



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Drain Grant Appeal - 1 Bexhill Avenue

Date:	January 24, 2007
To:	Public Works and Infrastructure Committee
From:	Lou Di Gironimo, General Manager, Toronto Water
Wards:	Ward 35 (Scarborough-Southwest)
Reference Number:	P:\2007\Cluster B\TW\pw07003

SUMMARY

The property owner of 1 Bexhill Avenue has requested a reimbursement of \$500 for costs incurred to repair the internal plumbing (collapsed trap) due to tree root infiltration under the Tree Root Removal and Grants Policy Program. To qualify for financial assistance Toronto Water staff must verify that damages are the results of roots from a City-owned tree and application must be submitted to the City within one year from the date of the paid invoice. In this case, there are no City trees in the vicinity of this property and the invoice was received twenty-three months after it was paid, therefore the property owner does not qualify for financial assistance.

In accordance with the provisions of the Toronto Tree Root Removal and Grants Policy, the application requesting reimbursement as submitted by the property owner should be denied on the basis that there is no evidence of sewer connection damage resulting from a City-owned tree and the paid invoice was not submitted to the City within one year from the date of the paid invoice.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Toronto Water recommends that Council deny the Drain Grant Appeal for 1 Bexhill Avenue.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial implications arising from the staff report. There are sufficient funds within the proposed Toronto Water 2007 Operating Budget should Council approve the drain grant appeal.

DECISION HISTORY

City Council at its meeting of May 11 and 12, 1999 adopted, as amended, Clause 3 of Works and Utility Committee Report No. 7 entitled “Sewer Connection Blockage Inspection and Repair Program, and Tree Root Removal and Grants Policy”.

Under the Policy the City provided assistance to property owners for repairs to private drains where the blockage is the result of roots from a City owned tree. For exterior work (between the City property line and the building foundation wall) assistance was provided in the amount of 100 percent of the invoiced cost up to a maximum of \$1500.00 for full replacement or \$500.00 for partial repair of the private drains (once every 3-year period).

City Council at its meeting of December 4, 5 and 6, 2001 adopted as amended Clause 19 in Report No. 16 of the Policy and Finance Committee entitled “Drain Grant Policy and Appeal Process” amending the Policy to provide for an additional grant of \$500.00 for work required on the interior of the system due to a City-owned tree provided that the City was included in the inspection before the work was done.

City Council at its meeting held on July 30, 31 and August 1, 2002 adopted Clause 20 in Report No.9 of the Works Committee entitled “Drain Grant Appeals” in which it’s clarified that the Drain Grant Policy is applicable only to owners of single, duplex and triplex properties.

City Council at its meeting held on July 25, 26 and 27, 2006 adopted Clause 8 of Report No. 5 of the Works Committee entitled “Amendments to the Sewer Service Line Blockage Inspection Repair Program and Drain Grant Policy” thereby amending the Policy to provide grants up to a total grant amount of \$2000.00 per property towards sewer service line repair work, including exterior work (foundation wall to property line) whether partial or full replacement, and internal work (within the building).

The Policy does not provide for reimbursement for costs incurred by the owner to conduct investigations (i.e. snaking, plunging, closed circuit television inspection) or cleaning due to flooding. To qualify for assistance, Toronto Water staff must verify the damages are roots from a City tree and applications for reimbursement must be submitted to the City within one year from the date of the paid invoice.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Toronto Water Staff responded to a request for service from the property owner on January 14, 2004 to perform a closed circuit television camera inspection of the sewer connection. The inspection found no blockages and the property owner indicated that a contractor had already relieved a blockage at this address.

Toronto Water Staff responded to another report of a blocked sewer on December 23, 2004 and there was no blockage found within the sewer connection to the property or the local main sewer. During the investigation staff removed two ping pong balls from the property owner's floor drain.

The property owner of 1 Bexhill Avenue submitted an application, received December 6, 2005, requesting a reimbursement of \$500.00 for the costs incurred to repair a collapsed trap inside her house, invoice dated January 6, 2004. The claim was subsequently denied on the basis the invoice was not submitted within the one year of the invoice being paid.

Toronto Water staff report that there are no City-owned trees in the vicinity of 1 Bexhill Avenue.

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SIGNATURE

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