

**LEGAL NOTICE**



**TOWN OF READING**

To the Inhabitants of the  
Town of Reading:

Please take notice that the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Reading will hold the following public hearing on Tuesday, November 16, 2010 at 8:00 p.m. in the Selectmen's Meeting Room, 16 Lowell Street, Reading, Massachusetts:

**Amending Fees.**

A copy of the relevant document regarding this topic is available in the Town Manager's Office, 16 Lowell Street, Reading, MA from 7:30 am-5:30 pm, M-W-Thurs and Tues 7:30 am-7:00 pm and this document is attached to the hearing notice on the website at [www.readingma.gov](http://www.readingma.gov)

All interested parties are invited to attend the hearing, or may submit their comments in writing or by email prior to 6:00 p.m. on November 16, 2010 to [townmanager@ci.reading.ma.us](mailto:townmanager@ci.reading.ma.us)

By order of  
Peter I. Hechenbleikner  
Town Manager

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Department	Item Description	Current Fee	Proposed Fee	Maximum by law	Reason
Fire	1 Smoke/Carbon Monoxide alarms				4/5 BOS vote Jan '10
	Single family	\$15	\$25	\$50	comp towns \$50
	Two-family	\$20	\$50	\$100	comp towns \$100
	6 or fewer residential units \$10 per unit		\$150	\$150	varies up to \$150
	7 or more residential units \$10 per unit		\$500	\$500	comp towns \$500
Fire	2 Oil Burner installations	\$15	\$25		4/5 BOS vote Jan '10
	Propane	\$20	\$25		comp towns \$25-50
	Combustible storage	\$15	\$25		comp towns \$25-50
	Town Clerk Renew underground storage tanks	\$12.50	\$25		comp towns \$25-\$200
Town Clerk	3 copies of Zoning Bylaws (175 pgs)	\$15	\$30		all now available free online
	copies of Town Bylaws (96 pgs)	\$10	\$20		increase charges to approximately
	copies of Town Charter (41 pgs)	\$6	\$10		\$0.20/page
Police	4 Parking/Depot access	\$25	\$35		4/5 BOS vote Jan '10
	Senior	\$15	\$15		(phase to \$50 in 2-3 years)
	2nd car at same address	\$10	\$15		
Police	5 Fingerprinting	none	\$25		comp towns \$25+
Finance	6 Lien Certificates - SF home (doing 25-50/wk; mtg refi's)	\$25	\$50		comp towns \$40-\$60
Public works	7 Water/sewer - charge for final bill	none	\$25		comp towns \$25 final meter reading & bill prep.
Public works	8 Sprinkler per Head charges	\$0.25/6 mos.	\$0		Eliminate fee (\$4800/yr) Nuisance sized bills to businesses Penalizing good fire prevention
Comm. Svcs.	9 Annual blanket fee for commercial with on-staff electricians - to apply only to routine maintenance and not to new construction or renovation	none	\$300		Eliminate many small fees & trips Approximately revenue neutral
Comm. Svcs.	10 Reinspection fees - building permits	none	\$30		4/5 BOS vote Jan '10 align with electric/gas/plumbing
Comm. Svcs.	11 Establish Site Plan Waiver Fee	none	none		4/5 BOS vote Jan '10 too onerous on small businesses

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HEADQUARTERS  
**READING FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Reading, Massachusetts 01867

GREGORY J. BURNS, Chief  
757 Main Street  
BUS. Phone: 781-942-9181  
STA. Phone: 781-944-3132  
Fax: 781-942-9114

TO: Mr. Peter I. Hechenbleikner, Town Manager  
FROM: Chief Gregory J. Burns  
DATE: April 14, 2010  
RE: Fire Department Fee Schedule

The Fire Department's fees have not been updated in several years. I have requested fee data from surrounding communities and received information from Wakefield and Stoneham. Below is the data from surrounding communities:

Description	Reading	Wakefield	Stoneham
Smoke/Carbon Monoxide Alarms Single Family	15	50	50
Smoke/Carbon Monoxide Alarms Two Units	10 per Unit	100	100
Smoke/Carbon Monoxide Alarms Three to Five Units	10 per Unit	150	50
Smoke/Carbon Monoxide Alarms Six to 25 Units	10 per Unit	500	50 plus 25 per unit
Smoke/Carbon Monoxide Alarms Over 25 Units	10 per Unit	500	125 plus 50 per unit
Oil Burner Installations	15	25	50
Tank installation	25	50	50
Propane (Above and below ground)	20	25	50
Tank Truck Permit	50	25	50
Flammable and Combustible Storage	15	25	50

