

**Arlington County, Virginia**



**WATER RULES**

**AND**

**REGULATIONS**



**1993**

**Seventh Edition**

Revised July 1998

## **Preface to the Seventh Edition**

The first Water Rules and Regulations Handbook was adopted and approved by the County Board on March 30, 1938, and the first edition was published April 14, 1938. Since that time, the expansion of Arlington County and the adoption of numerous resolutions by the County Board have brought about substantial changes in how the County provides water and sewer services to its citizens. Revised editions of the Handbook have been published periodically, and the sixth edition was published in 1975.

The seventh edition reflects the organizational changes that have occurred in County departments since the last publication. In 1990, the functions of the Water-Sewer Division were divided and assigned to the Department of Environmental Services and the Department of Public Works. The Utilities Services Office of the Department of Environmental Services provides customer account services to residential, apartment, and commercial customers. The Department of Public Works maintains the water and sewer infrastructure and provides field and related services to water-sewer customers, builders, and contractors.

The Handbook describes how to obtain water and sewer services, responsibilities of the County and the property owner, construction and inspection requirements, and penalties for violations. Those seeking more information should refer to the Arlington County Code and the Virginia Code available at the County's Central Library.

Arlington, Virginia  
June, 1993

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ATTACHMENTS

- A Arlington County Code, Chapter 26, Article I (published October 4, 1997)
- B Ordinance to Amend, Reenact, and Recodify Chapter 26, Article I, Sections 26-6 and 26-7, of the Arlington County Code (Approved July 1998)

- \* **Arlington County Code cross-references:** General penalties, §§1-6, 1-7; Building Code, Chapter 3; Fire hydrants and water mains, §8-10.5.5; Obstruction of fire hydrants, §8-10.5.5.1; Plumbing and Gas Codes, Chapter 18; Utilities, Chapter 26; Fee for dishonored checks and drafts, §27-7; Water Supply Emergency, Chapter 38; Home Improvement, Chapter 51.
- State law cross-references:** Code of Virginia §§21-112.22 to 21-140.3 (Sanitary Districts); §15.1-292 et. seq. (Sewage Disposal); Bad Check Ordinance, §15.1-29.4; Advertisement and Enactment of Levies and Fees, §15.1-29.14; Water Saving Ordinance, §15.1-37.2:1; Water Supply Emergency Ordinances, §15.1-37.3:4.

1.0 **DEFINITIONS.**

**CHIEF:** The Chiefs of the Engineering and the Water/Sewer/Streets Divisions, Department of Public Works, Arlington County, Virginia.

**COMMERCIAL:** Any structure or unit which is designed and used for a business, professional, educational, charitable, industrial, public or semi-public purpose.

**COUNTY:** The Arlington County Government and its constituent departments and divisions.

**DWELLING UNIT:** One (1) or more rooms in a structure designed for occupancy by one (1) individual or family for living purposes and having cooking facilities.

**ENGINEERING:** Engineering Division, Department of Public Works, Arlington County, Virginia.

**OWNER:** The owner of record as determined by the land records of Arlington County, Virginia.

**RESIDENTIAL:** Any structure or unit, either single or multi-family, which is designed and used for residential purposes.

**SERVICE CONNECTION AGREEMENT:** The agreement between the owner and the Department of Public Works, Engineering Division, providing for connection to the County water main.

**SUB-METER:** A sub-meter or consecutive meter is any meter installed in such a manner as to register the use of water that has already been registered on another meter.

UTILITIES: Utilities Services Office, Department of Environmental Services, Arlington County, Virginia.

WATER AGREEMENT: The agreement between the owner and the Department of Public Works, Engineering Division, and the Department of Environmental Services, Utilities Services Office, for the purpose of securing water and sewer services.

WATER-SEWER SERVICES: Service by both the County water system and sanitary sewer system. Unless otherwise noted, references to water, water agreements, and water services shall include sewer service.

WATER-SEWER-STREETS: Water-Sewer-Streets Division, Department of Public Works, Arlington County, Virginia

WATER SYSTEM: The Arlington County water supply system.

2.0 **GENERAL PROVISIONS AND ORDINANCES.**

2.1 **Connection with Other System.** Section 26-4(a), Arlington County Code. It shall be unlawful for any person to connect any water supply system not specifically approved by the County Manager to the public water system.

