

Wastewater Averaging Fact Sheet

Wastewater/ Winter Water Averaging is a way for you to save money. Wastewater averaging takes place during the late winter months and determines a cap on the volume of wastewater you will be billed for each month for the next year.

How am I billed for service?

- The monthly customer charge is a fixed fee updated **annually**.
- Wastewater averaging is calculated from mid-December to mid-March when most of the water goes directly into the sanitary sewer system versus being used for outdoor watering. The city pulls your January-March reads for the annual average.
- Your new wastewater average will begin with your May bill each year. If you start service after averaging was calculated, you will be billed at 5000 gallons a month temporarily until the next averaging.

If you want to reduce your wastewater bill:

- Conserve water starting mid-December – mid-March
- Turn off your irrigation system from mid-December – mid-March.
- If you have a pool or hot tub, wait to refill it until after March.

Why does the City use a wastewater average as the basis for my wastewater bill?

Your water meter measures your monthly water use, but there is no meter on your wastewater line. Wastewater averaging provides a measure that is generally reflective of the amount of water that goes directly into the sanitary sewer system from your property.

Why is wastewater averaging done mid-December to mid-March? Usually outdoor watering is minimal during the late fall and winter months; therefore it is easier to estimate the actual amount of water that goes directly into the sanitary sewer system versus being used for outdoor watering.

Why do I pay more for wastewater than I do for my water? The cost of providing wastewater services is higher than the cost of providing water services. After the water you use goes down the drain, or is flushed, it must be treated before it goes back into the Colorado River.

What if I have a water leak or other situation which artificially increases my wastewater usage?

Provide documentation that the leak ***did not*** go into the wastewater system, you may qualify for an adjustment.

Steps:

- 1) Complete the appeal form
- 2) Send the appeal form to ww@westlakehills.org explaining the cause(s) of the high water usage during January-March.
- 3) Attach documentation such as service reports from a plumber or irrigation company and/or before and after pictures, etc.
- 4) Attach a drawing showing the location of the water meter, the water line, the leak(s) and the building. It is very important to review your water usage monthly and to make any requests promptly after you get your water usage.

Please be aware that the City of Austin partially bills the City based on customers' winter water averages, so once Austin finalizes West Lake Hills' wastewater bill, it will not be possible to make further adjustments.