Permits issued by the head of the fire department are regulated by Massachusetts General Law Chapter 148 Section 10A. This law allows the Board of Selectmen to set the following maximum fees:

- A maximum permit fee of up to \$50 may be charged for each permit issued.
- The fee for smoke detector and carbon monoxide alarm inspections may be increased up to the following maximum fee:
  - Single dwelling unit \$50
  - 2- Family Dwelling \$100
  - 6 or fewer residential units \$150
  - 7 or more residential units \$500

It takes approximately 40 minutes of staff time for each permit generated. Most of these routine inspections are performed by the fire personnel assigned to a piece of fire apparatus. The cost of staff time is estimated at \$25.00.

After analyzing our permit data, the fees we currently charge and data from Wakefield and Stoneham, I recommend:

- a. Institute a minimum permit fee of \$25 (existing permits over \$25 to remain).

We're Your Friends for Life

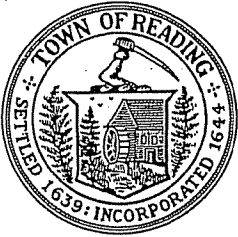
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b. Increase fees for smoke detector and carbon monoxide alarm inspections to the following schedule:

- |                                   |       |
|-----------------------------------|-------|
| i. Single dwelling unit           | \$25  |
| ii. 2- Family Dwelling            | \$50  |
| iii. 6 or fewer residential units | \$150 |
| iv. 7 or more residential units   | \$500 |

This option would generate a minimum of \$4,635 in additional revenue.



**Town of Reading  
Town Clerk**

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# Memo

To: Board of Selectmen  
From: Laura A Gemme, Town Clerk  
Date: November 10, 2010  
Subject: Town Clerk Copy Fees

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Town Clerk's sell about 30 copies of the Zoning Bylaws, 20 copies of the Town Bylaws, and about 20 copies of the Town Charter a years. These numbers are just estimated.

We are requesting to raise the fees to coincide with the \$.20 per page fee we charge for copies. This keeps the per page cost below the maximum of \$.25 by the State

Item	Current Fee	Proposed Fee
copies of Zoning Bylaws (175 pgs)	\$15	\$30
copies of Town Bylaws (96 pgs)	\$10	\$20
copies of Town Charter (41 pgs)	\$6	\$10

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# READING POLICE DEPARTMENT OFFICE OF THE CHIEF

**James W. Cormier**  
Chief of Police

15 Union Street, Reading, Massachusetts 01867  
Emergency Only: 911 All Other Calls: 781-944-1212 Fax: 781-944-2893  
E-Mail: JCormier@ci.reading.ma.us

November 10, 2010

To: Peter I. Hechenbleikner, Town Manager  
From: Chief James W. Cormier  
Re: Police Department Revenue Fees

The Reading Police Department is recommending adding a new fee to the fees collected by the Police Department and we did an analysis on another fee that we currently collect.

The new fee proposed would be to charge for fingerprinting services. We currently provide this service approximately twice per week and it takes approximately 20 to 30 minutes of staff time per service. This service is provided generally by the Detective Division. The cost per hour on average is \$35 per hour. Below is the breakdown of the study we have done, as well as the proposed fee.

<u>Town/City</u>	<u>Residents</u>	<u>Non-Residents</u>
Reading - as is	\$0	Do Not Print
Reading - proposed	\$25 - 2 cards	Do Not Print

Reading averages two per week over past three years so potential revenue from this process is about \$2500.00 per year.

Survey of 30 area communities and the fees they have for fingerprinting. All FY2011 data.

Seven of 30 do not print non-residents. Twelve do not charge residents and six of those do

not charge non-residents, either. The rest range from \$5 - 25 per card. Two cards are usually requested.

