

TOWN OF BLANDFORD MASSACHUSETTS

WATER DEPARTMENT

RULES AND REGULATIONS



Board of Water Commissioners

Brad Curry

Chair

Michael Keier

Clerk

Peter Thayer

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TOWN OF BLANDFORD MASSACHUSETTS
WATER DEPARTMENT
1 RUSSELL STAGE ROAD, SUITE 16
BLANDFORD, MA 01008
413.848.4279 Ext. 304

RULES AND REGULATIONS

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BLANDFORD WATER DEPARTMENT RULES AND REGULATIONS

I. Authority

- A. As provided in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Drinking Water Regulations 310 CMR 22.00 and Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40 and 42.

II. Definitions

- A. "Corporation Stop" or "Tap" – The device used by the Department to connect the service pipe to the water distribution main.
- B. "Curb Stop" – The valve located on the service line between the water distribution main and the owner's or customer's place of use located in the vicinity of the curb and the public right-of-way-line.
- C. "Customer" – The party contracting for water service to/for a premise. May also be called "Owner," "Applicant," "Authorized Agent," or "Consumer."
- D. "Department" – The Town of Blandford Water Department.
- E. "Fire Hydrant" – A device, connected to the water distribution system provided with the necessary valves and outlets, to which a fire hose(s) may be connected for the purpose of extinguishing fires.
- F. "Main" – A water pipe, owned, operated and maintained by the Department, which is used for the purpose of transmission or distribution of water, but not a service line.
- G. "Meter" – Any device for measuring the quantity of water used as a basis for determining charges for water service to a customer.
- H. "Premise" refers to but is not limited to the following:
 - a. A building or combination of buildings in one common enclosure under common ownership, occupied by one family, one company or one educational or institutional entity.
 - b. Each unit of a multi-use building under common ownership where each unit is equipped with its own separate water service line.
 - c. A single building under common ownership.
 - d. A single plot of land in one common enclosure used as a park or recreational area.

- I. "Service Line" – The pipe that runs between the water distribution main and the customer's place of use and includes fire lines. May also be called "Service Branch."

III. General Conditions

The following Rules and Regulations and all subsequent changes in same, or amendments and additions thereto, constitute a part of the contract with every person, firm, and corporation or property owner supplied with water service by the Town of Blandford, Massachusetts Water Department. Every such person, firm, corporation or property owner using such supply shall be considered as having expressed consent to be bound thereby. The meaning and application of these rules and Regulations shall be determined and interpreted by the Water Department.

The supply of water to any consumer for any purpose is without guarantee to such consumer to be of a fixed quantity, quality, purity, temperature or pressure, such items being subject to the variable conditions, which may arise in the operation, and maintenance of the water works system. As necessity may arise in case of break, emergency, or for other unavoidable cause, the Water Department shall have the right to temporarily cut off the water supply in order to make necessary repairs, connection, or alterations to the system. The Water Department shall use all reasonable and practical measures to notify the consumer of such discontinuance of service. The Water Department shall not be liable for any damage or inconvenience.

The Town shall not be responsible for damages caused by dirty water resulting from the opening or closing of any gate for repairs, use of any hydrant or the breaking of the pipe.

Right of Access

The Blandford Water Department shall have the right to enter premises at all reasonable times for the purpose of reading meters, testing, inspecting, repairing, moving or exchanging any or all equipment belonging to the Town of Blandford; conducting cross connection surveys and backflow device testing; or for any other purpose deemed necessary to properly protect the Water Department and the Water Supply System. Refusal to grant access may result in immediate termination of water service.

IV. Water Service

Application for Water Service

The owner or authorized agent of any real estate premises desiring a water service connection to the Town's Water Supply System shall appear in person at the Water Department Office in the Town Hall and make a written application. By signing the application for water service, the owner shall agree to be bound by the regulations of the Water Department and ordinances and orders of the Town of Blandford relating to water or the supply thereof.

No Application for water service will be accepted when the applicant or property owner is determined to be indebted to the Blandford Water Department for any purpose.

The applicant shall pay all costs associated with the installation of the water service. The applicant shall also pay an "Entrance Fee" to enter the "Town's Water System." This fee will be as determined by the Board of Water Commissioners.

A minimum charge shall be assessed for water service from the date the water is turned on whether the water is used or not.

No water service shall be provided to any property which does not directly abut the street where a water main is located.

The owner shall be responsible for maintenance of the service line between the curb stop on the property line to the meter setting on the owner's premises. All service line installation requires the inspection and approval of the Water Superintendent or his designee.

Requests for Turning on or Shutting Off Water

Requests for turning on or shutting off a water service shall be made in writing 48 hours in advance, except in the case of an emergency. Consumers shall be charged for each such service. Only Water Department personnel shall open or close curb stops. Requests for turning on or shutting off water will cost \$50.00 for each.

No new services shall be installed during November 15 to April 15 except in such cases deemed emergencies. Applications must be received by November 1st.

All persons wishing to tap any water main should notify the Water Commission of what approved contractor will tap pipe and put in a corporation stops opposite the premises. Water takers must bear the expense of laying, maintaining, and replacing if necessary, all pipe and fixtures on their premises to the water main. The user keep protected the water line from freezing and prevent all waste of water. They will be held liable for all damage resulting from their failure to do so.

