

SEWER USE RATES, BILLING INFORMATION & APPEALS PROCESS

**Water Pollution Control Authority for the
City of Norwalk**

**Adopted February 14, 2005
Updated May 16, 2008**

**WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY
FOR THE CITY OF NORWALK**

SANITARY SEWER USE RATES

July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2009

<u>USE CLASSIFICATION</u>	<u>RATE</u>
Residential:	
• Single Family	\$225.00
• Two Family	\$450.00
• Three Family	\$675.00
• Four Family	\$900.00
• Apartment Unit/Condominium Unit	\$225.00
Commercial and Mixed Use Properties (up to 110,000 gallons)	\$325.00
Commercial and Mixed Use Properties (over 110,000 gallons)	\$325.00 plus \$5.80 per 1,000 gallons over 110,000 gallons
Temporary Discharge	\$5.80 per 1,000 gallons
Late Payment Interest	1.5% per month or fraction thereof, 18% per annum
Returned Check Fee	\$25

BILLING INFORMATION

Residential, commercial, and mixed use customers that use less than 110,000 gallons per year are charged a flat rate for sewer use annually. Commercial and mixed use customers that use over 110,000 gallons per year are charged the commercial flat rate plus \$5.80 per 1,000 gallons used over the initial 110,000 gallon allotment. Sewer usage is calculated using the previous calendar year's water consumption data provided by the First and Second Water Districts. If water consumption data is not available, water consumption is estimated by using an average consumption for the parcel's classifying Land Use Code (per the Tax Assessor's records) and/or the parcel's previous consumption records.

Sewer use charges are billed semi-annually and, in most cases, included on your real estate tax bill. Sewer use charges are billed July 1st and January 1st each year and due by August 1st and February 1st respectively. If you have a mortgage and an escrow agent pays your real estate taxes, your escrow agent will most likely also pay your sewer use charges to the City on your behalf since they appear on the real estate tax bill.

Sewer use charges are billed for the current fiscal year, July 1st to June 30th. Residential, commercial, and mixed use flat rate bills shall not be prorated for mid-cycle occupancy or user classification changes. The use classification (whether a property is determined to be residential or commercial or mixed use or single family or multi family, etc.) is determined using information from the most recent Grand List provided by the Tax

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Assessor's Office. Although the information used to prepare the bill is based on the most recent Grand List (i.e., October 1st), your flat rate sewer use fee is for the current fiscal year. Sewer use fees are payable to the Tax Collector's Office. The status of connection to the sewer system (connected or not connected) is determined by the WPCA.

BILLING INQUIRES

It is always your right as a customer to question a bill. Any customer who has a question or complaint or who disputes all or part of a sewer bill should contact the City of Norwalk's Public Works Call Center by:

Telephone: 203/854-3200

Person or Mail: Call Center
Department of Public Works
City of Norwalk
125 East Avenue, 2nd Floor
Norwalk, CT 06856-5125

E-mail: customerservice@norwalkct.org

OTHER INQUIRIES

If a customer has any questions or concerns related to any aspect of their sewer use services other than billing issues, they should contact a customer service representative at the address and phone number listed above.

Each customer has the right to request a copy of the WPCA's current schedule of rates and charges. In addition, information regarding water use and the calculation of the appropriate sewer use billing amount is also available by contacting the above listed Call Center.

BILLING ADJUSTMENTS

For commercial or mixed use customers that are charged based on water consumption, the following adjustments are made upon request and when appropriate documentation is provided:

Laundromats: Water consumption reduced by 10%

Carwashes: Water consumption reduced by 10%

Other commercial and mixed use customers that are billed based on water consumption may request adjustments to their billing information based on the following requirements:

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Manufacturing Processes/Irrigation/Otherwise Not Discharged to the Sanitary Sewer: For commercial or mixed use customers that use water in their manufacturing process, irrigation operations or that is not otherwise returned to the sewer, the sewer use billing information can be modified by (1) the customer providing a written report certified by a registered professional engineer to the WPCA outlining the technical basis for the water consumption adjustment; (2) installation of a second certified and sealed water meter that measures the amount of water consumed by the process and not returned to the sewer system; or (3) installation of a certified and sealed sewer meter that measures the amount of flow discharged into the City's sewer system. If water or sewer meters are used as a basis for billing adjustment, the WPCA has the right to access the meter for testing and inspection at any time. It is the responsibility of the customer to supply the City's Finance Department with the meter data for the previous calendar year no later than April 1st of each following year to be considered for an adjustment. Meter data can be sent to the Finance Department by regular mail or fax:

