

Billing Dispute & Water Usage Relief Policy

On April 12, 2018, Silverdale Water District No. 16, by resolution of the Board of Commissioners, adopted the following policy:

Time Limitation: Should any customer disagree with the amount of any water bill relating to a customer account for any reason, the customer may request a meeting with the General Manager in writing within sixty calendar days following the due date of the contested water bill. Such written request shall set forth the reasons for the disagreement and the customer's estimate of the proper amount of the bill if the customer has an opinion about the amount.

Appeal to General Manager: The General Manager and customer shall make their best efforts to discuss issue within ten business days after the District receives the request. The General Manager shall require the customer to produce reasonable evidence and documentation to support the customer's request. The General Manager shall have thirty days to review the customer's request and supporting documentation or notify the customer of an extended review period.

After reviewing the customer's request and supporting documentation, the General Manager shall have the authority to correct the bill should it be determined that the change results in a credit to the customer account of less than one hundred dollars or a further debit to the customer account. If the General Manager believes the customer account should be credited in an amount equal to or greater than one hundred dollars, the General Manager shall submit the recommendation to the Board of Commissioners.

Appeal to Board of Commissioners: Any decision of the General Manager may be appealed to the Board of Commissioners of the Silverdale Water District. All such appeals shall be in writing and shall be made within ten business days after notice of the General Manager's decision has been given to the customer. The written appeal shall state the reasons why the customer disagrees with the General Manager's decision. Notices of appeals to the Board of Commissioners not received by the District within ten business days shall not be accepted. The General Manager's decision shall be final upon the expiration of the appeal period if no appeal is taken pursuant to these procedures.

The District after receipt of the appeal notice shall hear all appeals at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Commissioners. However, if the agenda for the meeting has already been determined, the appeal shall be heard at the next succeeding regularly scheduled meeting. At such hearing, the customer shall present their opinions on the decision and the General Manager shall reply. The Board of Commissioners may question either the customer or the General Manager with respect to the dispute. A majority vote of the Board of Commissioners shall be final.

Water Usage Relief Process: When the customer requests a billing adjustment for excess usage on the customer's side of the meter, District personnel will conduct a thorough investigation to determine the cause of the usage. The customer shall provide a signed statement that the cause for excess water use for which the customer is requesting credit, has been rectified. Where the General Manager has determined that a credit to a customer's account may be warranted, and the leak has been repaired, the General Manager shall calculate the amount of the credit based upon the following criteria and formula:

1. One adjustment may be granted during a five-year period for a customer.
2. The total usage being disputed must exceed the third inverted block usage and exceed 150 percent of the average usage during comparable periods in each of the two preceding years. If this information is unavailable for residential customers, the average will be based upon the average usage during those periods for all residential customers; the General Manager shall determine the estimated amount for all other customer classifications.
3. All usage will be calculated utilizing the first, second, and third inverted block rate structure in effect at the time of the billing period.