



Public Utilities
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ACCOUNT ADJUSTMENTS AFTER LEAK REPAIRS

With the conditions and limits discussed below, we may make an account adjustment when a customer fixes a leak that was caused by conditions beyond the customer’s reasonable control.

To request an account adjustment after you have fixed a leak, please read the information below and contact the Public Utilities Department @ 919-556-6177.

To make an adjustment, we will need information from you including:

- a. When the leak was discovered
- b. Who made the repairs, where and when; and
- c. A copy of the plumber’s bill, or receipts for materials purchased if you made the repair.

SUMMARY OF POLICY

The amount of the bill adjustment depends in part on whether the water from the leak returned to the sanitary sewer system or leaked elsewhere on your property:

- **LOST WATER *DID NOT RETURN* TO THE SEWER SYSTEM, ADJUSTMENTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:**

For WATER service, we may adjust charges for water use over the customer’s previous 12 months’ average billings for water, excluding the month(s) of excessive consumption for which the adjustment is requested. Charges will be based on the current rate schedule as adopted by the Franklin County Board of Commissioners.

For SEWER service, 100% of the amount exceeding the previous twelve months’ average monthly bill, excluding the month(s) of excessive water use for which an adjustment is requested.

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The situations where lost water does not return to the sewer system may include:

- a. Non-irrigation leaks that occur underground or in walls,
- b. Leaks in outdoor spigots, and
- c. Faulty water heaters or pressure reducing valves where such appliances and devices are not easily accessible or visible.

- **LOST WATER WAS RETURNED TO THE SEWER SYSTEM, THE ADJUSTMENTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:**

For water service, we may adjust charges for water use over the customer's previous 12 months' average billings for water, excluding the month(s) of excessive consumption for which the adjustment is requested. Charges will be based on the current rate schedule as adopted by the Franklin County Board of Commissioners.

For sewer service, 50% of the amount exceeding the previous twelve months' average monthly bill, excluding the month(s) of excessive water use for which an adjustment is requested.

The situations where lost water returns to the sewer system may include malfunctioning toilets and leaking indoor faucets.

PLEASE NOTE:

We do not make adjustments for irrigation system leaks.

We limit the adjustment period for leaks in readily visible fixtures to one month's billing.

We do not make adjustments within one year of completion of new construction.
(Recommendation is to seek relief under new homeowner warranty)

Adjustments must be requested within 90 days of the date of the high water bill due to water loss/leak, or within 90 days of a high water usage as detected by FCPU staff member, whichever comes first.

Customers who completely refill their pools qualify for one adjustment per year to their sewer charges.

Franklin County Public Utilities may make discretionary determinations as to the applicability of the policy in circumstances involving abnormal water usage or loss.

FRANKLIN COUNTY PUBLIC UTILITIES
POLICY FOR ADJUSTMENT OF CUSTOMER ACCOUNTS
INVOLVING LOSS OF METERED WATER

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a credit adjustment to the water and/or sewer account of a customer who has experienced an emergency situation involving the loss of metered water. The excess water metered will have occurred as a result of conditions beyond normal and reasonable control of the customer or other parties responsible for the use, care and maintenance of fixtures and devices that are a part of the customer's water service system.

CONDITIONS

It is the customer's responsibility to promptly discover and stop the loss of water. In addition, the customer is responsible for making arrangements to repair or have repaired the fixture or device causing the water loss. Although there is no obligation for Franklin County to adjust accounts when the water has been metered properly, it is the desire of the County to encourage customers to make prompt and permanent repairs and to show consideration for the unusual circumstance by sharing the cost of excessive billing charges.

CUSTOMER RESPONSIBILITY

1. The customer must provide information describing the emergency situation or circumstances that resulted in the loss of water. Emails and phone calls are an acceptable form of notification. This should include cause of the water loss, when the problem was discovered, what action was taken to stop the loss of water, and the arrangements made for repairs.
2. If a repair is completed, the customer must provide a copy of the plumber's bill or a statement of materials purchased if the repair was performed by the customer.

