Water & Wastewater Bills: Landlords and Tenants FAQ's

PUC Services Inc. manages invoicing for water and sewage services on behalf of the Public Utilities Commission and the City of Sault Ste. Marie. PUC accepts Tenants to sign-up as account owners for water and sewage services, however, the property owner is responsible for unpaid water and wastewater fees and charges, as per the Municipal Act, 2001. These fees can be added to the property's tax, no matter who used the services.

Q1: Can unpaid water and wastewater charges be added to the property tax roll?

A1: Yes, under subsection 398 (2) of the Municipal Act, 2001, the City of Sault Ste. Marie has the authority to add unpaid water and wastewater fees and charges to the tax roll of the property to which the services were supplied. PUC may send these arrears to the City to add to the tax roll.

Q2: Can property owners receive information about arrears or late payments without the customer's consent?

A2: No, PUC is generally prohibited by privacy laws from disclosing customer information to property owners without the customer's consent. The property owner can be informed about arrears or late payments only if the customer provides consent. Property owners can also consider registering as customers themselves. If you would like information about Tenant Arrears, please ask your Tenant to provide Tenant Authorization to Release Account Information to Landlord form.

Q3: Is there a situation where customer information can be disclosed to property owners without customer consent?

A3: Yes, once arrears are added to the tax roll under the authority of the Municipal Act, PUC can disclose certain information about the customer to the property owner through the tax roll enforcement mechanism. This disclosure is permissible because it is authorized by law, specifically the Municipal Act, and relates to the enforcement of arrears.

Q4: Can property owners receive advanced notice or other information about customers directly from PUC?

A4: Generally, property owners cannot receive customer information directly from PUC without the customer's consent. If property owners want to receive information about arrears or late

payments, they should register as customers with PUC or seek the customer's consent to be registered as a secondary contact for notifications.

Q5: How can property owners be notified about arrears or late payments?

A5: Property owners can choose to register as customers with PUC or request to be added as secondary contacts on the customer's account, with the customer's consent. This will allow property owners to receive notifications about any arrears, late payments, or other relevant information.

Q6: When will PUC send arrears to the City to add to the property tax roll?

A6: PUC will send the Tenant overdue reminders, however, if the Tenant has not paid or made any arrangements to pay within 30 days of the notice, PUC may send amounts to the tax roll. A letter will be sent to the Tenant and Landlord (i.e., multi-residential customers) where arrears have been sent to the City.

Q7: What can I do if I receive notice that arrears have been added to the tax roll?

A7: Once the amount is added to the tax roll, you can contact PUC or the City to make a payment. PUC can only disclose the service address, tenant's name, arrears on tax roll, the breakdown of tax rolled amount between water and sewage; and the account number for you to make a payment. Payment of the arrears can be made to PUC or the City of SSM.

Q8: What can I do to avoid having water arrears added to my taxes?

A8: Register as the account holder and ensure payment is made on time. As the account holder, all bills and notices will only be sent to you.

Tenant Authorization to Release Account Information to Landlord

Tenant Consent Form

By signing this form, I authorize PUC to release information related to my water and sewage account to the property owner, including by not limited to discussions of billings, payments, balances and the provision of issuing notice of past due accounts.

Water/Sewage Account Number:

Tenant Name:

Address of Property:

Property Owner's Name:

Property Owner's Address:

Property Tax Roll Number of Property:

Tenant Authorized Signature:

Date:

Please submit by email or mail to:

Email customer.experience@ssmpuc.com

Mail to:

PUC Services Inc.
500 Second Line East, P.O. Box 9000
Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario P6A 6P2

Personal information is collected under the authority of the Municipal Act, 2001 Section 398(2) for the purposes of creating a record to be used for release of tenant utility information related to a property address to the owner of that property.