



**City of Richmond**

**Report to Committee**

**To:** Public Works and Transportation Committee      **Date:** April 6, 2005  
**From:** Robert Gonzalez, P.Eng.  
 Director, Engineering      **File:** 10-6650-02/2005-Vol 01  
**Re:** **Water Metering: Single Family Dwellings Occupied as a Duplex**

**Staff Recommendation**

That single family dwellings found to be occupied as a duplex and used for rental purposes have a water meter installed and pay for water and sanitary sewer based on the metered rate.

Robert Gonzalez, P.Eng.  
 Director, Engineering  
 (4150)

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ROUTED TO:		CONCURRENCE		CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER		
Community Bylaws .....	Y	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N			
Sewerage & Drainage.....	Y	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N			
Water Services .....	Y	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N			
Budgets .....	Y	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N			
<b>REVIEWED BY TAG</b>	YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO	<b>REVIEWED BY CAO</b>	YES	NO
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Staff Report

### Origin

On December 8, 2003, City Council adopted Bylaw 7620, amending the City's Waterworks and Water Rates Bylaw. The amendment includes provisions that allow the City to bill residential water customers based on a metered rate and is in alignment with the City's long-term water management strategy.

From time to time, City Staff discovers single family residential buildings that are occupied as duplexes and are used for rental purposes. These properties are often identified as having a "secondary", "rental" or "illegal" suite. For the purposes of this report, they will be referred to as single family houses with rental suites. This report addresses the issue of equitable utility billing for single family with rental suites. This report does not address the zoning, planning, infrastructure, building code or neighbourhood related problems that rental suites may pose.

### Findings Of Fact

In general, single family houses with rental suites use more water and generate more sanitary sewage than houses that do not have rental suites. The City's flat rate system for water and sanitary sewer utility billing does not accommodate, and was not intended to include houses with rental suites. However, houses with rental suites are currently enjoying the single family flat rate as there is no specific flat rate for rental suites. To remedy this issue, staff recommends that houses with rental suites, that come to the attention of the City, be required to install water meters and pay for City utilities based on the metered rate. Through metered utility billing, houses with rental suites can pay for their utilities in an equitable manner. These meters will be installed through the Volunteer Water Metering program.

### Financial Impact

Funding is available under Richmond's Water Meter Program.

### Conclusion

The single family flat rate for water and sewer is not intended to include houses with rental suites. Staff recommends that water meters be installed at houses with rental suites at the property owner's expense and that the property owner pay the metered utility rate. In this manner, houses with rental suites will be billed equitably for water and sewer.



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602