POLICY NAME:
Collections Policy
POLICY AREA: General Government

POLICY NO: GG26-05
APPROVAL DATE: Nov 9, 2026
LAST UPDATED:

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1. Purpose

i. Set out a fair, consistent and legally compliant process for collecting all amounts owed to the Town of Tisdale.
ii. State clearly when an overdue amount is transferred to property taxes and when it is referred to a collection agency or legal action.
iii. Protect the Town's revenue so that paying ratepayers do not carry the cost of unpaid accounts.
iv. Give ratepayers and customers clear notice and a reasonable chance to pay or make arrangements before enforcement.

2. Scope

This policy applies to three types of receivables:

i. **Property taxes** — municipal, schools (education property tax) and library levies, plus penalties and costs.
ii. **Utility accounts** — water, sewer and any other public utility service billed to a parcel.
iii. **General accounts receivable** — all other invoices: facility and equipment rentals, recreation fees, cemetery fees, permits and licences, bylaw remedy costs, damage recovery, and similar charges.

Where this policy conflicts with The Municipalities Act, The Tax Enforcement Act or a Town bylaw, the legislation or bylaw prevails.

3. Legislative Authority

Authority	What it allows or requires
The Municipalities Act, s. 369(1)	Council may add these charges to a parcel's tax roll: (a) unpaid utility service connection costs; (b) unpaid utility service charges for the parcel; (c) unpaid costs of remedying a bylaw contravention on the parcel (and, from January 1, 2027, on adjacent Crown or municipal land under s. 364); (d) unpaid fire and security alarm fees; (e) unpaid snow and ice removal costs, where a sidewalk-clearing bylaw exists; (f) any other amount another Act allows. Notice rules for utility arrears are in Section 6.2.
The Municipalities Act, s. 369(2)	Amounts owed by a person for licence-of-occupation restoration, eliminating an emergency, or a dangerous animal may be added to any parcel for which that person is the assessed person.
The Municipalities Act, ss. 23 and 31	Council may set utility rates and additional arrears charges by bylaw; water and sewer rates and arrears charges require Saskatchewan Municipal Board approval.
Town of Tisdale Bylaw No. 11/25, Property Tax Penalties	Tax due date and penalties (Section 5.1).
Town of Tisdale Bylaw No. 06/26, Water and Sewer Bylaw	Utility billing, disconnection, reconnection and deposits (Section 6).

Authority	What it allows or requires
Town of Tisdale Bylaw Fees and Charges Bylaw	Interest on unpaid fees, returned payments, NSF and administration fees (Sections 6, 7 and 10).
Town of Tisdale Bylaw No. 09/26, Waterworks Rate Policy and Investment Strategy	Utility revenues and reserves fund a $500,000 annual waterworks capital target. Where it conflicts with the Water and Sewer Bylaw, that bylaw prevails (s. 14).
The Tax Enforcement Act and Regulations	Process and costs for enforcing tax arrears (Section 5).
The Limitations Act	Time limit for suing on a debt (Section 7.3).
The Collection Agents Act	Third-party collectors must be licensed in Saskatchewan and are regulated by the Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority (FCAA).

4. Definitions

i. **Arrears (taxes)** - taxes, penalties and costs that remain unpaid after December 31 of the year in which they were levied.
ii. **Arrears (utility / general)** - any amount unpaid after its due date.
iii. **Assessed person** — the person shown on the assessment roll for a parcel.
iv. **Collection agency** — a collection agent licensed in Saskatchewan and engaged by the Town under contract.
v. **Final account** — the closing utility bill when service is discontinued, an occupant moves out or a property is sold.
vi. **Parcel-related charge** — a charge listed in s. 369 of The Municipalities Act that may be added to a parcel's taxes.
vii. **Payment arrangement** — a written, signed agreement to pay arrears by instalments.
viii. **Tax roll** — the Town's record of taxes owing on each parcel; an amount added to it becomes a tax and a line on the parcel.

5. Property Taxes

Property taxes are never sent to a collection agency; they are enforced against the land under The Tax Enforcement Act.

Designate. As the Act permits, the Town has designated TAXervice to carry out tax enforcement under a written agreement. In this section, "the Town" includes TAXervice. Council keeps every decision the Act reserves to it, and ratepayers may still pay or arrange payment at the Town Office.

5.1 Due date and penalties (Bylaw No. 11/25)

i. Taxes are imposed January 1 and due June 30.
ii. Current taxes unpaid after June 30 carry a penalty of 2% per month, added on the 1st of each month. Taxes still unpaid after December 31 become arrears and continue to carry the penalty.
iii. Penalties form part of the tax roll and apply equally to education property tax.
iv. A partial payment reduces the penalty but does not stop or delay tax enforcement.

