



Water Leak or Unexpected Excessive Usage Adjustment Policy

1. Customer must request adjustment within 60 days of being billed by City.
2. Upon receiving customer's request for adjustment, the Finance Department will review the account history and work with the customer to determine whether the high usage is caused by a leak or by a qualifying Unexpected Excessive Usage event. Water Leaks that qualify for adjustments typically happen in the line between the water meter and the customer's home. Unexpected Excessive Usage adjustments are allowed when high consumption is caused by an issue the customer was unaware of until they received their water bill. A stuck toilet in a vacant home and a washing machine with a leak that has produced no visible signs of damage are two examples of events that would qualify for unexpected excessive usage adjustments. Unexpected Excessive Usage adjustments will also be allowed in the event of vandalism and / or theft. Adjustments will **not** be allowed when high usage is caused by a customer's water usage habits. Hot tubs and watering plants during dry weather are two examples of water usage habits that can be expected to use a significant amount of water and do not qualify for an adjustment.
3. To qualify for an adjustment, the cause of excess usage or leak must be identified and repaired within 30 days of discovery, notification, or utility billing reflecting the high usage, and customer's water usage must have returned to expected levels. The customer is required to provide contractor invoices and / or repair receipts to City in order to prove leak or faulty appliance has been repaired.
4. If it is determined the high usage qualifies for a leak or unexpected excessive usage adjustment, the adjusted bill will be calculated as follows:
 - Finance will review customer's billing history and calculate customer's average usage for the period in question. Up to 6 years of customer history will be considered if records are available.
 - The average usage amount will be subtracted from the high bill in question.
 - The remaining amount will be divided by 2 to create the adjustment amount. In effect, the City is splitting the cost of the excess usage with the customer.
 - The adjustment amount will then be subtracted from the high bill to give the customer their balance.

The below example demonstrates the calculation of a leak adjustment if a leak caused a bill of \$500 when the average usage during that period is \$50:

Bill amount (caused by leak)	\$ 500.00
Average usage amount	\$ 50.00
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<i>Amount of Excessive Usage (bill amount - average usage amount)</i>	\$ 450.00

**Divide amount of Excessive Usage
by 2 = adjustment amount** **\$ 225.00**

Subtract adjustment amount from initial bill amount =	\$ 275.00
Adjusted bill total	

5. If the customer’s chooses to take the leak adjustment the City will mail a leak adjustment affidavit. This affidavit states the amount of the adjustment and confirms that the customer understands the leak adjustment policy and conditions. This affidavit must be returned within 45 days of the date on the affidavit. If the affidavit is not returned within the 45 days the leak adjustment amount will not be applied.
6. One adjustment every 5 years per **owner** of property is allowed. If an adjustment is made and another owner assumes ownership of the property before the adjustment is fully paid, then the remaining balance of the adjustment must be paid in full. For purposes of adjustments, the 5 year clock is reset when the property is sold to an unrelated party. The 5 year clock does not reset due to a change of name on an account **without** a sale (i.e. husband changes name on account to wife) or due to a property being transferred to a family trust.
7. The City will allow customers to make payments on adjusted bills. The payment plan terms are detailed below:

Adjusted bill amount	Minimum payment plan terms
\$101- \$1,000	12 months
\$1,001- \$2,000	24 months
\$2,001- \$3,000	36 months
\$3,001- \$4,000	48 months
\$4,001 and up	60 months

8. If the customer wishes to appeal the Finance Department’s decision, they must do so in writing to the City Manager.