



Boston Water and Sewer Commission

Sewer Abatement General Guideline Statement

These guidelines create procedures for abating sewer charges to Boston Water and Sewer Commission (Commission) customers. Upon compliance with the general requirements, inspection and approval process outlined herein, the Commission will offer sewer use charge abatements (credits) to customers meeting all of the following criteria:

- 1) Customer: Legal title holder of property makes application.
- 2) Wastewater discharge is less than water use,
- 3) Able to measure water usage not returned to the sewer system,
- 4) Meet the plumbing specifications as outlined in this policy.
- 5) Pay fee at Meter Services for Meter Transmission Unit (MTU). **Note: \$325.00 per Meter Transmission Unit (MTU).**

Sewer abatements **will be granted at the Commission's discretion** and only upon compliance with the following requirements, conditions and procedures.

I. Application Procedures for a Sewer Use Charge Abatement

The following application procedures and conditions must be met **prior** to application review or approval of any sewer use charge abatement. It is recommended that the applicant **not purchase** any plumbing fixtures associated with the sewer use charge, abatement **prior to** Commission approval of the proposed system. No installation of sub-meters sewer flow meters, discharge meters, or backflow prevention devices shall commence **prior to** the submission by the Customer, and review and approval by the Commission, of the detailed plumbing schematic and floor plans as described below:

- A) The Customer **must submit to** the Commission's Meter Services Department, 980 Harrison Avenue, Boston, MA 02119 a check for \$325.00 per Meter Transmission Unit (MTU) along with a completed application with detailed drawings containing the following information:
 - 1) The Date, Name, Address, Contact Name, Phone Number and Commission Account Number associated with the Customer;
 - 2) The location of the main water meter and the plumbing fixtures leading to the proposed sewer abatement system;
 - 3) The proposed location of the sub-meter(s) or sewer flow meter(s), Meter Transmission Unit(s) and approved backflow prevention device(s) (when required);
 - 4) The upstream and downstream sides of all plumbing fixtures to be metered for sewer abatements;
- B) After plan review and approval by the Commission, **a plumbing permit** must be obtained from the City of Boston, Inspectional Services Department, for the installation of all sub-meters, sewer flow meters and all approved backflow prevention devices **prior to** the commencement of any plumbing work.

- C) **After** the completion of all approved work, the Customer must notify Meter Services at BWSC and arrange for an on-site inspection that will include the inspection of all sub-meters, Meter Transmission Units (MTU), sewer flow meters, backflow prevention devices, and adjacent plumbing fixtures. At that time, approved meters will be tagged and sealed by Commission staff. The Commission must be notified in advance of all meter replacements or seasonal disconnection.

****Tampering with meter seals will result in a loss of eligibility for sewer use charge abatement.**

- D) No abatement will be granted without **full compliance** with BWSC Water Use Regulations, Massachusetts Plumbing Code (**248CMR**), and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Drinking Water Regulations governing Cross Connections (**310-CMR-22.22**).

II. General Requirements

- A) These guidelines **require all** customers requesting sewer abatements to purchase all Meter Transmission Units and to purchase, install and maintain all sub-meters, sewer flow meters and backflow prevention devices. The sub-meters purchased by the Customer **must be** compatible with the Commission's current proprietary specifications for water meters.
- B) All sub-meters must register in **cubic feet** and must have "**encoder**" register heads. The Commission will install, wire and program the MTU with the necessary account information. The MTU must be purchased at the Boston Water and Sewer Commission, Meter Services Department, 980 Harrison Avenue, Boston MA 02119,(617)-989-7139.

***Commission reserves the right to have owner install the MTU and all associated wiring based on degree of difficulty.**

- C) The domestic water lines from all sub-meters and approved backflow prevention devices to units **NOT** contributing any discharge to the sewer system must be fully exposed along their entire length.
- D) When a portion of sub-metered water is returned to the sewer system, a discharge meter **must be** installed and the discharge plumbing must be fully exposed from the discharge meter to the point of discharge.
- E) Sub-meters (which **must register** in cubic feet) must be installed in a horizontal position. Approved backflow prevention devices must be installed in a horizontal position between 3 and 4 feet off the floor, 1 foot from any wall and **must be** easily accessible for testing and maintenance purposes.
- F) In accordance with Massachusetts State Law **310-CMR-22.22** and BWSC Water Use Regulations approved backflow prevention devices **must be** tested and inspected to ensure proper working order. The type of device will govern the frequency of testing and inspection, the minimum being one test per year. The Commission will issue a **\$110.00** charge per test per device to the sewer abatement account.