5.2 Courtesy notices (Town practice)

The Act does not require reminders, but the Town will send:

i. **July** — a reminder to all accounts with unpaid current taxes.
ii. **January** — an arrears statement to every parcel with taxes unpaid at December 31.
iii. **August** — a letter to every parcel that will be on the Tax Enforcement List, giving at least 30 days to pay or sign a payment arrangement before the list is published.

5.3 Tax enforcement steps

i. **Council approval (August/September).** Administration, with the designate, presents the proposed Tax Enforcement List; Council authorizes proceedings by resolution.

ii. **Publish the Tax Enforcement List by November 15.** The Town advertises the list in a locally available newspaper and posts it at the Town Office. Each parcel's share of advertising costs is added to its arrears.

iii. **Register tax liens.** If arrears and costs are not paid by the deadline in the list (at least **60 days** after publication), the Town registers a tax lien with ISC.

iv. **Wait at least 6 months.** No further title action for six months after the lien is registered (unless the Provincial Mediation Board shortens this).

v. **Six-month notice.** With Council authorization, the Town serves the owner (registered mail or personal service) notice that it will apply for title in six months unless arrears and costs are paid.

vi. **Provincial Mediation Board.** If still unpaid, the Town applies to the PMB for consent. The PMB will withhold consent while a reasonable payment arrangement is being honoured. (An expedited process without PMB consent applies only where the taxable assessment is under $17,500, the property is unoccupied, and nothing has been paid in two years.)

vii. **Thirty-day final notice** after PMB consent.

viii. **Apply for title.** If still unpaid, the Town applies for title. Property taken for tax enforcement must be offered for sale by tender or auction within one year, unless Council retains it for municipal purposes.

5.4 Costs

i. All costs of tax enforcement are added to the parcel's arrears, as the Act allows. These include advertising, ISC registration, service of notices, a reasonable amount for staff time, the Town's $50 per title lien registration fee and TAXervice's fees.

ii. Properties with arrears of $25 or less get a $50 discount on the first-stage fee; full fees apply if they reach proceedings for title.

iii. Setup fees are reduced for an owner with more than one property in tax enforcement, on properties with arrears under $2,500.

5.5 Other remedies

Council may also authorize non-title remedies (for example, garnishee or distress for tax arrears) on legal advice, particularly for business or resource property where title proceedings are impractical.

5.6 Payments on files with TAXervice

i. Once a parcel is on the Tax Enforcement List, payment must be in **guaranteed funds**: cash, debit, certified cheque, bank draft or money order.

ii. Staff email TAXervice the roll number, amount and date of every payment or agreement on an enforcement file **the same business day**, so no further fees are incurred.

iii. Payment agreements on enforcement files are prepared through TAXervice where an agreement is needed to stop proceedings.

6. Utility Accounts

Unpaid utility charges for service to a parcel are transferred to that parcel's taxes, whether the charges were run up by the owner or a tenant. Disconnection and transfer to taxes are used before any collection agency.

6.1 Overdue steps

Timing	Action (Water and Sewer Bylaw No. 06/26, s. 3)
Billing date	Accounts are billed bi-monthly and are due and payable on receipt.

Timing	Action (Water and Sewer Bylaw No. 06/26, s. 3)
30 days after billing date	Final Notice of Disconnection to the property owner or customer.
15 days after the Final Notice	If not paid and no satisfactory arrangement is made, a 24-Hour Notice of Disconnection.
After the 24-hour notice	Water service may be discontinued until the balance and applicable fees are paid in full.
Reconnection	All arrears and penalties paid, plus a $50.00 shut-off fee and a $50.00 reconnection fee, plus GST.

Collection, shut-off and reconnection are under the supervision and direction of the Town Chief Administrative Officer (s. 3(p)). As Town practice, disconnecting water to an occupied dwelling between November 1 and March 31 requires the Chief Administrative Officer's approval, given health and freezing risks.

6.2 Annual transfer to taxes — active accounts

i. **October 31** — Administration identifies every utility account with arrears more than 60 days past the billing date.

ii. **By November 15** — a written notice goes to **both the owner and any tenant** stating the amount owing and the date it will be added to the property taxes (at least 30 days after mailing). Until December 31, 2026, the notice must go by **registered mail**, at the Town's cost. From January 1, 2027, Bill 43 removes that requirement and notices go by regular mail (and email where on file).

iii. **December 15–31** — balances still unpaid are added to the parcel's tax roll, plus the **$50.00 Admin Fee to Add Cost to Tax Roll** (Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 03/26, Schedule A).

iv. From the date of transfer, the amount **is a tax**: it carries the penalties in Bylaw No. 11/25 and is enforced under Section 5.

