

# Overstrength Surcharge Program

## Information for Commercial & Industrial Users



The Town of Sylvan Lake is implementing an Overstrength Surcharge Program. This involves your business.

**Environmental Services**  
403 887 2800

  
**Sylvan Lake**  
[sylvanlake.ca/overstrength](https://sylvanlake.ca/overstrength)

## What is an Overstrength Surcharge Program?

- » This program is designed to recover the cost of treatment and applies to a customer who releases wastewater to the sewer system containing one or more constituents that exceed the concentration limits set out in Section 2 Schedule D of the Town of Sylvan Lake's Water and Sewage Bylaw
- » Although overstrength substances are acceptable, at higher concentrations the treatment of them comes at an extra cost. (i.e. cleaning blockages of oil & grease and solids, increased energy consumption, additional fees from The City of Red Deer)

## What substances have overstrength concentration limits?

- » There are 6 substances that are considered acceptable at lower concentrations but due to the cost of treatment are considered overstrength at higher concentrations
- » Above the maximum allowable concentration limit, these substances are prohibited and must not be discharged into the sewer under any circumstances at any time

SUBSTANCE	OVERSTRENGTH SURCHARGE CONCENTRATION LIMIT	MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE CONCENTRATION LIMIT
Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD)	300 mg/L	3000 mg/L
Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD)	600 mg/L	*9600 mg/L
Total Suspended Solids (TSS)	300 mg/L	3500 mg/L
Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG)	150 mg/L	*500 mg/L
Total Phosphorous (TP)	20 mg/L	150 mg/L
Total Kjeldahl Nitrogen (TKN)	100 mg/L	*400 mg/L
Limited by Town of Sylvan Lake Bylaw 1805/2020		
*Limited by City of Red Deer Bylaw 3606/2018		

## What is the difference between overstrength and prohibited?

- » Overstrength substances can be managed by wastewater collection and treatment systems, but come at an extra cost to do so
- » Prohibited substances are wastes that may not be able to be managed by the collection, transmission and treatment systems and may result in health, safety or environmental implications.
- » For a comprehensive list of all over strength and prohibited substances see Town of Sylvan Lake Bylaw 1805/2020

## How do I know if my wastewater is overstrength?

- » Depending on the industry and pre-treatment processes, there may be several checkpoints along the way used to verify constituent values
- » The Town of Sylvan Lake confirms values by sampling wastewater effluent leaving the business and having the results analyzed by an accredited laboratory



## I have an Overstrength Surcharge. What happens now?

- » Businesses are faced with a decision when receiving an overstrength surcharge on their municipal utility bill. Continue to pay the overstrength surcharges or implement pre-treatment or process modifications to reduce or even potentially eliminate their overstrength surcharges
- » To be removed from this program the following criteria must be met:
  - Implementation of industry specific Best Management Practices to reduce or eliminate contamination.
  - Apply online for a Compliance review of your account
  - Approved Source Control Corrective Action Plan
  - Satisfactory testing at the end of the 3-month period

## Are these limits new?

- » No, although the program is new, the overstrength concentration limits set out in the Town of Sylvan Lakes Bylaw 1805/2020 have been in place since 2017
- » As of July 2019, all wastewater collected from the Town of Sylvan Lake's residential, commercial and industrial customers is transported to Red Deer for treatment
- » The negative impacts of contaminants in the sewer system can range from higher operations and maintenance costs to the complete failure of the biological processes used for treatment at The City of Red Deer's Wastewater Treatment Plant
- » As a customer of the City of Red Deer we have an obligation to meet the requirements set out by the City of Red Deer in addition to protecting the staff and infrastructure within the boundaries of the Town of Sylvan Lake

## How much will my new rate be?

- » Overstrength surcharge rates are based on water usage and will be applied to the customers' next monthly utility bill. Each overstrength substance has its own rate, rates will be combined and totalled if the effluent contains more than one substance
- » Example: A customer whose base collection rate for wastewater is \$2.86/m<sup>3</sup> exceeds both FOG (\$1.80/m<sup>3</sup> of water consumed) and TSS (\$2.00/m<sup>3</sup> of water consumed) The new rate would be calculated as follows:
  - Collection rate      \$2.97 /m<sup>3</sup>
  - Overstrength FOG    \$1.80 /m<sup>3</sup>
  - Overstrength TSS    \$2.00 /m<sup>3</sup>
  - New rate                \$6.77 /m<sup>3</sup>

**Thank you for protecting our water**  
**Environmental stewardship is everyone's responsibility**

## Questions?

- » [sylvanlake.ca/overstrength](http://sylvanlake.ca/overstrength)
- » Environmental Services Department  
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