2.2 **Unauthorized Interference with Water System.** Section 26-4(b), Arlington County Code. It shall be unlawful for any person not specifically authorized by the County Manager to operate, injure, disturb, connect to or disconnect from, or otherwise interfere with any water meter, meter box, vault, main or pipe, valve, hydrant, pumping station, ground or elevated storage tank, or other structure which is part of the public water system.

2.3 **Conservation of Water Use.** Section 26-4(c), Arlington County Code. When the total water use in the Washington area is approaching total Potomac River flow, the County Manager is authorized to promulgate such emergency regulations, rules and conditions relative to the use of water as will, in his opinion, help to relieve the emergency water shortage or conserve the supply of water. Publication of a notice giving the emergency regulations, rules and conditions at least once in a newspaper having general circulation in the County and giving at least twenty-four-hour notice of the effective time of the imposition of emergency restrictions shall be deemed due and proper notice to each and every consumer supplied with water by the County. If a water shortage occurs because of a main break, reservoir leak, pump failure or for any

other reason, the County Manager is authorized to impose immediate emergency restrictions on water use, notifying the public by radio, television or door to door contact of the need for limiting water use during the emergency.

2.4 **Water Service to Buildings to be Demolished.** Section 26-8, Arlington County Code. The issuance of a demolition permit by the County Manager or a demolition order entered by a Court shall constitute an implied request by and permission from the owner of the building for discontinuance of the water service connection.

2.5 **Water Pressure.** The County shall attempt to maintain adequate water pressure throughout the system, but will not guarantee against fluctuations in pressure and will not assume liability for damages resultant from any such fluctuations. Where a greater pressure is required than that available, the owner will be responsible for providing booster pumps and storage. The pumps shall be of such design as to not create surges in the public water system. The design and use of the pumps shall be as approved by the County.

2.6 **Water for Construction Purposes.** Water for construction purposes at any building site shall be obtained through service connection and meter, installed for water service to the location. The service connection, meter connection, and meter installation are to be made in accordance with Section 5.0 (Service Connection Procedure).

2.7 **Air Conditioners.** No air-conditioning system shall be connected to the Arlington County water system which has a demand of over 5 gallons per minute unless such air-conditioning system provides for the recirculation of water or conserves water by other equally effective means so that the only water required from the system will be make-up water due to the loss through evaporation or spillage.

2.8 **Relocation of Water Facilities.** Relocation of water facilities for other than County or State highway construction shall be at the expense of the person requesting the relocation.

### 3.0 **WATER AND/OR SEWER BILLING.**

3.1 **Rates.** See Chapter 26, Section 26-7, Arlington County Code.

3.2 Estimated Bills. In the event that the Utilities Services Office is unable to read a customer's water meter, the billing shall be based on the previous year's consumption for the same period, the prior billing period, or the average of the year's consumption, whichever is determined by the Utilities Services Office to be reasonable.

3.3 **Monetary Adjustments Due to Leaks:** In the event of an unknown loss of water inside the house or building, an adjustment to the water and sewer charges may be made of 50 percent of the excess water loss based on the previous year's consumption for the same period, the prior billing period, or the average of the year's consumption, whichever is determined by the Utilities Services Office to be the most reasonable, provided that the leak is promptly repaired when detected and evidence of such repair has been submitted. Only one courtesy adjustment per customer, per five-year period, may be granted for leaks inside the house or building. In the event of an underground leak, which occurs between the meter and the house or building, the customer may submit a request for refund of excess water/sewer charges associated with the leak, provided that the leak has been promptly repaired by a plumber and the customer has submitted evidence of such repair. An adjustment may be made of 50 percent of the excess water loss and 100 percent of the excess sewer charges based on the previous year's consumption for the same period, the prior billing period, or the average of the year's consumption, whichever is determined by the Utilities Services Office to be the most reasonable.

4.0 **METERS.**

4.1 **Meter Ownership.** Water meters are the property of Arlington County in accordance with Chapter 26, Section 26-4 of the Arlington County Code.

4.2 **Removal.**

(a) **By Whom.** Meters shall be removed by authorized employees of Water-Sewer-Streets and Utilities Services only. No other person shall disturb a meter or a meter box.

(b) **Testing, Repair, Replacement.** Water-Sewer-Streets may remove meters at any time for repair, test or replacement.

(c) **Delinquent Cut-off.** Water-Sewer-Streets or Utilities Services Office may remove any meter which serves a delinquent account, in conformance with Chapter 26, Section 26-6 of the Arlington County Code.