6.3 Final accounts (move-out or sale)

i. When service is discontinued, the Water Meter Deposit is applied to the final bill first; any balance of the deposit is refunded (Bylaw No. 06/26, s. 3(e)).

ii. A final bill still unpaid 60 days after its billing date gets the same notice as in Section 6.2 (to the owner, and to the former tenant at the last known address), then is added to the tax roll with the $50.00 admin fee at the next month-end.

iii. On a sale, the final utility balance is shown on the tax certificate ($20.00) so it can be paid on closing.

6.4 Protecting owners and the Town

i. The owner remains responsible for utility charges at their property. They receive copies of all bills.

ii. Every customer pays a Water Meter Deposit: $100 if the owner, $200 if not the owner (Bylaw No. 06/26, Schedule A).

iii. The bi-monthly Infrastructure Fee ($20 in 2026, rising $10 a year to $60 in 2030) is part of the utility account and is collected and transferred to taxes the same way. Its revenue goes to the utility capital reserve under Bylaw No. 09/26.

6.5 When utility arrears go to collections instead

Only when the amount cannot be added to a parcel's taxes — for example, service to a property the Town has since taken for taxes, or a bulk water account not tied to a parcel. These follow the general receivables process in Section 7.

7. General Accounts Receivable

General invoices are due 30 days from the invoice date. An invoice still unpaid at 120 days past due is added to the tax roll if it is a parcel-related charge (Section 3); otherwise it is referred to a collection agency, or to legal action (Section 7.3), or, if $20 or less, recommended for write-off (Section 9).

7.1 Overdue steps

Days past due	Action
1	Interest of 2% per month added on the 1st of each month to unpaid fees (Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 03/26, s. 6), unless specifically provided in an agreement.
30	Statement marked overdue, showing interest applied.
60	Second statement and phone or email contact. Customers may lose credit privileges (e.g., future rentals require prepayment).
90	Final demand letter by registered mail: pay in full or sign a payment arrangement within 30 days, or the account proceeds as set out above.

7.2 Referral to a collection agency

i. The Town uses a collection agency under a written agreement approved by the Chief Administrative Officer.

ii. The referral list (name, amount, last payment and contact details) is approved by the Chief Administrative Officer or Treasurer before it is sent.

iii. The agency's commission is recovered from the debtor where the original invoice terms or a bylaw allow it; otherwise it is a cost to the Town.

iv. Once referred, the customer deals with the agency. Any payment received at the Town Office is reported to the agency within 5 business days.

v. Referred accounts are flagged; no further credit, rentals or services on account until paid.

7.3 Legal action

i. Accounts of $5,000 or more, or any account Council directs, may go to Small Claims Court or other legal action with Council approval.

ii. Under The Limitations Act, a claim must generally be started within 2 years of the debt being discovered (normally the due date), with a 15-year ultimate limit. Every account must be referred or actioned before 18 months past due so no claim is lost.

7.4 Not added to taxes

Under current legislation, the following cannot go to the tax roll and must be collected through this section: building permit, development and inspection fees; bylaw fines and tickets; recreation and facility fees; cemetery fees; and Notice of Violation payments under the Nuisance Abatement Bylaw No. 22/05. The Town's own costs of remedying a nuisance on a parcel can still be added to taxes under s. 369(1)(c). From January 1, 2027, so can the costs of remedying an owner's or occupant's contravention on adjacent Crown or municipal land (ss. 364 and 369).

8. Payment Arrangements

i. Any customer or ratepayer may request a payment arrangement at any stage. It must be in writing, signed, and clear arrears within 12 months (taxes: before the next Tax Enforcement List where possible).

ii. Current charges must be paid as they come due while the arrangement is in place.

iii. While an arrangement is honoured, the Town will not disconnect service, refer the account to collections, or advance tax enforcement beyond steps already required by legislation. Penalties continue to apply.

iv. A missed payment ends the arrangement after a 10-day written notice, and collection resumes at the step where it stopped.
v. The Chief Administrative Officer may approve arrangements; arrangements longer than 12 months require Council approval.

