



MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 7, 2018
TO: Public Utilities Board
FROM: Tiffany Thomson
SUBJECT: Water Leak Adjustment Process

During the April 23, 2018, Public Utilities Board meeting, a question was raised regarding when bills are forgiven for water leaks. While utility bills are not forgiven, a process is in place to make approved adjustments based off of City ordinance. The memorandums purpose is to clarify the process followed by Customer Service on water leak adjustments. In accordance with Denton, TX Code of Ordinances 2005-092, Sec. 26-128, a request for water leak adjustment is offered as outlined below for residential and commercial customers:

1. Customers can contact Utilities Customer Service and advise they encountered a water leak and make a request for an adjustment to their account.
2. The Customer Service Representative will inquire what type of leak occurred and the time frame discovered.
3. The customer will be provided a Request for Water/Sewer Adjustment form to complete and provide copies of the receipt(s) showing the leak was repaired.

- Per City ordinance, the request must be within 30 days of the due date for which the adjustment is sought:

Sec. 26-128 C-Written request. Any customer requesting an adjustment shall make the request in writing to the customer service department on the form provided. A request for an adjustment based upon a hidden water leak shall state the location and cause of the leak, the date it was first discovered, the person or entity making the repair and include copies of itemized paid repair bills. All requests shall be submitted no later than thirty (30) days of the due date of the monthly bill for which an adjustment is sought.

- Type of leak must qualify under the ordinance:

Sec. 26-128 A-Hidden water leak means 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"

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are leaks related to the following, without limitation: a sprinkler system, or washing machine, or water heater, or lavatory, or toilet.

4. The Customer Service Representative will review the customer's usage history on the account. It must fall within the time frame listed in the below ordinance.

- Customers usage must show to be a substantial increase in water based off of the ordinance:

Sec. 26-128 A-Substantial increase in water usage means an increase in the amount of water metered and billed at the customer's service location for the billing month for which the adjustment is requested which is in excess of fifty (50) percent of the greatest normal usage for that service location.

5. If the account qualifies for a water leak adjustment, the adjustment is allowed as follows:

(d) *Adjustment allowed.* A request for an adjustment in a monthly bill for water and sewer usage shall be granted if it meets all of the following conditions:

- (1) A request, with all required information, is filed within the required time, and
- (2) The requested adjustment is for a monthly billing in which there was a substantial increase in water usage resulting from a hidden water leak, and
- (3) There has not been an adjustment made in the monthly billing for water and sewer usage at the same service location within the prior thirteen (13) months under the provisions of this section; and
- (4) Previous adjustments were not given at the same service location for leaks of the same nature as leaks which are the subject of a claim under this section.

(e) *Amount of adjustment.* If an adjustment is granted under this section, the customer's account shall be credited by billing the customer for the excess usage of water and sewer at the service location for the month in which the adjustment is granted at a reduced rate established by the city council and which rate is on file in the office of the city secretary.

6. If the leak affected the waste water charges, the Customer Service Representative will make adjustments to the waste water billing using the greatest normal usage to calculate the average or waste water charges (see ordinance below):

Greatest normal usage means that amount of water metered at the customer's service location in the billing month of greatest consumption during the previous twelve (12) consecutive billing months or, if there is less than twelve (12) prior billing months, the greatest consumption during any prior billing month, prorated to the number of days in the billing month for which the adjustment is requested.

In addition to the aforementioned, Customer Service will work directly with the Water department on outlier customer scenarios that may arise to determine the best course of action contingent on the situation.

City of Denton Utilities Customer Service

Request for Water/Sewer Adjustment

Account Number _____ Date _____

Service Address _____ Phone _____

Customer Name _____ Customer Number _____

Subject Month/Year _____ Actual Billed Usage _____

Normal Month/Year _____ PR Greatest Normal Usage _____

EXCESS Usage _____

Any Customer billed for a substantial increase in water usage (50% more than the "greatest usage" during prior 13 months) during any **ONE** billing month due to a hidden leak, may request that the **EXCESS** usage be billed at a reduced rate of:

\$0.70 per 1000 gallons for WATER and \$0.50 per 1000 gallons for SEWER
Only **ONE** adjustment for **ONE** month's billing will be granted in a 13 month period.

Hidden Water Leak - Cause of substantial increase in water usage.

Date Leak Discovered _____

Location & Description of Leak _____

Repaired By _____ Date _____

(PLEASE ATTACH COPIES OF REPAIR and MATERIAL BILLS)

OFFICE USE ONLY

WATER
gallons _____
X \$ _____/1000 gallons
= \$ _____
+ \$ _____
= \$ _____

NORMAL USAGE CHARGE
Prorated Greatest Normal Usage
Normal Usage Rate
Normal Usage Charge
Facility Charge
Total Normal Usage Charge

SEWER
_____ gallons
X \$ _____/1000 gallons
= \$ _____
+ \$ _____
= \$ _____

=====

gallons _____
X\$.0007 (\$0.70/1000)
= \$ _____

EXCESS USAGE CHARGE
Excess Usage
Excess Usage Rate
Excess Usage Charge

_____ gallons
X\$.0005 (\$0.50/1000)
= \$ _____

Total Adjusted Charges	Water \$ _____	+	Sewer \$ _____	=	\$ _____
Less Billed Charges	(\$ _____)	+	(\$ _____)	=	(\$ _____)
Equal Total Adjustment	\$ _____	+	\$ _____	=	\$ _____