Mail: Finance Department
C/o Sewer Use Adjustment
125 East Avenue
Norwalk, CT 08856-5125

Fax: 203/854-7848

SEWER USE BILLING APPEALS

Chapter 113, Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA), of the Code of the City of Norwalk approved by the Common Council on March 26, 2002 states the following about sewer use billing appeals:

§ 113-15. Appeals

- A. Pursuant to Chapter 103, Section 7-255 of the Connecticut General Statutes, users shall be notified of proposed revisions to or establishment of sewer use charges by publication in a newspaper having general circulation in the community. Any user shall have the opportunity to be heard concerning the proposed changes at a public hearing held before the WPCA. After the WPCA has established or revised such charges, it shall cause the same to be published in a newspaper having general circulation in the community not later than five days after filing such charges with the Office of the City Clerk. Any user aggrieved by such charges may submit an appeal to the WPCA within 21 days after such filing.

- B. Any user wishing to appeal their sewer use bill based on water consumption or use classification shall do so in writing within 45 days from the installment due date. The Director of Public Works or his designee shall review the appeal and inform the user in writing of the decision within 15 days of receipt of the written appeal. If the problem remains unresolved after a written decision from the Director, the user has 10 days from receipt of the Director's decision to request in writing a further review by the WPCA. The WPCA will investigate the appeal and send its decision to the user in writing within 5 days after its next regular monthly meeting following receipt of the request.

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- C. Any user wishing to appeal their sewer use bill because they believe a clerical omission or mistake was made shall do so no later than three years following the installment due date.
- D. Any person aggrieved by any final decision of the WPCA may appeal to the Superior Court and shall bring any such appeal to a return day of said court not less than 12 or more than 30 days after service thereof. The judgment of the Court shall be final.

APPEALS PROCESS

The WPCA has established the following procedures for consideration of appeals:

Use Rate Charges: Persons wishing to appeal a change in the use rates shall contact the WPCA in writing no more than 30 days after date of the publication of the rate and state the basis for the appeal. The Director of Public Works or his designee, at his discretion, shall present the appeal request to the WPCA Board of Directors for consideration.

Use Classification: Customers wishing to appeal a change in their use classification shall complete a Sewer Use Fee Appeal Form obtained by contacting the City of Norwalk's Public Works Call Center within 45 days after in the installment due date. The Director of Public Works or his designee shall review the appeal and send the customer a decision within 15 days of receipt of the completed appeal form. If the problem remains unresolved after a written decision from the Director of Public Works, the customer has 10 days to request in writing a further review by the WPCA Board of Directors. The WPCA Board of Directors will investigate the appeal and send its decision to the customer in writing within 5 days after its next regular monthly meeting following receipt of the request.

Water Consumption Adjustments: For those customers who use more than 110,000 gallons and can show they discharge significantly less wastewater into the sanitary sewer system than water consumed, the WPCA – at its sole discretion – can make a one-time adjustment to the volume assessment portion of the sewer use bill. Customers who require on-going, yearly water consumption adjustments shall follow the procedure outlined in the Billing Adjustment section of this document. Customers wishing to appeal the volume assessment shall contact the City of Norwalk's Public Works Call Center within 45 days after the installment die date and complete a Sewer Use Fee Appeal Form. The appeal form shall be reviewed by the Department of Public Works and if necessary the customer will be contacted to provide additional information supporting why an adjustment in the volume assessment should be made. Additional information used in this determination may include certified engineering studies, copies of water bills, installation of a sewer flow meters, etc. The Director of Public Works or his designee shall review the appeal and supporting documentation and send the customer a decision within 15 days of receipt of the completed appeal form and receipt of additional documentation. If the problem remains unresolved after a written decision from the Director of Public Works, the customer has 10 days to request in writing a further review by the WPCA Board of Directors. The WPCA Board of Directors will investigate the appeal and send its decision to the customer in writing within 5 days after its next regular monthly meeting following receipt of the request.

