

MUNICIPALITY OF THE DISTRICT OF ARGYLE POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION MANUAL	REFERENCE NUMBER _____
SECTION PROCEDURE AND ORGANIZATION OF COUNCIL	SUBJECT SEWER LEVY

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. To ensure the Municipality has accurate records regarding the number of equivalent units served on the sewer system;
- 1.2. To ensure the sewer levy is charged in an equitable manner.
- 1.3. To define the mapped bounds of Zone 1 and Zone 2. See attached schedule “A”.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

- 2.1. The Municipality of Argyle is committed to treat all municipal sewer users in a fair and equitable manner. This policy recognizes that it is the individual’s responsibility to ensure compliance with the West Pubnico Sewer System By-Law - By-Law 29 Sewer – Municipality of the District of Argyle. This policy further recognizes that it is the Municipality of Argyle’s responsibility to manage, monitor and maintain municipal infrastructure.

3. SEWER OPERATING LEVY TAX REFUND FOR VACANT LOTS IN ZONES 1 AND 2

- 3.1. In an effort to keep taxation current and up-to-date, the Municipality of Argyle’s Taxation Department regularly receives property updates from Property Valuation. Property Valuation receives regular updates including all building and demolition permits from the Municipality of Argyle’s Department of Property Inspection and Public Works. This is the means in which the municipal tax office is notified of changes when a residential lot becomes vacant.
- 3.2. Demolition permits are also the means by which the Municipality is notified that a property is no longer occupied by a building and is no longer a user of the municipal sewer system. The result is the removal of the full annual operating levy from the tax bills and replacing it with a vacant lot charge consistent with the by-law.
- 3.3. *There have been instances where the above procedure was not followed, likely by unawareness of the property owner, resulting in the property taxes not being adjusted to reflect the change. (Although the Property Valuation may have noted the vacancy based on a site visit by their staff (Assessor) the Municipality of Argyle’s Public Works Department would not be notified thus the annual sewer levy would remain on the tax bill.)*
- 3.4. In order to provide consistency in all cases, refund of up to a maximum of three year’s past sewer operating levy will be considered if:
 - a) The owner of the lot provides proof the lot was purchased vacant or provide taxation or assessment information that the lot was vacant;

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- b) Proof that the sewer lateral has been capped. The Public Works Department shall inspect the work to ensure it is in compliance with the by-law and mark the location on public work records and the lot will be deemed vacant serviced with a lateral.

4. CAPITAL BILLING AND CONNECTION FEES SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

4.1. Vacant lots with laterals in Zone 1

- a) Vacant lots are defined as lots that, in the past, were serviced by the sewer and no longer containing a building and that the sewer lateral has been capped off as required by the sewer by-law. These lots shall be billed a sewer levy of \$20.00 annually. This sewer levy is governed by the West Pubnico Sewer By-Law; this also assists the municipality in keeping track of the lots with laterals. (These lots are easily connected back on to the sewer without cutting into the sewer main but by connecting on to the existing lateral that has been capped off when the building was demolished.)

4.1.a.1. Capital - Vacant lots with capped sewer laterals are charged 50% of any applicable capital fee. If the lot is reconnected to the sewer system the \$1000 hookup fee applies.

4.1.a.2. Operating Levy - Vacant lots with capped sewer laterals are billed a sewer levy of \$20.00 annually. This sewer levy is governed by the West Pubnico Sewer By-Law.

4.2. Vacant Lots without a lateral in Zone 1

- a) A vacant lot is a lot not containing a building and does not have a lateral or known lateral servicing it. Vacant lots are not charged a sewer levy nor will they be charged a capital fee, as they are in no way connected to the system.
- b) New connections pay a base hook-up fee of \$1,000, plus a capital fee at the following scale (see table below).

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Fiscal Year	Base Connection Fee	Capital Fee (may be financed)	Total Connection Fee
2010/2011	\$ 1,000	\$ 2,532	\$ 3,532
2011/2012	\$ 1,000	\$2,110	\$ 3,110
2012/2013	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,899	\$ 2,899
2013/2014	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,688	\$ 2,688
2014/2015	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,477	\$ 2,477
2015/2016	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,266	\$ 2,266
2016/2017	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,055	\$ 2,055
2017/2018	\$ 1,000	\$ 844	\$ 1,844
2018/2019	\$ 1,000	\$ 633	\$ 1,633
2019/2020	\$ 1,000	\$ 422	\$ 1,422
2020/2021	\$ 1,000	\$ 211	\$ 1,211
2021/2022	\$ 1,000	\$ 0	\$ 1,000

The intent of the reduced scale is to ensure new connections are treated equitably when compared to existing users.

