

CITY OF DENTON UTILITY BILLING ADJUSTMENTS POLICY

1. **Policy and Purpose.** Section 12.02 of the City of Denton's Charter specifically states that the utilities shall provide no free services. However, it is the policy of the City of Denton to make adjustments to customer utility bills where said adjustment is necessary to correct billing errors, to correct errors due to equipment failure, or to fairly apply the rates and rules of the City's utilities. The purpose of this policy is to continue to deliver effective service by enabling staff to quickly and accurately respond to customer requests for adjustments to bills while ensuring compliance with the Charter. The utilities covered by this policy include electric, water, wastewater (including storm drainage), and solid waste and recycling, and rates, including miscellaneous rates, related to each currently in place by ordinance.
2. **Responsibility.** The Customer Service Department shall receive requests and notify the customer of the determination of the adjustment. The Customer Service Department may initiate billing adjustment requests as they become aware of such issues during the normal operations of the department.
3. **Adjustments Allowed.** The Customer Service Department is authorized to make adjustments to customer utility accounts, without City Council action, in the following cases:
 - a. **Billing Errors:** Where an error has occurred that results in an inaccurate bill being sent to a customer, the Customer Service Department shall correct the error as soon as discovered, whether by the customer or by the Customer Service Department. These adjustments include, but are not limited to, data recording, entry errors, services provided but not billed, services not provided but billed, and meter malfunctions and meter failures, if tested and found to be inaccurate.
 - b. **Penalties, Interest and Fees; Release of Lien:** Where a customer incurs late penalties, interest and fees (i.e. tampering, delivery, etc.), and before a lien has been filed, the Customer Service Department may reduce or remove the late penalties, interest and fees based on account/customer circumstances and payment history. If a lien has been filed, the Customer Service Department may only reduce or remove interest; it may not reduce or remove late penalties or fees. The lien may then be released after the payment of late penalties and fees.
 - c. **Wastewater:** Where a customer experiences extraordinary water consumption during a billing period due to break in customer owned plumbing, equipment malfunction, etc. and said water did not enter the wastewater system, staff may adjust the wastewater charge to an

amount that is more typical of that customer's normal usage. Customer's may request an adjustment for usage billed during the averaging months of December, January and February for pool fills if a customer has obtained a read before and after the pool fill from a City of Denton Water Department authorized employee

- d. ~~Hidden Water Leaks: Where a customer requests in writing of any leak of a water pipe or water line caused by deterioration, corrosion natural forces or other similar cause which is not immediately and reasonably detectable from the surface of the ground. The term "hidden water leak" does not include any leak to a customer's fixtures, or appliances, or equipment. Included in the term "fixtures, appliances, or equipment" are leaks related to the following, without limitation: a sprinkler system, or washing machine, or water heater, or lavatory, or toilet. In order to qualify for a hidden water leak adjustment, the customer must submit a Water Leak Adjustment form and provide applicable receipts indicating the leak has been repaired~~Where a customer has experienced water loss due to a leak, staff may adjust an account as authorized by Section 26-128 of the City of Denton's Code of Ordinances. -
4. Adjustment Period. The City shall also have the right to provide billing adjustments, consisting of back-billing or back credits, on prior billing for a period up to, but no greater than two (2) years. These prior period billing adjustments must be based on actual meter readings, verifiable evidence, or proration based on actual readings.
5. Adjustments Not Allowed.
 - a. All utilities except wastewater: The City will not consider adjustments made in any monthly bill because of any water or electric high usage, leaks, or loss, unless otherwise stated in this policy.
 - b. Wastewater. Adjustments to wastewater charges for customers who claim normal outdoor water usage where the water used did not enter the wastewater system unless otherwise stated in above approved adjustments.
6. Requests for Adjustments. The Customer Service Department may require the any request for a utility billing adjustment to be in writing. Written requests shall state the name of the account holder, service address, contact information, reason for the requested adjustment and any applicable documents. The customer shall provide all information requested by the City and deemed necessary to make a determination on the request. When a customer makes a written request for an adjustment, the amount under consideration for adjustment shall not be payable unless otherwise requested until a determination on the adjustment is made. All

other amounts not in dispute shall be due according to the respective bill.

7. Response; How Adjustment Made. The Customer Service Department shall respond to the written request for adjustment within ten (10) business days after receiving from the customer all the information necessary to make a determination on the request. When an adjustment is made, a credit for the amount of the adjustment, including any sales tax shall be made to the customer's account.
8. Reporting. The Customer Service Department shall maintain records of all adjustments made on accounts.