

Every property owner shall take adequate measures to prevent ingress and seepage referred to in the above three instances.

PROTECTION OF MUNICIPAL SEWERS

No person shall, except with the written consent of Council and subject to such conditions as it may impose:

- construct, erect or lay any building, structure or other thing over or in such a manner as to interfere with or endanger any municipal sewer;
- excavate, open up or remove the ground above, next to, under or near any municipal sewer;
- damage, endanger or destroy or do any act likely to damage, endanger or destroy any municipal sewer; or
- make any opening in any municipal sewer, or abstract, divert or cause to be abstracted or diverted, any sewage therefrom.

Council may order that the person or persons responsible:

- demolish, alter or otherwise deal with any building, structure or other thing constructed, erected or laid in contravention of this section;
- fill in and make good any ground excavated or removed in contravention of this section;
- remove anything discharged, permitted to enter or put into a sewer or public drain in contravention of this section; and
- remove anything damaging, obstructing or endangering or likely to damage, obstruct, endanger or destroy any municipal sewer.

If a person fails to comply with an order issued in terms of the above, Council may take such steps as it may deem necessary to rectify the matter at the cost of the person responsible.

Council shall, at the cost of the owner, disconnect from the municipal sewer system any private sewer installation which, in Council's opinion, in any way endangers or injuriously affects or may endanger or injuriously affect any sewer or wastewater works or any works or land connected with any sewer or the conveyance, treatment, purification, disposal or re-use of wastewater, and require from such owner to:

- make such arrangements as may be necessary for the safe disposal of wastewater on the premises of the owner, or the conveyance thereof to a treatment installation or other suitable place approved by Council; and
- clean, repair, reconstruct, replace, reposition or otherwise comply to such requirements as Council may impose.

CLEARING OF BLOCKED PRIVATE SEWERS

- Council shall arrange for the clearing of blocked private sewer installations at the cost of the owner.
- Where it is established that a private sewer installation became blocked as a result of a defect or a blockage in the municipal sewer, no costs will be recovered from the owner.

OFFENCES AND PENALTIES

Any person who:

- contravenes any provision in this by-law or fails to comply with any condition imposed in terms thereof;
- threatens, resists, interferes with or obstructs any councillor, officer or official of Council in the exercise or performance of his or her duties or functions in terms of the by-law; or
- deliberately furnishes false or misleading information to a councillor, officer or official of Council,

shall be guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a fine.



To report any contraventions or for more information please call the Water Services Technical Operations Centre on 0860 10 30 54 or email: WaterTOC@capetown.gov.za

Saving water is a way of life



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WATER BY-LAWS FOR THE BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY



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INTRODUCTION

Cape Town is a growing city of approximately 3.2 million people. It is expected that, over the coming years, it will continue to grow and therefore consume more water, not only because of an influx of people, but because the economy is also growing. The City of Cape Town is located in a water-scarce region and recognises that if its water resources are to be used efficiently and sustainably, growth in water demand needs to be carefully managed. One of the ways in which demand can be reduced is by changing the water consumption behaviour of consumers.

With the above in mind the City of Cape Town (Water Services) wanted to ensure the most recent water restrictions, (level 1 - 10% savings, as required by DWAF), became a permanent measure with regard to the use of potable water. Aspects of the current level 1 restrictions have now been incorporated into the two new water by-laws (Water By-law, and Wastewater and Industrial Effluent By-law), which were promulgated on 1 September 2006.

These two new by-laws will ensure that potable water is utilised with respect and care, encouraging behavioural change and ensuring that "saving water is a way of life". Water restrictions are a temporary situation, a management tool, to ensure a fair and adequate supply of limited water resources to all. By-laws, however, are a permanent part of our lives and, as such, we all need to be aware of the responsibilities they bring.

WATER BY-LAW

The first four chapters define the "rights" and duties of both the consumer and the municipality. Chapter 8 through to the end contain the technical sections designed to prevent contamination and encourage conservation, thereby endeavouring to ensure a safe and sustainable water supply.

This pamphlet highlights some of the main elements of the by-laws. However, also try to read the full by-laws to see for yourself how they affect you and/or your business. The onus is on all members of the public to make themselves aware of the by-laws and to know their concomitant responsibilities.

WHY A WASTEWATER AND INDUSTRIAL EFFLUENT BY-LAW?

