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News Release

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Annual Winter Quarterly Averaging to start in November *Sewer charges for year determined by water use*

MELISSA (October 20, 2022) During the three billing periods from mid-November to mid-February, Melissa residents have the opportunity to make an impact on their monthly charges for sewer service, as the annual Winter Quarterly Averaging is applied.

This approximately three-month period is when Melissa Utility Billing calculates residential sewer charges by taking the average household water utilization and using that average as the basis for sewer charges for the following 12 months. The three consecutive billing cycles start on Nov. 15 and end on Feb. 15.

“Most municipal utility departments use some form of winter averaging calculation to determine each household’s monthly wastewater or sewer charges,” says Chris Thatcher, Customer Relations Director. “Since utilities presume that most of the water that enters the home, measured through the water meter, is likely going through the sewer system, the averaging process has been implemented industrywide.”

The assumption is that during these three winter months outdoor watering is either severely limited or eliminated altogether. Simply stated, the amount of water used in each residence during the three billing cycles is recorded, and the average for those three cycles becomes the monthly charge for sewer service or (WW consumption) during the ensuing year.

While the City of Melissa arrives at the average utilization for each home, the cost of sewer service, measured in thousand gallon increments, is set by the water supplier.

“There is currently no reliable way to measure how much wastewater goes into the various drains, sinks, toilets, showers, or baths in a home,” said Thatcher. “That’s why the winter averaging process is used.”

Conducting this process during the winter is preferable to any other time of year since most of a home’s water is discharged into the sewer lines. And, while many households may not see a big change from year to year, some homes may see a drop or rise in the wastewater charge because of the occupants’ water-use habits during the averaging period.

Outdoor irrigation, leaky faucets, runny toilets, washing less than full loads in the clothes or dish washer, washing cars at home, or any other unnecessary water use in the winter will not only drive up the monthly cost of water, but can also show up in the sewer charges during the following 12 months.

“From mid-November to mid-February residents should keep in mind that their water use has a direct effect on their sewer charges for the following year,” said Thatcher. “Starting good water use habits now, before the averaging period starts, can pay dividends later.”

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ABOUT THE CITY OF MELISSA – The City of Melissa is a fast-growing progressive suburb with a small-town feel, located 35 miles north of downtown Dallas in the dynamic growth area of northeast Collin County. Melissa sits on 21 square miles, is home to over 19,000 people, and is easily accessible by way of three intersecting highways. Melissa has ample inventory of the highly-sought-after undeveloped frontage available on US 75 and SH 121, primed to serve the commercial needs of a booming Collin County. Melissa is a home-rule municipality, governed by a council-manager form of government.