

North Shore Water Reclamation District

This Information Intended For Residential Customers Only

INFORMATION ABOUT OUR SUMMER CREDIT PROGRAM

The North Shore Water Reclamation District Board of Trustees adopted a revised summer credit program for residential customers in 1986. The revised program replaced our previous one which gave all residential customers a 10% credit for any water used between May 1st and September 30th.

This revised program is quite different. If you use more water in the summer than you do in the winter, you will only be billed on your typical winter use. If your summer usage is lower than your winter usage, you will be billed on your actual summer usage.

Thus, during the summer months, you will never be billed for more than what is typical for your use during winter.

Questions and Answers About the Program

Why is a summer credit program needed at all?

Many of our customers use extra water in the summer for lawn watering, gardening, pools, and the washing of cars. Water used for these purposes usually does not end up in the sewer system. Our previous summer credit system attempted to compensate for these water uses by reducing customers' water usage by 10% during the summer.

Why was this revised program adopted?

Since the inception of the user charge system in 1983, we have always monitored the trends of other sanitary districts and listened to the suggestions of our customers. A number of customers had asked us to investigate alternative ways of giving summer credit for water not returned to the sewer system. They felt that a flat 10% credit in many cases was not sufficient. In late 1985 we conducted a study which showed that such a revised program was both feasible and more equitable.

Which months are considered summer months?

The five months starting with May 1st and ending with September 30th are the summer months. The other seven months are winter months. This has not changed from the previous program.

What are some terms I need to know?

Besides our definitions of winter and summer mentioned above, there are four other terms.

Typical Winter Day: the amount of water you use on an average winter day.

Current Summer Day: the amount of water you used on an average day for your current summer bill.

Days of Service: this is the number of days which you currently being billed. The days of the service are shown on the middle portion of your bill.

Units: amount of water measured either in thousands of gallons or hundreds of cubic feet, depending on who supplies your water. The units are shown on the middle portion of your bill.

Could you give an example of calculating the credits?

There are three steps involved in calculating the amount of your summer credit.

Step 1: Calculate Current Summer Day

Let us say that your meter was read on July 31st for the quarter that started May 1st. The reading showed you used 57 units.

Your *Current Summer Day* is 0.62 units (57 units divided by your 92 *Days of Service*).

Step 2: Calculate Typical Winter Day

Let us assume that you used 51 units of water during the winter. There are 212 days in the winter.

Your *Typical Winter Day* is 0.24 units (51 divided by 212 days).

Step 3: Calculate the Summer Credit

The amount of your credit is the difference between your *Current Summer Day* and your *Typical Winter Day*. This number is then multiplied by your *Days of Service* that fall within the summer.

In this example the credit is 35 units (0.62 minus 0.24 times 92 days).

Your 57 units of incoming water would be reduced by your credit of 35 units. You would then be billed for 22 units which is a better indicator of how much water actually entered the sanitary sewer system.

What happens if the result of the above calculations comes out negative?

This is an indication that you use less water in the summer than you do in winter. In this case, you will be billed only for the water you actually used during the summer and not for the higher winter amount.

The example you gave above is for a meter reading that is solely in the summer. What happens if the reading includes a period of time that is both in the summer and in the winter?

This gets a little bit more complicated. We prorate your water usage into both periods of time. This is the method that was used on the previous summer credit program. For example, if you used ten units and 60% of the *Days of Service* were in the winter, then six units will be considered to have been used in the winter and four units in the summer.

Why is prorating so important?

Our customers have their water supplied by 17 different cities, villages, and private water companies. Each water supplier reads its meters not only at different time during the month, but also at frequencies ranging from once a month to every four months.

Prorating the water usage between the summer and the winter insures that all customers, no matter where they live, will have the same summer period. If we did not prorate the water usage, then some customers would have a summer only three months long while other would have a summer eight months long. This would not be equitable.

When is the Typical Winter Day calculated?

We will calculate your *Typical Winter Day* at the time we received your first reading for the summer. By then we will be assured of having all your readings for the prior winter.

How is the Typical Winter Day calculated?

First, readings for the period of October 1st through April 30th are collected for a customer. Any reading that started before October 1st or ended after April 30th is prorated so that only the amount of water during the winter is used in the calculation. The *Typical Winter Day* is the total of all the readings divided by the number of days in the winter, which is 212.

For example, if the total of all your readings for the winter was 77 units then your *Typical Winter Day* would be 0.36 units (77 units divided by 212 days).

What happens if I am a new customer and did not live in my new home all of last winter?

You will still be eligible for a credit. As long as we have readings for at least half of the winter, we will use those readings to compute your *Typical Winter Day*.

If you were not in your home for at least half of the winter, your *Typical Winter Day* for the first year will be the *Typical Winter Day* for the average NSWRD residential customer.

What happens if my water comes from a well that is not metered?

Since the amount of water you use cannot be determined, we will assign you for each quarter the average winter use of all the other NSWRD customers.

What happens if some of my readings were estimated?

An estimated reading poses no problem if an actual reading follows it since the actual reading will compensate for any errors in the original estimate. If you end the winter with an estimate reading, we will not use that reading when calculating your *Typical Winter Day*. We will only use your other readings.

When a customer ends the winter with more than one estimated reading it is more difficult to fairly determine a *Typical Winter Day* since much of the water usage is not actual information. For those customers, the *Typical Winter Day* will be calculated using an adjustment factor. Fortunately, only about 1% of our customers has more than one consecutive estimate reading. Many water supplies leave meter cards for customers whose meters could not be read. Completing such a card will help to insure that your reading will not be estimated.

Why don't you use the reading for just the inter quarter to determine a Typical Winter Day?

About 40% of all the meters are not read by the water suppliers in the winter quarter. If the bill for the rest of the year were based solely on an estimated reading, many customers would either receive too large or too small a summer credit.

Is this revised summer credit system used elsewhere?

Yes. There are 12 other sanitary districts in Illinois with a population above 50,000.

- 3 give no credits
- 3 give credits only in special cases
- 1 gives a flat 10% credit
- 1 gives a flat 20% credit
- 4 use a program similar to this one.

I still have questions about the summer credit program that have not been answered by this information. Where can I get more information?

You can call the North Shore Water Reclamation District at (847) 623-6060, Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Our TDD number is: (847) 623-6091.

Or you may write us at:

North Shore Water Reclamation District
C/O User Charge Section
PO Box 750
Gurnee, IL 60031-0750

Summary

During the winter, you will be billed on your actual water usage.

During the summer, you will either be billed on your actual water usage or on your typical use, whichever is lower. Although the program may seem complicated, you can be assured that during the summer you will never be billed for more water than you used as an average during the prior winter.