
DIRECT CONNECTIONS TO THE REGIONAL WATER SYSTEM POLICY

Effective Date: January 30, 2026

Approved By: GVWD Board

Policy No. UT-020

PURPOSE

To establish criteria for Member, Non-Member, and Private connections to Metro Vancouver's Water System and to define ownership and financial responsibilities of work associated with connections and disconnections.

DEFINITIONS

"Act" means the *Greater Vancouver Water District Act* (British Columbia);

"Board" means the Board of Directors of the GVWD;

"Direct Connection Point" means a location in the System where a Member may directly connect without compromising the integrity of the System and its energy efficiency. Preferred locations are at or immediately after an in-system reservoir and where direct pumping to a Member distribution system is not required;

"GVWD" means the Greater Vancouver Water District as incorporated under the Act;

"Member" means a municipality or a First Nation that is a member of the GVWD;

"Non-Member" means a local government that is not a member of the GVWD, the provincial and federal governments, and Crown corporations;

"Private", in respect of a direct connection, means a connection to the System from a private property owned by an entity other than a Member or a Non-Member within the GVWD; and

"System" means the GVWD's assets such as water mains, pump stations, and water reservoirs, used in connection with the GVWD's services and operations.

POLICY

This policy applies to Member connections, Non-Member connections, and Private connections to the System.

GVWD supplies water to Members according to the Act. Members receive water in bulk through connections to the System and then distribute it to properties in their respective jurisdictions. Members may apply to the GVWD for new Member connections as needed.

Non-Members may apply to GVWD for Non-Member connections, subject to GVWD requirements and policy considerations.

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Connections to the System must adhere to current GVWD standards at the time of application for connection. Connections to the System must be at a Direct Connection Point. This limits the total number of connections along GVWD water mains and maintains System integrity, safety, efficiency, and conveyance of the System as a whole. The System is not sized to supply fire flow and for the integrity of the System it should not be relied upon as a replacement for municipal fire flow storage; however, Metro Vancouver will strive to meet the operational needs of Member jurisdictions and Members who choose to rely on the System for fire flow may continue to do so with the understanding that adequate pressure for fire flow emergencies is not guaranteed.

This policy also adheres to *Water Supply Pressure for GVWD Members and Non-Members Policy* (Policy No. UT-006), by which Members must accept water at the pressure supplied by the System as and where delivered by the GVWD.

Member Request for Connection

A Member must apply for a new or replacement connection to the System, including temporary and permanent connections. If the GVWD constructs new water infrastructure as a replacement for existing water infrastructure, like-for-like Member connections are not assumed, and Members must apply to the GVWD for connection to the new water infrastructure. The GVWD will consider an application to connect to the System when a “Member Application for Direct Connection” form is completed to the satisfaction of the GVWD and submitted to the GVWD.

Construction of a new tie-in from a Member’s water infrastructure to the GVWD’s System at a Direct Connection Point will be carried out by the GVWD and the cost of all work incurred by the GVWD associated with the construction of the tie-in will be borne by the Member. All remaining work, including financial responsibilities, will be borne by the Member.

Construction of a replacement tie-in from the Member’s water infrastructure to the GVWD’s new replacement infrastructure at a Direct Connection Point will be carried out by the GVWD and the cost of all work incurred by the GVWD associated with the construction of the replacement tie-in will be borne by the GVWD.

Member Request for Disconnection

A Member must apply to disconnect a connection from the System. A Member request to disconnect a connection from the System must be submitted to the GVWD by email to the Water Connection Request email address found on the Metro Vancouver website and must include the following information:

- The reason why the connection is no longer needed; and
- A drawing showing the location and details of the connection that is no longer needed.

The GVWD will consider the request under the following criteria:

- The connection will be permanently disconnected and will not be reinstated;
- The act of disconnecting a Member connection from the System will be carried out by the GVWD with associated costs borne by the GVWD; and
- All remaining work, including associated financial responsibilities, will be borne by the Member.

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In collaboration and consultation with the Member, subject to the GVWD's existing agreements with the Member and with adequate notice, the Member's connection will be disconnected from the System or transferred to another of the GVWD's infrastructure, when the GVWD plans to relocate or abandon an infrastructure asset as authorized by Section 5(1)(d) of the Act. In instances of a transfer, the process outlined in the Member Request for Connection section above must be followed.

Non-Member Requests for Connection

Connections between the System and Non-Member water infrastructure which meet the requirements and policy considerations below may be considered and approved as directed by the Board. However, an application may be rejected if a regional interest is not identified or if other policy considerations are not met. Non-Members may initiate a request for connection to the System by completing, to the satisfaction of the GVWD, and submitting a "Non-Member Application for Direct Water Connection" form to the GVWD.

When considering a new Non-Member connection, the following requirements must be met:

- Proposed connection(s) must be for uses that are compliant with local and regional plans;
- Extending the service area of the GVWD should not result in an additional financial burden on GVWD or Members; and
- The construction of the proposed tie-in to the GVWD's System at a Direct Connection Point will be carried out by the GVWD with costs borne by the Non-Member, and all remaining work, including associated financial responsibilities, will be borne by the Non-Member.

In addition to the requirements above, the following policy considerations will be evaluated before a decision on the connection request can be made:

- Technical and operational considerations, including whether current infrastructure design can meet present and future capacity, whether there are issues concerning technical and operational feasibility that cannot be addressed, and whether there is a valid assessment process to estimate future capacities;
- Land use compliance, including compliance with existing municipal and regional plans ensures assessment of current and future infrastructure needs as well as land use compatibility;
- Service levels, including ensuring the extension of utility services does not degrade service levels of existing serviced areas;
- Local and community interests, including considerations for the community's concerns regarding extension of utility services to the adjacent area, and whether these concerns can be addressed;
- Legal considerations, including risk allocation between the GVWD and the Non-Member in connection with the supply of water; and
- Regional interests, including the future expansion of regional infrastructure.

If a Non-Member request meets the requirements and policy considerations, and the application is approved by the Board, a connection process will be initiated by the GVWD. Key features of the process will include:

- Joint decision-making fostered by information exchange at all stages between all parties including the applicant Non-Member, affected Member(s), and the GVWD;

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- Thorough and detailed financial analysis and agreement to ensure all parties understand and agree to their financial responsibilities;
- Specific timeframes to ensure an efficient and predictable process. Timelines for receipt, review, and analysis will enable all parties to target specific areas of interest and to estimate the duration of their participation;
- Staged review and completion process to provide flexibility in relation to the complexity of the connection; and
- The GVWD and the Non-Member entering into a mutually acceptable agreement which outlines servicing terms.

Non-Member Request for Disconnection

A Non-Member must apply to disconnect a connection to the System, following the same process as a Member request for disconnection.

Private Connections

Under exceptional circumstances in the past, the GVWD has approved requests from Member jurisdictions for Private connections to the System, however the GVWD does not permit any new Private connections to the System. Therefore, any new requests for a Private connection will be denied. When the GVWD or a Member identifies an existing Private connection, it must notify the other party through Member representatives of the Regional Engineers Advisory Committee and enter into discussion with the other party regarding future plans for the connection.

Any Private connections to a water main owned by a Member identified as regional water infrastructure as defined in the *Transfer of Water Facilities Policy* (Policy No. UT-005) must be removed prior to, or as part of, the process of transferring the infrastructure to the GVWD.

Related Policies:

Water Supply Pressure for GVWD Members and Non-Members Policy (Policy No. UT-006), October 24, 2014

Transfer of Water Facilities Policy (Policy No. UT-005), February 24, 2017