4.3. Vacant Lots without a Lateral in Zone 2

- a) A vacant lot is a lot not containing a building and does not have a lateral or known lateral servicing it. Vacant lots are not charged a sewer levy nor will they be charged a capital fee, as they are in no way connected to the system. In this zone only human waste shall be introduced into the system, no processing water from fish production is allowed to enter the system.
- b) New connections pay a base hook-up fee of \$1,000, plus a capital fee at the following scale (see table below).

Fiscal Year	Base Connection Fee	Capital Fee (may be financed)	Total Connection Fee
2014/2015	\$ 1,000	\$ 9,000	\$ 10,000
2015/2016	\$ 1,000	\$ 8,500	\$ 9,500
2016/2017	\$ 1,000	\$ 8,000	\$ 9,000
2017/2018	\$ 1,000	\$ 7,500	\$ 8,500
2018/2019	\$ 1,000	\$ 7,000	\$ 8,000
2019/2020	\$ 1,000	\$ 6,500	\$ 7,500
2020/2021	\$ 1,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 7,000
2021/2022	\$ 1,000	\$ 5,500	\$ 6,500
2022/2023	\$ 1,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 6,000

** A capital fee of \$5,000.00 plus the base connection fee shall apply to all connections from fiscal year 2002/2023 going forward until changed by the West Pubnico Sewer Committee.*

The intent of the reduced scale is to ensure new connections are treated equitably when compared to existing users.

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- c) As per the West Pubnico Sewer Bylaw, Bylaw 29 for the Municipality of Argyle, “All costs associated with the installation, connection, maintenance or repair of a building sewer connection to the municipal sewerage system, whether in a street, highway or easement, including the costs of any necessary permits, are the sole responsibility of the owner.”

4.4. Abandoned Buildings and Homes on the System in Zone 1 and 2

- a) Abandoned buildings or homes are defined as structures that are not occupied for one reason or another. In some cases, an abandoned building may be a building that had plumbing installed and connected to the sewer main but is no longer in use for that purpose.
- b) If the owner chooses and the building is demolished (demolition permit required), the lateral capped and inspected then the lot will then become a vacant lot as described above.
- c) Abandoned Buildings and Homes on the system are billed at the same rate as an occupied building or home.

5. BUILDINGS FRONTING MUNICIPAL SEWER LINE IN ZONE 1 AND 2

5.1. With the expertise of a GIS Technician applying the “as built” drawings onto municipal mapping it has been discovered there are buildings throughout West Pubnico that have a lateral servicing their lots, and:

- a) have been paying the annual sewer levy, but upon billing residents a capital fee, came forward to say the building was never connected to the sewer main (that they have their own system); or
- b) have never connected to the sewer main even though the sewer main runs in front of their property.

5.2. Sentence 4 of Part 4, Connections, of the West Pubnico Sewer By-Law states **“The owner of a building, the nearest part of which is not more than one hundred and fifty feet (150’) from any portion of the municipal sewer shall be required to connect to the municipal sewer system, at the owners expense, however, Council may exempt therefrom any such building as appears to it:**

- a) **to be adequately served with existing on-site sewage disposal systems;**
- b) **would not be adequately served by connection to the sewerage system.**

5.3. If the Municipality of Argyle receives a call/complaint that a property has been paying the annual sewer levy but was never connected, it will:

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a) Determine if the existing on site system is adequate by having the property owner supply a report from a Qualified Person (as licensed by the Department of Environment).

5.3.a.1. If the system is working fine that they are permitted to remain on their own on-site system until such time as their system is not working or they request a connection. In this case, no sewer tax levy will be refunded unless it can be proven that the Municipality of Argyle had previously been advised that the property was never connected. If it can be proven the Municipality of Argyle was notified, the sewer levy will be reimbursed up to a maximum of three years retroactively. The capital fee will be removed from the account and the account adjusted accordingly.

5.3.a.2. If the on-site system is malfunctioning or inadequate, then the property will be required to connect to the municipal sewer system. In this case, the sewer connection fee will be waived providing the property has been paying a levy as a serviced lot for more than 10 years and the capital fee will apply.

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SCHEDULE "A"

MAPS OF ZONE 1 AND 2

<u>Chief Administrative Officer's Annotation for Official Policy Book</u>	
Date of Notice to Council Members Of Intent to Consider [7 days minimum]: <u>September 2, 2014</u>	
Date of Passage of Current Policy: <u>September 9, 2014</u>	
I certify that this Policy was adopted by Council as indicated above.	
_____ Warden	_____ Date
_____ Chief Administrative Officer	_____ Date