date for the utility levy. The practice of giving a 5% discount for fees paid by the due date is consistent with the other utility charges collected under the authority of the Waterworks Bylaw.

With Council's approval staff will proceed with the implementation of the necessary bylaw amendments and Director Finance will report back to Council with the actual charges as part of the 1997 water rate setting report in November.

This report has been prepared in consultation with the City Solicitor and Director Finance.



D. G. Stenson, DIRECTOR
PLANNING & BUILDING

DWM:ap

cc: Director Finance
City Solicitor
Chief Building Inspector

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