



**CITY OF NEWPORT
DEPARTMENT OF UTILITIES
WATER POLLUTION CONTROL DIVISION
70 HALSEY STREET
NEWPORT, RI 02840**

Sewer Abatement Policy

The Sewer Abatement Request Form is on the **next page**; *BEFORE* you complete the form, please read the Sewer Abatement Policy. The Policy page is for informational purposes; do not submit the policy page with the Sewer Abatement Request Form.

Water usage directly impacts the sanitary sewer system as the majority of water used eventually becomes wastewater that flows in the sewer system. Higher water usage leads to a greater volume of wastewater needing to be processed and treated, as the standard industry practice, the Sewer Use Charge is based on water consumption. The Sewer Use Charge is only billed to water customers with a City of Newport service address; while the Department of Utilities water system extends across Aquidneck Island, the sanitary sewer system is confined to the City of Newport. The Department of Utilities does not grant adjustments to metered water charges. However, the Department recognizes that an extraordinarily high bill resulting from water leaks causing unpreventable water usage can present financial hardship to a customer. While the charge for the metered water cannot be abated, the Department does consider and will allow for one-time abatement of sewer charges attributable to a specific incident. The Sewer Abatement Policy permits a one-time abatement within a ten-year period for the excess sewer consumption above typical consumption due to an unpreventable water release that did not enter the City sewer system.

- Sewer Abatements only pertain to customers with a City of Newport service address.
- Sewer Abatements are not issued for water usage associated with construction, irrigation, swimming pools, etc.
- It shall be the responsibility of the customer to submit a completed Sewer Abatement Request Form with supporting documentation providing reasonable proof and substantiating evidence that supports the request for an abatement.
- Customers who file an abatement form are required to have paid all uncontested prior bills (including penalties and interest, if applicable), and also make a payment on contested bill equal to prior billed amount.
- Forms shall be reviewed by Department staff on a case-by-case basis. The determination of the adequacy of the evidence shall be at the sole discretion of the Director of Utilities.
- In order to qualify for abatement, a customer's excess consumption must exceed 100% or 10,000 gallons above their normal average consumption.
- The customer must provide documentation that the excess water did not enter the City sewage system.
- The customer must also prove that the deficiency responsible for leakage has been repaired or corrected.
- This policy only applies to leaks that have occurred within the previous three (3) months of the date of the abatement request.
- In the event that a customer cannot determine the source or cause of the abnormally high consumption, no abatement will be provided.
- In the event the source or cause of the abnormally high consumption is related to a leak due to customer negligence such as the failure to maintain internal (private) plumbing fixtures in good repair and/or protect plumbing from freezing, the customer shall be held responsible for the entire bill.
- In the event the abnormally high consumption has occurred due to "unpredictable leakage" not caused by customer negligence, ignorance or unfortunate circumstances, as determined by Department staff, the Department shall consider granting a one-time abatement, per account, within a ten-year period. The abatement calculation may consider compensation from any other sources, including insurance policy claims, etc. Normal consumption will be calculated by the average of at least the previous three years' consumption history, for similar billing periods, unless deemed otherwise by the Director.
- The customer may be required to submit a written statement from their homeowners insurance policy provider stating what portion, if any, of the leak is covered by insurance.

The Sewer Abatement Request Form can be submitted by mail or in person to the **Department of Utilities, Water Pollution Control Division** at 70 Halsey Street, Newport, RI 02840. There is no application fee. Please allow 5-7 business days for form processing. Incomplete forms will be returned, applicant signature is required for approval. Upon satisfactory review, you will receive an approval letter with further instructions and/or requirements. If you need assistance completing the form you may call 401-845-5600.



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Sewer Abatement Request Form

(Please complete in full)

Date: _____ Account Number: _____

Property Address: _____ Phone: _____

Owner's Name: _____ Email: _____

Owner's Mailing Address: _____
(city, state, zip)

Did water enter the sewer system: Yes _____ No _____

If no, where did the water discharge? _____ Discharge Dates: _____

Does the property have foundation drains, floor drains and/or sump pump: Yes _____ No _____

If yes, provide evidence that the foundation drains, floor drains and/or sump pump is not connected to the City Sewer.

Will or have you submitted a claim with your homeowners' or renters' insurance company? Yes _____ No _____

If so, what has been the insurance company's response? _____

Detail Abatement Request: _____

Attach supporting documentation for the abatement request including but not limited to: Certification that water did not enter City Sewer System; Invoice(s) from Plumber / Contractor showing a description of the work, the dates the work was performed and the dates of the discharge; Photos of the damage; other supporting materials.

☐ *I acknowledge I have read and understood the Sewer Abatement Policy, Specifically that the Department shall consider granting a one-time abatement, per account, during any ten-year period. I certify that the information given in this form is truthful, accurate and complete. No information likely to affect this abatement has been withheld.*

Owner's Signature: _____ Date: _____

PLEASE NOTE: All customer requests to abate any portion of a metered sewer bill that is unusually high due to unpreventable leakage shall be reviewed by Department staff on a case-by-case basis. The determination of the adequacy of the evidence shall be at the sole discretion of the Director.

DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE

Deputy Director – Finance Date

☐ Approved ☐ Denied

Director Date

☐ Approved ☐ Denied