



WESTMINSTER DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
P.O. BOX 376 WESTMINSTER, MA 01473 - Tel. (978) 874-5572

Commissioners
Lorraine J. Emerson, Chairman
Vance A. Butterfield
Scott H. Ryder

Joshua W. Hall, P.E.
Director of Public Works

POLICY ON WATER & SEWER ADJUSTMENTS

It is the policy of the Town of Westminister not to grant adjustments to water & sewer bills unless the problem rests with the Town's system. However, the Town recognizes that a high bill resulting from accidental, unpreventable water release can present financial hardship to a customer. While most water releases are preventable, there are certain circumstances when an accidental water release cannot be reasonably prevented. The intent of this policy is to establish an abatement procedure to cover these circumstances

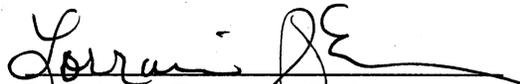
Adjustment Determination Procedure:

1. All customer requests to abate any portion of a metered water bill that is unusually high due to unpreventable or undetected leakage shall be reviewed by DPW staff and the Public Works Commission (PWC) on a case-by-case basis. In order to qualify for abatement, a customer's excess consumption must exceed greater than 100% above their normal average consumption for the same billing period that the leak occurs. The customer must also prove that the deficiency responsible for leakage has been repaired or corrected. This policy only applies to leaks that have occurred in the six (6) month period preceding the most recent bill. The PWC, shall consider granting an abatement to that account of up to 75% of the bill, not to exceed the customers normal billing amount for the same previous four billing periods
2. In the event that a customer cannot determine the source or cause of the abnormally high consumption, the customer is required to hire a private licensed plumber to assist the customer in trying to determine said source or cause. If the plumber is unable to determine the source or cause of the abnormally high consumption, the Town can only speculate that the customer has located and repaired or corrected said source. If the customer claims that said source never existed, the DPW shall test the meter and make an adjustment to the bill in accordance with any standard requirements for meters found to be over-recording. If the meter test reveals an accurate or under-recording meter, the customer shall be held responsible for the entire bill plus the cost of meter testing and shipping/handling.
3. In the event the source or cause of the abnormally high consumption is related to a leak due to customer negligence such as the failure to maintain internal (private) plumbing fixtures in good repair and/or protect plumbing from freezing, the customer shall be held responsible for the entire bill.
4. In the event the abnormally high consumption has occurred due to excessive water release whose origin is unknown or was caused by a significant unintentional release of water due to leakage, as determined by DPW staff and

the PWC, the PWC shall consider granting an abatement to that account of up to 75% of the bill, not to exceed the customers normal billing amount for the same previous four billing periods.

6. In the event that a portion of a water leak is covered by the customers "Homeowners Insurance Policy", the customer may be required to submit a written statement from their homeowner's insurance policy provider stating what portion, if any, of the leak is covered by insurance. The PWC will then decide what if any amount can or will be abated.
7. The Public Works Commission may revise this policy from time to time as may be proposed upon a majority vote of the Commissioners at an open public meeting.

Approved by: TOWN OF WESTMINSTER
PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION


Lorraine J. Emerson, Chairman


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