

## **RESOLUTION 2011-11**

### **NORTH CHARLESTON SEWER DISTRICT**

A Resolution confirmed and reestablishing the Sewer Surcharge Program for Unauthorized Connections:

Whereas the North Charleston Sewer District Commission is minded to modify and reestablish the Resolution to assess a sewer surcharge to those customers who, after notice, do not comply with the Commission's Resolutions affecting unauthorized connection or discharge of wastewater to the North Charleston Sewer District's sanitary sewer system,

Be it resolved and enacted that the Commission of the North Charleston Sewer District of the State of South Carolina adopts the Sewer Surcharge Program for Unauthorized Connections as follows

#### **I. DECLARATION**

The North Charleston Sewer District adopts the Sewer Surcharge Program for Unauthorized Connection or Discharges to the North Charleston Sewer District Sanitary Sewer System.

#### **II. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The North Charleston Sewer District owns, operates and maintains an extensive wastewater collection and treatment system within its defined service area. This collection system consists of over 500 miles of sewer line, 59 pump stations, and a wastewater treatment plant.

In order to minimize cost, protect the environment, and ensure long-term serviceability of the collection and treatment systems, it is imperative that a program be developed to minimize the flow of extraneous water into the sewer collection system. To that end, the North Charleston Sewer District has committed resources towards developing a comprehensive inflow/infiltration (I/I) reduction program. One aspect of such an inflow/infiltration reduction program is the identification of non-sanitary sewer connections to North Charleston Sewer District's wastewater collection system, which originate on private property.

The purpose of this program is to develop a systematic approach to field-identify any and all unauthorized connections and to have voluntary corrective action taken by property owners/customers within a reasonable, specified timeframe, or be subject to monthly sewer surcharges. Such surcharges will be applied uniformly and consistently to those customers who opt not to voluntarily correct documented, unauthorized connection following sufficient notice. This monthly surcharge shall be thirty dollars (\$30.00).

North Charleston Sewer District will make every effort to work with home and business owners in avoiding the addition of sewer surcharges on their monthly bills in a cooperative effort to meet the program's objectives.

### **III. SMOKE TESTING/SEWER SURCHARGE POLICY**

#### **NORTH CHARLESTON SEWER DISTRICT POLICY ON UNAUTHORIZED WASTEWATER SYSTEM CONNECTIONS**

##### **A. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS/DEFINITIONS**

Section V, Paragraph 5.08 of North Charleston Sewer District's Sewage Disposal System Use Resolution approved November 9, 2009, states without the express written permission of District:

"No person shall maintain or make a connection of roof downspouts, exterior foundation drains, areaway drains, cooling towers or other sources of surface runoff or groundwater to any sewer line which, in turn, is connected directly or indirectly to the District's Wastewater System."

Consequently, the North Charleston Sewer District, in an effort to identify and correct unauthorized connections to its wastewater collection system, which are costly and rob the system of capacity, has developed this policy to impose temporary surcharges on customers who utilize the sanitary sewer system in an unauthorized manner as described above. The surcharges are fair and based on sound engineering practice. Such surcharges are removed upon verification of correction by the property owner or a licensed plumbing contractor. All customers will be given a reasonable time allowance to correct any unauthorized connections prior to imposition of surcharges as defined below.

An unauthorized connection shall also be defined as a malfunctioning, broken, or collapsed on-site building sewer which, because of its deteriorated condition, absence of a clean-out cap, existence of structural defects, etc., has the potential to allow extraneous water (inflow/infiltration) into North Charleston Sewer District's wastewater

collection system.

All other terms used in this policy shall be as defined in the North Charleston Sewer District's Sewage Disposal Use and Rate Resolutions, latest revision.

B. REASON FOR SURCHARGE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Unauthorized connections or discharges of wastewater to the North Charleston Sewer District's sanitary sewer system rob the system of its capacity to transport and treat sanitary wastes as designed. Excessive flows from extraneous sources can cause or contribute to sluggish or clogged drains, surcharged manholes, and even wastewater backups or over-flows, which can be considered public health hazards and public nuisances. Pumping costs, treatment costs, and cleanup costs are significantly increased due to storm water or groundwater flow discharging into a sanitary sewer system designed to handle only domestic sanitary sewage.

