

8/10/09 SICTA Board e-mail to James Terruso, SIC Department of Finance (cc: City Government)

Jim,

As an extension of our work on the Water & Sewer Utility, SICTA conducted a check to determine whether all buildings in the City were being billed for Water & Sewer usage. We did this by comparing all addresses in the real estate appraisal data base to the 2009 water & sewer billings data base. Using Excel, we were able to automatically clear about 6,500 of about 7,000 buildings with no exception.

The remaining 500 buildings took some work but we were able to clear most of these exceptions because the addresses in the data bases were slightly different (for Excel to clear them, the letters, spacing and punctuation in the addresses had to be identical).

We then had a very short list of buildings to physically review. In almost all instances, we found that the buildings on the appraisal data base addresses were under construction or were brand new, and that the original buildings on the appraised list were torn down and that the water & sewer had been turned off. Our final list of exceptions, covered only nine titled properties, of which eight could be grouped into two related groups of four (see below). Our strong hunch is that there are good reasons why these titled properties do not have water & sewer billings.

It would not been unexpected, if, over the years, some paper work initiating water and sewer bills had been innocently lost. Accordingly, when we started the project, we expected to find some, if not many, unbilled properties. We found none and we commend you and your department for a perfect water & sewer billing record covering many years.

We plan to publicize our findings in our newsletter and/or in our website. Before doing so, we would prefer to validate the reasons for the nine un-cleared exceptions. In this connection, could you advise (and validate our hunch) as to the reasons why the nine properties, listed below [listing removed from this posting; the question was answered], were not billed?

Please accept our sincere congratulations and extend them to your department.

Regards,

Joe McDevitt

cc: City Council and Administration

SICTA Board