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Clerical Errors and Omissions: Customers wishing to appeal because they believe a clerical error or omission was made to their bill shall complete a Sewer Use Fee Appeal Form obtained by contacting the City of Norwalk's Public Works Call Center within 3 years after in the installment due date. The Director of Public Works or his designee shall review the appeal and send the customer a decision within 15 days of receipt of the completed appeal form. If the problem remains unresolved after a written decision from the Director of Public Works, the customer may appeal to the WPCA Board of Directors at its next scheduled meeting. The WPCA Board of Directors will investigate the appeal and send its decision to the customer in writing within 5 days after its next regular monthly meeting following receipt of the request.

Upon approval of the Director of Public Works or the WPCA Board, the Department of Public Works will send the Tax Assessor's Office and the Finance Department a Sewer Use Fee Adjustment Form to process a credit, adjust the bill and/or make billing changes.

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Instructions for Billing Adjustments and Sewer Use Fee Appeals

The purpose of these instructions is to inform and assist residential, commercial, or mixed-use properties through the billing adjustments and sewer use fee appeals process with the Water Pollution Control Authority for the City of Norwalk (WPCA).

Adjustment/Appeal Process:

The WPCA's adjustment/appeal process is as follows:

1. Review the Sewer Use Rates, Billing Information & Appeals Process Policy (updated May 16, 2008). Then, if your situation requires an adjustment/appeal, please fill out either the *Sewer Use Billing Adjustment Form* or the *Sewer Use Fee Appeal Form* included in Attachment A for the specific adjustment/appeal being requested.
 - a. *Sewer Use Billing Adjustment Form* – Request for standard adjustment (laundromat, carwash) or permanent water consumption adjustment
 - b. *Sewer Use Fee Appeal Form* – Use classification change, or one-time water consumption adjustment, or not connected to sanitary sewer

*****Please note that requests must be made in writing and within 45 days after receipt of the sewer use bill*****

2. Submit the completed form, copy of the sewer use fee bill, and any other supporting documents to the WPCA at the following address:

City of Norwalk/Department of Public Works
125 East Avenue, Room 225
Norwalk, CT 06856
Attention: Wastewater Systems Manager

Upon submission to the WPCA of a completed form and documentation, the Director of Public Works or his designee shall attempt to review the application as quickly as possible.

- c: Mayor's Office
Department of Public Works – Customer Service
Tax Assessor
Tax Collector
WPCA Board of Directors

Attachments:

Attachment A – Sewer Use Billing Adjustment Form and Sewer Use Fee Appeal Form

ATTACHMENT A

**Sewer Use Billing Adjustment Form and
Sewer Use Fee Appeal Form**

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SEWER USE BILLING ADJUSTMENT FORM

Property Owner/Name: _____

Property Address: _____

Billing Address: _____

Contact Name (if questions): _____

Daytime Telephone Number: _____

Type of Business: _____

Water Account Number(s): _____

Basis of Adjustment:

Standard Adjustment

____ Laundromat (10 % reduction)

____ Carwash (10% reduction)

Permanent Water Consumption Adjustment

State basis for adjustment and attach supporting documentation:

____ Certified technical/engineering report

____ Secondary sealed water meter

____ Sealed sewer meter

Attach Copy of Sewer Use Bill

Attach Copy of Water Bills

Attach Supporting Documentation

-- FOR WPCA USE ONLY --

Date Received: _____

Received By: _____

District/Block/Lot (D-B-L): _____

File or Record No.: _____

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SEWER USE FEE APPEAL FORM

(Must be completed within 45 days of receipt of bill)

Property Owner/Name: _____

Property Address: _____

Billing Address: _____

Contact Name (if questions): _____

Daytime Telephone Number: _____

Basis of Appeal: **Use Classification Change**

State basis for change and attach supporting documentation.

One-Time Water Consumption Adjustment

State basis for adjustment and attach supporting documentation:

*Documentation should include at least one of the following:
certified engineering study, copies of water bills or secondary
water/sewer meter readings. Customers may appeal water
consumption one-time. Customers who require on-going, yearly
water consumption adjustments shall follow the Billing
Adjustment procedure.*

Water Account No.: _____

Not Connected to Sanitary Sewer

State basis and attach supporting documentation:

*Documentation should include a bill from a septic tank cleaning
company dated within the last three years.*

- Attach Copy of Sewer Use Bill**
- Attach Copy of Water Bills (if applicable)**
- Attach Supporting Documentation**

-- FOR WPCA USE ONLY --

Date Received: _____

Received By: _____

District/Block/Lot (D-B-L): _____

File or Record No.: _____