Therefore, it is reasonable to consider a surcharge for those customers who utilize the sanitary sewer for other than its intended purposes. Since these costs must be borne by the North Charleston Sewer District, it is logical to require the costs to be borne by the offender, rather than increase rates to all customers to cover these unnecessary costs.

C. PLAN DETAILS

1. **Advance Public Notification**

Prior to implementation of this policy in a specific area, the North Charleston Sewer District will notify all of its retail wastewater customers in that area through either door hangers, public notices, or both concerning the basic details of this policy and the potential of monthly surcharges for unauthorized connections, and procedures of removal of surcharges.

2. **Method of Discovery of Unauthorized or Leaky Connections:**

The North Charleston Sewer District will perform smoke tests of the sewer system within its service area. These smoke tests are designed to inject a non-toxic smoke into the sanitary sewer system. If the sanitary system and building plumbing are working properly, smoke will be observed emanating from roof vents in houses and buildings which are properly connected to the sanitary sewer system. Advance notification of smoke

testing in an area will be performed via door hangers.

Illegal or unauthorized connections will be observed on private property as smoke emanating from roof gutters, downspouts, yard drains, or any other source through which smoke from the sanitary sewer system can reach the surface. Location and identification of these sources will be documented by field records from qualified North Charleston Sewer District employees, and video and/or photographic records of each event. Dye tests may also be utilized as confirmation tests in this process.

**3. Notice to Customers; Compliance Schedule**

Upon discovery of an unauthorized connection to the sewer system, the affected customer(s) will be notified by the North Charleston Sewer District and given at least sixty (60) days to correct the situation, or be subject to the monthly unauthorized connection surcharge. The North Charleston Sewer District will provide the location of the problem(s) and all other relevant information.

Each customer will be required to have his or her licensed plumber (or customer may opt to make his or her own repair(s)) submit a letter certifying that the corrective repairs have been made or the fixed surcharge will be added to the customer's next billing. Failure to correct the problem will result in the surcharge remaining on subsequent bills. Failure of the customer to pay the surcharge along with the normal sewer charges will result in the account being considered delinquent for that month, subject to all routine remedies as described in the North Charleston Sewer District's Wastewater Use and Rate Resolutions, to include termination of sewer service.

Upon notification of correction, the North Charleston Sewer District will randomly select field verification sites for follow-up smoke testing. Failure to pass the follow-up smoke test will again result in adding the surcharge to the next monthly bill and subsequent bills until corrective action is positively verified.

**4. Record Keeping/Records Management**

It will be the responsibility of the North Charleston Sewer District to keep and maintain all applicable records (field, billing, photographs, video, other) associated with the implementation of this policy. Customers may review these records relative to their property(s) upon written request to the North Charleston Sewer District's Customer Service

Representative.

**5. Adding a Surcharge for Non-Compliance**

Upon proper verification of an unauthorized connection, the Customer Service Billing System will automatically add a thirty dollar (\$30.00) monthly wastewater surcharge. A new charge code will be required. This charge will remain on the customer's bill until proper notification is received that corrective action has been completed. Wastewater surcharges will then be removed before the next billing cycle. Proper notification shall be considered received when proof of corrective action taken is submitted to the Customer Service representative.

This Resolution supersedes and thereby repeals Resolution 99-13.

The Chairman declared this Resolution duly adopted this 12<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2011.

  
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GARY C. McJUNKIN, CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

  
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SYLDERRIAL T. PRYOR, SECRETARY

I, the undersigned, the duly qualified and acting Secretary of the North Charleston Sewer District, and the keeper of the records of the applicant, including the Journal of Proceedings of the Commission, do hereby certify:

1. That the attached Resolution is a true and correct copy of the Resolution as finally adopted at a meeting of the governing body held on the 12<sup>nd</sup> day of September, 2011 and duly recorded in my office.
2. That such meeting was duly convened and held in all respects in accordance with law and to the extent required by law, due and proper notice of such meeting was given; and a legally sufficient number of members of the governing body voted in the proper manner and for the adoption of said Resolution; and that all other requirements and proceedings under the law incident to the proper adoption or passage of said resolution; including publication, if required, have been fulfilled, carried out, and otherwise observed; and that I am authorized to execute this certificate.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this 12<sup>nd</sup> day of September, 2011.



**SYLDERRIAL T. PRYOR, SECRETARY**