




COMMUNICATION UPDATE

TO:	Mayor and Members City Council
DATE:	April 19, 2022
SUBJECT:	2757 King Street East, Hamilton – Water and Wastewater / Storm Account Credit Adjustment (Ward 5)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
SUBMITTED BY:	Brian McMullen Director, Financial Planning, Administration and Policy Corporate Services Department
SIGNATURE:	

The City's Water and Wastewater / Storm Back-billing Policy (Policy) maintains the principle that consumers are to pay for the water and / or wastewater / storm services they utilize, while ensuring that back-bill adjustments are conducted in a fair and reasonable manner. Typically, back-bill adjustments represent charges not previously billed for service that was delivered to the customer during a period before the current billing cycle where the original billings are discovered to be too low (under-billed). Less frequently, an over-billing of charges arises due to a billing error as has recently occurred with the water account for 2757 King Street East, Hamilton.

Generally, customers request to enter into an optional payment arrangement once significant account debit bill adjustments related to an underbilling occurs. Per the City's Water Billing Payment Arrangement Policy, arrangements exceeding \$100 K require City Council approval. Similarly, where a credit bill adjustment surpasses \$100 K, the matter is provided to Council for information.

As such, this Communication Update is to advise that a credit bill adjustment has been completed regarding 2757 King Street East, Hamilton, the site of the St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton King Campus (Urgent Care Centre), ("The Customer"). The water meter servicing the site had been over estimated from December 2019 resulting in a credit adjustment of \$104,775.85.

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OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

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In December 2019, the subject account began to bill out on estimated readings. A subsequent site visit by a Hamilton Water meter technician recommended a meter change as the meter register does not transmit a reading to the remote touchpad. However, the lack of a proper meter bypass assembly would not facilitate a meter change without shutting the water to the urgent care centre. The customer was advised that a proper meter bypass needs to be installed.

Attempts to obtain actual meter reads over the past two years until the bypass assembly could be installed were hindered by access limitations to health care facilities during the pandemic. The Customer recently provided Alectra an actual meter reading (which has been verified by Hamilton Water) revealing the over estimation that has occurred with the subject account. The Customer has been informed of the credit, which has been applied to the affected water account.

The Customer has advised Hamilton Water that a proper bypass assembly will be installed in May 2022 and immediately thereafter, the water meter will be replaced. Hamilton Water will be provided access to obtain meter readings to ensure the account is billed on actual usage until the new water meter is installed.

JS/dt