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<u>Town/City</u>	<u>Residents</u>	<u>Non-Residents</u>
Acton	\$10 per card	\$10 per card
Andover	\$20 - 2 cards	\$20 - 2 cards
Arlington	\$25	\$25
Belmont	\$10 per card	\$15 per card
Billerica	\$0	\$0
Burlington	\$0	\$15 per person
Cambridge	\$15 per card	\$15 per card
Chelmsford	\$10-one card, \$5 2nd	Do Not Print
Cohasset	\$0	\$0
Concord	\$0	\$0
Dedham	\$0	Do Not Print
Framingham	\$5 per card	\$10 per card
Hampton, NH	\$25 flat rate	\$25 flat rate
Holden	\$10 flat fee	\$10 flat fee
Leominster	\$10 per card	\$10 per card
Lincoln	\$10 flat fee	\$10 flat fee
Lowell	\$5 per card	\$5 per card
Lynn	\$0	\$0
Malden	\$10	\$15
Marlboro	\$0	Do Not Print
Medford	\$5	Do Not Print
Melrose	\$25 - 2 cards	\$25 - 2 cards
Nashua, NH	\$25 per card	\$25 per card
Pepperell	\$0	\$0
Saugus	\$10 flat rate	\$10 flat rate
Stoneham	\$25 - 2 cards	\$25 - 2 cards
Tewksbury	\$0	Do Not Print
Watertown	\$0	Do Not Print
Wilmington	\$0	\$0
Woburn	\$0	Do Not Print

The fee increase we evaluated is an increase in the Resident Depot Parking / Compost Access stickers. The increase would go from \$25 per year to \$35 per year for the first car at a residence. The second car which is currently \$10 would increase to \$15. The cost for Senior Residents would not change, it would remain at \$15 per year. We distribute approximately 3500 resident access stickers per year.

Conservatively we would estimate the increase in revenue from this increase to be approximately \$25,000. Our annual revenue from this area is approximately \$70,000. This fee has not increased in at least five plus years.

Respectfully submitted:

Chief James W. Cormier

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**Town of Reading**  
16 Lowell Street  
Reading, MA 01867

Fax: (781) 942-9037

Website: [www.readingma.gov](http://www.readingma.gov)

**Finance Department**  
Phone: (781) 942-9005

TO: Mr. Peter I. Hechenbleikner, Town Manager  
FROM: Nancy Heffernan, Treasurer/Collector  
DATE: November 9, 2010  
RE: Municipal Lien Certificate Fees

A municipal lien certificate (MLC) is a legal document that lists all taxes, assessments and utility charges owed on a parcel. These documents are usually requested by law offices in preparation of a refinance or sale of a property. The fee for each certificate varies from \$25 to \$150, depending on the class of property. If a property has more than one parcel of land, a certificate must be ordered for each parcel.

In Reading, because RMLD's main office is situated in town, we are required to include any unpaid electric bills as well as the water, sewer and storm water charges. We further have Engineering research each property to identify any betterments voted but not yet assessed as well as pertinent information such as access is via a private way or that a Title V inspections will be required.

The most recent comprehensive survey done in 2003 suggested that Reading MLC fees were lower than the average (as shown below). The MLC fees have not changed since then – in fact they have not changed since 1987:

Description	Reading (2003)	2003 Avg. (survey)	Reading vs. Avg.	Reading (2010)
Land of less than 1 acre	\$25	\$37	-\$12	\$25
One to Three Family Residence	\$25	\$41	-\$16	\$25
Four or more Family Residence	\$100	\$95	\$5	\$100
Commercial / Industrial	\$150	\$178	-\$28	\$150

We are seeking to increase the MLC fees for Land and One to Three Family Residences from \$25 to \$50. An informal survey of surrounding towns in 2010 suggest that \$50 is now the going rate, up from \$41 several years ago. In addition, we estimate that the average 35 minutes of staff time (from five different employees) to prepare an MLC plus materials puts the average cost between \$45 and \$50.



**Town of Reading**  
16 Lowell Street  
Reading, MA 01867-2683

Fax: (781) 942-5441  
Website: [www.readingma.gov](http://www.readingma.gov)

**PUBLIC WORKS**  
(781) 942-9077

TO: Peter I. Hechenbleikner, Town Manager  
FROM: Jane C. Kinsella  
DATE: November 9, 2010  
RE: \$25.00 Fee for Final Water Bill

An average of 20 final water bills are generated through the DPW water division every month. Currently, it takes over 2 labor hours between the water billing clerk, a skilled laborer/meter technician and the collector's office to generate and collect (1) final water bill. To offset some of the time required, I recommend that we charge a \$25 service charge for a final water bill. The fee can be incorporated as a service charge attached to the final water bill, thereby eliminating the need for a separate mailing.

