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**DEPARTMENTAL POLICY****Customer Adjustment Policy – Raleigh Water – Category: Financial**

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**PURPOSE OF POLICY**

To provide an opportunity for water customers to request consideration for a financial adjustment to water and wastewater use charges where a leak has been repaired in the water system on the customer's side of the water meter.

**DEFINITIONS**

**Leak Adjustment** – Leak adjustments are courtesy financial adjustments to water or wastewater usage charges on a customer's utility bill caused by a leak on the customer's side of the meter or increased usage due to filling of a customer's pool.

**Preventable/accessible leaks** – Examples of readily available water pipes or hoses include but are not limited to; toilet leak, leaking faucet, leaking hose bib, etc.

**Non-accessible leaks** – Examples of non-accessible leaks include but are not limited to underground lines, pipes within walls, water heaters, etc.

**Consumption or usage** – These terms are synonymous and mean the amount of water or wastewater volumetric use during a billing period.

**Appeals Officer** – Director or Assistant Director within the Raleigh Water Department who have subject matter expertise in meter and billing operations and are designated to review and provide sound decisions for exceptional usage and determination of the adjustment.

**Excessive Water Bill** – A water bill in which the amount of water usage exceeds by at least double the average water usage by the customer at that location during the twelve-month period immediately preceding the complaint.

**Monthly Average** – The customer's average is calculated by adding the 12-month usage prior to the high bill and dividing by 12. If the customer has not resided at the location for 12 months, the customer average will be the current citywide average.

## INDIVIDUALS AND ENTITIES AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY

Raleigh Water Meters Division and Customer Care and Billing Division

## POLICY

- 1.0 When a customer notifies the City of Raleigh about a higher than usual water bill that may be related to a leak, the City policy is to provide consideration for leak adjustments for water and/or wastewater usage caused by a leak that occurred on the customer's side of the meter.
- 2.0 Customers are encouraged to contact a licensed professional plumber, contractor, leak detection crew, at their own cost, to locate and repair the leak and provide detailed documentation indicating:
  - 2.1 Type of leak
  - 2.2 Date repaired
- 3.0 To be eligible for the relief provided by this policy, the customer's water usage, in a single billing cycle, must exceed the monthly average by at least two times. Leak adjustment will be based on the type of leak and all additional requirements of this policy must be met.
- 4.0 If a leak occurs on a preventable/accessible water pipe (toilet leak, leaking faucet, etc.) the water consumption charges will be adjusted to double the monthly average. There will be no adjustments to the wastewater consumption charges.
- 5.0 If a leak occurs in a non-accessible area (underground lines, pipes within walls, water heaters, etc.) the water and wastewater consumption charges will be adjusted to double the monthly average.
- 6.0 If water is stolen from a hose bib, the wastewater charges may be adjusted to double the monthly average. There will be no adjustments to the water consumption charges.
  - 6.1 A police report must be filed as part of the documentation if water was stolen.
- 7.0 Swimming pools that are filled one time between the months of March and October may receive a one-time only adjustment of their wastewater consumption back to their

monthly average. Customers must submit a leak adjustment request with the date of the pool filling.

- 7.1 Customers may only receive either a swimming pool adjustment or accessible/non-accessible adjustment within a 12-month period.
- 8.0 If a leak was caused by a third party, and is reimbursable or is covered by insurance, then no adjustment will be made by the City of Raleigh.
- 9.0 Once a City of Raleigh employee or representative notifies a customer of a water leak and it is not repaired in forty-eight hours, it may result in the disconnection of service until such time as the leak is repaired. (The time may vary dependent upon water conservation mandates.)
- 10.0 Financial adjustments associated to billed usage will be allowed one (1) time per year for the two highest consecutive billing cycles per customer's Account/Premise.
  - 10.1 Should a customer have two leaks within a one-year period, they may elect to have the greater of the two adjustments applied to their account.
  - 10.2 Leak adjustments will not exceed \$5,000 without the approval of the Appeals Officer.
  - 10.3 Base, watershed and infrastructure replacement fees will not be adjusted in any case.
- 11.0 No adjustments will be granted where the following situations exist:
  - 11.1 Usage above the customer's monthly average is due to seasonal usage such as watering of sod, gardening, washing vehicles, power washing, etc.
  - 11.2 City of Raleigh staff have notified customer of high-water usage and repair is not made within two (2) billing cycles.

## PROCEDURE

- 1.0 Water leak adjustments must be requested by contacting the Customer Care and Billing Division and must be accompanied by a plumber's receipt or other proof of the repair unless related to theft.
- 2.0 After all documentation has been received by the Customer Care and Billing Division, a determination is made regarding what type of leak this is/is not and if the leak is adjustable or not. A notification in writing will be sent to the account holder stating approval or denial of the leak along with relevant details.
- 3.0 The determination may require contact with repair company/plumber. If the appropriate information is not provided for verification, the leak adjustment may be denied.
- 4.0 Except theft, a leak adjustment may occur only after all leaks have been repaired.
- 5.0 Customers are responsible to pay the entire amount due while the account is under leak adjustment review or enter into payment arrangements for the billed amount in order to remain in good standing on all current billings.
  - 5.1 If payment is not received on time, the customer is subject to all current and applicable collection processes, and procedures, including but not limited to disconnection of service.

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

Raleigh Water Customer Care & Billing is responsible for review accounts to determine edibility for leak adjustment.

**WEBSITE ADDRESS FOR THIS POLICY**

[Request A Leak Adjustment on Utility Bill | Raleighnc.gov](http://Request%20A%20Leak%20Adjustment%20on%20Utility%20Bill%20|Raleighnc.gov)

**HISTORY AND UPDATES**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Revision</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Reference Section</b>
2/04/1986	0.0	Original – Resolution No (1986) – 75 Resolution to Establish an Excessive Utility Bill and an Insufficient Utility Bill Adjustment Policy	All
11/07/2011	1.0	Establish procedure for customer leak adjustment	All
12/5/2011	2.0	Corrected typographical error in header on second page- Updated DOI Number and corrected Page #	Page 2
4/11/2012	3.0	Corrected typographical error- the word “bid” to “bib”	Section 6.8.5.1
4/23/2013	4.0	Establish procedure for an adjustment when there is exceptional unexplained consumption or a	All

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		preventable/accessible leak.	
7/16/2013	5.0	Added wording “per customer’s Account/Premise” to Section 4.7	Section 4.7
4/21/2014	6.0	Removed Section 4.8 “Customers must be in good standing to receive any monetary adjustment on their bill”; removed Robin Rose from Approved by Section on first page	Section 4.8 Page1
6/16/20	7.0	Made updates to leak adjustment types, values, definitions, and procedures	All
11/4/2022	8.0	Made updates to policy and procedures.	All

## REFERENCES, RELATED DOCUMENTS AND FORMS

[Leak Adjustment Form](#)

## APPENDIX

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### LEGAL NOTICES

Nothing in this policy shall alter an employee’s at-will status of employment with the City.

This policy shall not create liability on the part of the City or any officer or employee thereof for any personal injury or property damage that may result from reliance upon this policy or any administrative decision lawfully made pursuant to this policy.

If any provision of this policy is or becomes or is deemed to be invalid, illegal or unenforceable pursuant to applicable law, such provision shall be construed or deemed amended to conform to applicable laws, or if it cannot be so construed or deemed amended without materially altering the purpose or intent of the policy, such provision shall be stricken and the remainder of the policy shall remain in full force and effect.