

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**  
**TOWN OF STRASBURG UTILITY BILLING**

**Q. When are utility bills mailed to customers? When are bills due?**

A. The utility billing cycle goes according to the following schedule:

Water Meters Read	Utility Bills Mailed	Bills Due	Late Notice Mailed	Shut-off for non-payment
Around the 20 <sup>th</sup> of each month	Last business day of the month	20 <sup>th</sup> of the month	21 <sup>st</sup> of the month	5 <sup>th</sup> of the following month
<b>Example:</b> October 20	<b>Example:</b> October 31	<b>Example:</b> November 20	<b>Example:</b> November 21	<b>Example:</b> December 5

**Q. How much am I charged for water, sewer, trash and recycling?**

A. Water and sewer charges are based on your monthly water usage according to the following fee schedule:

*Example: An in-town, residential customer using 5,000 gallons of water would be billed \$60.37 for water, \$51.52 for sewer, \$8.95 for trash collection and \$2.05 for recycling collection for a total bill of \$122.89.*

		Residential User		Non-Residential User	
		In-Town	Out-of-Town	In-Town	Out-of-Town
Water	Minimum Charge for first 2,000 gallons	\$24.58	\$34.41	\$25.51	\$35.71
	Charge for each additional 1,000 gallons	\$11.93	\$16.70	\$16.85	\$23.59
Sewer	Minimum Charge for first 2,000 gallons	\$19.60	\$27.44	\$21.09	\$29.53
	Charge for each additional 1,000 gallons	\$10.64	\$14.90	\$13.27	\$18.58

**Q. Why are the charges so high in comparison to other nearby areas, especially the additional water/sewer charges per 1,000 gallons used of the minimum 2,000 gallons?**

A. Each community water and sewer utility is different in many ways including the number of customers, water source, type of treatment used to treat water and sewer, and size of the infrastructure needed to deliver water and collect sewer. All of these factors and many others determine water and sewer fees. The Town of Strasburg's water and sewer systems are self-supporting, meaning the rates are established in order to generate enough revenue to provide the service. This means that every dollar generated through water and sewer fees is used to operate the water and sewer system – no money is transferred to support other services. This helps the Town keep rates at a minimum given the size and type of its water and sewer system. If you're interested in finding out what other water and sewer utilities charge for their service, you can review the annual Virginia Water and Wastewater Rate Survey which is compiled by Draper Aden Associates at <http://www.daa.com/va-rate-study/>.

**Q. Who decides how much to charge for utilities?**

A. Water and sewer fees are approved annually by the Town Council in conjunction with the adoption of the Town's budget. The Town Manager presents the Council with a draft budget and makes recommendations for what water and sewer rates are needed to provide the service.

**Q. My bill was as high as it has ever been this month. What can I do to find out why?**

A. It may be that you used more water than normal or that you have a leak in your water system. The Town can help you identify whether you have a leak and where that leak might be. Your best course of action is to call the Town office at 540-465-9197.

**Q. I had a high water bill due to a leak in my home. Can I get a refund for the water that leaked?**

A. If you had high water usage due to a leak in your water system, you may be eligible for a refund. The Town has a refund policy that applies in cases where your water usage doubled or tripled due to a leak. To qualify, you must provide evidence that the leak was fixed, for example a receipt or bill from a plumber. To find out if you qualify for a refund, please contact the Town office at 540-465-9197.

**Q. How often does the Town read water meters?**

A. Your water meter is read each month before bills are sent out. Generally, meters are read around the 20th of the month. In rare cases, your water usage may be estimated if the meter is inaccessible due to severe weather.

**Q. I don't live within the Town of Strasburg, but have Town utilities. Why do I pay more for my water and sewer?**

A. The Town charges out-of-town customers 40% above normal rates in order to cover the additional cost of maintaining the infrastructure it takes to provide service to these areas. Generally, these areas are far from the Town limits and require more infrastructure, and thus money, to maintain. Some out-of-town areas, such as the Strasburg Junction area, even have their own water storage tanks and pumps to service the customers. These facilities are expensive to own and maintain and require additional resources.

**Q. Why does my bill go up every third or fourth month? I use the same number of gallons each month.**

A. The Town bills in 1000 gallon increments. When a water meter is read, the software rounds DOWN to the nearest 1000 gallons. For example, if a meter reads 2312 gallons, we bill for 2000 gallons. The remaining 312 gallons is held in the billing system. Once the remaining gallons from multiple months is equal to or greater than 1000 gallons an additional billing unit is added to the bill.

Month	Gallons Used	Remaining Gallons after rounding DOWN	Total Remaining Gallons	Billing unit due to remaining gallons
May	2312	312	312	No
June	2312	312	624	No
July	2312	312	936	No
August	2312	312	1248	Yes
September	2312	312	560	No

**Q. I came home from work and found my toilet running, will this affect my water bill?**

A. Yes, a toilet leak can waste up to 5 gallons of water a minute! That can total 7,200 gallons of water a day. If that much water were leaking from the toilet onto the floor into the bathroom, it would be highly noticeable. However, most toilet leaks occur from the tank on the back of the toilet into the bowl, and then into the sewer. They might not make much, if any, noise. A toilet leak doesn't just waste water, it costs money. Both the water that went down the toilet and the sewer treatment for that amount of water show up on the water bill.