

EXEMPTION FOR SECONDARY SUITE UTILITY BILLING (WATER & SEWER)



NEW WESTMINSTER

Planning Handout

October 2011

All properties in Single Detached Dwelling Districts containing one or more secondary suites, whether legal or illegal, are subject to a single Secondary Suite Utility Charge for water, and sewer (note: payment of Secondary Suite Utility Charges does not mean a suite is legal). However, a property is eligible to be exempted from the Secondary Suite Utility Charges under the following circumstances:

1. There is only one secondary suite in the house, and
2. The suite is not being occupied as a separate and independent housing unit. This usually means the suite is either:
 - i) vacant,
 - ii) being used by the people occupying the principal unit (i.e. the main part of the house), or
 - iii) is occupied by a family member who has significant interaction with the people occupying the principal unit (usually this involves eating meals together, providing child care, or regular passage back and forth between the suite area and the rest of the house).



If the property is eligible to be exempted from the Secondary Suite Utility Charges the owner should contact the Single Detached Dwelling Coordinator (SDDC) in regard to the following:

1. Arrange an appointment for the SDDC to inspect the suite to confirm that it has the appearance of not being occupied as a separate housing unit (it is not necessary to remove any appliances).
2. The SDDC will bring to the inspection a document called a Statutory Declaration (a type of affidavit). This “Stat Dec” will require the property owner to swear under oath that the suite is not occupied at the present time as a separate unit, and should it become occupied as a separate unit in the future the owner will advise the City of this in writing, and also be aware that the City will start to bill the property

for Secondary Suite Utility Charges at that time.

3. If the suite has not been occupied separately prior to this inspection, and the property owner wishes to receive the billing exemption for that period the owner should write a short letter to the SDDC describing the occupancy of the suite as well as the dates of the occupancy. No billing exemptions will be granted for periods further back than the beginning of the previous calendar year (e.g. if an exemption is requested in September 2011 and the owner writes a letter stating that the suite has not been occupied for the past three years, the City will only authorize a refund for the period back to January 1, 2010).

For more information:
Development Services Department
604.527.4532