

SUN PRAIRIE PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASSESSMENT FOR LOST OR DAMAGED MATERIALS

POLICY

I. Purpose

To establish guidelines for assessment of lost or damaged materials checked out on library cards.

II. Card Holder Responsibility

(A) As stated in the library card application, cardholders are responsible for material drawn on the library card issued in their name, including material drawn on it by others with or without the holder's consent unless the holder has previously reported the loss of their card to the library.

(B) Until the library is notified of a lost or stolen card, a library card is valid and its owner is responsible for all use of the card and for any lost or overdue materials and fees incurred. In the case of children, the parent or legal guardian who signed the library card application is the responsible party.

(C) Once the library has been notified that a card has been lost or stolen, that card will be invalidated and a block will be placed on further withdrawals; the owner will not be responsible for further items withdrawn on that card.

III. Assessment for Lost or Damaged Materials

(A) The amount assessed by the library for lost or damaged materials checked out with a valid card will either the city invoice price or an exact replacement as verified by the library director, and a processing fee. If the total amount in arrears is less than \$500, these discussions will be held with the appropriate library staff

(B) If the amount assessed for material withdrawn prior to the reporting of a lost or stolen card exceeds \$500, the cardholder may petition the Library Board for a reduction of the charges over the \$500. For example, if the total charges are \$800, the cardholder must pay the initial \$500, but may petition for a reduction of the \$300. The cardholder must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the board that these materials were withdrawn without the cardholder's permission, and that every effort was made to report the loss of the card to the library in a timely manner.

(C) The board reserves the right to judge each incident on its merits, and may choose to hold the patron responsible for all lost materials and fees. However, it is recommended that if the board decides that the patron should be relieved of some costs, the patron may be assessed no less than 50 percent of charges over the initial \$500 amount. For example, if the total charges are \$800, it is recommended that the Board charge the patron no less than \$650 ($\$500 + \$300/2 = \650).

(D) If any losses are recovered through municipal liability insurance or through the return of lost materials, half of the recovered amount will be applied to the total charge assessed to the card holder. For example, if the total charges are \$800, it is recommended that the Board charge the patron no less than \$612.50 ($\$800 - \$150 \text{ recovered} / 2 = \725 ; $\$500 + \$225 / 2 = \$612.50$).

IV. Responsibility for Collection Costs

- (A) **The library utilizes a private firm to assist with retrieving collections over \$50.00.**
- (B) The patron is responsible for costs incurred by the library in collecting such fines and charges. Fees and fines may be waived at the board's discretion. All decisions of the board are final.

Adopted March 11, 2004

Amended June 10, 2004

Reviewed & amended May 8, 2008