V. **Water Meters**

The Water Department reserves the right to test any water meter when deemed necessary.

The Water Department shall be notified at once of any accident to a meter.

All water service lines shall be metered. The meter will be provided and installed by the Water Department and a quarterly meter fee will apply. There shall be only one meter installed per service line unless otherwise approved in writing by the Water Superintendent. At the discretion of the Water Superintendent, meters may be required to be installed in outside pit settings; otherwise meters shall be installed inside of the premises in a location accessible to Water Department personnel. Ample clear space shall be provided and maintained around meters for removal, repair or replacement of the meter.

Where an outside remote reading pad is provided for reading the meter, the owner shall keep the area accessible and free of such obstructions as bushes or fences.

Meter size will be determined by the Blandford Water Department based on information regarding flow requirements supplied by the applicant for water services. Large meters, 1½" or larger, shall be installed with a bypass around the meter with a valve, locking device, seal and test port so that the meter may be changed, tested or repaired without shutting off the water supply to the property.

Property owners are responsible for protecting the service line and meter from damage and freezing. The owner shall be responsible for all costs associated with any necessary repairs or replacement.

All water must be metered and paid for whether used or wasted. A minimum charge shall be assessed for water service from the date when the water is turned on.

Any new homeowner linking to the Town Water System is responsible for connecting to the corporation. The Water Department will install a shut off on the main pipe, however, the resident is responsible for all of the work and costs from the corporation valve to the home and any cost incurred with the installation of a meter. Meter installation must be installed by the Water Department. Meters are supplied by the Water Department, the meters are owned by the Water Department and a quarterly rental fee will be charged.

No Right to Furnish Water to Other Premises

A consumer shall not be permitted to supply the premises of another person with water, except in special emergencies and then only with the approval of the Superintendent.

Meter Seals – All meters shall be sealed. No person other than an authorized employee of the Water Department shall remove a meter. Where a meter has been found to be unlawfully removed or the seals broken, water service shall be immediately shut off. Water service will not be resumed until the owner has paid calculated charges for the estimated water usage and water shut off and turn on charges.

Meter Testing

When requested in writing by a property owner or his authorized agent, the Water Department will test a water meter. If the meter is found to be registering 2% or more above the amount of water that is actually passing through, the owner's bills will be adjusted to reflect corrected consumption.

VI. Billing and Collections

Bills for the use of water and for other charges shall be prepared by the Water Department and shall be committed to the Town's Collector for collection such bills shall be sent to water users or owners of property served by Town water. The owner of the property served with Town water shall be responsible for payment of bills for water and other water service related charges.

The Water Department will deliver bills through use of the U.S. Postal Service. The failure of a customer to receive a bill will not relieve them

from their obligation to pay said bill. The Water Department shall not be responsible for failure of a customer to receive a bill, demand notice, shut off or other notice.

Water bills are due upon receipt and shall be delinquent on the date indicated on the bill for, which is 30 days after the billing date.

The amount of water consumed as registered by the water meter serving the property shall be used to determine the water usage charge. No rebate or discount will be allowed because of leaks, open faucets, or other water loss causes.

Nonpayment of Water Bills

Water service may be terminated to any premise where a water bill is unpaid 30 days after the same is due. The water supply will not be reconnected until the amount due together with any late fees and charges for the shutoff and turn on is paid in full.

Estimated Bills

Whenever a meter in service is found not to register, and/or if access to the read meter cannot be obtained, the Water Department shall render an estimated bill based on the average amount registered over a similar period or other reliable information related to the customer's usage patterns.

Abatement

The Blandford Water Department abatement process has been established according to Chapter 59, Section 59 9f the Massachusetts General Laws. It states that a person aggrieved by a charge from the Water Department may apply for abatement by filing a petition in writing to the Water Department on an approved form. Forms may be obtained at the Water Department during posted hours. Abatement applications will be mailed upon request. Abatement must be received by the Board of Commissioners 30 days after the issue of the water bill. If mailed, the USPS postmark must be on or before the due date of the water bill.

VII. Rate and Fees

The Board of Water Commissioners has the sole power to determine and assess water rates and fees.

VIII. Extensions of Water Mains

All extensions or improvements to the Town's Water Distribution System require the approval of the Board of Water Commissioners. The Board shall be under no obligation at any time to make any extensions to existing water lines.

All requests for extensions to the Town's distribution system shall be in writing to the Board of Water Commissioners.

Water main extensions may also be initiated using the "Betterment Process."

An applicant for the extension of a water main must enter into a written agreement with the Board of Water Commissioners. The agreement will contain such provisions and stipulations as deemed necessary to protect the interest of the Town of Blandford and the Blandford Water Department.

The contractor shall guarantee in writing to assume full responsibility for the maintenance and repairs of the extended main for the period of (12) months for the date the main is placed into service by the Town.

Once accepted by the Town, the new water main installation including all appurtenances shall become the sole property of the Town of Blandford and will be under the exclusive control and management of the Town of Blandford. Partial service lines shall be extended to all abutting properties along the route of the main extension. The Water Superintendent shall determine location of service lines.

