

CITY OF CHARLESTOWN, INDIANA

SANITARY SEWER ADJUSTMENT POLICY

EFFECTIVE ON MARCH 22, 2022

OVERVIEW

The purpose of this policy is to establish uniform City of Charlestown, Indiana (the “City”) procedures (1) regarding adjustments to customers’ monthly billing for sanitary sewer usage; (2) to establish guidelines for application of adjustments to customers’ monthly bills; and (3) to ensure that the use of billing adjustments is correctly authorized and applied.

It is the City’s policy to provide the highest standard of service to our community in a customer friendly manner. Utilizing an adjustment process supports the City’s efforts to provide high-quality, customer friendly service to the public. For this reason, establishing guidelines should help preserve the benefits provided to our customers from billing adjustments.

The property owner is responsible for maintaining the condition and integrity of their property’s infrastructure. Visually checking for leaks, ensuring that pipes are water-tight, reviewing the water bill monthly and knowing the average usage are some of the things property owners should do to help minimize the cost of the monthly bill and avoid expensive repairs.

Charges for wastewater treatments and sanitary sewer service are assessed using water meters use readings provided by Indiana-American Water Company. As these meters age, they tend to run slower, and usage may not be recorded accurately. In these instances, the customer is undercharged, not overcharged.

Adjustments may be processed and approved by the Office of the Clerk Treasurer or the City’s Sanitary Sewer Board (“Board”) per the following criterion:

- A water leak adjustment for which water did not discharge into the wastewater treatment system;
- Water company (i.e. Indiana-American Water) errors that result in an incorrect reading;
- Late charges improperly assessed due to errors, misapplied payments, adjustment of bills in which ownership of property is transferred or initial connection; or
- For the use of water that did not discharge into the City’s wastewater treatment system

In order to receive an adjustment on a sanitary sewer bill, the customer must submit the appropriate form (see below) to the Utility Billing Office at 304 Main Cross Street, Charlestown, Indiana 47111 no later than 180 days from the invoice date of said bill. Any credit balances that arise from adjustments may only be used to reduce a customer’s account balance. Credit balances may only be used to apply against other accounts if the customer has more than one account in his or her name with the City. The Office of the Clerk-Treasurer may authorize most adjustments, but any adjustment which will exceed \$1,000, is the result of a charge-off for a closed account, is lacking proper documentation, or is the result of uncommon circumstances shall only be effective upon

ratification or approval by the Board. The Clerk Treasurer reserves the right to have any adjustment approved by the Board that she/he deems necessary.

WATER LEAK ADJUSTMENTS

The Clerk Treasurer (or Board) will adjust a sewer bill resulting from a leak which would not discharge into the sanitary sewer system or for the use of water that did not discharge into the City's wastewater treatment system.

A customer seeking to obtain a water leak/other adjustment shall:

1. Complete formal written application (Form A-2) for a leak/other adjustment credit.
2. Obtain proof of leak and the repair through receipts from a licensed plumber or for parts. The application will be considered documentation for other adjustment requests.
3. Form A-2 and proof of leak should be submitted to the Utility Billing Office at 304 Main Cross Street, Charlestown, Indiana 47111 no later than seventy-two (72) hours prior to a meeting of the Board (if requiring Board approval.)

If the adjustment is deemed appropriate and is approved by the Clerk Treasurer (or Board) the sewer portion of the bill will be reduced to the customer's previous 12-month average.

Adjustments for water leaks/other are limited to one (1) customer per location annually unless extenuating circumstances exist such as the water leak continues over two (2) billing cycles. It is intended for this policy to apply to customers responding promptly to a "high" bill and that any plumbing problems are identified and repaired immediately. In order to receive an adjustment for a water leak, the customer must cause the leak to be fixed no later than ninety (90) days after the customer becomes aware or should have become aware of the leak, whichever is earlier.

WATER COMPANY ERRORS

Any errors in billing arising from erroneous information submitted by the water company (i.e. Indiana-American Water) serving the customer's account will be adjusted based upon the data provided by the water company.

PENALTY ADJUSTMENTS

Adjustments will be made to remove any penalties as a result of incorrect or erroneous billing, if the account is otherwise current. Any misapplied payments and incorrect/erroneous billing will be corrected immediately by the Utility Billing Office, once notified, and the resulting penalties reversed that occur as a result of the misapplication of payments or incorrect/erroneous billing only. Any further requests for a reduction of penalties in the same twelve (12) month period must be done by submitting an application (Form A-1) to the Utility Billing Office at 304 Main Cross Street, Charlestown, Indiana 47111.

FORMS

Below are the names of the forms for seeking an adjustment on a City sanitary sewer bill. These forms are available at the Utility Billing Office at 304 Main Cross Street, Charlestown, Indiana 47111 and on the City website: [City Clerk-Treasurer | Charlestown, IN \(cityofcharlestown.com\)](#).

FORM A-1-APPLICATION FOR BILLING ADJUSTMENT CREDIT

FORM A-2-APPLICATION FOR LEAK ADJUSTMENT CREDIT

**CITY OF CHARLESTOWN, INDIANA
SANITARY SEWER BOARD**

The foregoing *Sanitary Sewer Adjustment Policy* was adopted and passed by the City of Charlestown Sanitary Sewer Board this _____ day of _____, 2022.

Mayor Treva Hodges, Chairperson

Attested by:

Ryan Hodskins, Secretary/Treasurer

CITY OF CHARLESTOWN, INDIANA
FORM A-1: APPLICATION FOR BILLING ADJUSTMENT CREDIT
(For leaks, please complete Form A-2 instead (Application for Leak Adjustment Credit))

Name: _____

Date: _____

Service Address:

Customer Account No.: _____

Phone Number: _____

Reason for Requesting Billing Adjustment:

Clerical billing error

Suspected meter malfunction

Water company error

Sump pump did not discharge into the City's wastewater treatment system

Other _____

Have you ever received a previous billing adjustment?

No

Yes, approximate year _____

Are you a tenant at this property? Yes No

Landlord's Name: _____

Landlord's mailing address: _____

We suggest you pay at least the amount of your average bill at this time and pay the current amount for any future bills until the adjustment has been processed. The balance due after your adjustment will typically be higher than your usual bill amount.

Customer Signature

CITY OF CHARLESTOWN
FORM A-2: APPLICATION FOR LEAK ADJUSTMENT CREDIT

Name: _____ Date: _____

Service Address: _____

Customer Account No.: _____

Phone Number: _____

Have you ever received a previous billing adjustment? [] No [] Yes, approximate year _____

Date you first noticed leak: _____ Date leak repaired: _____

Where was leak located? [] Inside House [] Between house and water meter [] In irrigation system

Have you ever received a previous leak adjustment: [] No [] Yes, approximate year: _____

Have you attached a receipt/documentation for leak repair? [] Yes [] No

If No, briefly describe repair:

If No and repair parts were used for this repair or a commercial establishment performed the repair, please explain why receipts are not available? _____

Are you a tenant at this property? Yes [] No []

Landlord's Name: _____

Landlord's mailing address: _____

Please describe how your leak was identified or provide any additional facts you think might be helpful (or submit an extra page):

How much is your total bill? _____

We suggest you pay at least the amount of your average bill at this time and pay the current amount for any future bills until the adjustment has been processed. The balance due after your leak adjustment will typically be higher than your usual bill amount.

Customer Signature