

# Compassionate grant policy offering up to \$3,000 for residential property sewer backup approved by Council

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 5, 2021

**Welland, ON** – A new City policy now allows residential property owners who experience sewer backups resulting from significant weather events to apply for a grant of up to \$3,000 to help cover costs resulting from storm events.

Council passed the motion on November 2 adopting the compassionate grant policy on sewer backups. The grant is based on compassionate grounds and is not to be construed as a perceived liability on behalf of the City.

"It can be difficult to understand the impact of these weather events on your home until you've experienced it," said CAO Steve Zorbas. "We hope this policy gives some peace of mind to homeowners and also shows that we're listening to residents about the challenges they're facing, especially when it comes to those with financial impacts."

To qualify, the property owner must satisfy a list of conditions, including, but not limited to:

- Proof of two or more sewer backups that are related to sewer surcharging as a result of significant rainfall.
- The first backup occurring after January 1, 2017, and the second occurring after July 1, 2021, with a five-year cycle
- Owned the home during both backups
- The property must have insurance coverage with a sewer backup rider and must disconnect from the storm sewer system
- If the property does not have sewer backup coverage, they must show proof that the coverage was denied (ex. letter from insurance company)
- Claims must be submitted within five months of the second event
- Water overland flow damage is not eligible
- Property taxes must be paid in full, or be on the City's PAP program

In addition to the compassionate grant, the City also offers a Sewage Water Alleviation Program (SWAP). The SWAP program provides funding for the installation of devices that provide basement flooding protection.

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