

**ARTICLE X**  
**Water Theft**

- Section 1 Theft of water or tampering with the Town's water system is subject to criminal prosecution as a Class 1 misdemeanor, punishable as provided by law, pursuant to Virginia Code Section 18.2-163. Theft of water or tampering with the Town's water system shall also be subject to a civil penalty as set forth in Section 4, of this Article IX. 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 Round Hill and specifically excludes private water service laterals wherever located and plumbing fixtures affixed to privately owned property.
- Section 2 Whenever any person observes any type of water theft or tampering with the Town's water system, the Town Administrator shall complete or cause to be completed a formal report and any meter, equipment or device used to illegally remove water for the Town system will be confiscated.
- Section 3 A copy of the report along with the confiscated items will be logged in the administrative 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.
- Section 4 Civil penalties for tampering with a meter or theft of water will be assessed immediately. Civil penalties for tampering with meters or theft of water are as follows. Each instance of meter tampering or water theft shall be treated as a separate offense.
- First Offense \$500
- Second Offense \$750
- Third and/or Subsequent Offenses \$1,250
- Section 5 In addition to the fines for tampering with the system, the offending party will be billed for all water that potentially withdrawn from the Town system by the offending party in accordance with the Town's adopted rate schedule. The Town Administrator will estimate the amount of water that was potentially removed from the system.
- Section 6 The Town staff will determine whether there has been any damage to fire hydrants, meter crocks, assembly, or any other location where the meter may have been removed. In addition, since water thefts may result in dirty water complaints, Town staff may need to flush the lines to clear the system, in which case any additional staff hours, equipment, and water loss as a result of the subject activity shall also be paid by the offending party.
- Section 7 Should any person fail to pay the penalty and charges within 15 calendar days of assessment, the penalty will increase to double the original amount. If the violation remains unsettled by full payment 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.
- Section 8 In an effort to curb the amount of water theft and damage to the system, the Town formally authorizes a crime solver/reward program where residents and businesses are encouraged to report any theft or damage they may observe to the town water and sewer system. In the event that any individual's report results in the apprehension of an

individual stealing from or damaging the Town's water and sewer system and ultimately the collection of the appropriate fines, the reporting individual will be eligible for a \$50 credit to their Town 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, the reward program does not apply to employees of the Town of Round Hill who are currently working as scheduled when a theft or tampering incident occurs.