

OTTER LAKE WATER DISTRICT
LEAK POLICY
July 16, 2019

Summary

This policy provides for a billing adjustment for residential and commercial ratepayers who have experienced a large and unexpected increase in their water consumption due to indoor/outdoor fixture leaks, pipe breaks, or similar occurrences. The billing adjustment is limited to a maximum adjustment of \$250 and is calculated based on a quarterly average for that period or on an annual consumption. This adjustment is only available once every five years for the same customer at the same location.

Scope

Water is a limited resource and it is the responsibility of all ratepayers to maintain their home irrigation systems, watering troughs for livestock, pipes and fixtures to minimize the unintended loss of water. Nevertheless, on rare occasions, unexpected water use can occur through no fault of the ratepayer. It is the water districts policy to provide a partial credit to the amount submitted to the municipality for annual collection. All efforts will be made to reimburse prior to the taxation deadline, however, not guaranteed.

A ratepayer shall be eligible for an adjustment, under this policy, if he or she has not had a prior adjustment for the same meter location in the five prior years. Water district staff or operator shall determine if the ratepayer is eligible for an adjustment and then proceed to calculate the adjustment.

This water leak adjustment policy applies to all ratepayers within the boundaries of the Otter Lake Water District and is as follows:

1. For excessive water use, due to indoor/outdoor fixture leaks, pipe breaks, vandalism or similar unexpected loss of water limited to a three month period. The policy does not apply to new landscaping irrigation, irrigation, pool/spa filling or other similar uses of water. Water lost due to theft, vandalism, or construction damage is not eligible for an adjustment.
2. To receive a credit, water ratepayers must complete an **Excess Water Use Adjustment Claim** form and correct the cause of the excess water use **prior** to any adjustment to the water bill. Excessive water use is defined as greater than a 50% increase over the average for the that meter reading period. (quarter) The physical meter read will be deemed accurate for all calculations.

3. Is limited to once every five years for the same customer at the same meter location.
4. Adjustments to water account billings are limited to the volume charges for water use, *not the base rate or taxation portions*, and are based on the average quarterly or annual use.
5. This policy is applicable only for leaks on the customer's side of the water meter and or curb stop. Any leaks on the District's mains and connections leading up to the customer's meter and the meter connections will be the responsibility of Otter Lake Water District.
6. Only the operator may replace a meter if he/she deems the meter to be physically or electronically malfunctioning. If the ratepayer insists that the meter be replaced prior to its life expectancy, then the cost of the meter and the installation of that meter will be the sole responsibility of the ratepayer. A 50% deposit of the estimated costs be accepted prior to any works starting with the balance being invoiced at the time of installation.

The calculation of the billing adjustment shall be based on the Tier 1 water rate applied to the excess use and limited to a maximum \$250 credit.

Procedure:

Eligible water customers who suspects or discovers a leak, or has been notified by the District operator that a leak is suspected shall contact the Otter Lake Water District immediately to request an inspection by the operator. As a ratepayer courtesy, the cost of the first visit to the ratepayer's property will be provided at no charge. *Failure to contact the District office either by phone or email within two weeks of notice given by the operator, will forfeit your right to a credit for excess water use.*

Upon inspection, if a leak is discovered after either the curb stop or the meter pit, the responsibility will be the ratepayers. With the permission of the property owner, the operator will perform a brief survey of the property for any fixtures, pipes or irrigation systems that may visibly be leaking and shall inform the property owner of any results. Any and all repairs, or a more comprehensive surveying or testing of the customer's water system is the responsibility of the ratepayer.

The operator will issue a work order explaining the result of the visit and whether an adjustment to the ratepayer's water bill is recommended.

If a second visit is required by the ratepayer, a service charge of \$100.00 will be added to the ratepayer's account.

In order to receive a leak credit, the ratepayer must complete an **Excess Water Use Adjustment** form indicating the problem and provide a contractor's invoice, repair parts invoice or other documentation that the leak was repaired. These documents may be scanned and emailed to otterlakewaterdistrict@telus.net. The board of trustees for the Otter Lake Water District will be responsible for adjudicating the request and notifying the ratepayer.

The billing adjustment will be calculated as follows:

1. The adjustment will only be made on the excess water over and above the 3 year average for that quarter providing no additional water usage/consumption points have been added.
2. Adjustments will only be made on ONE billing quarter per calendar year. If the leak has persisted over two quarters, credit will only be calculated on the first quarter and calculated on that excess water only.
3. Any adjustments made will be credited to that ratepayers and a cheque will be written and issued by the Board of Trustees of the Otter Lake Water District at their next regularly scheduled meeting.
4. All decisions made by the Board of Trustees for the Otter Lake Water District are final.

Please contact us at:

www.otterlakewaterdistrict.com

otterlakewaterdistrict@telus.net

Operator – 250-309-0450