

## Town of Windsor

### Memorandum

November 12, 2013

**TO:** The Windsor Town Council

**FROM:** Carita J. Richardson, Mayor

**SUBJECT:** Policy for Excessive Water Leak Bills

Isle of Wight County has a very large water bill due to a leak and is asking Council to consider reducing it. I have asked our Town Manager to include the policy he wrote previously, after he had researched what other governmental bodies use, in your packets.

As the deciding vote last time, I felt that it was not fair to the citizen who came to us with a \$1000 bill for us to pass it and not include him retroactively.

As water rates continue to rise in the future, and regular bills, as well as ones that have leaks included, will become larger and larger, the impact on the lives of citizens who have limited resources can be devastating.

The County and Town try to offer professional courtesies to each other on fees (such as the ones for the permits that we just received for our new signs which IOW waived). We do want to encourage them to buy more water from us well into the future so I strongly recommend that we pass the policy included in the packet and make it retroactive 5 years for which we have software data. That will ensure that we are being fair to all of our citizens and water users.

Last time some council members said they had a concern about how much time the staff would have to spend doing this and did not want to burden them. I have asked Terry how difficult it would be to get the info on someone's water bill 3 to 4 years ago if they come in to take advantage of this, and she said that with our software it is not hard. There are a very limited number for the last 5 years that would be eligible for some reimbursement if they have the required documentation, and this policy would have very little effect on our water budget.

Thank you for carefully considering this.

## **Water Leak Credit Policy**

The Town of Windsor will issue a credit to customers that experience water leaks when all of the following conditions are met:

- The water leak must result in a water bill that is more than three (3) times larger than the customer's average bill over the previous 12 month period
- The water leak must result in a water bill that is more than \$300
- The customer must show proof that the water leak has been repaired
- Only one credit may be issued within a 12 month period, and no more than two (2) credits may be issued within any five (5) year period
- The water customer must fill out the appropriate application for credit and provide the required information

When the above conditions are met, the customer will be eligible for a credit of 50% of the usage above the normal average usage for the previous 12 month period. This credit shall not exceed \$500. This policy shall be retroactive for a period of 5 years from the date of its adoption.