

**Deputation Comments for: The Infrastructure and Recreation Committee Agenda** for the meeting on Tuesday, January 17<sup>th</sup> 2012.

**The purpose** of this submission is twofold:

- A) Recover sewage charges for usage not incurred and
- B) Suggest ways that could alleviate this perennial complaint by establishing a preemptive application based on expected abnormal water usage for justifiable purposes.

**Background:**

The evidence of the purpose for most of the 233 cubic meters of water for July and August is that we paid the Town extra fees for extended hours to water approximately 33 new trees that were planted by local experts Landmark Group. Their professional advice was that a lot of tree watering was a must. But we essentially got charged double for water (watering plus sewage not used) when in fact all we were trying to do is improve the neighbourhood by planting needed trees and ensure they survive. As is typical, our development got clear-cut before new buildings went up and we were trying to restore our lot with new plantings. You should have an abatement program for plantings, not an extra charge.

In short, the Charge for \$462 for water is bad enough but it was a shock to see the \$412 charge for sewage when most of that water never went into the sewage, it went into our landscaping. Sewage usage would have been closer to our normal \$100 bill.

**Solution:**

Planting trees definitely improves the carbon cycle because trees act as a carbon sink to soak up CO<sub>2</sub>. Planting trees remains one of the cheapest, most effective means of drawing excess CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere. That concept is something each and every taxpayer can make a contribution toward. Therefore why tax it with extra sewage costs not used? Instead why not encourage more plantings?

A process could be easily set up to apply for sewage alleviation charges when requesting an extra watering permit. This would also establish a policy of fairness; as it is, we are aware of some taxpayers getting sewage relief when complaining, others do not. We need an equitable solution because someday the residential development recession will end, more new residents will flow to this beautiful area and they will want to improve the landscaping on their lots. A Town Hall that encourages new plantings and the necessary watering of them is desirable for the community we live in.

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