- G) In accordance with the Commission's policy of recovering the costs of providing special services not used by the general population from the users of the service, the Commission **will set** appropriate fees, including an initial application fee and inspection fees.

III. Types of Water Use Eligible for Sewer Use Charge Abatement

- 1) **Cooling Towers** - Sewer use charge abatements will be calculated based upon the difference between sub-metered water use feeding the tower and sub-metered water discharging through overflows or "blow downs". Overflows or "blow downs" must be maintained in good working order. **No over-spray will be allowed.** All cooling towers **must have** a sub-meter and a discharge meter to be eligible. No drains or hose connections will be allowed between the sub-meter and the discharge meter.
- 2) **Irrigation Systems** - Sewer use charge abatements will be calculated based upon Sub-metered water use on in-ground irrigation systems only. There shall be no sill cocks or hose connections as part of the sewer use charge abatement system. Compressor and drain fittings installed for winterizing the irrigation system shall not consist of hose connections but will utilize smaller valve connections. The sub-meter connection must be located downstream of (after) the main water meter.
- 3) **Boilers** - Sewer use charge abatements on boilers **will be** calculated based on sub-metered water use supplying the boiler. In instances where the boiler operation includes continuous or intermittent "blow downs," a sewer discharge meter **will also be required.** The sewer use charge abatement **will be** calculated based on the difference between sub-metered use supplying the boiler and the metered water discharging through "blow downs."
- 4) **Product Use** - Sewer use charge abatements on product uses **will be** calculated based on sub-metered water use on the supply line to the product. Water lost due to evaporation during the production or manufacturing may be accounted for with a sewer flow meter measuring actual discharge to the sewer system. In instances where 100% of the sub-metered water is used in the product, all service pipes providing product make-up water **must be** fully exposed, fixed and untapped. Production reports or evaporation estimates will not be accepted.
- 5) **Laundries** - Sewer use charge abatements in laundries **will be** calculated based on the difference between the metered water supply to the laundry facility and the metered discharge to the sewer system. Sewer flow meters **must be** installed to measure actual discharge to the sewer system and **must be** equipped with remote reading devices. Sewer flow meters should be tested annually by an independent third party at owners expense and test results forwarded to the Meter Services at BWSC.
- 6) **Other** - Other sub-metered water usage not returned to the sewer system may qualify for a sewer use charge abatement. All applications **must be** filed with the Boston Water and Sewer Commission's Meter Services Department.

IV. Procedures for Customers Currently Receiving Sewer Use Charge Abatements

The qualification requirements, procedures, and appropriate fees outlined herein for new applicants pertain to existing customers as well. However, existing customers **will be** granted a “grace period” in which to obtain an inspection verifying compliance with this policy. During the “grace period,” customers will still be eligible to receive their sewer use charge abatement as currently calculated. **Failure to obtain an inspection verifying compliance with this policy will result in loss of eligibility for sewer use charge abatement.** The customer may reapply as described in Sections I and II to be considered for future abatements.

V. Meter Readings and Inspections

Sewer use charge abatements from an approved meter will only be calculated based on **actual meter readings**. No abatement will be granted without obtaining an actual meter reading. In cases where readings from multiple meters are required to calculate sewer use charge abatement, all the required readings must be obtained in order for the abatement to be processed. All accounts billed for seasonal water use will be read a minimum of twice per year.

If upon annual inspection, Commission staff discovers an irregularity, the customer **will be informed in writing** as to the specific violation or irregularity. The abatement will be discontinued on that date. The discontinuance will remain in effect until the situation has been corrected by the customer and verified by the Commission. The customer will have **30 days to correct the problem and contact the Commission** to schedule a follow-up inspection by Commission staff. If the problem is not corrected and the Commission is not contacted within 30 days, the customer **will no longer be eligible** for sewer use abatement unless they reapply as described in Sections I and II.