

The Rules and Regulations for Water and Wastewater



Matthew W. Garbark
Acting Director

Nothing herein is intended to limit the powers or authority of the Director of Public Works or the Department of Public Works as provided by law.

I. Definitions

- a. All terms defined in Baltimore City Code Article 24 and Article 25 shall have the meaning ascribed therein. To the extent that terms defined in this Section are defined in Article 24 and Article 25, the definitions below are intended to elaborate on and clarify the Article 24 and Article 25 definitions.
- b. Abandon / abandonment – The closure and discontinuation of service from any part of the water supply, the sanitary sewer system, or the storm sewer system.
- c. Account – A unique identifier of one (1) or more services for the purpose of billing.
- d. Baltimore City / City – The Mayor and City Council of Baltimore, the body corporate as established by the Charter of Baltimore City, Article I § 1.
- e. Baltimore County – The legal entity of Baltimore County, Maryland, as established in Article I of the Charter of Baltimore County.
- f. Cleanout – An access opening with a removable plug/cap that is connected to a sewer lateral.
- g. Cross-connection – A link through which it is possible for any contaminant to enter the water supply.
- h. Department of Public Works / DPW – The Baltimore City Department of Public Works established pursuant to the Charter of Baltimore City, Article VII § 27 *et seq.*
- i. Detector check – A valve that is used to detect unauthorized water use or leakage.
- j. Director of Public Works / Director – The Director of the Baltimore City Department of Public Works.
- k. Distribution main – The pipe that carries water for delivery to customers.

- l. Fire service line – The pipe that carries water from the distribution main to a property, building, or facility for the sole purpose of fire protection.
- m. Meter vault – The pit and associated cover where the water service line and water meter are joined together.
- n. Service shut-off valve – A valve that is used to start or stop flows in a water service line or fire service line.
- o. Sewer lateral – The pipe that carries wastewater from a property, building, or facility to the sanitary sewer system.
- p. Stormwater service line – The pipe that carries stormwater and related drainage to the storm sewer system.
- q. Water meter transmitter – A device that stores and transmits water consumption information electronically.
- r. Water service line – The pipe that delivers water to a property, building, or facility from the distribution main.

II. Utility Connections

- a. Any installation, renewal, modification, relocation, or abandonment of the water supply, sanitary sewer system, or storm sewer system shall require a written agreement approved by DPW as specified in applicable law or as otherwise determined by DPW.
- b. Baltimore County – Any installation, renewal, modification, relocation, or abandonment of the water supply in Baltimore County must be approved by Baltimore City and Baltimore County as required by applicable law before incorporation into the Metropolitan District.
- c. DPW will determine whether there is adequate capacity to support any proposed installation, renewal, modification, relocation, or abandonment of the water supply, sanitary sewer system, or storm sewer system and may impose any condition that DPW deems necessary.
- d. Professional Certification Required – All persons acting on the customer's behalf who perform any connection to the water supply, sanitary sewer system, or storm

sewer system shall be an approved underground utility contractor as determined by DPW.

- e. Performance Security Required – All persons who perform a connection to the water supply, sanitary sewer system, or storm sewer system shall supply a performance security that is acceptable to DPW to allow DPW to recover any cost it may incur to correct faulty construction or work that does not otherwise meet the requirements of applicable law.
- f. Initial Connection to Utility – Unless otherwise provided by applicable law or written agreement approved by DPW, all connections to the water supply, sanitary sewer system, or storm sewer system shall be built according to the standards set forth or adopted by the City and as otherwise provided by law at the property owner's sole cost and expense after review and approval from DPW. All connections shall be designed by a Master Plumber or Professional Engineer who is licensed and in good standing with the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation. The property owner shall assume all risk and liability pertaining to any design or construction, and review or approval by DPW shall not convey any express or implied warranty that the connection is fit for any particular purpose. The property owner shall abide by all applicable laws and shall obtain all necessary permits and approvals.

III. Maintenance of Connections

Unless otherwise provided by agreement with DPW, this Section shall apply once a water service line, fire service line, sewer lateral, or stormwater service line is constructed in accordance with applicable law.

- a. Water Service Line – The water service line from the distribution main to the meter vault is maintained by DPW. If no meter vault exists, DPW will maintain the water service line from the distribution main to the property line.
- b. Fire Service Line – The fire service line from the distribution main to the property line is maintained by DPW.
- c. Sewer Lateral – The sewer lateral from the sewer main to the property line is maintained by DPW.
- d. Stormwater Service Line – The stormwater service line is the private property of the owner and is not maintained by DPW.

Notwithstanding anything herein to the contrary, all persons shall maintain their property in accordance with applicable law and shall give DPW reasonable access to perform any inspection, repair, or replacement that DPW deems necessary.

