

TOWN OF FAIRHAVEN  
BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS



**WATER METER TAMPERING POLICY**

Meters will be supplied by the Public Works Department.

Any person employed by the Fairhaven Board of Public Works, at the direction of the BPW or Water Superintendent, may at any time enter any premises supplied with municipal water for the purpose of examining or removing meters, pipes, fittings and works for supplying or regulating the supply of water and of ascertaining the quantity of water consumed or supplied in accordance with the Mass. General Laws and Board policies and regulations.

The Department reserves the right to remove, repair or replace any meter at any time it deems necessary. Meters shall be repaired and replaced from time to time as deemed necessary in order to ensure their accuracy.

If a meter fails to register or under-registers for any cause other than tampering, the charge for the water shall be based on the average amount registered by the meter when in order for similar billing periods, using available billing records. Charges will be calculated covering the probable use period over which the meter was not registering correctly.

All repairs or injuries to meters from freezing, hot water, or external causes shall be charged to the consumer.

No person shall change, or tamper in any way, with the water meter, including appurtenances. All settings and repairs will be made by the Water Department personnel.

Tampering with a meter will result in a \$1,000 fine.

Should there be evidence of tampering which has resulted in reduced water bills, the Department shall calculate a charge based on the two highest uses for the winter and summer billing periods over the past 10 years, or available records, and adjust the bills to these usage amounts for the period of probable reduced water bills. In addition, the user will be charged for staff time spent to address the matter, the cost of a replacement meter if required, as well as a fine of \$200 per billing cycle where meter tampering led to a reduced bill.

Massachusetts law allows additional penalties for tampering, including up to one year in prison, which the Board may pursue at its discretion.”

Approved by the Board of Public Works – 6/18/18