

Trades Advisory Council
Minutes
November 19, 2003

Present: Martha Segal, Mary Ellen Jackson, Ronnie Russell, Mike Morris, Shannon Wray, Gary Ragland, Kelly Sloan, Jack Steakley, Andy Ward, Eba Hobbs, Richard Smith, Eric Holt, James McLean, Ken Gregory, Lance Hornbuckle, Ric Blackburn, David McGowan

Absent: Tony Smith, Cris Remke, Charles Hawkins

Kelly Sloan, Phillips Builders was introduced as a new member to the TAC group. Ric White and David McGowan were guests of Jim McLean.

Mary Ellen reported the customer handbook was in the hands of a graphic designer with draft for review expected by the first of December.

The present DDCV policy was reviewed. This policy was approved in 1992. This policy included provision of notification the first month usage was detected. The second consecutive month of usage could result in a meter minimum and usage charge. The third month of usage would result in these same charges and the Director could at his discretion require the installation of a fire meter in addition to the reduced pressure back flow preventor assembly. This scenario assumes the customer has not submitted reasons for usage after receiving notification.

Proposed policy changes were discussed. These changes include the following:

1. A departmental representative will notify the customer by letter after the first month of noted consumption.
2. Evidence of consumption in the second month(not necessarily consecutive) will result in a billing of a meter minimum charge per month per commercial rate based on size service line in addition to a per unit charge for each ccf of water used based on the current commercial rate. The sewer service charge will apply in addition to the above. It is to be noted, at this stage,unless the customer presents information that meets MWS criteria for usage, installation of an approved type fire meter in addition to a reduced pressure backflow preventer assembly will be required.
3. The consumer will be responsible for the cost of any and all maintenance and repair of devices and related equipment to be replaced within 30 days.

Mary Ellen stated there were currently 328 DDCV's in the system. A report beginning with January of 2001 through October 2003 showed 114 of these customers had usage on more than three occasions. This report, however, does not reflect if any of the 114 responded to notification with submittal of justification of usage. Under the new policy some of these customers could have been required to install the fire meter.

Discussion included a suggestion from Richard Smith that we talk about a flat fee for a flow test. He had discussed this with Greg Nalls. Reasons water was used were discussed including washing down parking lots etc. The cost of various sizes of meters and using a 6 inch meter on an 8 inch fire line was discussed. One participant stated he did not feel the cost and requirement of a meter was the main issue. He discussed other alternative solutions: combo fire line up to the building; fire line off of domestic line. It was suggested the Fire Marshall be included in future discussions to assure both perspectives are being considered. Pressure and availability should also be taken into consideration.

Ms. Segal stated we are waiting to receive alternative solutions to the fire metering issue from ABC. Mr. Smith stated they had received the requested information from MWS and were working on their proposal.

She also stated MWS will meet internally on this and other issues brought to the surface by this discussion including placement of meter on property. Mr. White stated the meter has historically been the demarcation line on the property.

The next agenda item was Commercial Split Services. Splits are allowed for irrigation in residential and commercial. MWS restated the reasoning for changing this policy concerning splits on domestic service. Metro does not agree with the submetering of water. Pressure and consumption issues were mentioned as considering factors. It was also stated that the variance in requirement between new and existing services should be reviewed. MWS will review these issues internally for discussion at the next meeting.

The recent changes in the placement of the backflow are causing concern. Eric Holt cited an example of approval last year of placement and due to some repairs MWS was requiring the backflow device be moved. It was further stated that in building placement would be most cost effective and would not require the use of a sprinkler professional. It was suggested the meter stay at the street and backflow be allowed in the dwelling. . MWS agreed to revisit situations such as this internally.

A change in the time of the regular monthly meeting was suggested and approved. The meeting time will be 10:00 to 11:30. MWS will provide lunch around 11:15. This will alleviate the conflict for some members.

The next meeting will be in January unless a special meeting is called concerning the handbook. This date is January 28, 2004.