



POLICY TITLE H2O Help to Others	ADOPTED BY City Council	EFFECTIVE DATE June 21, 2017
ORIGIN / AUTHORITY City Council	CITY POLICY NO WW-005	MOST RECENT CONSOLIDATION N/A

1. Purpose:

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that the H2O Help to Others Program provides one-time financial assistance to customers facing disconnection of their water service in accordance with City of Winnipeg Council direction.

2. Definitions:

- 2.1 “**H2O**” means the H2O Help to Others Program approved and funded by Council.
- 2.2 “**Turn off notice**” means a notice issued by the Water and Waste Department which states service will be stopped if the account is not paid within a specific period of time (currently 10 days).
- 2.3 “**Utility Bill**” means a bill issued by the Water and Waste Department that includes water service and may include sewer, solid waste and other services.

3. H2O Help to Others Policy

3.1 Eligibility

To be eligible for assistance from H2O, the applicant must meet all of the following conditions:

- A. The applicant must be the customer for a current utility account and must be resident at the service address. H2O Credits will not be approved for water used for commercial or rental properties or for multi-family dwellings.
- B. The applicant’s household income must be below Statistics Canada pre-Tax Low-Income Cut-off, and in an emergency situation; that is, one where there are no resources to pay the City of Winnipeg utility bill and the household is about to face disconnection of water service.

- C. The applicant and other members of the applicant’s household must not have received assistance from H2O in the past.
- D. The utility account holder must complete and submit an application and must be willing to meet with The Salvation Army (or a similar organization contracted with the City to perform this role) to review the application.
- E. The utility account must be billed to an actual reading or an actual meter reading must be submitted with the application.
- F. The applicant must not have been convicted of a violation of the Water By-law or Sewer By-law in the past five years.

3.2 H2O Credits

- A. Subject to funding of the H2O Program, applicants who qualify for the H2O program will receive the lesser of:
 - i. The balance outstanding on the turn off notice; or
 - ii. The maximum credit for 2017 as follows:

Household Size	Maximum Credit
1	145.00
2	185.00
3	250.00
4	315.00
5 or more	380.00

- B. The maximum credit is calculated based on average water use by household size, Council-approved rates for water, sewer, solid waste service and any other required fees included on the Water and Waste utility bill. The maximum credit will be adjusted annually to reflect increases to utility rates approved by Council.

4. Notice to Applicants

- A. For every completed application form, the Water and Waste Department must mail a decision letter to the applicant’s residence which shall indicate the amount of approved credit (if any) or an explanation why no credit has been approved.

- B. The decision letter must advise applicants they may appeal the decision to the Utility Credit Review Committee within 30 days by mailing an appeal to:

Utility Credit Review Committee
Water and Waste Department
510 Main St
Winnipeg, MB R3B 3M1

5. Appeal Process

- A. Applicants who are not approved for an H2O credit or who feel the approved credit is not consistent with this Policy, may appeal in writing to the Utility Credit Review Committee within 30 days of receiving their approval or denial letter. The applicant may provide any additional documentation that they feel is necessary to support their appeal.
- B. Applicants who feel their needs will not be adequately met by a written appeal may request their appeal be made in person to the Committee.

5.1 Utility Credit Review Committee

- A. The Utility Credit Review Committee will include three members as follows:
 - i. Manager, Finance and Administration, Water and Waste Department
 - ii. Manager, Customer Service, Water and Waste Department
 - iii. Third manager appointed by the Director, Water and Waste Department. This member may be appointed for a single meeting or for a set period of time determined by the Director.

The Utility Credit Review Committee must meet at least quarterly. Appeals must be received two weeks prior to a scheduled meeting to give the administration time to prepare information for review by the Committee. Any requests received outside of this time frame would be reviewed at the following meeting.

5.2 Committee Decisions

- A. The Committee must send a formal letter to the applicant within 30 days after a meeting outlining the Committee's decision.

- B. H2O Credits approved by the Committee must be consistent with amounts outlined in section 3.2 of this Policy.

6. Responsibilities

6.1 Responsibility of The Salvation Army or other similar organization –

Pursuant to an agreement with the City, The Salvation Army or other similar organization shall:

- A. Meet with applicants and review completed H2O applications
- B. Provide recommendation to the City regarding eligibility and credit amount.

6.2 Responsibility of Director, Water and Waste Department

The Director shall:

- A. Ensure that recommendations of the Salvation Army (or other similar organization) are reviewed to determine eligibility for H2O credits
- B. Ensure that customer utility accounts are credited with H2O credit when applications are approved
- C. Provide required notices to applicants
- D. Appoint the chair and members of the Utility Credit Review Committee and ensure that appeals are conducted according to this Policy.

6.3 Responsibility of the Applicant

In order to receive an H2O credit, the applicant must:

- A. Submit a completed application form along with all required documentation
- B. Meet with the Salvation Army (or other similar organization contracted with the City to perform this role) to review their application.