- (d) By Request. Water-Sewer-Streets may remove any meter at a consumer's request for testing. It shall be replaced by a tested meter.
- 4.3 **Meter Test.** There shall be no charge for the removal of a meter for testing at a consumer's request. If a meter tests more than two (2) percent fast, the proper credit shall be given on the water account at the next regular billing.
- 4.4 **Non-Registering Meters.** In the event a meter fails to register properly, bills for the affected billing periods shall be rendered in an estimated amount in accordance with Section 3.2.
- 4.5 **Reset Charges.** Meters removed under Section 4.2(c), Delinquent Cut-off, shall be reset only upon payment of the unpaid balance on the account served. The charge for reactivation of service necessitated by the delinquency of the occupant shall be in accordance with Chapter 26, Section 26-7, of the Arlington County Code.
- 4.6 **Obstructed Meters.** It shall be the customer's responsibility to keep the water meter free of obstructions by cars, landscaping, or other objects at all times.
- 5.0 **SERVICE CONNECTION PROCEDURE.**
- 5.1 **Application.** Application for service connection shall be made by the owner of the property concerned, or his agent, to the County.
- 5.2 **Service Connection Agreement.** A service connection agreement shall be executed by the owner of the property to be served on the form provided by the Department of Public Works. Hook-up charges shall be paid prior to execution by the County.
- 5.3 **Installation.**
- (a) The installation of the water service connection by the County shall include the tapping of the water main (size and location approved by Engineering Division, Department of Public Works), the laying of the required service line from the water main to the meter box at a depth of four (4) feet, and the installation of a meter box and meter connection on the service line. All construction shall be as specified in the most recent version of the Construction Standards and Specifications, Department of Public Works, Arlington County, Virginia.

- (b) The water meter box shall be located between the existing curb and the sidewalk or at the same point of the future location of curb and sidewalk. Where either existing or future curb and sidewalk alignments do not provide for a utility strip, the water meter shall be located within the County right-of-way behind the sidewalk, within the sidewalk, or in an easement on private property behind the sidewalk. Where curb, gutter, and sidewalk are to be installed in conjunction with the street development, the service connection shall not be made until the curb, gutter, and sidewalk are complete.
- (c) The service line installation from the outlet side of the water meter into the property being served shall be performed by a licensed plumber or mechanical contractor in full compliance with the Arlington County Plumbing and Gas Codes. (Chapter 18 of the Arlington County Code).
- (d) No installation will be initiated until payment of the applicable connection and hook-up fees have been made in accordance with Chapter 26 of the Arlington County Code.

- 5.4 **Maintenance.** The County shall maintain the service connection from the main up to and including the outlet side of the meter. After this point, all maintenance of the line is the responsibility of the owner.
- 5.5 **Service Connection Charges.** See Chapter 26, Section 26-12, of the Arlington County Code.
- 5.6 **Service Design.** The service connection design shall comply with the design criteria of the County.
- 5.7 **Single Connection.** A separate water service connection shall be required for each residential structure except buildings served by a common boiler room where one (1) service shall be permitted.
- 5.8 **Commercial Structures.** Each commercial structure shall require a separate service connection. Additional service connections may be installed for each business within the structure. However, sub-metering will not be the responsibility of the County.

5.9 **Sub-Metering.** Arlington County will not install, maintain or read sub-meters or consecutive meters for any purpose. Arlington County will only meter water one (1) time per connection to the water system. Building owners who wish to meter their tenants separately within a single structure will be responsible for all installation, maintenance, and billing for such an arrangement. Separate meters can be installed for water only uses such as air conditioning systems, swimming pools that do not discharge to the sanitary sewer, and landscape watering systems.

**5.10 Fire Connection.**

- (a) A fire connection for a sprinkler system, standpipe with hose rack, or fire hydrant installed on private property shall be arranged in the same manner as any other service connection.
- (b) The County, or the owner, in cases where the owner has prior approval from the Engineering Division of the Department of Public Works, shall construct the service line, including a valve, from the water main to the outlet side of the valve. The fee for such work is indicated in Chapter 26, Section 26-12, of the Arlington County Code and must be paid in full prior to construction. In cases where installation is not performed by the County, it shall be performed by a licensed plumber or mechanical contractor in full compliance with the Arlington County Construction Standards and Specifications. The installation of the service line, including the valve, from the water main to the outlet side of the valve shall be inspected by the Water-Sewer-Streets Division, Department of Public Works.
- (c) Fire connections shall be used for fire protection purposes only. Any other use shall result in the connection being turned off. Penalties for tampering with fire connections shall be in accordance with Chapter 8 (Fire Prevention Code), Sections 8-1.1, 8-10.5.4, and 8-10.5.5 of the Arlington County Code.