IV. Water, Sewer, and Stormwater Services

a. Applications for Service

- i. All persons wishing to install, renew, relocate, modify, or abandon any connection to the water supply shall file a written application on a form provided by DPW or Baltimore County as applicable, and pay all applicable fees.
- ii. All persons wishing to install, renew, relocate, modify, or abandon any connection to the sanitary sewer system or the storm sewer system shall file a written application with DPW and pay all applicable fees.
- iii. All persons consolidating two (2) or more properties with separate accounts shall notify DPW.
- iv. Applications shall be signed by the property owner or his authorized agent.
- v. Charges shall be effective on the date that an account is created.
- vi. The property owner shall be responsible for all applicable charges.

- b. Closure of Accounts – All property owners wishing to close their water and/or sewer accounts shall file a written application for abandonment with DPW and pay all applicable fees as determined by the Baltimore City Board of Estimates. All applicable charges shall apply until all balances are paid and the application for abandonment is approved by DPW. Upon payment of all balances and approval of the application for abandonment, no future charges shall apply except as otherwise provided by law.

- c. Metering Required – Except as otherwise determined by DPW, all properties with any connection to the water supply shall be metered with a water meter and water meter transmitter. No person shall connect to the water supply without notifying DPW. Any un-metered consumption of water without approval from DPW may

be subject to charges, fees, penalties, and/or turn-off as provided by applicable law.

d. Meter Installations and Costs

- i. All persons shall purchase water meters from DPW. No water meter shall be issued without payment of all applicable charges.
- ii. Except as otherwise determined by the DPW, all meter vaults and water meters shall be installed at the curb line nearest to the distribution main from which water service is provided.
- iii. Unless the water meter is installed by DPW, upon installation the property owner shall immediately notify DPW. Upon notice, DPW will install a water meter transmitter, provided that applicable fees are paid in full and further provided that the account has no delinquent balance.
- iv. If DPW determines that any connection to the water supply does not have a water meter or water meter transmitter installed and does not otherwise have permission from DPW, DPW may install a water meter and/or water meter transmitter at the property owner's sole cost and expense.

e. Unauthorized Connections Prohibited – No person shall connect to the water supply, sanitary sewer system, or storm sewer system without permission from DPW. Any unauthorized connection may be turned-off and abandoned at the property owner's sole cost and expense.

f. Connection to Abandoned Utilities Prohibited – No person shall connect to any part of the water system, sanitary sewer system, or storm sewer system that is abandoned.

g. Size Limits

- i. The capacity of each water service line, fire service line, sewer lateral, or stormwater service line shall not exceed the capacity of the pipe to which it is connected.
- ii. No water service line or fire service line shall be connected to any distribution main that is 20 inches or larger in diameter.

h. Access to Assets

- i. All meter vaults, water meters, water meter transmitters, service shut-off valves, and cleanouts shall remain accessible to DPW at all times.
- ii. If any meter vault, water meter, water meter transmitter, or service shut-off valve is damaged, malfunctioning, inaccessible, or otherwise in any condition that may endanger public safety, the customer shall immediately notify DPW.

i. Location of Utilities

- i. Upon written request, DPW will furnish the location of any pipe, facility, or related appurtenance of the water supply, sanitary sewer system, or storm sewer system, provided that the information requested is available and further provided that disclosure will not endanger public safety as allowed by law.
- ii. All records shall be provided as-is and without any express or implied warranty that the records are accurate or fit for any particular use or purpose.
- iii. All persons who request any records from DPW shall be solely responsible to verify the accuracy of any records provided at their sole cost and expense.

j. Cross-Connections Prohibited

- i. All cross-connections are prohibited except where approved backflow prevention methods are installed to protect the water supply as provided in the Building, Fire, and Related Codes of Baltimore City or as otherwise determined by DPW.
- ii. All persons given notice regarding the existence of any cross-connection that is not in compliance with applicable law shall take immediate action to identify and control all cross-connections as provided by applicable law. The existence of any cross-connection that is not in compliance with applicable law shall be grounds for immediate termination of water service.

k. Fire Protection Lines

- i. All persons wishing to install, renew, relocate, modify, or abandon any fire service line or water service line that supplies water for fire protection must obtain a written agreement approved by DPW.
- ii. All properties applying to install a fire service line or water service line for fire protection must receive water from the water system.
- iii. DPW may install a detector check on any fire service line.
- iv. All sprinkler systems, private fire hydrants, and related appurtenances for fire protection must be approved by the Building Official and the Fire Marshall, as provided by applicable law.
- v. Size of fire service line or water service line for fire protection:
 1. All fire hydrants shall be connected to a fire service line that is six (6) inches or larger in diameter as determined by DPW.
 2. Sprinkler systems in single-family homes shall comply with the requirements of National Fire Prevention Association (“NFPA”) 13D.
 3. Sprinkler systems in office, commercial, and industrial buildings shall be connected to one (1) or more fire service lines that are four (4) inches or larger in diameter as determined by DPW.
- vi. Existing fire service lines and water service lines for fire protection may be continued without modification, provided that:
 1. There are no fire hydrants or hose connections;
 2. There is approved central station supervision; and
 3. The Fire Marshall, the Building Official, and DPW determine that existing arrangements for fire protection are sufficient to protect health, safety, and welfare.

