



OMBUDSMAN INVESTIGATION REPORT

'Water Works'

An Investigation into Water Billing, Metering and Customer Service

Date:	April 3, 2012
To:	City Council
From:	Ombudsman
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

In accordance with section 170(2) of the *City of Toronto Act, 2006* (COTA), I am providing the attached report which represents a concluded investigation into the City's procedures for responding to complaints from residents about high bills for large unexpected increases in water consumption.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Ombudsman recommends that:

City Council adopts the recommendations contained in this investigation report including but not limited to amending Chapter 849 of the Toronto Municipal Code to establish the authority by which Revenue Services may have the discretion on a case-by-case basis, based on established criteria, to adjust the water account of a customer who has experienced a sudden large increase not explained by a meter test or leak check.

Financial Impact

This report has no financial impact.

DECISION HISTORY

This investigation was conducted pursuant to section 171(1) of COTA, which allows the Ombudsman to investigate any decision, recommendation, act or omission in the course of the administration of the City. This function is conferred and exercised independently of Toronto City Council. Under this power, I may make findings and recommendations as I deem necessary to address any problems, which I may then report to Council.

COMMENTS

I have supported the complaint and found the actions and omissions of the City to be unreasonable.

My report makes 7 recommendations to the City Manager. They are systemic fixes, designed to ensure a fair, open and thorough response to customers' complaints.

The City Manager has accepted my recommendations.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

Fiona Crean, Ombudsman

ATTACHMENT

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