

City of  
**Fitchburg**



Department of  
**Public Works**

**COMMISSIONER**

301 Broad Street  
978-829-1910  
978-345-9687 FAX

**STREETS & PARKS**

301 Broad Street  
978-829-1900  
978-345-9687 FAX

**WASTEWATER**

301 Broad Street  
978-829-1930  
978-345-9687 FAX

**WATER**

1200 Rindge Road  
978-345-9616  
978-345-9555 FAX

**ENGINEERING**

301 Broad Street  
978-829-1917  
978-345-9687 FAX

**CEMETERIES**

115 Mount Elam Road  
978-345-9578  
978-345-9686 FAX

**POLICY & PROCEDURES FOR SEWER BILLS ABATEMENTS**

(Revised July 14, 2016)

Q.: What is an "abatement"?

A.: In the context of sewer use billing, an abatement is a lessening or reduction in the billable amount for the sewer use billing period, for specific policy approved causes, where sewer billing cannot be fairly derived from the customer's water meter reading.

**POLICY NOTES:**

1. Except as otherwise restricted and explicitly identified as **not approved** for sewer billing abatements, the overarching intent of the policy is to provide protection and relief to the sewer customers for situations where water is used (read as "used" by the water customer's service meter), but the used water is not sent into the customer's sewer service and into the public sewer system. As a result, the customer should not be charged for sewer services in such a situation.
2. In general, conditions which allow discharge of water into the customer's sewer service shall not be eligible for sewer billing abatements.

**\* IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS CONCERNING ABATEMENTS, CONTACT \***  
**\* THE DPW - WASTEWATER DIVISION OFFICE AT: (978) 829 - 1911 \***

**SEWER BILLING ABATEMENTS MAY BE GRANTED FOR THE FOLLOWING:**

1. Breaks in water lines (as may be caused by frozen pipes, for example).
  - Written request for an abatement must be provided by the customer, and must be accompanied by a written detailed description of the incident/occurrence, and any supporting information and documentation (such as a plumber's repair bill), and a statement as to where the water went (to a drain, to a dirt floor, to an exterior discharged surface disposal); WATER ALLOWED TO ENTER THE CUSTOMER'S SEWER SERVICE WILL NOT BE ELIGIBLE FOR BILLING ABATEMENT.
  - An inspection, by DPW Wastewater Division personnel, of the property may be required for approval of the abatement request.
2. Swimming pool fills (see details on abatements requirements for swimming pool fills on the next page).

**NO ABATEMENTS WILL BE ALLOWED FOR THE FOLLOWING:**

1. With the exception of swimming pool abatements, outside uses of water, including (but not limited to) watering gardens or lawns, washing automobiles or powerwashing (etc.) shall not be abatable. Customers may purchase a separate "water only" meter for such a purpose from the DPW Water Division.
2. On sewer billing accounts charges more than 90-days old.
3. No abatements shall be granted for the watering of a newly installed lawn.
4. No abatements shall be granted for water use resulting from general maintenance items (repairs of leaking toilets, faucets, pipes, etc.), which allow water to enter the customer's sewer service, and into the City's sewer system.

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**SWIMMING POOL ABATEMENTS:**

1. Just prior to starting the pool filling, customer shall take a meter reading of water meter. If you have any questions as to how to read the water meter, contact the DPW Water Division Office at **(978) 345 - 9616**.
2. Immediately after completion of the pool fill, customer shall take another meter reading.
3. Take the difference between the two readings. This difference will be the volume of water used in the pool filling, in cubic feet. In order to be eligible for an abatement, the pool fill volume must be at least 9.0 hundred cubic feet (9.0 CCF), or 6,700 gallons.
4. If the pool fill volume meets the above minimum requirements, contact the DPW Wastewater Division Office at **(978) 829 - 1911**, and provide us with:
  - Customer's name, address and telephone number;
  - The recorded water meter readings (before and after the pool filling);
  - The pool dimensions and pool depth;
  - The reason for filling the pool (new installation, liner replacement, etc.);
  - The approximate # of gallons of the pool (if known); and
  - Customer's billing account number.

➤ **NO ABATEMENTS FOR SWIMMING POOL FILLS WILL BE PERMITTED WITHOUT WATER METER READINGS.**

➤ **NO ABATEMENTS WILL BE ALLOWED FOR SWIMMING POOL FILL VOLUMES OF LESS THAN 6,700 GALLONS.**