

# **TOWN OF HINTON**

**POLICY TITLE:** **Sanitary Sewer Backup Policy**

**POLICY #:** **038**

**APPROVED BY:** **Town Council, May 1990**

**UPDATED BY:** **Town Council, May 16, 2017**

---

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

This Policy deals with the backup of sanitary sewer into private residences and businesses. It is intended to cover only sanitary sewer backup and is not applicable to the storm water drainage system.

## **PURPOSE**

To minimize the impacts of wastewater service line disruptions.

## **APPLICATIONS**

### **1.0 First Response**

1.1 If the homeowner is experiencing sewage backup into their home:

**Call Public Works immediately at 780-865-2634 (24 hours/day).**

1.2 Upon receipt of a complaint, the Town shall check to determine if the sanitary sewer main servicing the affected property is flowing normally.

### **2.0 Mains**

2.1 If the sanitary sewer backup has its origins within the sanitary sewer main, the Town is responsible for all costs required to restore the sewer to proper operating conditions.

2.2 Backups into basements are not the responsibility of the Town. Claims for compensations shall not be considered unless negligence can be proven on the part of the Town, its employees, or its authorized representatives.

2.3 If the Town or its agents are proven negligent and have caused the backup, the Town pays all costs including those that incurred on private property.

2.4 If any property owner incurs damages to a property or building due to a sanitary sewer main backup and the owner wishes to claim compensation based upon the

case of Town negligence, the owner must submit a written claim to the Town's Insurance Company.

### **3.0 Services – Private**

- 3.1 If no problems are found with the sanitary sewer main, the Town will explain the sewer policy to the owner and shall advise the owner:
  - 3.1.1 To obtain the services of a certified plumber to check the sanitary sewer service to determine the nature and type of blockage;
  - 3.1.2 If the blockage is located on private property (between the property line and the basement) the owner is responsible for all costs associated with the sewer backup;
  - 3.1.3 If the blockage is forced downstream from inside the private property to the Town property, it is the owner's responsibility to unplug the blockage to the Town sewer main at their cost; and
  - 3.1.4 If the certified plumber is not successful in resolving the sewer problem within six hours of working on site, the owner shall advise the Town. The Town will review with the plumber and owner other options to consider.

### **4.0 Services – Town**

- 4.1 If the certified plumber determines the blockage is beyond the property line (between the property line and the sanitary sewer main) the following conditions will apply:
  - 4.1.1 If the blockage is caused by grease, hair, roots and/or other foreign objects found in the sanitary sewer service, the owner is responsible for all costs;
  - 4.1.2 If the blockage is caused by a collapsed or misaligned service line (greater than 25%) the Town will pay all costs to repair the sewer service, including the plumbing costs incurred by the owner, to discover the cause of the problem (provided the Town was contacted by the owner or certified plumber prior to work commencing). The Town will not be responsible for any clean-up of the basement for sewer that has backed up into the basement unless Town negligence can be demonstrated; and
  - 4.1.3 The Town undertakes work on the service line providing:
    - a. The resident shall sign a Sewer Investigation Agreement prior to the Town undertaking any work,
    - b. A minimum 100 mm (4 inch) cleanout access is available,
    - c. If the 100-mm cleanout is not available, the operators may attempt to unplug the blockage although the operators cannot ensure the quality of the cleaning (further spillage on floor). In this case the owner will be advised to obtain a certified plumber to install a cleanout at the owner's expense,

- d. The operator shall record all service call information for review, and
- e. A letter of findings will be sent to the owner and copy placed in the property file.

## **5.0 Sewer Blockage Due to Root Build-up**

- 5.1 Root blockage of sanitary sewer mains shall be dealt with as per Section 2.0 dealing with Mains.
- 5.2 Root blockage of a sewer service, whether on private property or Town roadway, will be the responsibility of the property owner. The Town will assist in determining the most appropriate treatment for the problem. The allocation of repair/clean-up costs remain with the property owner unless the origin of the roots are from a tree within the Town roadway.

## **6.0 Town Assistance to Private Property Owners and Related Costs**

- 6.1 To assist in the determination in the cause of a sanitary sewer blockage, the owner, with the Town's written approval, may request a camera inspection of the sanitary sewer service. The cost of the inspection will be borne by the party responsible for the sewer repair as per section 6.5.
- 6.2 If the owner is unable to obtain the services of a plumber, the Town or its authorized representatives may undertake the work required and bill the owner accordingly. Prior to commencement of any repairs, the owner must authorize the work in writing and agree to the terms and conditions of this policy statement. The Town staff will maintain the list of plumbers to ensure the owner had contacted all possible plumbers.
- 6.3 Property owners are urged to consult a certified plumber regarding the installation of a backup flow preventer valve on their sewer service if they feel there is unwarranted risk of flooding their basement.
- 6.4 Property owners are encouraged to adequately be covered under their home owner policy for sewer backups.
- 6.5 Maintenance (removing blockage and camera) is determined at the following cost recovery percentage rates:
  - 6.5.1 0% Owner - if blockage is observed in the sewer service located on Town property;
  - 6.5.2 50% Owner and Town - if blockage is observed in the sewer service on both the Town property and private property;
  - 6.5.3 100% Owner - if blockage is observed in the sewer service on private property; and
  - 6.5.4 Town will not replace or pay for any sewer line replacement on private property.

**TOWN OF HINTON**  
**AUTHORIZATION FOR PRIVATE SEWER INVESTIGATION**

Owners Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone - Residence: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell # \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date & Time of Appointment: \_\_\_\_\_ Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

**This form acknowledges that:**

- A blockage of the sewer service has occurred and an investigation is required to determine the nature and type of blockage and condition of the sewer line from private property to the Town sewer main.
- **I AGREE TO PAY THE SEWER INVESTIGATION CHARGES OF \$200.00/HR OR \$ \_\_\_\_\_ AS PER THE TOWN OF HINTON SEWER BACKUP POLICY #038.**
- **I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT IF I DO NOT PAY THE SEWER CHARGES OF THE AMOUNT STATED ABOVE THIS MAY BE ADDED TO MY UTILITIES BILL AND/OR ADDED TO THE TAX ROLE FOR MY PROPERTY. BY PROVIDING MY SIGNATURE PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF WORK, I GRANT CONSENT FOR THE TOWN TO CONDUCT THE SEWER INVESTIGATION.**
- **Owner or Representative Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

---

**General description of work to be carried out:**

Pressure flush line to remove blockage and Camera sewer line to determine the condition of the sewer line and the cause of the blockage.

**Note:** The Town will not be responsible for the work undertaken by the private individuals as per the Town of Hinton Sewer Backup Policy.

**Town of Hinton's Representative Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_