



TOWN OF WEBSTER
WATER & SEWER DEPARTMENT
PO BOX 793 WEBSTER, MA 01570

PROCESS TO APPEAL A WATER/SEWER BILL

Pursuant to the Town of Webster regulations, ALL appeals to water and sewer bills must be made in writing within thirty (30) days of the date of the bill.

Please read the following information carefully and fill out the attached application, if you need assistance please refer to the last page of the instruction for contact information.

DEFINITIONS:

ABATEMENT: *A change in an issued utility bill for reasons not attributable to errors made in calculating the utility bill or the service was not used.*

BILLING PERIOD: *The period of time between one reading of the meter, whether the reading is actual or estimated. A second reading may be taken prior to the abatement being granted. An estimated bill will NOT be eligible for abatement these bills are based on the actual past three readings.*

FORMS: *When required under this policy requests for abatement must be submitted to the Department in writing. The Department will supply the forms necessary to provide the information needed to act upon the request.*

Completed applications must be submitted within thirty (30) days of the issued bill, no adjustments will be made for billings periods over the thirty day period.

REASONS FOR AN ABATEMENT:

- > Billing errors whether computer or clerical will be adjusted.
- > The actual reading is incorrect.
- > The reading is different from the inside meter to the outside reader. In this case, the inside reading will take precedence.
- > Property was not connected to the sewer system inside the house – a dye test will be required and performed by sewer department personnel.
- > Sewer charges will be adjusted for water leaks that can be proven to not have entered the sewer system. Homeowners must submit, with the abatement application, a plumbers' invoice as verification of cause of the leak and must be signed by a licensed plumber.
- > Other unique circumstances as evaluated by the Water/Sewer Commissioners.

REASONS NO ABATEMENT WILL BE GRANTED:

- > Senior discounts. The current bill will not be abated to allow for the senior discount. The senior discounts begin at the time of notification there will be no retroactive adjustments.
- > If a bill has been estimated, it will not be eligible for an abatement. Any estimated bills are based on the last three actual readings.
- > Charges that result from the homeowner filling a pool, having a leaking toilet and or a leaky faucet, or any other issue involving water and or sewer leaking.
- > All water that passes through the meter will be charged to property owner.
- > Failure to secure a recorded MLC (Municipal Lien Certificate) from the town collector prior to closing on a property.
- > Failure to request a final water/sewer reading prior to closing on a property.
- > If a request to remove a meter or to terminate water service is made, any balance on said account must be paid in full prior to terminating the service or making an account inactive in the billing process. No abatements will be issued for outstanding balances due to termination of service.

- > If a property owner fails to receive a bill that does not resolve him or her from the obligation of the payment of that or any other water/sewer bill.
- > If a property is purchased due to a foreclosure or abandonment the purchaser will assume all of the water/sewer charges (if any) on that property. No abatements will be issued due to burst pipes and/or other damage due to neglect or improper winterizing of the meter.
- > Failure to notify water/sewer department of change of names or address.
- > Other unique circumstances as evaluated by the Water/Sewer Commissioners

No application for abatement or adjustments will be accepted on any account unless all past due amounts, including interest and penalties for prior billing periods have been paid in full to the Town Collector. If the homeowner is requesting an abatement on one charge whether water or sewer, it is suggested that they pay the bill to avoid additional interest and penalties that will occur on any unpaid portion of the bill. All interest and penalties will be adjusted for the portion of the bill that is to be abated.

REQUESTS AND SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS:

Homeowners requesting an abatement must contact the water or sewer department by phone, e-mail or in writing to receive the necessary forms.

Town of Webster Department of Public Works
 Water/Sewer Division
 PO Box 793
 Webster, MA 01570-0793

Telephone: Water Department --- 508-949-3861
 Sewer Department --- 508-949-3865

E-Mail: kdoyle@webster-ma.gov mroy@webster-ma.gov

**This policy has been adopted by the Water/Sewer Commissions on May 05, 2022 and is posted with the Town Clerk's office.