



## TOWN OF HIGH RIVER POLICY

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<b>Policy Number:</b>	<b>POL-16-100-00</b>
<b>Policy Title:</b>	Forgiveness of Penalties on Utility Bills for Hardship Cases
<b>Related Procedure Number:</b>	N/A
<b>Related Procedure Name:</b>	N/A
<b>Approval Date:</b>	December 20, 2004
<b>Revision Date:</b>	
<b>Policy Category:</b>	Finance
<b>Responsible Department:</b>	Corporate Services

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### **Policy Statement:**

Council wishes Administration to produce a policy that will allow residential utility customers to enter into a payback agreement and to get relief from penalties whenever their account has a single bill which is five times or more greater than the average of the past years average bill.

### **Reason For Policy:**

Council wishes to provide residential utility customers with a process that will allow them to get relief from single bills that are much greater than their past bills.

### **Related Information:**

Bylaw #3545/85 and all amendments to same.

Bylaw #3546/85 and all amendments to same.

Bylaw #3810/95 and all amendments to same.

### **Definitions:**

*Pay Back agreement:* Is an agreement entered into between the ratepayer and the Town that contains requirements for a maximum of twelve equal monthly payments that, in total, will equal the balance in question. It will contain a provision that, after the agreement is entered into, each penalty on the account that applies to this balance will be reversed as long as the payments are up to date and have not been returned by the bank. In addition, the agreement will require that all future charges to the account be kept current.

### **Evaluate Need:**

Council has determined that there is a need for such a policy and has directed Administration to produce same.

### **Policy Criteria:**

Penalties will be forgiven on utility bills for hardship cases that meet the following criteria:

- a. This policy applies only to residential utility accounts.
- b. *This policy applies only to accounts where a single bill is five or more times greater than the average of the past years bills (i.e. the six bills immediately preceding the one in question).*

- c. *The ratepayer must approach the Town in writing requesting to be included under this policy prior to the due date shown on the bill in question.*
- d. *The ratepayer enters into a pay back agreement for a period not longer than one year.*
- e. *The ratepayer keeps future charges current, and meets the agreement made with the Town.*
- f. *The agreement will be considered to be cancelled if the ratepayer does not make any payment by its due date or if any of the payments are returned by the bank.*

**Responsibilities:**

The Director of Corporate Services will be responsible to ensure that this policy is applied on a fair and consistent basis.

**Appendix "A":**

Pay back agreement is attached as Appendix "A".

**End of Policy**

**Approval:**

This policy shall come into force and effect upon adoption by Council at a Regular or Special Meeting of Council.

Adopted by Council as Resolution #317/2004 at the Regular Meeting of Council held on December 20, 2004.

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MAYOR/DEPUTY MAYOR

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TOWN MANAGER/  
DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

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DATE

**Appendix "A"**

This agreement is made this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 200\_\_, between:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(The Applicant)  
Being identified as utility account # \_\_\_\_\_

- and-

The Town of High River  
(The Town)

Whereas the Applicant has applied for forgiveness of penalties on utility bills for hardship cases under Council Policy #CP 1701-01 and whereas it has been determined by the Town that the Applicant meets all of the policy criteria, the two parties enter into an agreement for repayment of the utility bill in question under the following conditions:

The Applicant hereby promises to pay to the Town of High River the sum of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ (no more than eleven) equal monthly payments of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ and a final payment of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ on, or before, the last day of each month. The first payment will be due on, or before, the last day of the first full month immediately following the signing of this agreement.

The Town promises to reverse each penalty on the account that applies to this balance as long as the payments are up to date and have not been returned by the bank.

The Applicant acknowledges that this agreement will become void and all outstanding balance will become immediately due if any payments are not made on time or if any payment is returned by the bank and that if this happens, there will not be any further reversal of penalties.

The Applicant further acknowledges that all charges on subsequent utility bills for the duration of this agreement will be paid prior to their due dates or this agreement will become void.

The Applicant further acknowledges that if this agreement becomes void, the Town may take any or all actions that it is allowed to do so under the Municipal Government Act in order to collect the outstanding balances on this Utility Account.

Signed by both parties on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 200\_\_.

**APPLICANT:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**TOWN OF HIGH RIVER:**

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Director of Corporate Services