

La Mesa Water Cooperative

WaterGram - October 2014

Board Approves Interim Policy on Extraordinary Water Use

After several months of study, on September 23 the Board approved an interim Extraordinary Water Use Policy. This policy is intended to offer some rate relief to members who experience unusually high water bills because of equipment failure or malfunction. This interim policy is retroactive to January 1, 2014. Unless it is extended by the Board, the policy will expire on December 31, 2014.

The Interim Policy on Extraordinary Water use appears on the back of this page and is posted online at *lamesawatercoop.org*. If you have experienced an equipment failure or malfunction since January 1, 2014 that resulted in an unusually high water bills you may request rate relief by sending an e-mail to board@lamesawatercoop.org or a letter to La Mesa Water Cooperative, PO Box 53, Placitas, NM 87043. If you have already requested rate relief it is not necessary to submit another request.

Have You Adjusted Your Irrigation Schedule?

Fall is officially here and the end of the growing season is upon us. Please make certain that you have adjusted your watering schedule accordingly. The Albuquerque Water Authority recommends that landscaping should be water twice weekly in September and October then the once weekly until the first killing frost.

Please Turn This Page Over to Find the Interim Policy on Extraordinary Water Use.

Board of Directors

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Interim (2014) Leak Policy

Members are responsible for all water delivered to their property. Members are expected to maintain their water distribution system to insure that water is used responsibly and is not wasted.

The Board recognizes that an equipment failure or malfunction may cause a significant water leak, in which case the resulting unusually high water bill may be deemed as appropriate for relief. Relief is not appropriate for a pattern of high water use, human error, or intentional one-time high water use, such as filling a swimming pool.

A member requesting relief under this policy must submit a request by sending an e-mail to board@lamesawatercoop.org or a letter to La Mesa Water Cooperative, PO Box 53, Placitas, NM 87043.

Criteria

Relief, in the form of the Extraordinary Water Use rate, may be approved by the Board, if the recorded usage for the month is:

More than one and a half times the usage of the previous month,

AND

More than one and a half times the usage of the subsequent month.

For example, a bill showing usage of 27,000 gallons is eligible for relief if the prior month's usage was less than 18,000 gallons, and the subsequent month's usage is also less than 18,000 gallons.

Usage amounts are for the same property, even if there was a different resident.

Other situations, such as a large leak that originates in one billing cycle and carries into the next billing cycle will be considered for relief.

If a homeowner requests relief and chooses to not pay the original billed amount, late charges will be waived until the relief request is either granted or denied (which will take at least a month).

Extraordinary Water Use Rate

If the above criteria is met, the member is charged the normal fixed monthly charge (\$33) plus a usage charge computed by applying the average metered price of \$8.94 per thousand gallons to the entire usage for the month, with that usage charge limited to a maximum of \$750.

Retroactive for all of 2014

This policy applies to all water bills dated January 31, 2014 through December 31, 2014.

Notes

Note that the criteria and average metered price have several implications:

- Usage must go down significantly in the subsequent month to qualify, so members must be proactive in identifying and correcting any problem.
- Relief cannot be determined for at least a month, when the next month's usage is available.
- Two or more consecutive months of high use will not qualify.
- For monthly usage below about 21,000 gallons, the existing tiered rates will result in a lower bill than applying the \$8.94 rate to all usage.