No contractor will be allowed to perform water main extension work until evidence has been presented to demonstrate the contractor has necessary facilities, experience, ability and financial resources to perform the work in a satisfactory manner and within the time stipulated.

Contractors may be required to furnish formal sworn statements as to their experience and financial status.

Contractors may be required to furnish a complete statement of the origin, composition and manufacture of any or all material proposed to be used in the construction. A performance bond will be required to cover the entire cost of the water line improvement plus ten percent. The duration of the bond shall be until such time as the town accepts the water line improvements.

The developer shall pay the Water Department a sum equal to the five (5%) percent of the estimated cost of the extension to defray the administrative, legal and engineering expenses of the Water Department in connection with the proposed installation.

IX. Fire Protection

All fire hydrants installed on the Blandford Public Water System are for the use of the Blandford Fire Department for the extinguishment of fire and the Blandford Water Department for water system maintenance. These hydrants are not to be used for any other purpose without the prior written authorization of the Blandford Water Department.

Persons having hydrants in their land boundaries must keep said hydrants clear of snow, or there will be a fine of \$25.00 for each infraction.

X. Fines

No person shall obstruct or tamper with any of the Water Department's property in any way. Failure to do so will result in a fine of \$1,000.00.

No person shall be permitted to open any service box, gate or hydrant or tamper with the same in any way without a written permit from the Water Commissioner or Superintendent. However, the Fire Department shall in all cases have free control of the hydrants at all fires.

THESE ARE MISDEMEANORS UNDER THE LAW

All persons are forbidden to connect with any main or service pipe back of the meter – and all plumbing where meter is used must be done in a matter and be of a quality that meets the approval of the Water Commissioner or Superintendent.

Any person using a public way to transport any loads over or across the Town's water line shall post a bond or cash in the amount of \$5,000.00. Said public way shall be inspected by the Water Superintendent to determine any possible damage and the cost of repair by the hauler for any damages caused by transportation of loads, which expense shall be the responsibility of the hauler.

XI. **Cross Connection Control Program**

The Blandford Water Department will maintain a Cross-Control Program in accordance with the requirements of the State of Massachusetts regulations 310 CMR 22.22.

No person shall install or maintain any unprotected connection whereby water from any system of unknown quality may enter the public water system or the consumer's potable water system.

All persons are forbidden to connect with any main or service pipe back of the meter – and all plumbing where meter is used must be done in a manner and be of a quality that meets the approval of the Water Commission.

The Water Department will not supply water to any premise served by a private well or other water supply system.

The Water Department shall have the right to enter premises served by the public water system at all reasonable times for the purpose of making surveys and investigations of water use practices within the premises. Upon request, the consumer shall furnish the Water Department information on water use practices within the consumer's premises.

XII. **Where Protection is Required**

An approved backflow prevention device shall be installed on each branch line in a consumer's water system where a real or potential health, pollution or system hazard to the public water system exists.

XIII. **Backflow Prevention Devices**

Any backflow prevention device required by Blandford Water Department or other applicable regulations shall be of a type approved by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. These devices shall be repaired, overhauled or replaced at the expense of the consumer whenever they are found to be defective. Records of such inspections, tests, repairs and overhauls shall be kept by the consumer and provided to the Water Department. The Water Department reserves the right to check backflow prevention devices at its discretion.

XIV. **New Water Service Requirements**

To maintain conformity with and a standard of high quality in service and performance, the Blandford Water Department has required certain

standards in material and installation practices of all service lines installed on the water system.

1. The work may be supervised by a water department employee or the Town plumbing inspector. All fees will be due by the owner of the property for the inspection period paid to the Blandford Water Department.
2. The line material size must be a minimum ¾" copper pipe or 1" ID Blue-Mal Plastic piping. Larger size may be required pending Building/Plumbing code requirements. If larger piping is required and therefore requiring a larger meter than standard, owner will be responsible for the difference in meter cost.
3. The piping must be laid in a bed minimum of 4 feet deep or frost line and in a base of 5" minimum of sand with 4" minimum on top of the water line.
4. If Blue-Mal plastic or non-metallic piping is used, tracer wire is required to be laid on top of the upper sand layer, connected to the curb box and stubbed into the basement. No tape.
5. When the line is charged and the shut off is in place in the basement, with the pipe and tracer wire in place.
6. As soon as the pipe is covered and the wire is in place, at the discretion of the inspector, allow the installer to complete the backfill on the line.
7. The service line must be put on in the presence of the inspector or with permission from the Water Department Superintendent.
8. Failure to meet these requirements will result in a fine up to \$1,500 from the Water Department and possible removal from future work lists.
9. Any damage done to the curb box, service shut-off valve, service line to the main, the main will be the financial responsibility of the installer.
10. Meter install hardware must be purchased through the Blandford Water Department by the installer.
11. Forty eight (48) business hours notice must be given to schedule inspectors on all preplanned installs.

Blandford Water Department
One Russell Stage Road, Suite 16
Blandford, MA 01008
413 848-4279, Extension 304
water@townofblandford.com