

Title Sewer Maximum Recalculation	Number CS-310.5	Rev. no. 0
Responsibility Customer Service Branch	Supersedes N/A	Pages 3
SPU Director's Approval  Ray Hoffman	Effective Date August 15, 2012	

1. PURPOSE

In accordance with SMC 21.28.080 (A), during the months from November 1 through April 30, a residential customer's wastewater charges are based on the actual metered water consumed at the premise. During the months from May 1 through October 31 wastewater charges are calculated based on the residential customer's average winter water consumption, which is called the Sewer Maximum. May through October residential wastewater charges are based on this Sewer Maximum to avoid levying wastewater charges on higher summer water usage typically attributable to irrigation and landscaping, flows from which do not enter the wastewater system.

This Director's Rule establishes the administrative process for using prior water consumption records, or average residential consumption, to calculate the Sewer Maximum in cases where the residential sewer customer has experienced unusually high winter water usage that does not accurately reflect the customer's normal consumption patterns, provided that such usage does not continue into the May 1 to October 31 period.

2. DEFINITIONS

Sewer Maximum: The average winter water consumption from the first four-month billing period that falls between November 1 and April 30, used as the basis for residential wastewater charges for the six months from May 1 through October 31.

Premise: The residential customer's property at which the higher-than-average winter water consumption occurred.

Residential: Single-family, duplex properties, or any premise billed with Sewer Maximum during May 1 to October 31 period within the City of Seattle's retail water distribution service area not including wholesale water customers

Unusually high winter water consumption: A premise's higher-than-average winter water consumption as evidenced by a residential customer's utility bill. For purposes of this rule, unusually high winter water consumption must be at least 50 percent above the previous year's average winter water consumption for the residential customer(s) at that premise. If there is

insufficient water consumption history to perform this calculation, unusually high winter water consumption will be defined as at least 50 percent above the current SPU residential average.

3. RULE

A. Notification and Verification of Unusually High Winter Water Consumption

- 1) If a period of unusually high winter water consumption occurs, the customer must notify SPU no later than six months following the billing date which includes the unusually high spike in winter water consumption.
- 2) SPU will review the customer's consumption records and determine if there is satisfactory evidence of the following:
 - Unusually high winter water consumption for the customer, with "unusually high" defined as in Section 2 of this Directors Rule.
 - The unusually high consumption did not or will not continue into May through October of that year, as evidenced by water usage patterns returning to normal levels for that customer, or by other documented evidence acceptable to SPU.

B. Administering the Sewer Maximum Recalculation

- 1) If there is satisfactory evidence of unusually high winter water consumption, and if the unusually high consumption did not or will not continue into May through October of that year, the Branch Deputy Director of Customer Service, or designee, will approve a Sewer Maximum recalculation.
- 2) SPU will set the Sewer Maximum that will be the basis for that year's sewer charges from May 1 through October 31 at the prior year's Sewer Maximum. If there is insufficient water consumption history to calculate the Sewer Maximum, or the previous year's consumption is not a reliable indicator of the residential household's normal usage, then SPU will set the Sewer Maximum at the current SPU residential average.
- 3) The Sewer Maximum recalculation will be documented on the customer account notes in the Consolidated Customer Service System (CCSS).

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

SPU is responsible for:

- Professional, courteous and timely response to a residential customer's notification of an unusually high spike in winter water consumption.
- Uniform and consistent application of the sewer maximum recalculation procedure.
- Reviewing, calculating, and posting of an approved recalculation to the 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 an SPU employee from approving, calculating or posting any recalculation where the employee is related to the residential 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.

Customer is responsible for:

- A timely, documented notification of unusually high winter water usage that did not or will not continue into May through October of that year.
- Paying all undisputed sewer charges.

5. AUTHORITY/REFERENCES

- SMC 21.28.080 Calculation of residential wastewater volume charge
- SMC 21.28.100 Adjustments to wastewater volume charge
- SMC 3.32.020 Adoption of Rules