

*Town of Fairhaven
Board of Public Works*

*5 Arsene Street
Fairhaven, Massachusetts 02719
TEL. 508-979-4030
FAX. 508-979-4086
bpw@fairhaven-ma.gov*



Town of Fairhaven Water Sewer Abatement Policy

In accordance with Town of Fairhaven regulations, ALL appeals to water and sewer bills must be made in writing using the appropriate form and forwarded to the following address within thirty (30) days of the date of the bill.

Town of Fairhaven
Water Department
5 Arsene Street
Fairhaven, MA 02719

REASONS FOR AN ABATEMENT:

- Billing errors whether it be a computer or clerical error will be abated.
- The actual reading is incorrect.
- Sewer charges will be adjusted for water leaks that can be proven, by a licensed plumber, to not have entered the sewer system.
- Other unique circumstances as evaluated by the Board of Public Works Commissioners.

REASONS NO ABATEMENT WILL BE GRANTED:

- If a bill has been estimated, it will not be eligible for an abatement. Any estimated bills are based on the last three actual readings from that billing period.
- Charges that result from the homeowner filling a pool, having a leaking toilet and or leaky faucet, or any other issues involving water leaking and going down the sewer.
- All water that passes through the meter will be charged to the property owner.
- Failure to secure a recorded MLC (Municipal Lien Certificate) from the town collector prior to closing on a property.
- Failure to request a final water/sewer reading prior to closing on a property.
- Charges that result from a property owner watering outside landscaping without a second water meter. (Note: please be advised that the Town allows the installation of a second meter for outside use)

- If there is a request to remove a meter or to terminate the water service at a property, the water must be shut off and the meter must be removed from the property and any balance on said account must be paid in full prior to terminating the service or making the account inactive in the billing process.
- If the property owner fails to receive a bill that does not absolve him or her from the obligation of the payment of that or any other water / sewer bills, interest or penalties.
- If the property is purchased due to a foreclosure or abandonment, the purchaser will assume all the water/sewer charges (if any) on that property. No abatements will be issued due to burst pipes and/ or other damage due to neglect or improper winterizing of the meter.
- Failure to notify the water/sewer department of name change or address.
- Other unique circumstances as evaluated by the Board of Public Work Commissioners.

Any resident opting to challenge the accuracy of a water meter, please be aware that there will be a charge of \$125 levied upon the homeowner unless the results yielded reveal a malfunctioning, high reading, water meter.

No application for abatement or adjustments will be accepted on any account unless all past due amounts, including interest and penalties for prior billing periods have been paid in full to the Town Collector.

If the homeowner is requesting an abatement on one charge whether water or sewer, it is suggested that they pay the bill in full to avoid additional interest and penalties that will occur on the unpaid portion of the bill.

For abatements related to water not entering the sewer system, such abatement requests must be verified by a licensed plumber and the Town Water Superintendent. This request must be accompanied by photographic evidence of said leak. In any case, this type of abatement request must be accompanied by a plumber's invoice that states what caused the leak. Further, this invoice must be signed by a licensed plumber as verification that the leak has been repaired.

REQUESTS AND SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS:

Homeowners requesting an abatement must contact the water or sewer department by phone, e-mail or in writing to receive the necessary form.

Town of Fairhaven
 Water Department
 5 Arsene Street
 Fairhaven, MA 02719
 Telephone: Water Department - 508-979-4032 ext. 2

Email: waterdept@fairhaven-ma.gov