



# HIGHWAY 14 REGIONAL WATER SERVICES COMMISSION

## POLICY AND PROCEDURE HANDBOOK

### Operational

#### Policy OP 1.03

#### **POLICY: Thawing of Frozen Water Service Lines**

#### **GUIDELINES:**

There shall be a policy for the thawing of frozen service lines that are part of the Highway 14 Regional Water System by the Highway 14 Regional Water Services Commission

#### **Service Line Freezing**

Contributing factors to water service lines freezing.

1. During prolonged cold winters frost can travel deep into the ground. This commonly occurs in locations of traffic and hard packed snow.
2. Lack of use over the winter months. Customers that take a winter vacation often return home to a frozen water service. Services that have otherwise been idle over the winter will tend to freeze.

Service lines that are in continuous use rarely freeze. The water service is commonly installed very near to the sewer service line. Sewer lines frequently have warm water passing through them during normal use. This reduces the level of frost in the ground and prevents both the sewer and water line from freezing. If the water line has frozen, once the water line has been thawed then the sewer has the possibility of freezing. Warm/hot water should be run for a period of time to prevent the sewer from freezing.



## **Uninterrupted Service Not Guaranteed**

The Commission's Bylaw #13-1

(11.1) "Uninterrupted Service Not Guaranteed"

The Commission will use reasonable efforts to maintain, but does not guarantee, uninterrupted water service to its customers. . . .

(11.3) "Force Majeure" (includes "inclement weather")

Should the Commission be rendered unable wholly or in part by Force Majeure to carry out its obligations to supply water, the Commission's obligations so far as they are affected by Force Majeure shall be suspended during the continuation of any inability so caused, but for no longer period and such cause shall, as far as possible, be remedied with all reasonable dispatch. The Commission shall, where practicable, give notice of occurrence of such Force Majeure to its customers affected thereby.

## **Make an Appointment**

Should you notice there is no water coming out of your taps please contact the Commission office at:

Toll Free 1-866-333-3791, or

Phone: 1-780-663-2019, or

Email: [info@hwy14water.ca](mailto:info@hwy14water.ca)

The Commission will set up an appointment with you.

## **Service Line Thawing**

Thawing the service line requires the removal of the water meter and inserting tubing up the service towards the water main. Once the ice block is encountered, hot water is pumped in to melt the ice. Once all ice has been melted the service tubing is removed and the service valve is shut. The meter will be re-installed and a tap turned on. Please be aware that thawing a service line requires 2 men approximately 4 hours and the use of several pieces of equipment. We attempt to contain water but some water will be spilt in the house.

## **Keep Water Running!**

Water must remain running after service line has been thawed otherwise it will refreeze in just a few minutes if the tap is not left open. A steady stream of water that breaks into droplets approximately half way before hitting the drain should keep the service from refreezing. If taps are shut off completely they will refreeze in as little as 5 minutes. The running tap must be left running until deep frost has thawed. This will normally occur after May 15. This volume of water should not be less than one liter/5 minutes and will total approximately 8.5 cubic meters per month. The Commission will credit your account for above normal water usage.

If water service has frozen then there is a risk of the sewer line freezing as well. Ensure a good volume of warm water is run down the drain at least once a day. This may be accomplished by normal activities of bathing, washing dishes or doing laundry.



## Charges for Service Line Thawing

The thawing crew will determine the location of the ice block.

1. If frozen between the customer's house and the property line, then the customer will be responsible for the thawing cost. Customer's cost **\$500**.
2. If the service line is frozen between the property line and the water main then the Commission will absorb the cost of the thaw. **No cost** to customer.
3. If the service line is frozen on both sides of the property line then the thawing cost will be shared with the customer. Customer's cost **\$250**.

## Re-thaw of a Service Line in the Same Winter Frost Season

Service lines will refreeze if the water is not left running or running too slow. The customer's cooperation is required to ensure the service line does not refreeze.

- In the event that a service line refreezes and the Commission has to return to thaw the line a second time, the customer will be invoiced for 50% of the thawing cost or **\$250**.
- If the ice block is completely on the customer's property in which case the customer will be invoiced for the full cost of thawing or **\$500**.
- If the customer fails to leave a tap running the customer will be invoiced for the full cost of thawing or **\$500**.
- All subsequent thaws (3<sup>rd</sup> or more) that frost season, for any cause, will be done at full cost or **\$500**.

## Acknowledgement of Thawing Policy

I, \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ have reviewed, understand and accept the terms of this policy.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Refusal to accept the terms of the Commission's service line thawing policy will result in all thawing work to be invoiced at full cost to the customer.

DIRECTOR'S APPROVAL MOTION # **18-44**

Bzmarko  
CHAIRPERSON

25 APR 2018  
DATE

**IMPORTANT**  
**WATER**  
**FREEZING**  
**RISK.**  
**DO NOT**  
**SHUT TAP**  
**OFF!**

