

Town of Lovettsville

PRESS RELEASE

The Town of Lovettsville has been the victim of water theft, and we are asking for help from our citizens. During the week of June 30, water was taken unlawfully from a fire hydrant in New Town Meadows. Our Water and Sewer Ordinance states that it is a misdemeanor for anyone other than authorized personnel to access a fire hydrant in the Town of Lovettsville. Authorized personnel are identified to be operators of the water system (Loudoun Water), Town Staff, and fire fighters. A fine of \$500 will be imposed for unauthorized access to the system. We ask any citizen to contact the Town Office at 540-822-5788 regarding this issue. If the incident should occur after working hours or on a week-end, please contact the Loudoun County Sheriff's Department, the Mayor or any Council Member. Thank you for your cooperation with this most important matter.

Elaine Walker
Mayor

The German Settlement

Town of Lovettsville

TOWN OF LOVETTSVILLE IN LOUDOUN COUNTY, VIRGINIA

ORDINANCE NO. 06-08-01

PRESENTED: August 17, 2006

ADOPTED: August 24, 2006

An Ordinance: AMENDING THE WATER AND SEWER ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF LOVETTSVILLE TO ADD SECTION 5.13, WATER THEFT

MOTION: MILLER

SECOND: EFTHIM

BE IT ENACTED AND ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF LOVETTSVILLE THAT THE WATER AND SEWER ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF LOVETTSVILLE BE AMENDED TO ADD A NEW SECTION 5.13, WATER THEFT, AS FOLLOWS:

Sec. 5.13. WATER THEFT

(a) Theft of water or tampering with the Town's water system is subject to prosecution as a class 1 misdemeanor, punishable as provided by law, pursuant to Va. Code Section 18.2-163. For purposes of this section, the Town's water system is defined as all water storage facilities, hydrants, lines, meters and associated facilities owned by the Town of Lovettsville and specifically excludes private water service laterals wherever located and plumbing fixtures affixed to privately owned property.

(b) Whenever any person observes any type of water theft or tampering with the Town's water system, the Town Manager shall complete or cause to be completed a formal report and any jumper, bulk meter or any other device used to illegally remove water from our system will be confiscated.

(c) A copy of the Report along with any confiscated items will be logged into the Town Manager's office so that the Town can begin the formal assessment period to determine what type of damages may have occurred as a result of the theft along with the appropriate fines and water use bill that will be generated.

(d) Fines for tampering with a meter or theft of water will be assessed immediately. Fines for tampering with meters or theft of water are as follows:

*	First Offense	\$500.00
*	Second Offense	\$750.00
*	Third or Subsequent Offenses	\$1,250.00

(e) In addition to the fines for tampering with the system, the offending party will be billed for all water that was potentially withdrawn from our system by the offending party in accordance with the rate schedule adopted in Section 5.11. In cases where bulk meters exist, the Town will call the issuing locality and determine how much water has been used since the last billing and that figure shall be used for the purposes of calculating the charge. In cases where a bulk water meter or other measuring device was not used, the Town Manager will estimate the amount of water that was potentially removed from the system

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by the offending party based on the follow up investigation and that amount will be billed at the rate established in Section 5.11.

(f) None of the confiscated equipment or the bill for the theft will be released sooner than a 24-hour period so that the Town staff can determine whether there was any damage done to the fire hydrant, meter crock and assembly and any other location where the water may have been removed. In addition, since many water thefts result in dirty water complaints, the staff may have to come out and flush our lines to clear up the system. Any additional staff, equipment or water loss as a result of these flushings will also be billed to the offending party.

(g) No confiscated equipment will be returned until the fine and any charges are paid in full.

(h) Should any person fail to pay the fine and charges within 15 calendar days of assessment, the penalty will increase to double the original fine. If the violation remains unsettled by full payment of the enhanced fine and charges after 30 calendar days of assessment, a summons will be issued for the accused offender to appear in Loudoun County General District Court. Nothing herein shall restrict the punishment imposed by the judge upon conviction.

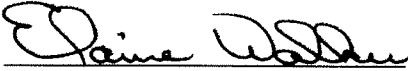
(i) In an effort to curb the amount of water theft and damage to our system that occurs annually, the Town has formally authorized a crime solver/reward program and our residents and businesses are encouraged to report any potential thefts that they observe within the Town. In the event that their reporting results in the apprehension of a company or individual stealing water and ultimately the successful collection of the appropriate fines, the reporting individual will be eligible for a \$50.00 credit to their Town of Lovettsville water and sewer account or a \$50 reward check to non-account holders. Not more than one reward shall be made in connection with any incident. In addition, this reward program does not apply to employees from the Town of Lovettsville, who are currently on the clock when these thefts occur or the Town Manager at any time due to the fact that they are responsible for administering this program.

This ordinance shall be effective upon its passage.


VOTE:

Ayes:	Treptow, Miller, Efthim, Martin
Nays:	None
Abstentions:	None
Absent for vote:	Zoldos, McDonough

PASSED THIS 24th DAY OF AUGUST, 2006.


 Elaine Walker, Mayor
 Town of Lovettsville

ATTEST:


 Judy Kromholz, Town Clerk