

## WATER & SEWER NEWS

*Hornepayne Municipal Council, at their regular meeting of Wednesday, November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017 established both a Water & Sewer Line Repair Policy and a Boil Water Advisory Policy. In conjunction with the establishment of these new policies, it seems timely to share some additional information to inform, raise awareness, provide clarification and guidance to homeowners and to establish an open line of communication with residents on topics that are becoming more and more relevant. Council and Staff share many of the same goals and desires as you do – our hope is that we can work together to achieve these common goals.*

### AGING INFRASTRUCTURE

*Over the past couple of years there has been much discussion about the Township's aging infrastructure and the need to develop a sound, long-term plan for capital improvements. This will not be a quick or easy fix, but one that Council and Staff are committed to working towards. In the meantime, the Township, along with the Ontario Clean Water Agency (OCWA), continues along a program of maintenance and upkeep as resources become available. One of Council's key priorities is to complete engineering studies on both the water and sewer systems to determine the condition and remaining lifecycle of pipes in order to properly prioritize repairs and/or replacement.*

*Over the past three years, the Township has been successful in obtaining \$700,000 to repair/replace hydrants and main isolation valves, another \$400,000 to repair/replace curb stops, and increase efficiencies at both the Water Treatment Plant and the Raw Water Pumping Station (Moonlight Lake), as well as \$4 million to perform critical upgrades to our Waste Water Treatment Plant and our six pumping stations. Now that the second phase of the Waste Water project is coming to a close and the critical components have been replaced, our focus will shift back to the Water Distribution System (main isolation valves, curb stops, main line piping, water tower repairs, etc.), with an application to the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund being submitted this past fall.*

### ONTARIO CLEAN WATER AGENCY

*Council continues to work with the Ontario Clean Water Agency (OCWA) to streamline processes and improve efficiencies. Although it may not always be readily evident, great strides have been made over the last two years to control costs and, where possible, reduce costs.*

*Staff is currently completing a methodical survey of all main valves and curb stops, taking an inventory of condition and repair/replacement requirements. From there, a long-term plan can be devised and implemented as time and resources allow.*

*This summer, you may have seen local OCWA staff using a new piece of equipment called a Valve Turner. This apparatus, that will greatly improve efficiencies, was recently purchased by OCWA and will be used throughout the region, enabling staff to return functionality to many curb stops without the use of an outside contractor.*

### FUNCTIONAL VALVES

*The best defense against a water emergency in your home is knowing where the main water valve is located inside your residence and ensuring that it is functional. As set out below, the care and maintenance of interior valves is the responsibility of the homeowner. When indoor plumbing repairs and maintenance are required, these valves must be operational in order for you to shut off the water. The Township recommends that residential valves be inspected and exercised on a regular basis (at least once per year) and that non-functioning valves be replaced to prevent seizure and deterioration and to provide protection from indoor plumbing leaks. It is also recommended that residents plan ahead and keep a supply of fittings and piping on hand to address emergencies.*

### ONTARIO CLEAN WATER AGENCY & PRIVATE REPAIRS

*OCWA employees are not certified residential contractors and are not permitted to undertake work on private water or sewer services or indoor plumbing. It is ultimately the homeowner's responsibility to take steps to ensure that damage does not occur to their property, including the homeowner retaining a plumber with a freeze kit, if required. This is not a Municipal responsibility. It is up to the homeowner to ensure his/her infrastructure is operational.*

### WHO IS RESPONSIBLE WHEN SOMETHING GOES WRONG?

*As set out above, residents can help protect their internal home fixtures by keeping interior shut-off valves in good, operational condition.*

*It is important to note that the exact location of a leak can often not be determined until the waterline/curb stop is excavated.*

*Allotment of responsibility and costs are often in question until the leak is investigated and the source identified. Council has determined the following as per the Water & Sewer Line Repair Policy (By-Law No. 1615):*

- Leaks occurring anywhere on the copper service line running between the curb stop and the main line, as well as on the curb stop itself or the brass fittings connecting either end of the service line to the curb stop, are the responsibility of the Township;*
- Leaks occurring between the curb stop and the residence (on the private copper service line) and inside the residence, are the responsibility of the homeowner;*
- Should the leak be the responsibility of the Township, repairs will be completed as soon as reasonably possible and the expenses paid by the Township;*
- Should the leak be the homeowner's responsibility, then the homeowner will have to decide whether to continue with the repair, keeping in mind that, once a leak has been identified, the homeowner will have a maximum of thirty (30) days (or a lesser period of time reasonably required by the Township) to perform repairs or the service to the property will be disconnected. Some restrictions apply as set out in the Policy;*
- If the exploratory excavation results in a determination by the Township that the Township has responsibility for the repair, the cost of the exploratory excavation conducted will be the responsibility of the Township;*
- If the exploratory excavation results in a determination by the Township that the homeowner has responsibility for the repair, then the cost of the excavation will be the responsibility of the homeowner;*
- If the home owner, after performing repairs, believes that the Township is responsible for all or part of the costs incurred, a formal request, with relevant supporting documentation attached, can be made to Council. The Township will determine, in its sole discretion, what, if any, amounts, are reimbursable to the homeowner.*

### LOCATES:

*Prior to commencing an excavation for any reason, even if on private property, it is incumbent upon whomever is planning to perform the excavation, whether it be the homeowner or a contractor, to request locates to identify whether there is any underground infrastructure that could be damaged. Ontario1Call is the organization that manages locate requests. Locate requests can be registered with Ontario1Call at [www.on1call.com](http://www.on1call.com) or by calling 1-800-400-2255. There is a risk of penalty for non-compliance.*

### SERVICE LINE WARRANTIES OF CANADA

*The Township would like to remind residents that Service Line Warranties of Canada has obtained permission to operate within our community and provides insurance policies for private water and sewer lines as well as indoor leaks. The Township does not operate this program. If you are interested in learning more about their services, please visit [www.SLWofC.ca](http://www.SLWofC.ca) or call 1-866-922-9004.*

### CONTACT INFORMATION

*A copy of the Water & Sewer Line Repair Policy can be found at [www.townshipofhornepayne.ca](http://www.townshipofhornepayne.ca). Should you have questions about your water or sewer service, please call the Ontario Clean Water Agency at 807-868-2380 or the Municipal Office at 807-868-2020. For any after hours' emergencies, OCWA staff can be reached at 807-229-6868.*