- vii. If DPW determines that a fire service line is being used for any purpose which is unrelated to fire protection, DPW may install a water meter, water meter transmitter, and related appurtenances at the property owner's sole cost and expense. The water supply classification for the account shall be changed to water service line and the fire service line inspection charge shall be discontinued. All applicable charges pertaining to provision of water shall apply.

l. Fire Hydrants

- i. Fire hydrants' primary purpose is to supply water for fire protection. No person shall damage, deface, or sabotage any fire hydrant. All use of any fire hydrant for any purpose besides fire protection shall require written approval from DPW except as otherwise provided in this Section.
- ii. All persons wishing to use any fire hydrant for any purpose besides fire protection shall obtain a permit from the Department of Public Works. Applicants shall pay all applicable fees before a permit may be issued.
- iii. The following rules shall apply to permit holders. Failure to comply with any rule provided in this Section or as otherwise determined by DPW shall result in immediate termination of the permit.
 - 1. All usage shall be limited to the 2½ inch nozzle outlet on the hydrant. All use of the 4½ inch nozzle on any fire hydrant is prohibited.
 - 2. All defects on or within any fire hydrant shall be reported immediately to the Department of Public Works.
 - 3. The permit shall be maintained at the site where water is obtained.

m. Abandonment

- i. Abandonment of Cross-Connections – Failure to abate any cross-connection that does not comply with applicable law shall be grounds for abandonment of any water service line or fire service line to the property or properties where the cross-connection exists. All costs of the abandonment shall be charged to the property owner.

- ii. Abandonment of Unauthorized Connections – Failure to abate any unauthorized connection to the water supply, sanitary sewer system, or storm sewer system shall be grounds for abandonment of the unauthorized connection. All costs of the abandonment shall be charged to the property owner.
- iii. Abandonment of Un-Used Connections – If DPW discovers any un-used connection to the sanitary sewer system, DPW may provide notice to the owner of the property served by the un-used connection to abandon the connection. If the property owner fails to abandon the un-used connection after notice, DPW may abandon the un-used connection at the property owner's sole cost and expense.

n. Relocating Assets

- i. Any relocation of City-owned assets shall require a written agreement approved by DPW.
- ii. DPW will determine whether any proposed relocation is practicable and consistent with the protection of health, safety, and welfare. No application shall be approved until any balance in arrears on the applicant's account is paid in full.
- iii. Any relocation of City-owned assets shall be performed by DPW, provided that a third party may do so if specified in a written agreement approved by DPW.

V. Privacy

- a. This Section is adopted to define “sociological information” exempt from disclosure under the Maryland Public Information Act, codified in § 4-330 of the General Provisions Article (“GP”) of the Maryland Code.
- b. The following categories of information shall be deemed “sociological information” and shall not be disclosed in accordance with GP § 4-330 unless the applicant is a person in interest as defined in GP § 4-101(g), or is a person acting on behalf of the person in interest with written documentation attesting to the applicant's authority:

- i. Social Security number;
- ii. Date of birth;
- iii. State-issued drivers' license number;
- iv. Taxpayer identification number;
- v. Individual or household income;
- vi. Participation status in any program on the basis of income; and
- vii. Hourly, daily, and weekly consumption of water by individual accounts.

VI. Charges

- a. Incorrect billing – If DPW determines that current charges billed to a property owner for water or sewer consumption are lower than the correct amount, or otherwise incorrect, DPW shall be entitled to correct the bill for a period not to exceed three years.
 - i. Incorrect billing does not include the failure to provide a bill but is defined herein to mean a bill with incorrect consumption or usage fees.
 - ii. The three-year period shall not apply if a billing defect, discrepancy, malfunction, or miscalculation was due to interference with DPW equipment, in violation of Article 24, Section 21-6 of the City Code. Should the defect, discrepancy, malfunctions, or miscalculation be due to deliberate interference on the part of the property owner, or at the direction or on behalf of the property owner, the property owner will be liable for full payment of all retroactive charges.
 - iii. If the correction of an incorrect bill exceeds a customer's ability to pay, DPW may enter into a payment plan.
- b. Failure to bill – if DPW is unable to bill a property owner for any water or sewer charges due to any defect or malfunction of the water meter, water meter transmitter, or due to any interruption of billing system functions, DPW shall be entitled to include any unbilled charges on the most current bill, and the property owner shall be responsible for all said charges.

VII. Delinquency

- a. Charges are due and payable upon rendering of bills.
- b. An account becomes delinquent upon failure to pay by the date stated on the bill and, thereafter, water services are subject to turn-off at any time.

APPROVED FOR FORM AND LEGAL SUFFICIENCY:

HILARY RULEY, CHIEF SOLICITOR

SUBMITTED:

RUDOLPH S. CHOW, P.E. DATE
DIRECTOR
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

THIS IS TO CERTIFY that the preceding is a true copy of The Rules and Regulations for Water and Wastewater, as adopted by the Department of Public Works and filed with the Department of Legislative Reference.

AVERY AISENSTARK DATE
DIRECTOR
DEPARTMENT OF LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE