
City of Kelowna

MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 19, 2002
FILE: 5500-03
TO: City Manager
FROM: Deputy Director of Finance
RE: UTILITY BILLING CUSTOMER CARE BYLAW
Prepared by: Revenue Manager

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Utility Billing Customer Care Bylaw No. 8754 be forwarded for reading consideration;

AND THAT the following corresponding amendments to the current regulatory bylaws be forwarded for reading consideration:

- Sewerage System User Bylaw, 1972, No. 3480, Amendment Bylaw No. 8809
- Water Regulation Bylaw No. 2173, Amendment Bylaw No. 8810
- Bylaw No. 8811 being Amendment No. 6 to City of Kelowna Electricity Regulation Bylaw No. 7639

BACKGROUND:

In late 2000 the City of Kelowna committed to the transfer of the City's utility billing operation to BCG Services Inc. In the fall of 2001, BCG Services made the necessary internal decisions on the software package and implementation procedures that would allow that organization to begin the systems phase of the transition process.

In order to facilitate the management of the Customer Care aspect of the contract between the City of Kelowna and BCG Services Inc, items and features that are currently outlined in each of the various service (electrical, water, sewer) bylaws are brought together under Utility Billing Customer Care Bylaw 8754.

In addition to the items and features mentioned above, some aspects of the contract, which are new to the Customer Care operation are also included as part of Bylaw 8754.

Items that are specific to each service (electrical, water, sewer), including rates, are not part of Bylaw 8754.

Details:

Items that have been consolidated under Bylaw 8754, and removed from the current electrical, water and/or sewer bylaws include:

- No application for services will be accepted from any person until any previous outstanding balance is paid in full.

- Applications are not transferable.
- Penalty of 10% on outstanding prior charges will be applied to accounts.
- Payment is due and payable within fifteen (15) days of the billing date.
- Meter reading will be, as nearly as reasonably possible, on the same date in each billing cycle.
- Transfer to taxes of accounts left unpaid at the end of December.
- Estimating meter readings and consumption when meter cannot be accurately read.
- Handling billing errors that result in either an over or an under charge to the customer.
- Non delivery of a billing invoice once it is mailed will not be accepted as a reason for non-payment.
- Requirement for twenty-four hours notice to close an account.

Items that are not part of the current electrical, water and/or sewer bylaws, but have been included in Bylaw 8754 because they are new processes or requirements resulting from the BCG Services contract, are:

- Security deposits will apply to all new customer service accounts, both commercial and residential.
- Security deposits will be returned to customers who have maintained their account in good standing, with residential customer security deposits held for one year and commercial customer deposits held for three years.
- Interest on security deposits will be at the rate used by the Residential Tenancy Office.
- Current customers will be grandfathered and will not be charged a security deposit unless their current account is disconnected for non-payment.
- In cases of severe hardship, security deposit payments may be spread over a period of up to three months to assist customers.
- A Security Deposit Waiver, signed by the property owner, would allow the City to waive the security deposit requirement.

An item that is not a part of Bylaw 8754, because of processing changes related to the BCG Services Inc. contract, but had been previously included in the current electrical, water and/or sewer bylaws is the requirement to make application in person. Customers will now be able to apply for services over the telephone. Customer Care services will be available between the hours of 7:00 AM and 6:00 PM weekdays, except statutory holidays.

Paul Macklem

cc: Director of Finance & Corporate Services
Revenue Manager
Financial Planning & Systems Manager