

BEDFORD CITY UTILITIES LEAK ADJUSTMENT POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to provide a basis for Bedford City Utilities to adjust high bills caused by underground leaks in water lines or equipment on users' property that the user could not reasonably have known about with normal diligence as approved by Indiana Code 8-1.5-3.5-4. The reason for providing a policy for reducing these bills is to relieve possible financial hardship on residents and businesses caused by no fault of their own. The intent is to provide some relief for catastrophic losses of water but not high uses caused by lack of maintenance or a change in activity at the home or business.

A. LEAK ADJUSTMENTS FOR LOSS TO WATER AND SEWER BILLS

Threshold Considerations

Leak adjustments to water and sewer bills will be considered when all of the following threshold conditions have been met:

- Water use volume is 200 % of previous twelve months usage history, or the previous full billing period if no history exists;
- Bedford City Utilities staff verifies the leak if applicable and the Account Holder (**or third party such as renter, contractor, Power Co., etc**) must provide written documentation in the form of a bill with a detailed statement of repairs from a licensed plumber or from the customer requesting the adjustment that;
- Provides documentation that leak has been repaired (if leak identified). If homeowner fixes leak, bills for materials is required.
- Bedford City Utilities will not consider lack of proper maintenance or negligence by account holder (**or third party such as renter, contractor, Power Co., etc**) which culminates in a water loss as being appropriate for approving an adjustment in the bill.
- Account Holder must submit a "Request for Water/Sewer Leak Adjustment Form" in writing before due date.
- Account must not be delinquent (only the current month usage is owed) but an approved payment plan agreed upon by customer does not constitute delinquency;
- Account Holder, has not received an adjustment within the last 12 months;
- The Auditor shall disallow requests for adjustments for faulty toilets, leaking faucet or other interior fixtures, basement, crawl space, hot water heater, frozen pipes, busted pipes, hydrants or faucets left on, leaks at vacant houses unless underground, hot tubs, fish ponds, sprinkler or watering of garden or lawn, guests, etc.
- Car Washes do not receive a discount on monthly sewer charges.

Exceptions can be made for sewer adjustments if **all** other threshold considerations have been met **AND** water is determined to not have entered the sewer system. All sewer adjustment exceptions must be approved by the Utilities Director.

Potential Adjustment Opportunities

Bedford City Utilities assumes no responsibility for damage, repairs, or inspections necessitated by leaks. **If all thresholds items have all been met**, leak adjustments will be issued as follows:

The City will calculate the customer's most recent twelve month average water consumption. If the leak is corrected immediately after notification but results in high consumption within two consecutive months, the City has the option of calculating the credit on the higher month consumption (one month only) and eliminating the other high consumption month from the average calculation. If the customer has not established a twelve month history, an average will be calculated based on number of occupants at the residence and any historical billing information available.

Sewer Charges Adjustment Policy

If the leak is shown to **not** have entered the sewer system, the customer has the following two options for sewer adjustments:

1. The excessive consumption above the average will be divided in half and that half will be adjusted off. As a result, the customer will be billed for the average consumption plus half of the excessive consumption due to the leak. **One adjustment per year.**
2. The excessive consumption above the average will be adjusted off. As a result, the customer will be billed for the average consumption only. **One adjustment per lifetime of ownership of property. Property owner signature is required.**

Water Charges Adjustment Policy

The customer has the following two options for water adjustments:

1. The excessive consumption above the average will be divided in half and that half will be adjusted off. As a result, the customer will be billed for the average consumption plus half of the excessive consumption due to the leak. **One adjustment per year.**
2. The excessive consumption above the average will be adjusted off. As a result, the customer will be billed for the average consumption only. **One adjustment per lifetime of ownership of property. Property owner signature is required.**

B. PROCEDURES TO REQUEST AN ADJUSTMENT

Account holders may apply for a water and/or sewer leak adjustments by fully completing a "Request for Water/Sewer Leak Adjustment Form" and return to the Bedford Utilities office. **If the account holder chooses to apply for the 100% adjustment of the leak (option #2), the property owner signature is required.** The billing Office Manager will review the leak form, account history, and provided documentation with the Auditor. Approvals/Disapprovals will be determined within 10 days of receipt of completed form and documentation. A copy of the approval/denial will be mailed to the requester. Adjustments over \$100.00 must also be approved by the Utilities Director.

Customer is responsible for payment until adjustment is processed. Late fees and penalties will be applicable until balance is paid and will not be credited back when/if approved.

SEWER ADJUSTMENT ON SWIMMING POOL FILL

Private swimming pools meeting the requirement of at least 24 inches deep, a surface area of at least 100 square feet, and a permanently equipped re-circulating system shall be eligible for a manual sewer adjustment. An adjustment is allowable for sewer only. One adjustment for one bill per calendar year will be allowed (January 1 – December 31st). The sewer consumption will be adjusted to the prior (6) month historical average. If the customer has not established a six month history, an average will be calculated based on number of occupants at the residence and any historical billing information available. **Account holder must submit a “Request for Sewer Adjustment when Filling Pool Form” in writing.**