

## Town of Pepperell DPW

### Administrative Water & Sewer Abatement Policy

The Pepperell Board of Public Works (“Board”) may allow relief for water and/or sewer charges for excessive consumption beyond the reasonable knowledge and control of the customer. Abatements may be processed by the Dept of Public Works (“DPW”) managers in the case of routine requests; however, the Board retains the authority to review, support, modify or overrule these decisions. The following policy is written to provide clear guidance regarding abatement requests from users of the Pepperell water and sewer systems. All customers should familiarize themselves with the policy before deciding to apply for an abatement.

1. No abatements shall be given on relief requests of less than \$50.00.
2. The DPW reserves the right to request evidence of an insurance claim being filed for reimbursement of the damages/relief being sought from the DPW via the abatement request.
3. The procedure for applying for abatement shall include submitting a written request to the DPW Business Manager. The application shall include the following information:
  - a) Name and contact information of person requesting the abatement.
  - b) Property address for which relief is sought.
  - c) Account number for which relief is sought.
  - d) A brief description of the situation which explains the reason you are asking for abatement.
  - e) Proof of insurance claim filing and insurers’ decision denying request to recoup costs associated with relief being sought (if required by Board).
4. Any account request requiring the preparation of a consumption ‘history’ for the account shall be assessed a non-refundable \$25 service fee.
5. The initial abatement request will be reviewed by the DPW Business Manager or their designee with regards to the appropriate criteria contained in this policy, and a decision will be rendered within 10 working days. If the petitioner is aggrieved by the decision, said petitioner shall have the option to file an appeal with the Board. There is no fee for the initial abatement application; however, there shall be a \$25.00 fee to file an appeal to the Board.
6. Water abatements will be allowed if, in the opinion of the staff and/or Board, extreme extenuating circumstances exist as determined on a case by case basis. In no case shall any and all water usage be billed at a rate less than the lowest water tier in place at the time of the usage.
7. **Abatements will not be granted if due to negligence or maintenance related items such as leaking toilets/faucets/fixtures/pipes; malfunctioning exterior hoses/spigots; irrigation system, etc... These criteria shall apply to all properties whether owner occupied or not.**

8. Sewer abatements **may** be considered for the following reasons:

- a) A one-time/year abatement may be granted for filling a pool. The Wastewater department must be notified by calling 978-433-9859 prior to the pool being filled. The owner must provide the address of the property, the dates they expect to fill the pool and an estimation of the volume of water to be used. Pools requiring less than 5,000 gallons will not qualify for a sewer abatement.
- b) A one-time abatement may be granted for the installation of a new lawn. This abatement will not be available during periods of mandatory outside water bans as declared by the Board.
- c) A damaged household appliance such as a water heater, washing machine (excluding hoses), etc..., where it can be determined that the water did not enter the sewer system.
- d) Other extreme extenuating situations as determined by the staff or Board, on a case by case basis where it can be determined that the water did not enter the sewer system.


**Request for abatements must be received within 30 days of the billing date. Water and Sewer accounts must be current with no past due balances to be considered for abatement.**

*Effective 02/18/22*

*Voted and approved on 02/17/22 at a duly posted and noticed Pepperell Board of Public Works meeting.*

  
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Thomas Nephew, Chair

  
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John Harrington, Vice Chair

  
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George Clark, Commissioner

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Jose Mercado, Commissioner

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Lewis Lunn, Commissioner