

Winter Quarter Average/History Based Consumption Information

Background:

Setting a minimum of 3,000 gallons Winter Quarter Average (WQA), or History Based Consumption (HIBC), is a way of recovering a portion of the costs of providing wastewater service to a residence. More than 90% of the Utilities' wastewater costs are fixed. They do not vary based on a customer's use. These costs include the operation and maintenance of the collection systems and wastewater plants, as well as debt service. These costs stay the same for each residence even if the current resident's water use is very low. Generally, only the cost of chemicals and electricity to operate the plants vary by use.

The 3,000-gallon minimum was established by rate ordinance and adopted by City Council in November 2003. It was in response to concerns around very low winter use customers. Low winter use can occur for many reasons from resident absence to significant conservation efforts. The main concern was that the three winter months of recorded water use affects 12 months of bills. We questioned if it was reasonable to assume that all indoor use for the year would be that low. As a result, we determined that a reasonable minimum of indoor use needed to be set at 3,000 gallons per month for metered single family homes. Duplex minimum was set at 4,000 gallons per month. Unlike water, the Utility never intended to use the wastewater rates as a conservation tool. By setting a minimum, the Utility is better able to recover the costs of serving a very low use customer.

Average vs. Minimum

Average = for customers who have not yet established a winter quarter water use at the service address, a system average shall be billed.

Minimum = for customers with an established winter quarter water use at the service address, the monthly amount billed shall be based on a minimum per month.

Single Family

Average = 4,000 gallons

Minimum = 3,000 gallons

Duplex

Average = 6,200 gallons

Minimum = 4,000 gallons

Rate Information:

<http://www.fcgov.com/utilities/residential/rates/wastewater>

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WQA Leak Recalculation:

The WQA can be readjusted if a leak is discovered and fixed. After WQA is recalculated for the new year and a customer can prove their WQA was based off water usage that included a leak, then the customer has 60 days after recalculation to provide documentation stating there was a leak and that the leak has been repaired.

Reports on usage reviewed by a Utility Billing Representative should show a decrease in consumption, and that any leaks have been repaired and resolved, prior to any WQA and/or monetary adjustments. The customer must provide supporting documentation in an email with attachments to UtilitiesBillingGroup@fcgov.com, or a written letter addressed to: City of Fort Collins Utilities, Attn: Utility Billing, PO Box 580, Fort Collins, CO 80522-0580.

Supporting Documentation to Include:

- **Customer Information (Name, Service Address, Account Number)**
- **Date leak was discovered**
- **Date repairs were made**
- **Copy of repair bill with receipt**
 - **Include description of problem and what repairs were done**

Once a customer confirms a leak and its associated repairs (within 60 days of recalculation), the WQA for that premise shall be reverted back to the WQA from the previous year. If the current customer has no WQA history, then it will be reverted back to the WQA average per MuniCode section 26-280A-F. A monetary adjustment may be made for the customer.