

Monthly Billing Information for Upper Dublin

As many of our customers know, the Bucks County Water & Sewer Authority (BCW&SA) recently implemented a monthly billing system, similar to most utility billing processes such as energy or phone bills. This change was actually requested by many of our customers and the decision to change was made after careful consideration. Monthly billing also allows more efficient budgeting, not to mention more effective conservation. In addition, while many utilities bill in advance, BCW&SA bills in arrears.

Monthly billing also allows customers to detect leaks earlier, thus wasting less water and saving more money.

The Authority offers many solutions to customers who would like to avoid sending a check monthly, including the direct debit program, advance pay, and credit card payment. All these options can be accomplished through our bonded Customer Service department.

Rate setting is based on the average user in a service area. Some use more than the average, some less. As part of the rate change the minimum charge reflects true costs allocated to each customer. BCW&SA must be prepared, have the infrastructure in place, and have the capacity to deliver service on demand. The same customer who may use zero gallons in one period could need a system that handles 17,000 gallons or more in the next period. The minimum charge allocates that portion of costs to each individual customer based on their proportionate share of the system.

Penalties are charged to accounts per the PA Municipal Authorities Act for unpaid balances approximately three business days after the due date. Interest is 10% annually or 0.83% monthly of the unpaid balance. This follows standard rules regarding such charges.

Billing sewer consumption on water readings is a nationally recognized billing practice as Water Environmental Federation, Manual of Practice No. 27, Financing Charges for Wastewater Systems states that wastewater flow measurement for individual small customer is not practical. Consequently, water meters are generally relied on to determine contributed flows to the waste water system.

There are three water providers in Upper Dublin. One provider – Ambler Borough – reads meters on a quarterly basis. The Authority has entered into an agreement with Ambler Borough to read their radio water meters on a monthly basis.

It is an industry standard to measure sewer flow based on water use. BCW&SA recognizes that increased water usage could result from establishing plantings, lawn irrigation, and pool fill-ups. Generally, such water is not returned to the waste water system. This is why BCW&SA offers deduct metering options. A customer can purchase a deduction meter for irrigation reasons and that portion of water used would be deducted from the sewer bill.

In accordance with the Upper Dublin Twp. Sewer System Acquisition Agreement, BCW&SA was allowed to raise rates up to the lowest rate currently used in its Sewer Service Area. The Langhorne Borough, Bucks County, Sewer System, then served by BCW&SA on a wholesale basis, was acquired by the Authority in 1999. The acquisition agreement maintained the then current Langhorne Borough rates for

a period of 15 years. At present, Langhorne Borough has the lowest sewer service rates and Upper Dublin Twp. was brought to that level accordingly.

The Authority's rates benchmark the national average, and we are committed to remaining so. The Authority will continue to provide quality service in an environmentally safe manner at an affordable rate.

Please call our customer service hotline at 215-343-2538 if you need additional information.

Bucks County Water & Sewer Authority (BCW&SA)