ADJUSTMENT PROCEDURE

1. Upon receipt of the customer's electronic or written statement describing the water loss and copies of invoices or receipts documenting repair, the FCPU Customer Service Representative will evaluate the circumstances surrounding the water loss.
2. The Customer Service Representative, upon determination that an adjustment is appropriate under the policy, may adjust charges for water usage over the customer's previous twelve (12) months average billings for water, excluding the month(s) of excessive consumption for which the adjustment is requested at the current applicable rate as adopted by the Franklin County Board of County Commissioners. Additionally, the rate will include:
 - a. 100% of the amount in excess of the previous twelve (12) months average billings for wastewater, excluding the month(s) of consumption for which the adjustment is requested, for

the following conditions or similar situations where the water has not returned to the sewer system:

Leaks underground not associated with irrigation systems, or in walls,
Frozen and burst pipes not associated with irrigation systems,
Outdoor spigot and hose leaks,
Faulty water heaters or pressure reducing valves where such appliances and devices are not easily accessible or visible, and
Vandalism to plumbing that is documented with a police report.

- b. 50% of the amount in excess of the previous twelve (12) months average billings for wastewater excluding the month(s) of excessive consumption for which the adjustment is requested, for the following conditions or similar situations where the water has returned to the sewer system:

Malfunctioning toilets, and
Leaking indoor faucets

- c. No adjustment shall be made for the following:

Leaks resulting from any portion or component of an irrigation system,
Losses that occurred within one (1) year of construction, and
Unoccupied dwellings listed as 'in-active' in FCPU's billing system.

- d. If a twelve month average is not available (such as with a new customer), the average will be based on 2,000 gallons of usage per month per person in the household, or the rate of consumption after repairs, whichever is greater.
- e. For seasonal users (customers with fixed and predictable patterns of consumption, usually due to irrigation), the adjustment will be based on the corresponding month(s) from the year immediately preceding, where no water loss or meter malfunction was recorded during the corresponding month(s).
- 3.
4. The billing period adjustment shall be limited to one (1) month in cases of adjustments for malfunctioning toilets, indoor faucets, and other visible, easily accessible fixtures. With the exception of the annual sewer adjustment for pool filling, not more than one (1) such adjustment will be made for any given twenty-four (24) month period per location.
5. No adjustment shall be made when the request for the adjustment is received more than ninety (90) days after the billing date of the bill to be adjusted in the case of an active customer, or thirty (30) days after the billing date of a final bill. Exceptions will only be made if there is proof for extraordinary mitigating circumstances.
6. Adjustments will not normally be allowed for water loss arising from carelessness, negligence or lack of due diligence on the part of the customer, as it is the customer's responsibility to promptly discover and stop the loss of water.

7. All customers with pools shall qualify for an adjustment to their sewer charges once a year if they have completely emptied and refilled their pool or for initial set up of a new structure. The customer must supply FCPU, in writing, the volume of the pool in gallons and the date it was filled. The Customer Service Representative will then compare that volume to the total consumption for the month in question. Assuming the customer's total consumption increased above their average by the approximate volume of the pool, the sewer portion of the bill shall be adjusted by the amount of water it took to fill the pool. No adjustment will be given if the total volume of the pool exceeds the total consumption for the month.
8. All water loss calculations shall be documented by the Customer Service Representative and shall be included in a complete and adequate description of the problem and justification for the adjustment.
9. A proposed adjustment less than < \$50.00 will be reviewed and approved or denied by the Customer Service Representative before a credit adjustment is made to a customer's account. A proposed adjustment greater than >\$50.00 but less than <\$500.00 will be reviewed and approved or denied by the Director of Public Utilities or his/her designee. A proposed adjustment greater than >\$500.00 will be presented to the Utility Advisory Committee for review and determination.
10. In accordance with this policy, a copy of the adjustment documentation will remain in the customers' master file for a period of thirty-six (36) months with a copy of the adjustment forwarded to the County Finance Department.
11. Once the adjustment has been made to the customer's account, the Customer Service Representative will notify the customer in writing that the adjustment has been made.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Director of Public Utilities, or his/her designee, shall be responsible for implementation and interpretation of this policy, and is authorized to exercise on behalf of Franklin County Public Utilities the discretionary determination as to the applicability of this policy in the various circumstances involving abnormal water usage or loss.

Adopted by the Franklin County Board of County Commissioners on the 7th day of June, 2010.

By:

Penny McGhee, Chair

Attest:

Kristen G King, Clerk to the Board

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