**APPENDIX A**  
**RULES FOR SETTING HOOK-UP CHARGES.**

1. The Water and Sewer Hook-Up Fee shall be derived from the total equivalent drainage fixture units (dfu's) in any structure. The dfu value shall be assigned to plumbing fixtures according to the Building Officials and Code Administrators (BOCA) Basic Plumbing Code (1987). The total number of dfu's for the structure less any applicable credits shall be multiplied by the current rate per dfu to determine the total fee.
2. The rate per dfu shall be revised bi-annually by the Department of Public Works and shall include the total system replacement cost, work in progress, and the estimated six year cost for expansion of the water and sewer system contained in the County's Capital Improvement Program, all expressed in current dollars. A credit shall be provided in the calculation of the rate for that portion of debt service paid through the Water-Sewer Service Charge.
3. Hook-up fees shall be paid in full prior to issuance of a building permit, or a plumbing permit if no building permit is required, and the hook-up fee shall be in accordance with the rate schedule in force at the time of issuance of the permit based on the plans submitted to the Inspection Services Division, CPHD. The charge may be adjusted to reflect "as-built" conditions prior to issuance of a "Certificate of Occupancy."
4. The County Manager or his designee shall determine the hook-up fee for all structures. When a plumbing fixture does not fall under any of the listed types, the County Manager or his representative shall select the most similar type listed or may designate a special hook-up fee for the fixture based on water consumption and/or waste disposal requirements.
5. A credit shall be allowed for the total equivalent dfu's in any existing structure to be demolished or rehabilitated by the applicant. Proof of the total existing dfu's must be provided through presentation of satisfactory documentation, such as a building plan signed by a registered professional engineer, architect, or a building inspection by the County.

6. Credit for the total equivalent dfu's in a building to be demolished or rehabilitated will be applied only against new construction or rehabilitation work on the same site. No payment in lieu of credit will be made for demolition of buildings or removal of plumbing fixtures. All credit shall be applied against the hook-up fee and shall not exceed the fee. For multi-building and phased construction projects, credit for dfu's in structures to be demolished shall be prorated for the entire project or in a manner acceptable to the County.
  
7. Credit for the total equivalent dfu's in any pre-existing structure that has been demolished before the applicant applies for a building permit on a new site shall only be allowed if the building was demolished within the last 10 years and if the applicant can provide adequate documentation of the number of dfu's in that structure. Such documentation shall consist of a building plan for the demolished structure showing total equivalent dfu's, and signed by a registered professional engineer or architect. If such a plan is not available for applications submitted after January 1, 1993, alternate forms of documentation may be approved by the County Manager or his designee, including appraisals prepared by certified appraisers which contain sufficient information to enable the County to determine equivalent dfu's or other documentation prepared by an independent third party determined to be qualified to provide such information by the County Manager or his designee. If documentation acceptable to the County Manager does not exist, the applicant may request credit at the following rates provided the type of structure can be adequately documented as determined by the County:

CREDIT FOR DEMOLISHED STRUCTURES

Single Family Dwellings (Detached, Semi-Detached, Townhouse)	11 dfu/unit
Apartments	9 dfu/unit
Hotels or Motels	7 dfu/rental unit
Office or Commercial	3 dfu/1000 sq. ft. (No Credit Allowed for Basements or Attics)

No credit will be given for garages, sheds, temporary buildings, or other similar structures which normally do not have plumbing.

8. The payment of hook-up fees is required for all additional drainage fixture units in an existing structure, regardless of the original construction date of the structure. No hook-up fee will be charged for rehabilitation of a structure provided there is no net increase in drainage fixture units.
9. Funds collected through the hook-up fee shall be accumulated in a separate category within the Utilities Fund. This fund category shall be subdivided into water supply system and sewer system/water pollution control plant subcategories. The percent of total revenues going to each subcategory shall be established annually. Funds in each subcategory shall be spent on expansion projects for the water supply system or sewer system/water pollution control, respectively.