

May 22, 2020

Report To: Travis Rob, P.Eng., Manager of Operations & Facilities

From: Craig Miller, P.Eng., Environmental Superintendent

**SUBJECT:** 815 Williams Avenue – Knapp Investments

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On May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020, I received a call from Ms. Penny Knapp regarding the water bill received for 815 Williams Avenue (owned by Knapp Investments). Ms. Knapp expressed concern that the water bill they received for the March – April billing period was much higher than previous bills.

On May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020, I made arrangements with Ms. Knapp to meet her and Mr. Knapp at 815 Williams to check the water meter and to investigate the high water bill.

In preparation, I reviewed the daily water meter data (see chart). The water showed an inconsistent usage pattern with several daily peaks around 3000 gallons per day.

I met the Knapp's at 815 Williams Avenue at approximately 11:30am on May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020. We discussed the usage history and that the building was leased to another company but they were down to one staff that frequently worked from home and 815 Williams Avenue was frequently vacant. The infrequent use of the building matched the sporadic water usage from the daily meter reads.

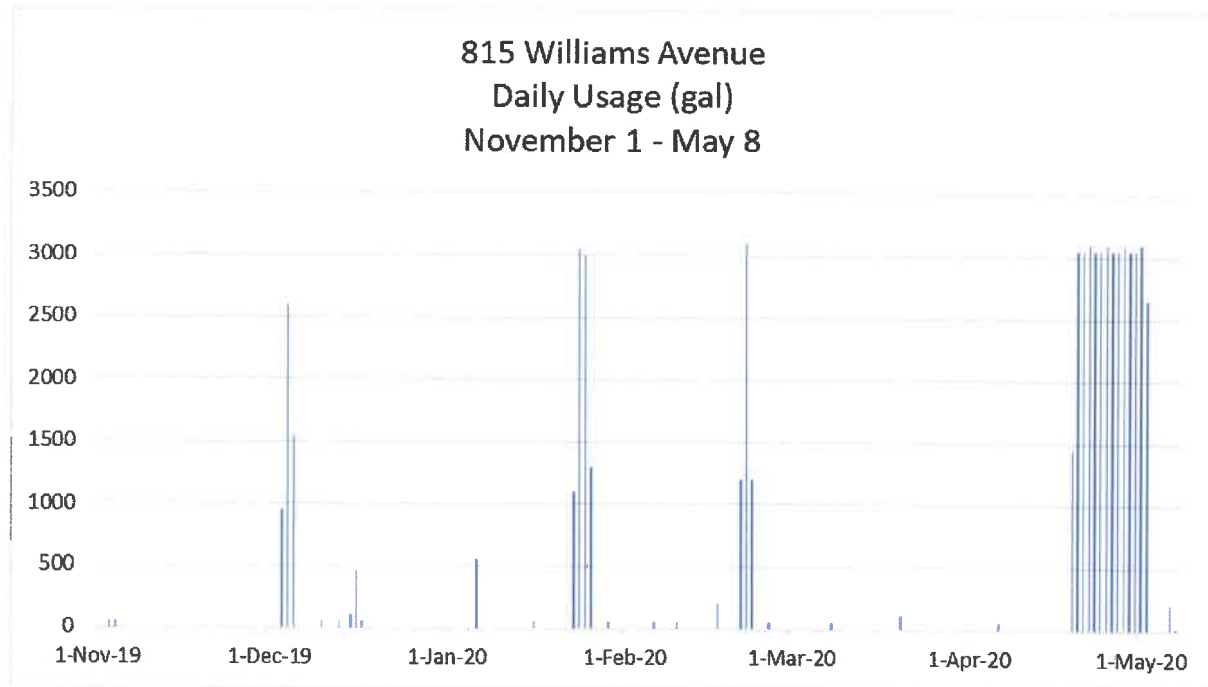
There were no signs of any broken water lines, the water meter flow indicator turned when water was running and the read on the meter matched the remote read.

Upon further investigation of the property, I checked the toilet internals. The internal lever attached to the flush handle had left a mark on the Styrofoam insulation inside the tank. There was a small chip on top of the insulation where it appeared that the lever would occasionally get stuck when flushed and the toilet would probably run until the next time used or someone heard it running or it just dropped off on its own. I did show this to Ms. and Mr. Knapp. Unfortunately, I did not get a picture of this.

Ms. and Mr. Knapp asked what I could do to help their bill and I explained that their only recourse to dispute the bill was to either have their water meter tested (at their cost) or write to the Mayor and Council.

Ms. and Mr. Knapp indicated that they would repair the toilet immediately and determine their next steps going forward.

It is my opinion that the water meter installed at 815 Williams Avenue is installed properly and is reading accurately. Further, the high water bill received by Knapp Investments is due excessive water usage caused by faulty toilet internals.



Respectfully submitted,

Craig Miller, P.Eng.  
Environmental Superintendent

Town of Fort Frances  
320 Portage Avenue  
Fort Frances, ON  
P9A 3P9

Attn: Mayor and Town Council

To: Lisa Slomke : Town Clerk

lslomke@fortfrances.ca

**RE: Account 041161.00**

We are in receipt of the most recent water bill for 815 Williams Avenue in Fort Frances. Upon review of this invoice, we note that there has been a dramatic increase in the water consumption since 2019.

In 2019, there were 5 employees working at 815 Williams up until May 2019. After May, there were only 2 employees working, and most recently in January, only 1 employee at this address.


Due to COVID19, the one employee working at this premises has been working from home since March 2020. This employee has been in the office sporadically, for an hour here and an hour there. As this is a leased building, with Claimspro, we are not authorized to visit the premises on a daily basis.

Upon review of the billings, and historic usage, we note that there have been substantial increases in the water usage, with less employees in the building, which has led to this letter and our meeting with Craig Miller at 815 Williams Avenue. Mr. Miller inspected the water meter to ensure it was working correctly. Mr. Miller also checked the taps and the toilet. Mr. Miller pointed out that the toilet was most likely the culprit, as there was a significant indentation on the Styrofoam where the chain may have been getting stuck. Due to the fact that the 1 employee was there very sporadically since March, and he was the only employee in the building since January, we can assume that he did not notice that the toilet was running.

We are writing this letter in hopes that you can revise this most recent water bill. As you are aware, due to COVID, this building has remained for the most part, empty for the period in which the most recent bill pertains to. It would have been impossible for 1 person to consume that much water in that time period. As you are also aware, due to COVID, our tenants have elected to delay rent payments, and as a household, we are all unemployed. I am certain you can appreciate our predicament.

We would appreciate if you would reduce our bill to our average billing, even though there is only 1 person occasionally in the building. Please advise as soon as possible as the billing payment due date is May 29, 2020.

Thank you for your time,

  
Keith and Penny Knapp  
Knapp Investments