9. Write-offs and Cancellations

Every write-off requires a Council resolution. Administration may recommend a write-off when:

i. the balance is $20 or less, cannot go to taxes, and is 120 days past due;
ii. the collection agency returns it as uncollectible;
iii. the debtor cannot be located after reasonable efforts;
iv. the debtor is bankrupt or deceased with no estate (the Town files a proof of claim first); or
v. the limitation period has expired.

Property taxes, penalties and other tax-roll amounts can only be cancelled or abated by Council under The Municipalities Act. A write-off is an accounting entry only; the Town may still accept payment, and the customer remains flagged.

10. Returned Payments

A cheque or electronic payment returned for insufficient funds or a closed account is deemed not received (Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 03/26, s. 5). It is reversed on the account with the $31.00 NSF fee, and interest or penalties apply as if no payment was made. After two returned payments in 12 months, the Town may require certified funds, cash or debit.

11. Roles and Responsibilities

Who	Responsibility
Council	Adopts this policy and related bylaws; passes tax enforcement resolutions; approves write-offs, tax cancellations, legal action and arrangements over 12 months.
Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)	Applies the policy; approves payment arrangements, the collection agency agreement and referral lists; manages the TAXervice agreement; signs tax enforcement documents; reports to Council.
Finance	Issues bills, statements and notices; tracks aging; prepares tax-transfer, referral and write-off lists; records all customer contact; gives TAXervice the arrears and tax roll information it needs; handles payments on enforcement files as set out in Section 5.6.
Tax enforcement designate (TAXervice)	Carries out the tax enforcement steps in Section 5.3 under its agreement, including deadlines, draft Council resolutions, notices and service, lien registration, PMB applications and the title request; reports file status to Administration.

12. Reporting

i. **Quarterly:** an aged receivables summary (taxes, utilities, general) to Council.
ii. **Annually (September):** the proposed Tax Enforcement List and the utility-to-taxes transfer list.
iii. **Annually (year-end):** accounts referred to collections, amounts recovered, and write-offs.
iv. Reports to Council use roll or account numbers in open session, not names, to protect personal information under The Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

13. Fairness and Hardship

Staff will treat every account the same way, record every contact, and refer ratepayers in hardship to a payment arrangement and to the Provincial Mediation Board. Council follows the principles of

procedural fairness in its collection decisions, including write-offs and tax enforcement resolutions (The Municipalities Act, s. 92). Nothing in this policy limits Council's authority under legislation.

14. Annual Collections Calendar

Month	Property taxes	Utilities	General receivables
January	Unpaid prior-year taxes become arrears; arrears statements sent	Year-end utility transfers appear on tax notices	Monthly aging review
Quarterly (Mar, Jun, Sep, Dec)	Aged receivables report to Council	Aged receivables report to Council	Accounts at 120 days referred to collections, added to taxes, or sent to Council for write-off
May–June	Tax notices issued; taxes due June 30	—	—
July	2% monthly penalty starts on current taxes; reminders sent	—	—
August	Pre-enforcement letters to parcels with arrears	—	—
September	Council approves Tax Enforcement List	Transfer list previewed to Council	—
October 31	—	Identify utility arrears over 60 days	—
By November 15	Publish Tax Enforcement List	Notices to owners and tenants (registered mail for 2026 only)	—
December 15–31	—	Unpaid utility arrears added to tax roll	Year-end write-off recommendations to Council
60+ days after list	Tax liens registered with ISC (e.g., mid-January)	—	—

15. Taxes or Collections?

If the law ties the charge to a parcel of land, it goes to the tax roll; if not, it goes to collections. A tax-roll amount is secured by a lien on the land and stays with the property; a collections debt is unsecured and must be acted on within 2 years.

Type of amount	Goes to	When	Required notice first
Property taxes	Tax enforcement (Section 5)	Prior-year arrears; list published by November 15	Published list; lien no sooner than 60 days later
Utility charges (active and final accounts)	Tax roll	Over 60 days past billing: active accounts at the December transfer; final accounts at the next month-end	Written notice to owner and tenant at least 30 days before transfer (Section 6.2)
Other parcel-related charges (listed in Section 3)	Tax roll (of any parcel the debtor is assessed for, under s. 369(2))	120 days past due	Final demand letter, 30 days
General receivables over $20, and utility charges not tied to a parcel	Collection agency	120 days past due	Final demand letter
General receivables of	Small Claims Court / legal action (Council	120 days past due, and	Final demand letter

Type of amount	Goes to	When	Required notice first
$5,000 or more	approval)	always within 2 years	
General receivables of $20 or less that cannot go to taxes	Council for write-off	120 days past due	Statements and final demand letter

Mayor: _____ Chief Administrative Officer: _____