

Important Message About Your Sewer Rate Calculation



Dear Sewer Customer:

At New Mexico Water Service, we are committed to providing you with excellent customer service. To that end, several years ago we began to provide you with information about the range of services you receive for your sewer rate dollars and explain how your sewer bill is calculated.

Currently, the average residential customer pays \$52.22 per month for sewer services. For that, New Mexico Water disposes of waste, treats the wastewater, and maintains a reliable wastewater system. State-certified operators operate and maintain our wastewater treatment facilities. Customers can flush their toilets, run their dishwashers, wash their clothes, and bathe without having to worry about where the wastewater goes.

The sewer calculation on your bill consists of two charges: the monthly base charge, which is determined by the size of your water meter, and the monthly usage charge, which is based on your **winter quarter average (WQA)** water consumption. Please see an example on the reverse side of how this is calculated. The WQA is used to calculate sewer charges because it reflects the amount of water used in the home and discharged to the sewer system, and not the water used for other purposes, such as irrigation and cooling.

Your WQA water usage period can be found on the chart below. First, see the November bill and find your meter read date listed in the first column of the chart below. This could be either the current or previous meter read date on the November bill. Then, using that date, refer to the chart on the other side to determine when your WQA time period begins and ends. Consumption is in KGAL (thousand gallon units), so 1.7 KGAL equals consumption of 1,700 gallons.

2020 Winter Quarter Average (WQA) Beginning and End Meter Read Dates

If your scheduled meter read date for your November bill was...	Then your WQA will begin with your meter read scheduled...	And your WQA will end with the meter read scheduled...
10/25/2019	11/25/2019	2/27/2020
10/29/2019	11/27/2019	2/28/2020
10/30/2019	12/2/2019	3/3/2020
10/31/2019	12/3/2019	3/4/2020
11/7/2019	12/10/2019	3/11/2020
11/8/2019	12/11/2019	3/12/2020
11/12/2019	12/12/2019	3/13/2020
11/14/2019	12/16/2019	3/17/2020
11/15/2019	12/17/2019	3/18/2020
11/18/2019	12/18/2019	3/19/2020
11/19/2019	12/19/2019	3/20/2020
11/20/2019	12/20/2019	3/23/2020

Dates subject to change based on weather or circumstances beyond our control.

(continued on back)

Stringent federal regulations regarding sludge treatment and disposal, influent and effluent monitoring, and record-keeping have all increased operating costs. Unlike a municipal system, New Mexico Water is not eligible to receive governmental grants and cannot rely on municipal bonds backed by property tax receipts to cover our operating and plant expansion costs. The New Mexico Public Regulation Commission approves sewer rates that cover the costs of providing sewer services and allows a utility to earn a reasonable return on its investment in the sewage system.

This information is provided to help you understand and ultimately control your sewer charges by conservative and efficient use of water. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Customer Service Manager Staci Avendano or any of our customer service representatives at our Rio Communities Customer Center, located at 401 Horner Street, or by phone at 864-2218.

Important Messages for Sewer Customers

Did you know that what goes down your sinks, toilets, and bathtubs can affect both your sewer lines and ours? Grease, rags, and other debris can require more frequent cleaning of our facilities and can impair or damage them, which in turn can affect the cost of your sewer services. Please be sure to prevent grease and rags from going down your household drains and toilets.

Have you had a water leak due to burst pipes or broken water fixtures during the winter months when your water usage is used to calculate your sewer winter quarter average (WQA)? While you will be billed for the water that passed through your meter, the leak will affect the calculation of your sewer WQA. When you provide proper documentation of a water leak repair, you can request a review of your sewer WQA calculation. If your sewer service is provided by New Mexico Water Service, it is important to report water leaks during the WQA period to us, because Public Regulation Commission rules limit the period of time a utility can adjust prior bills.

To prevent burst pipes due to freezing temperatures, protect your pipes by insulating them and turning off irrigation systems before cold weather arrives.

Example

If you are billed in January for 4,200 gallons, in February for 4,100 gallons, and in March for 4,500 gallons, the total for the winter quarter would be 12,800 gallons. This is divided by three and rounded to the nearest hundred to determine your **winter quarter average (WQA) monthly water consumption**.

In this example, it would be 4,300 gallons (4,266 average rounded to 4,300); this is the usage amount you would be billed for sewer beginning in April and continuing through March of the following year, at which time your WQA would be recalculated based on the most recent winter quarter.

You also receive a "return flow credit," which relates to the production of reclaimed water.

Below is a detailed calculation for this example (based on a 4,300-gallon WQA and using rates effective 1/3/2018):

Residential sewer base charge (5/8" residential meter)	\$28.58
Usage charge ($\$6.22 \times 4.3$ WQA units of 1,000 gallons)	\$26.75
Return flow credit ($\$0.174 \times 4.3$ WQA units of 1,000 gallons)	(\$0.75)
Subtotal for service	\$54.58
<i>Plus tax</i>	

