



Councillor Frances Nunziata
Council Speaker
Toronto City Council
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Attn: Chair & Members of the Budget Committee

From: Councillor Frances Nunziata

Re: **Office of the Treasurer 2011 Operating Budget**

During the last term of Council, changes were made to combine water billing and Solid Waste Management fees into one Utility Bill, which the City of Toronto is required to send to the registered owner of a property. A registered property owner may direct the City to send a duplicate Utility Bill to owner-designated agents at a fee of \$16.00 per additional copy of the Utility Bill. This new administrative fee was adopted by Council in March 2008 is applied directly to the Utility Bill upon issuance, and places many tenants in Toronto at an unfair disadvantage as it relates to paying for water consumption.

Many tenants across the City do not have utilities included in their rent and are responsible for paying the Utility Bills, which as noted above, includes the billing for water consumption which, if paid after the due date, is charged at a higher rate. Tenants have reported that oftentimes, despite numerous requests to be given the Utility Bill in time for them to make payment before the due date, the landlord sends the bill to the tenant late, causing the tenant to pay a higher water rate because at no fault of their own, the bill was paid late. In the past, tenants were easily able to overcome this issue by having arrangements made for a copy of the bill to be sent to them directly; with the \$16.00 fee, this is no longer the case, with tenants in these circumstances essentially having to pay \$16.00 per bill to ensure they pay on time. Considering there are typically three Utility Bills per year, this amounts to a total of \$48.00 that we are taking from tenants who want to make sure their payments are made on time.

In addition to the above, the \$16.00 administrative fee for duplicate bills is questionable from a cost recovery perspective; it is difficult to comprehend why this would cost so much, considering the cost of paper, printing and postage would not even reach \$2.00.

Taking the above into consideration, I request that the Budget Committee vote to eliminate the \$16.00 fee for duplicate Utility Bills. In the event that the Committee does not recommend the elimination of this fee, I ask that the Committee vote to reduce the fee significantly.

Yours sincerely,

Frances Nunziata
Council Speaker
Councillor, Ward 11, York South-Weston