



BILLING ADJUSTMENT

STANDARD BILL ADJUSTMENT

From time to time, adjustments will need to be made to various accounts. In situations of leakage or other errors, if a customer is overcharged, they are entitled to a bill review by the customer care department.

The bill may be adjusted by the customer care department meeting the following criteria:

1. Billing accounts based on inaccurate meter readings, provided that a new meter reading has been made by appropriate personnel.
2. Errors created by the computer system.
3. Data entry errors (clerical)
4. Bills received late due to postal delay may have the penalty amount adjusted.
5. Proven malfunction of the water meter
6. Operational errors

Adjustments of this type shall be approved by the Director of Finance and presented to the Board of Commissioners for approval by the Executive Director. The Billing Adjustment Form will be completed for all adjustments; this form is made a part of policy and procedure for adjustments. The completed forms shall be filed with the Customer Care Department and retained until disposed of in accordance with law.

BILLING ADJUSTMENTS DUE TO LEAK

You may be eligible to receive a credit on your utility bill depending upon the nature of a water leak, and only if the water due to the leak has not flowed into the sanitary sewer system. If the water leak is determined to be your responsibility, you should repair the water leak immediately, and submit documentation of the repair (including receipts for labor, supplies and equipment) to the WMUA office along with the completed Water Leak Adjustment Request Form.

While a leak adjustment is being processed, customers are responsible for the entire amount due on their utility bills within the normal payment period. If payment is not made, the customer is subject to all collection and termination of service processes and procedures for delinquent accounts.

For water utilities, a common issue is leakage. Maintenance and repair of water lines on private property is the responsibility of the private landowner, as is any water lost due to leaks or breakage. However, many utilities will adjust a high bill due to leakage if the customer had no knowledge of the leak and fixes it promptly.

After all documentation has been received by the WMUA, a determination will be made if the leak is adjustable or not, and a letter will be sent to the mailing address on file with the WMUA stating approval or disapproval of the leak and the details. Requests will be reviewed and a determination made as quickly as possible, but please note that this could take up to 30 days. The amount and time period to which the adjustment can be applied varies depending on the nature of the water leak. Any request for water leak adjustments must be made within 30 days of the water leak repair.

Hidden Leaks

An adjustment can be made to accounts that have excessive usage due to a water leak under the following circumstances.

- The leak that was hidden is now repaired

Please read the following before submitting a request for an adjustment. The Water Leak Adjustment Request form is available at the Willingboro Municipal Utilities Authority office located at 433 John F. Kennedy Way, Willingboro, NJ, by calling 609-877-2900 extension 115 or email customersupport@wmua.info and downloadable from the website www.wmua.info.

Adjustments on water/wastewater charges will NOT be made on the following:

1. Dripping faucets, leaking commodes/toilets
2. More than one occurrence per an 18-month period
3. Loss due to theft, vandalism, construction damage
4. Unoccupied or vacant properties are not covered under this policy. Resolution of these instances is the responsibility of the account holder or property owner
5. Usage above the customer's average monthly consumption is due to seasonal usage (swimming pools, irrigation systems and watering of lawns)
6. Bills claimed to be lost or not received
7. Homes under construction/major renovation
8. Customer did not take immediate steps after detection of. Water leak to prevent further loss of water
9. Did not provide proof of the repair (receipts for any material for services related to that repair)
10. Meter was tampered with in any way

The Customer Care and Finance departments shall be under no obligation to extend the discount or due date or the time for paying the bills because the customer disputes the amount of the bill.

Only one adjustment per twelve (12) month period will be allowed. The adjustment will be based on an average of the usage over the previous twelve (12) month period.

All requests for billing adjustments must be received in writing (postal mail or email) or in person at the WMUA office during regular business hours. A Water Leak Adjustment Request Form must be completed for each adjustment stating the necessary information about the water leak and verifying the water leak repair. The customer or his/her designee shall file a written report of the customer billing adjustment and the action of the staff regarding the adjustment.

APPLICATION FOR WATER LEAK ADJUSTMENT

The Willingboro Municipal Utilities Authority allows a Bill Adjustment on customer bills for qualifying water leaks. To be eligible, adjustments must meet one (1) of the six (6) adjustment criteria, and requested within 30 days of the date of the WMUA bill indicating a possible water leak. **IMPORTANT:** Please be aware that a large water leak may result in a water bill that could total SEVERAL THOUSAND DOLLARS! Small water leaks are typically less, but many small water leaks are often a sign of a problem water line and indicate that larger and more expensive water leaks are likely to happen in the future. Because each circumstance is unique, we strongly suggest that you contact your repair provider for professional advice given your particular circumstance.

