

COMMUNITY RELEASE: WINTER QUARTER AVERAGE

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Sewer Charges Calculated for Three Winter Months

Water consumption should be closely monitored

MELISSA- Every year, Melissa residents have the opportunity to influence the monthly charge for sewer, or wastewater, service by monitoring and regulating their water use during November 15th through February 15th service periods.

This nearly 90-day period is known as winter quarter averaging, the annual process used to calculate residential sewer charges by taking the average household water utilization during those three months and using that as the basis for sewer charges for the following 12 months.

“Most municipal utility departments use some version of winter averaging to determine each home’s monthly wastewater or sewer charges,” says Chris Thatcher, Customer Relations Director. “The rationale is that most of the water that enters the home, measured through the water meter, is likely going through the sewer system because, during these three months, outdoor watering is either severely limited or eliminated altogether.”

The calculation process is repeated every winter. Simply stated, the amount of water used in each residence from November 15th through February 15th is recorded, and the average for those three months becomes the monthly charge for sewer during the following twelve months.

Conducting this process during the winter is preferable to any other time of year since most of a home’s water is used indoors and thus discharged into the sewer system. 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 water use during the averaging period.

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

“From November 15th through February 15th service periods, residents should be mindful that their water use has a direct effect on their sewer charges for the following year,” said Thatcher.

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