



## **Administrative Guidelines for Extraordinary Water Use Billing Adjustments**

Resolution Number 24-056 authorizes the Finance Director, or a designee of the Finance Director, to make adjustments to extraordinary water charges in the event of hidden water leaks, undetected water line breaks, unexplained water usage of at least five times the average use, or circumstances that are demonstrated to be beyond the reasonable control of the account holder. Such adjustments shall be made in accordance with written guidelines reviewed by the Water Commission and approved by the Finance Director and Public Works Director. These Administrative Guidelines were reviewed by the Water Commission on April 18, 2024.

### **Section A. General Rules and Requirements**

1. Adjustments are not allowed for intentional water use, such as filling of swimming pools, establishment of landscaping, or similar voluntary uses of water.
2. Adjustments reduce but do not eliminate charges and any adjustment shall not result in a cost per hundred cubic feet (HCF) that is less than the lowest unit rate for residential customers (i.e. the Tier 1 rate).
3. Accounts that have an active Notice of Violation of Water Use Regulations or which are otherwise violating any Water Use Regulations or other related policies are not eligible.
4. The water usage must be greater than the average usage on the account to qualify as extraordinary usage. Average usage is equal to the average of the previous twelve months usage before the extraordinary usage.
5. A customer may only be granted an extraordinary water use billing adjustment once every five years.
6. Participation in the Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) program is required. Hourly water use data provided by the AMI system can facilitate early detection and customer notification of potential water leaks/extraordinary usage. Customers who choose to disconnect (opt-out) from the AMI system by having the meter transmitting unit removed are not eligible.
7. Customers must subscribe to leak alerts and be registered for the City's AMI customer engagement portal (WaterSmart), which allows the customer to be notified early of a possible leak or high usage event. If a customer was unsubscribed from leak alert notifications at the time of the extraordinary water use event, they may receive a billing adjustment only after they re-subscribe to leak alerts from WaterSmart.
8. Customers may appeal any denials to the Assistant Finance Director. Any denial by the Assistant Finance Director may be appealed to the Finance Director. Decisions by the Finance Director are not subject to appeal.
9. Submittal of inaccurate information may result in the adjustment being revoked and all charges being added back to the account.

## **Section B. Application Requirements**

1. An Extraordinary Water Use Billing Adjustment Application (Application) must be submitted within 60 days of the relevant billing date.
2. Water Leak: If the extraordinary water usage is caused by an identified water leak or similar cause, copies of receipts for labor and materials documenting steps to repair or prevent recurrence (invoice from plumber, gardener, or receipts from retail store) must be submitted with the Application.
3. Water Theft: If the extraordinary water usage is due to water theft, a police report documenting the water theft must be submitted with the Application.
4. Unexplained Usage: If the cause of the extraordinary water usage is not an identified water leak issue, or the result of water theft, the unexplained use must be at least five times the customer's average water use, over the last twelve months, for the account to qualify for a billing adjustment. The customer shall document their due diligence in investigating the cause and/or abatement of the issue in the Application.

## **Section C. Billing Adjustments**

1. The volume of extraordinary water use eligible for an adjustment is equal to that extraordinary month's use less the monthly average use as defined in Section A.
2. An adjustment for the extraordinary water use will be calculated as the difference between the billed tier rate for that use and the Tier 1 residential rate. No adjustment will be provided for Utility User Tax (UUT) charges or wastewater charges.
3. No more than two consecutive months' billings related to the leak incident may be adjusted. No more than one consecutive month's billing related to the theft or unexplained incident may be adjusted.
4. No billing adjustment will be credited until the account no longer shows continuous (every hour) water use indicating a leak.

Approved by:



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Keith DeMartini  
Finance Director



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Clifford M. Maurer, P.E.  
Public Works Director