

POLICY 26-05

SEWER CHARGE ADJUSTMENT POLICY

DATE OF ADOPTION:	April 22, 2026	MOTION NUMBER:	#26/04/63
DATE OF AMENDMENT:		DEPARTMENT:	Infrastructure & Planning

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear and consistent criteria under which sanitary sewer charges may be adjusted or waived where Town-supplied water is permanently and verifiably not discharged into the municipal sanitary sewer system. This Policy ensures that any such adjustment is granted only in limited circumstances and protects the financial sustainability of the Town’s sanitary system.

DEFINITIONS

CAO is the Chief Administrative Officer of the Town of Vermilion.

Council is the municipal Council of the Town of Vermilion

Dedicated Meter is a water meter approved by the Town of Vermilion that measures specific, isolated water use that does not discharge into the municipal sanitary sewer system.

Director is a person employed by the Town who is in charge of an activity, department, or organization, as delegated by the CAO.

Non-Discharging Water Use is water supplied by the Town that is permanently and intentionally isolated from the municipal sanitary sewer system and does not, at any time, enter the sanitary system.

Property Owner is the registered owner of the property as per the Land Title, receiving water service from the Town.

Sanitary Sewer Charge is the portion of the utility bill intended to recover costs associated with the collection, treatment, and disposal of sanitary wastewater.

Town is the Town of Vermilion in the Province of Alberta.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to properties supplied with Town water seeking an adjustment or waiver of sanitary sewer charges, excluding uses identified as ineligible under this Policy.

TASK	TITLE OR DEPARTMENT OF PERSON RESPONSIBLE
APPROVAL OF POLICY & AMENDMENTS	Council
HANDLING INQUIRIES & COMMUNICATING POLICY	Director of Infrastructure & Planning
MONITORING REVIEWS & IMPLEMENTATION	Chief Administrative Officer

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 1) Sanitary Sewer Charges are based on the assumption that water supplied by the Town is discharged into the sanitary sewer system.
- 2) Adjustments or waivers shall be considered only in exceptional and verifiable circumstances, as determined by the Director of Infrastructure & Planning.
- 3) All approved adjustments must protect the financial sustainability of the Town's sanitary system.
- 4) Council retains final authority over all Sanitary Sewer Charge adjustments.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible for a Sanitary Sewer Charge adjustment or waiver, all the following conditions must be met:

5) Dedicated Metering

- a) A Dedicated Meter approved by the Town must be installed to measure the Non-Discharging Water use.
- b) The meter must be installed downstream of the Town's primary water meter.
- c) All costs related to the installation, calibration, maintenance and replacement of the Dedicated Meter shall be the responsibility of the Property Owner

6) Verified Non-Discharging Use

- a) The water use must be permanently configured so that it does not enter the municipal sanitary sewer system.
- b) Acceptable uses may include agricultural, livestock, or institutional processes with no sanitary discharge.
- c) Uses identified as ineligible under Section 20 (Exclusions) shall not qualify for an adjustment under this Policy.

7) Inspection and Verification

- a) The Town reserves the right to inspect plumbing configurations and meter installations.
- b) The Property Owner must provide access for inspection upon request.
- c) Failure to allow inspection may result in denial or revocation of the adjustment.

APPROVAL PROCESS

- 8) All applications shall be submitted in writing using the prescribed Town application form and must include all required supporting documentation.
- 9) Administration shall review the application for completeness, eligibility, and compliance with this Policy.
- 10) Administration may require additional information, documentation, or inspection prior to advancing the application to Council.
- 11) Submission of an application does not guarantee approval.
- 12) All complete applications that meet the submission requirements of this Policy shall be forwarded to Council for consideration and decision.
- 13) Decisions made by Council under this Policy are final and not subject to appeal.

ONGOING COMPLIANCE AND REVIEW

- 14) The Town may review approved adjustments at any time.
- 15) The Property Owner must notify the Town of any change in water use, plumbing configuration, or discharge conditions that may affect eligibility under this Policy. Notification must be provided prior to the change occurring or within thirty (30) calendar days of the change. Notification shall be provided in writing by contacting the Town's Infrastructure Department, including by email or other written communication approved by the Town.
- 16) If water approved under this Policy is later found to be discharging into the municipal sanitary sewer system:

- a) Administration has the authority to immediately reinstate Sanitary Sewer Charges.
- b) Administration may revoke the approval granted under this Policy.
- c) Council may require retroactive billing for any period during which the adjustment or waiver was applied while the water was discharging into the sanitary sewer system.

IMPORTANT NOTES AND EXCLUSIONS

- 17) Approval under this Policy does not constitute a general exemption from Sanitary Sewer Charges.
- 18) Approval granted under this Policy does not establish precedent for other properties or uses.
- 19) The following uses are not eligible for adjustments under this Policy:
 - a) Residential properties
 - b) Irrigation or landscaping systems
 - c) Incidental water losses, including leaks, flooding, drainage, or operational inefficiencies
- 20) Council retains discretion to deny any application that does not clearly meet the intent of this Policy.
- 21) Approval granted under this Policy applies only to the specific property, configuration, and circumstances reviewed at the time of approval. Any change in use, plumbing configuration, water discharge conditions, or ownership may result in the approval being reviewed or revoked.
- 22) The Town reserves the right to correct any billing adjustments made in error and recover any amounts owing.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- 23) Town Staff must:
 - a) Review applications for completeness and eligibility
 - b) Conduct inspections as required
 - c) Provide recommendations to Council
 - d) Monitor ongoing compliance
- 24) Property Owners must:
 - a) Install and maintain approved Dedicated Meters
 - b) Ensure non-discharging configuration is maintained
 - c) Provide access for inspection
 - d) Notify the Town of any changes affecting eligibility