This service charge could conservatively bring in \$6000.00 per year.

Thanks in advance,

Jane C. Kinsella

cc: Jeffrey Zager



**Town of Reading**  
16 Lowell Street  
Reading, MA 01867-2683

Fax: (781) 942-5441  
Website: [www.readingma.gov](http://www.readingma.gov)

**PUBLIC WORKS**  
(781) 942-9077

TO: Peter I. Hechenbleikner, Town Manager  
FROM: Jane C. Kinsella  
DATE: November 9, 2010  
RE: Fire Sprinkler Fee For Connection to Water Supply

The Department of Public Works currently bills at a rate of 12.5¢ per sprinkler head every 6 months for a total annual revenue of \$4858. There are 67 bills ranging from \$1.00 - \$315.00, with 32 of these bills under \$20 each. The process of generating a bill, mailing/postage, and collecting these fees do not cover many of the locations billed. Therefore, it is my recommendation that the Board of Selectmen consider elimination of the semi-annual billing for sprinkler head charges.

Thanks in advance,

Jane C. Kinsella

cc: Jeffrey Zager



**Town of Reading**  
**16 Lowell Street**  
**Reading, MA 01867-2683**

**JEAN DELIOS**,  
**Community Services Director /**  
**Town Planner**  
Phone: (781) 942-6612  
Fax: (781) 942-9071  
jdelios@ci.reading.ma.us

## MEMORANDUM

To: Peter Hechenbleikner, Town Manager  
From: Jean Delios, Community Services Director/Town Planner  
Date: November 8, 2010  
Re: Fee Schedule – Community Services Department

The Community Services Department has reviewed fees and recommends the modification of fees as follows.

### **Annual Blanket Fee for Maintenance ONLY - Electrical Permit (Commercial/Institutional)**

This is a way to allow one annual fee to cover routine maintenance (not new construction or renovations) related to commercial or institutional electrical work. A blanket annual permit would be issued for larger commercial operations that have on-going electrical work being done, typically by staff electricians. The proposed annual fee is \$300/year. This eliminates the many small fees and trips to Town Hall to pull permits. It is projected to be revenue neutral.

An example would be for one of the nursing homes in town. They have staff and routinely perform electrical work to their building. This would simplify things by allowing a one time permit to cover all of the maintenance related work they perform over the year and one fee.

### **Re-inspection fee for Building Permits**

The building permit process currently does not include a re-inspection fee like electric/gas/plumbing. The recommendation is to adopt a \$30 re-inspection fee for building permit applications to make permitting consistent across the trades. There are no anticipated customer service impacts.

### **Site Plan Review Waiver Fee**

In early 2010, the department proposed establishing a Site Plan Review Waiver Fee but after a more careful review a new fee is not proposed. It was decided that this fee would not be implemented because it would be too onerous on small businesses and would not bring in much revenue. This would be a positive move towards our customer service goals.

Although there have been 21 site plan review waiver request in the last three years, many have been for small projects that do not have major impacts to the surrounding area and thus do not require a significant review by staff or the CPDC. Exterior construction or alterations greater than 300 square feet, interior renovations over 1,000 square feet, a change of use (ex: office to retail) or expansion of a commercial parking lot requires site plan review. The CPDC can grant a waiver from the full site plan review if the construction is interior only, the change of use is in the same use category, or when the property has undergone site plan review within last 5 years. Many of the waivers granted by the CPDC were for interior or small exterior construction purposes such as installing new bathrooms, handicap ramps, new entrance doors or a change of use such as a small fitness center in a former café space, a hair salon in a former office space, or Paul's TV in Jordan's Furniture.

Other communities that have similar triggers for site plan review don't charge a fee for waivers or are between \$25 and \$75. If a new fee is imposed, \$30 - \$50 is a reasonable application fee which would only bring in approximately \$300 - \$400. We are working very hard to improve upon our business friendly atmosphere and adding this fee may not be in keeping with that.

The analysis of fees is an on-going item for the Community Services Department. We anticipate further review once the permitting software is purchased and implemented.