

Report to Council



Date: April 11, 2016
File: 0245-80
To: City Manager
From: Matt Friesen, Accountant
Subject: Amendment No. 5 to Utility Billing Customer Care Bylaw No. 8754

Recommendation:

THAT Bylaw No. 11209, being amendment No. 5 to Utility Billing Customer Care Bylaw No. 8754 be forwarded to Council for reading consideration;

Purpose:

To seek Council's approval to amend the Utility Billing Customer Care Bylaw for the clarification and updating of current terms and processes as well as removing irrelevant sections pertaining to the electrical utility.

Background:

The Utility Billing Customer Care Bylaw establishes how the City of Kelowna operates and provides billing services for its various public utilities, including a water service system, a sanitary sewer collection system, and a streetlight system.

Staff have identified various current terms and processes that need updating and clarification.

1. The Utility Billing Customer Care Bylaw is specifically in relation to Utility Billing Services. The proposed amendment replaces all references of "Customer Service Account" to "Utility Billing Account" providing a clearer definition for the purposes of this bylaw.
2. Section 8.6 refers to the City's ability, provided through the Community Charter, to deem outstanding utilities as taxes in arrears and transfer those balances to property taxes. Staff are recommending that the wording "are in relation to a Utility Service account that is no longer receiving Utility Service" be removed as the current process includes utility service accounts that are still active and receive utility service. There

are some owners who pay their utility bill once a year on their property tax notice instead of paying their bi-monthly bill.

3. Section 10 of the Utility Billing Customer Care Bylaw refers to circumstances where a utility service may be terminated. Currently, the bylaw states utility services may be terminated if:
 - a) safety of life or property is at risk; or
 - b) where a provision of this bylaw, the City's Sewer Connection Bylaw or the City's Water Connection Bylaw is violated; or
 - c) an invoiced amount remains unpaid after the payment due date.

This proposed amendment would add:

- d) an occupier has not applied for a Utility Service Account.

There are also current terms or processes that need to be removed because they are no longer relevant.

1. The electrical utility was sold to Fortis BC in 2013 but the Utility Billing Customer Care bylaw still refers to electrical service. This proposed amendment would remove all electrical service references from this bylaw.
2. Section 7.3 states that a customer can provide meter readings if there is a temporary or long term issue in the City reading the meter. Staff are recommending that this section be removed as it was in reference to electrical meters only and is no longer relevant.
3. Staff are recommending that the sections regarding processes of not charging penalties and security deposits for those affected by the Okanagan Mountain Park fire be deleted as they are no longer relevant.

Internal Circulation:

Kevin Van Vliet, Utility Services Manager

Cam Moody, Cross Connection Program Coordinator

Considerations not applicable to this report:

Legal/Statutory Authority:

Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements:

Existing Policy:

Financial/Budgetary Considerations:

Personnel Implications:

External Agency/Public Comments:

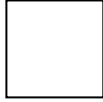
Communications Comments:

Alternate Recommendation:

Submitted by:

M. Friesen, Accountant

Approved for inclusion:



Genelle Davidson, CPA, CMA, Director, Financial Services