Village of Hay Lakes

Policy 04-2021

Unpaid Tenant Bills Policy

**Policy**:

Occasionally, Hay Lakes Administration has difficulty collecting payment for water; wastewater; and garbage disposal services from Village account holders. Where the delinquent account holder is a tenant, and administrative staff are unable to collect amounts owing, the Village of Hay Lakes will, under the authority granted in Section 42(1) of the *Municipal Government Act*, transfer those amounts to the property taxes of the owner.

**Procedures**:

Tenants that through their lease/rental agreement are required to pay their own utility account to the Village, must make an application for a water; wastewater; garbage disposal utility account.

For maximum protection, property owners should advise the Village of Hay Lakes administrative staff of properties that are being rented.

The owner of a property will receive notice of penalty upon the tenant’s account being in arrears for 60 days.

Property owners may, when a tenant’s utility bill is more than 60 days in arrears request, in writing, disconnection of the service.

When requested in writing, during the months of June to November, village administration will arrange for disconnection of water services to a rental property. This does not represent a standing order. The owner will be required to submit a written request for each tenant at each property. There will be a disconnection and reconnection fee which will be added to the tenant’s account. If the charges remain unpaid, the account will be added to the property taxes of the owner.

If the bill is 90 days overdue at October 31st of any year, a letter is sent to the owner advising that, unless the account is paid by a prescribed date, the account will be transferred to the owner’s property taxes for the related property prior to the end of the December.

Landlords should always advise Village administration when a tenant is vacating the rented premises so that the City can take a final meter reading on the property. With a final read, administration can calculate the amount outstanding so the owner knows what to collect before the tenant departs. If the owner requires the reading faster, administration can provide an estimate of the amount owing for the information of the owner, if the owner attains a meter reading and provides it to the Village. When issued, a final bill will be sent to both the tenant and the owner.

If no new tenant is moving into the property, or administration is unaware of the tenant, the cost of utility services will be transferred to the owner’s name.

Hay Lakes Administration will not negotiate payment extensions or alternative payment arrangements with tenants. Tenants are responsible for obtaining the owner’s consent for alternative payment arrangements.

If administration becomes aware of a resident who is receiving service at a new address while still owing for service provided at a previous address, we will forward any unpaid bills to the former tenant’s current address.

**Recommendations for Landlords**:

BEFORE renting out any type of housing unit, please consider the following:

If you are in any doubt about issues relating the tenant and owner contact Service Alberta for information or visit <https://www.alberta.ca/information-tenants-landlords.aspx> for information regarding rights and responsibilities; fact sheets and mediation of disputes.

It is further recommended strongly that any arrangements with the tenant regarding the payment of water; wastewater and garbage services be recorded in the Tenancy Agreement a copy of which should be provided to Village Administration.

Feel free to contact administration if you need an update on the status of payment for the properties.

Always provide Village Administration with the name and pertinent information of the new account holder, even when the property is to remain vacant for a period of time. If the name of the new tenant is not provided, the account will be transferred into the owner’s name.