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# SEWER BACKUP POLICY

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Date Approved by Council: September 22, 2016

Resolution: 2016-09-22-06

Review Date: Organizational Meeting

Related Bylaw: 499-15 Utility Bylaw

Amendments: 2017-09-14-04; 2020-10-08-263

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## **Policy Statement**

The intent of this Policy is to determine the responsibilities of Homeowners and the Village of Hussar when a blockage occurs in a sanitary main.

## **Definitions**

*Private Sanitary Sewer Service Line* shall mean the portion of the sanitary sewer line which services the private property from the property line to the building.

*Sanitary Sewer Service Line* shall mean the line that services the private property and connects to the sanitary sewer service main, and includes the Private Sanitary Sewer Service Line and the Village Sanitary Sewer Service Line.

*Sanitary Sewer Service Main* shall mean the main line of the public utility to which the sanitary sewer service line connects.

*Village Sanitary Sewer Service Line* shall mean the portion of the sanitary sewer service line which services the private property. It is connected to the sanitary sewer main, and runs to the property line.

## **General Information**

### **SERVICE BLOCKAGE**

The most common cause of a sewer backup is a blockage of the sanitary sewer service line between the home and the Village's sanitary sewer service main. Blockages may be caused by soil settlement, misaligned joints, root infiltration, pipe collapses or debris within the pipe (cooking grease, rags, or other solid debris) that has been flushed down any drain.

### **SEWER MAIN BACKUP**

On rare occasions, a blockage can occur in a Village sanitary sewer service main causing a backup onto a private property. A backup may also occur on private property due to too much water in the sanitary sewer system through either inflow or infiltration. Inflow occurs when storm water or other water enters the sanitary system through downspouts, weeping tile or sump pumps being drained into the sanitary sewer system. Infiltration occurs through cracks, joints, broken pipes or other defects within the sanitary sewer system.

**Responsibilities**

The property owner (or tenant) is responsible to obtain the services of a plumber or contractor to clear or remove any obstruction in the Sanitary Sewer Service Line.

The plumber or contractor hired by the property owner (or tenant) is responsible to take the necessary steps to clear or remove the obstruction from the Sanitary Sewer Service Line at the building to the Sanitary Sewer Main.

The property owner (or tenant) is responsible to notify the Village Office if no obstruction was found in the Sanitary Sewer Service Line and sewer backup continues.

The property owner is responsible for all maintenance or repairs that may be required within the Sanitary Sewer Service Line, and for adhering to Bylaw #499-15 in its entirety to mitigate the potential for sewer backups.

The Village is responsible for any repairs of defects that occur within the Sanitary Sewer Main.

The property owner (or tenant) is responsible to provide all the information on the Sewer Backup Reimbursement Request Form specified as Schedule A to this policy in order to request reimbursement for any costs associated with a sewer backup that has occurred due to a defect in the Village sanitary sewer service line or the sanitary sewer service main.

The Village is responsible to forward all Sewer Backup Reimbursement Request Forms to the Village's insurance company for determination of liability and reimbursement.

The Village is responsible to act with reasonable expediency to mitigate damage and repair defects within the sanitary sewer service line or the sanitary sewer service main, and to follow the procedures laid out within this policy to the best of their ability.

**Procedures**

1. The property owner (or tenant) contacts a private plumbing service to clear the Sanitary Sewer Service Line.
  - a. If no blockage is found and the sewer backup continues the property owner must contact the Village Office.
2. The Village receives notification from the property owner (or tenant) that a sewer backup has occurred and that no blockage was found in the Sanitary Sewer Service Line. The property owner must supply the Village with the following information:
  - a. Name of the property owner (or tenant);

- b. Civic address of the property where the backup occurred;
  - c. Contact phone number of the property owner (or tenant);
  - d. Name and contact phone number for the plumber or contractor used;
  - e. The full distance of the roter or camera that was used in attempting to clear a blockage.
3. The Village will notify the Village's current water/wastewater services contractor and provide the details provided by the property owner (or tenant) as provided above.
4. The water/wastewater services contractor will provide an operator to check manholes downstream and upstream (as necessary) to determine the location of any problem within the Sanitary Sewer Service Main.
  - a. If the water/wastewater services contractor is unable to provide an operator within a reasonable time, or upon discussion with the contractor, the Village Office and Public Works Foreman, the water/wastewater services contractor may approve a Village employee to check the downstream and upstream manholes (as necessary) and report back to the contractor.
5. Upon locating the problem in the Sanitary Sewer Main the water/wastewater service contractor will make necessary arrangements to repair the line or remove the blockage (possibly by flushing) within a reasonable time frame.
  - a. The water/wastewater service contractor will contact the Village upon arrangements being made to repair the line or remove the blockage and specify the date at which the repair or removal will occur as well as the name and contact information for the company that has been requested to complete the repair or removal.
  - b. If the Village is not satisfied with the time frame for the repair or removal the Village may request that the contractor enter further discussions with the company hired to complete the repair or removal to complete the work at an earlier date, or the Village may notify the contractor that they will be contacting the company directly, or the Village may find an alternate company that is available at an earlier time and notify the contractor as such. If the Village finds an alternate company they will notify the company arranged by the contractor of such cancellation.
  - c. If a defect or blockage cannot be located in the Sanitary Service Main (the mains are flowing freely and no other properties are reporting sewer backups), it is assumed that the blockage or defect is within the Sanitary Sewer Service Line and is the responsibility of the property owner.
6. Upon satisfactory arrangements being made for the repair of the Sanitary Sewer Main or removal of a blockage, the Village will contact the property owner (or tenant) as well as any

other residents that may be affected by the repair or removal with the time frame for the repair or removal.

7. Upon completion of the repair or removal work the Village will notify the property owner (or tenant) as well as any other affected residents of the completion of the work.

**SCHEDULE A**  
**SEWER BACKUP REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST FORM**

Please ensure all parts of this form are completed:

<b>Claimant Information (Property owner)</b>	
Name:	
Phone Number:	
<b>Witness Information (May include plumber, neighbours, etc.)</b>	
Name:	
Phone Number:	
<b>Loss Information</b>	
Date of Backup:	
Civic Address:	
Total Reimbursement Requested:	
<b>Damage Details</b>	
<p>* Please provide as much information as possible regarding the backup occurrence (attach additional sheets if necessary)      ** Please attach any pictures, reports, video, invoices or receipts.</p>	

The Village will pass this information on to our insurance company to determine reimbursement for costs related to the sewer backup and any repairs. Costs covered under the property owner’s own insurance are not eligible for reimbursement. Requests for reimbursement for any other amount will be determined on a case by case basis by Village Council.