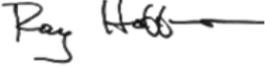


Title Leak Adjustments	Number DR-2011-007
Responsibility Customer Service Branch	Supersedes CS-103 (specific sections only)
SPU Director's Approval  Ray Hoffman	Effective Date February 1, 2011

This rule supersedes only those portions of CS-103 (effective 11/1/2005) pertaining to leak adjustments AND subcategories 1A to 1E, 3A, 3B, 6A to 6C in Appendix 7.1 of CS-103 (procedure manual). All other sections of CS-103 remain in effect.

1. PURPOSE

This Director's Rule establishes the administrative process for issuing billing adjustments to a retail customer's water and sewer utilities bill due to underground domestic and fire service water line leaks.

2. REFERENCES

- SMC 21.04.310, Owner's responsibility for maintenance
- SMC 21.04.320, Wasting water and unlawful uses
- SMC 21.28.100, Adjustment to wastewater charges
- SMC 21.04.410, Accounts of charges and penalties

3. DEFINITIONS

Customer: The owner of a premise within the City of Seattle retail distribution service area.

Documented request: The leak-adjustment application form which must be submitted to SPU by the retail customer.

High consumption: A premise's higher-than-average water and sewer consumption as evidenced by a customer's utility bill.

Underground leak: A leak in the portion of the buried domestic water or fire service line from the City of Seattle service connection to the foundation wall or shutoff valve, whichever comes first, of the retail customer's property.

Premise: The retail customer's property on which the leak occurred.

Retail: Residential and commercial properties within the City of Seattle's retail water distribution service area not including wholesale water customers.

Unusual Circumstances: A set of circumstances where the retail customer was unable to repair the underground leak and request an adjustment to his/her Utilities bill within six months of the receipt of the initial high consumption bill due to unusual, compelling or other reasons beyond his/her control. Unusual circumstances must be approved by the Deputy Director of Customer Service or designee. The customer is responsible for providing satisfactory evidence to support the unusual circumstances.

4. RULE

A. Requirements for Leak Adjustments

A retail customer is eligible for an adjustment to a water and sewer service bill due to an underground leak on the premises after the following requirements have been completed:

- 1) The retail customer submits a documented request for an adjustment due to high water and sewer consumption on the utility bill.
- 2) SPU inspects and approves repair, replacement or cut and cap of an underground domestic or fire service line prior to backfilling.
- 3) The repair, replacement or cut-and-cap of an underground domestic or fire service line is completed within six months of receipt of the initial high utility bill unless the customer can prove unusual circumstances. A delay of repairs and notification to SPU beyond the time periods under this section will be considered a violation of SMC 21.04.320 and SMC 21.04.310.

B. Administering the Leak Adjustment

Once approved by the Deputy Director of Customer Service or designee, an adjustment to the utility bill due to the underground leak is administered as follows:

- 1) One-time-only adjustment during the ownership of said premise
- 2) A 50 percent adjustment to the water consumption above the average consumption for that season for up to two utility bill periods.
- 3) A 100 percent adjustment to the sewer consumption above the average consumption for that season for up to two utility bill periods.
- 4) Bill adjustments based on the adjusted consumption amounts for water and sewer will be administered and the amount conveyed to the customer within 60 days of meeting all requirements listed above.

C. Non-eligibility for Leak Adjustments

A retail customer is not eligible for an adjustment to water and sewer service bills due to circumstances caused by, but not limited to, the following:

- Toilet leaks
- Irrigation system leaks
- Hot water and expansion tank leaks
- Hose bib (spigot) leaks
- Indoor plumbing and appliances, including faucets and radiant floor heat
- Pools, water features and their plumbing lines
- Discolored water complaints due to flushing
- Theft or vandalism

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. SPU is responsible for

- Professional, courteous and timely response to a retail customer's request for an adjustment.
- Uniform and consistent application of the leak adjustment policy and procedure
- Educational outreach to the public on how to check for a leak.

- Review, calculation and posting of an approved leak adjustment to billing system.
- Providing customers the ability to seek redress of final decisions through SPU policy CS-104, Customer Billing and Service Disputes within the Customer Service Branch-Retail.
- Recusal by a SPU employee from approving, calculating or posting any leak adjustment where the employee is related to the retail customer or may have a financial interest in the premise, or under any other conflict of interest policy that may be in effect for SPU employees from time to time.

B. Customer is responsible for

- A documented request of an underground leak to SPU within the specified time period.
- Requesting an SPU inspection of the repair, replacement and/or cut and cap of the water line prior to backfilling.
- Paying all undisputed water service charges or premise will be subject to shut off notification.