

Purpose:

The City recovers the cost of providing sewer conveyance and treatment services via a sewer service charge. The City applies a default rate to all new single-family residential accounts (see Finance Department Policy 900-02). The purpose of this policy is to establish a fair and equitable means of applying the City's sewer service charge to single-family residential utility account name changes.

Background:

The City's sewer service charge consists of fixed charges (base charge and sewer facility replacement charges) as well as variable commodity charges based on assumed sewer flows. The fixed charge varies by meter size, while the variable charges vary by customer class. For commercial, industrial, and multi-family residential customers, the variable charge is based on actual water consumption. For single-family residential customers, the variable charge is calculated based on a two-month winter average of the previous year's water consumption (see Finance Department Policy 900-01). For new accounts, no prior-year winter average consumption is available, and a default rate for new single-family residential accounts is applied (see Finance Department Policy 900-02).

Prior to implementation of this policy, the City treated an account name change as effectively creating a new account, triggering the default new single-family residential account rate. While City sewer customers periodically request account name changes, this action does not reflect a change in actual customer characteristics and should not trigger a reset to the default new account rate.

Policy:

Finance Department Policy 900-02 establishes a default rate for new single-family residential customers. The default rate shall not be applied in instances of account name changes. Instead, these accounts shall continue to be billed based on their prior-year winter average consumption.

I. Customer Responsibility to Inform the City of Account Name Change

The City does not directly bill for water usage and is not able to differentiate between changes in customers and account name changes. It is therefore the responsibility of the customer to contact City staff to request the continuation of their winter average rate. While there is no required format for this request, all requests must be made in writing.

II. Demonstration of Eligibility (Proof of Name Change)

The following shall be considered acceptable demonstration of eligibility. This list is not exhaustive, and alternative documentation may be considered.

1. Provide a utility bill listing both previous and new account names.
2. Provide a rental/lease document listing both previous and new account names.
3. Provide property ownership documentation listing both previous and new account names.
4. Provide an affirmative written statement from the previous account holder stating that the change is in name only, and that no change in the sewer service use has occurred.

Procedures:

Not applicable.

Forms:

Not applicable.

Government Code References:

Not applicable.

Policy History:

1. Issued 07/01/2014