

March 26, 2008

Mayor Bell & Common Council Members  
7525 West Greenfield Avenue  
West Allis, WI 53214

Honorable Mayor & Council Members:

The Water Utility has had a long-standing policy of adjusting the charge for the water consumption portion of a residential customer's utility bill when the customer had some type of malfunction on their property that resulted in the high consumption. To get an adjustment, the customer is required to write a letter explaining the nature of the defect that caused the unusually high consumption as well as informing us that the problem that had caused the high consumption is corrected. Typically, the adjustment provided the customer results in the customer paying the retail price for the average amount of water consumed in a quarter and a wholesale price for water consumed in excess of that amount.

While the discounting of the excess quantities of water provides some relief to the residential customer, a substantial portion of the over-all bill may still remain due to the sanitary sewer charges assessed. The City's sanitary sewer charges are directly related to consumption since water consumed on the property, excluding lawn care, typically ends up in the sanitary sewer system.

MMSD bills the City a fixed price for each residential sanitary sewer connection. This price is passed on to our customers via both a fixed fee and, as noted, on water consumption. When a residential customer experiences a malfunction in their plumbing system that results in excessive consumption, the sanitary sewer charges, likewise, can be substantial. Because of this, the Sanitary Sewer Utility proposes to reduce the sanitary sewer charges in those instances where the charges were caused by a defect, as indicated above, in the customer's water system. Similar to the action taken on the water portion of the bill, the Utility proposes to charge the full sanitary sewer rate based on the typical quarterly water consumption and 25% of the sanitary sewer fees related to the excess amount of water consumed. Finally, the Department also proposes charging a \$20 administrative fee to cover the cost of investigating the request for adjustments and preparing a corrected utility bill.

We believe that implementing the above procedure will provide considerable savings to the residential customer who has the misfortune of experiencing some type of failure in their water system that results in unusually high consumption. As such, we request the approval of the Common Council to implement the above described procedure.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael F. Pertmer  
Director of Public Works