



POLICY P-04

Collections and Resolution of Issues with Ratepayer Accounts

Adopted date: May 11, 2022	Amended date: May 13, 2026	Next Review: 2031
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OBJECTIVE

This policy establishes a clear, consistent, and fair process for addressing ratepayer concerns related to accounts, billing, collections, and enforcement, while protecting District staff and Trustees and ensuring compliance with District bylaws.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy, “Water Charges” include all charges related to the provision of water service, including but not limited to flat water tolls, metered rates, tiered rates, customer specific rates, penalties, and service-related charges.

POLICY STATEMENT

A. COLLECTION AND SHUT OFF PROCEDURES

In the event of a 24-hour shut-off: 24-hour shut-off notices are to be hand delivered with at least two trustees in attendance. It would be preferable to also have the water operator attend so that, for appearance purposes, the shut off will take place without delay.

In the event the ratepayer does not make the necessary payment, two trustees will accompany the water operator to the property the next day for the water to be shut off.

The water will not be turned back on until such time as all outstanding amounts as well as the shut-off and turn-on fees are paid.

B. RESOLUTION OF RATEPAYER ACCOUNT CONCERNS

General Principles Applicable to All Accounts

Billing Schedule and Notice

- The District issues annual invoices in January, with payment due date shown on the invoice, as established by bylaw.
- Public notices are issued annually advising ratepayers to contact the District if an invoice has not been received.
- Non-receipt of an invoice does not alter due dates or penalty provisions established by bylaw.

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Basis for Water Charges and Service Classification

- Water Charges and service classifications are based on property designation and the infrastructure and level of service provided by the District, not on seasonal, temporary, or intermittent use.
- Claims of non-use or intermittent occupancy do not, on their own, justify reclassification or adjustment of charges.
- Service availability, pressure, and continuity are governed by the Water Distribution Regulation Bylaw and do not, on their own, modify billing classifications.

Resolution Process

1. Initial Contact

Ratepayers who have concerns regarding their account, billing, or service are encouraged to contact the District to request clarification or information. The District strives to address questions and concerns informally wherever possible.

2. Court of Revision

The Van Anda Improvement District holds a Court of Revision annually in February, as advertised. The Court of Revision is the preferred forum for ratepayers to raise concerns regarding Parcel Taxes, Water Charges, or property classifications.

At the Court of Revision:

- Ratepayers are not required to submit a written Dispute Review request in advance.
- Concerns may be raised in person or by contacting the District office to be scheduled.
- Trustees will hear and consider concerns directly in accordance with applicable bylaws.

3. Dispute Reviews Outside the Court of Revision

Dispute Reviews requested outside of the annual Court of Revision must be submitted in writing in accordance with this policy. The following sections set out the format, requirements, and process for Formal Dispute Reviews conducted outside the Court of Revision. Written submissions ensure consistency, fairness, and an adequate record when matters are reviewed outside the Court of Revision process. Disputes will not be resolved through informal discussions, in-person interactions, or telephone conversations.

4. Submission Requirements

A Dispute Review request must include:

- Ratepayer name
- Parcel Identifier (PID)
- The specific charge(s) or classification being disputed
- A written explanation of the concern
- Any supporting documentation the ratepayer wishes to provide

Requests may be submitted by email or mail to the District office.

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5. Role of Staff and Trustees

District staff do not make determinations on disputed charges. Dispute Reviews are considered by the Trustees, or their designate, based on District bylaws, adopted rates, classifications, billing records, and available documentation. Where a meeting is required, a minimum of two Trustees will be present. Attendance by staff is for information purposes only.

6. Effect of Dispute Submission

Submission of a dispute review:

- Does not suspend payment obligations
- Does not delay enforcement actions required by bylaw
- Does not guarantee an adjustment

Charges remain due and payable unless and until a written decision is issued.

7. Conduct

Disputes must be handled respectfully and through the formal process. Abusive, threatening, or confrontational behavior toward staff or Trustees may result in the matter being handled exclusively in writing and may be reported to the RCMP.

8. Finality of Review

Decisions resulting from a Dispute Review represent the District's determination under its authority. Further correspondence on the same matter may be declined unless new, material information is provided.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- BC Local Government Act
- Water Distribution Regulation Bylaw
- Van Anda Improvement District Water Tolls Bylaw