The by-law aims to protect the environment, people, property, streets, rivers, vleis and lakes by regulation of the by-law across industrial, commercial, institutional and residential sites, by ensuring that:

- wastewaters, to the exclusion of rainwater, are correctly discharged to the correct reticulation system, viz. the sewerage system;
- the volumes of the wastewater discharged to the sewerage system do not result in surcharge of the sewerage system, overflow to the streets, rivers and vleis and so create unsafe, unhygienic conditions;
- the quality of wastewater discharged to the sewerage system meets the quality parameters of the by-law to prevent corrosion, damage, even loss of that system through the discharge of toxic, inflammable material, as well as protecting persons undertaking maintenance work on the sewerage system;

- the quality of wastewater discharged ultimately (via the sewerage system) to Council's wastewater treatment works does not injure or negatively affect the works and result in a pollution discharge from the works to the environment.

These two by-laws replace any previous by-laws from any of the previous municipalities/town councils which have now been amalgamated into the City of Cape Town. You can read the full by-laws in Provincial Gazette No. 6378, dated 1 September 2006, or on our website www.capetown.gov.za/water. Copies of the by-laws are available in Council payment offices, Sub-Council offices, libraries and the Government Printers.

WHAT THE WATER BY-LAW MEANS FOR THE BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

- If a temporary builder's supply from a municipal hydrant has not been arranged, a builder must ensure that a connection pipe and meter is installed by Council, before any building work on a site may commence.
- Where a boundary structure is being erected which will result in access to the water meter on the property being denied, application must be made and the relevant tariff paid for the meter to be repositioned on the footway outside the boundary of the property.
- Where previously unmetered fire installations are being modified or extended, application must be made and the relevant tariff paid for a water meter to be installed as part of the connection to the property.
- Where alterations and additions to an existing metered installation is taking place, and after assessment of the revised installation by Council, a larger water connection must be applied for and the relevant tariff paid for it, if Council deems it to be necessary.
- A copy of the approved plan must be kept on site for the duration of the construction.
- Only plumbers qualified and accredited in terms of the South African Qualifications Authority Act, No.58 of 1995, may be employed to carry out plumbing work.
- When constructing a swimming pool or garden pond, an automatic top-up system, using a float valve connected to the potable supply from the municipal main, may not be used.
- Outside stand-pipe draw-off taps must be at a height of more than 450 mm above-ground level.
- Water closet cisterns may not exceed 9,5 litres in capacity.
- No automatic flushing cistern or tipping tank may be used for flushing a urinal.
- Terminal water fittings, such as taps, installed outside non-residential buildings must be of a type that cannot allow wastage of water due to unauthorised use.
- Plastic pipes may not be used to supply water in fire or combined domestic/fire installations in above-ground positions.
- Plastic pipes conveying water for potable use, must be protected from direct sunlight.
- Galvanised mild steel pipes may not be used in installations supplied with water from the municipal mains.
- Water pipes supplying water from Council's main may not be laid beneath concrete floor slabs, encased in concrete foundations, or installed in the cavity of double skin brick walls.

WHAT THE WASTEWATER BY-LAW MEANS FOR THE BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

In Cape Town, as in most of South Africa, there are two underground pipe systems to collect and convey rainwater run-off and wastewater (sewage and industrial effluent). Wastewater is derived from a toilet, urinal, shower, bath, washing machine and kitchen sink, and is discharged to the sewer. In terms of national law wastewater needs to be treated to an acceptable quality before it is discharged to the environment, i.e. the rivers or the sea. The stormwater system is designed to convey only rain or seepage water, which is normally unpolluted, to streams, rivers, lakes or the sea.

The underground wastewater pipe system, together with pump stations and the final wastewater treatment plants with the stormwater system, represent a tremendous financial investment by the City in order to provide the public with a reliable, safe and hygienic way to remove wastes and flood waters from premises. The charge for accepting wastewater into the sewer is calculated as a percentage of the measured municipal water consumption, and is recovered in terms of the City's Sanitation and Tariff Policy.

In order to prevent damage, blockage, flooding or pollution, the following rules must be observed. The most important is that the wastewater and stormwater systems be kept separate.

DUTIES OF OWNERS OF PROPERTY

Every owner of property shall on receipt of written notice by Council:

- construct a private sewer installation on the premises;
- connect a private sewer installation to the municipal sewer, whether directly or indirectly as required by Council;
- enlarge the capacity of a private sewer installation to accommodate a greater discharge; or
- reconstruct a private sewer installation to comply with the requirements of Council.

No owner of property may allow:

- the ingress of groundwater or stormwater into a private sewer installation on his or her premises; or
- the seepage of wastewater from a private sewer installation on his or her premises; or
- the ingress of stormwater into a private sewer installation on his or her premises, except with the written consent of Council and subject to such conditions as it may impose.