If you determine you qualify, please complete and submit the Water Leak Adjustment Request Form, and return it to Willingboro Municipal Utilities Authority's office as soon as possible with the necessary receipts or support documentation. **NO ACTION CAN BE TAKEN TO PROCESS YOUR ADJUSTMENT UNTIL INFORMATION ON THE COMPLETED APPLICATION FORM IS RECEIVED AND ADJUSTMENT IS APPROVED BY WMUA.**

METER FAILURE

Since meters can, and do, occasionally fail, it is important to establish payment procedures when a meter reading cannot be used. A common practice is to charge based on an average of the previous twelve (12) consecutive usage months.



Policy and Procedure for Adjustments to Utility Bill

WILLINGBORO MUNICIPAL UTILITIES AUTHORITY REGARDING ADJUSTMENTS TO UTILITY BILLS

1. **Policy and Purpose.** It is the policy of the WMUA to make adjustments to customer utility bills where said adjustment is necessary to correct billing errors, to correct errors due to equipment failure, or to fairly apply the rates and rules of the utility. The purpose of this policy is to improve customer service by enabling staff to quickly and accurately respond to customer requests for adjustments to utility bills rather than waiting for the matter to come before the WMUA and also setting forth the situations where adjustments will and will not be considered.

2. **Responsibility.** The Review Committee (2 commissioners on a rotating bases, and support staff) shall determine the amount, if any, of the adjustment to be made. The Review Committee shall receive requests, and the Executive Director notify the customer of the determination.

3. **Adjustments Allowed.** Staff is authorized to make adjustments to utility bills, without WMUA action, in the following cases: Billing Errors: Where an error has occurred that results in an inaccurate utility bill being sent to a customer, staff shall correct the error as soon as discovered, whether by the customer or by staff. These adjustments include data recording and entry errors as well as meter failures if tested and found to be inaccurate. Late Fees: Where a customer incurs late fees and requests an adjustment, staff may reduce or remove the late fee based on the customer’s circumstances and payment history. Water: Where a customer experiences extraordinary water consumption during a billing period due to break in customer owned plumbing, equipment malfunction, etc. and said water did not enter the sanitary sewer system, staff may adjust the charge to an amount that is more typical of that customer’s normal usage. When an adjustment is made, a credit for the amount of the adjustment, including any sales tax shall be made to the customer’s account. When a customer makes a written request for an adjustment, the amount under consideration for adjustment shall not be payable until a determination on the adjustment is made. All other amounts not in dispute shall be due according to utility rules. When a customer pays an amount that is later adjusted, the credit shall remain on the account. No cash refunds shall be made for adjustments unless the account has been or is subsequently closed and a credit balance remains.

4. **Adjustments Not Allowed.** The WMUA will not consider adjustments for the following situations:

Water. Adjustments to water charges where customer experiences extraordinary water consumption during a billing period due to a break in customer owned plumbing, equipment malfunction, etc. Sanitary Sewer. Adjustments to sanitary sewer charges for customers who claim normal outdoor water usage (i.e. lawn or garden sprinkling, car washing, filling swimming pools, etc.) where the water used did not enter the sanitary sewer system.

5. **Requests for Adjustments.** Written requests shall state the name of the account holder, service address, contact information, and the reason for the requested adjustment. The customer shall provide all information requested by the WMUA and deemed necessary to make a determination on the request.

6. **Response.** The utility shall respond to the written request for adjustment within ten (10) business days after receiving from the customer all the information necessary to make a determination on the request.

7. **Reporting.** The Review Committee shall provide a monthly report to the WMUA Board of Commissioners on adjustments made under this policy.

8. **Appeals.** Customers who disagree with the determination of staff regarding their requested adjustments may appeal to the Review Committee. Said appeal must be in writing and shall be scheduled to be heard during the second week of each month.

Effective Date. This policy shall become effective immediately upon approval of the WMUA Board of Commissioners.

This policy was adopted by the WMUA Board of Commissioners this day, _____ of _____ 20__.

_____, Board Chair

ATTEST: _____, Finance Director