



CITY OF HAILEY

---

Public Works Department

# Leak Repair Refund Policy

## Utility Billing

It is unlawful for any water user to waste water or allow water to be wasted by leaky water stops, valves, joints or pipes that are not under the jurisdiction of the city, or to permit the malicious or willful consumption of water from the municipal water system.

*City Ordinance 13.08.030 Water Conservation*

Operating in conjunction with this ordinance, the City of Hailey Public Works Department has developed the following internal policy:

### **Policy**

Customers who have made repairs within a reasonable time period shall be reimbursed for excessive charges accumulated due to a leak according to the following:

- Customers will be informed of the policy of reimbursement by the Utility Billing Department with either a phone conversation or letter informing them of the possibility of a leak. Phone conversations will be documented in Customer Notes in Caselle.
- Customers who request reimbursement to their account due to excessive charges will be reimbursed as follows:
  1. Repairs made within 30 days of notice will receive 100% credit back to average use.
  2. Repairs made within 60 days of notice will receive 50% credit back to average use.
  3. Repairs made after 60 days will not be eligible for credit.
- The assessment of water rate credits will be determined only after a full month's billing subsequent to the repair being completed.
- Credit assessment will be based on the previous year's month of water usage prior to the leak unless the data is unavailable, then discretion will be used for a maximum of two months to be adjusted.

## **REFUND POLICY**

- Winter leaks will require an adjustment to the accounts sewer rate in April, in compliance with the sewer rate ordinance. The sewer rate is not subject to the 30/60 day repair deadline.

### **Procedures**

- Leaks are reported to the Utility Billing Department by the customer or after being revealed through monthly meter reading by the Water Department or through the monthly perusal of account activity for billing purposes by the Utility Billing Clerk.
- If there is evidence of a leak, a leak test will be performed for verification.
- If the customer did not initiate this notification of a leak, a phone call will be made or a letter is sent to:
  1. Notify the customer of the leak
  2. Inform the customer of the violation of City Ordinance 13.08.030
  3. Request a prompt repair of the leak.
  4. An allowance will be made for winter weather conditions:
    - A. Leak repair is to be completed by May 1<sup>st</sup> following the winter season. Unless unusual weather does not permit this due date.
    - B. Customers will continue to be charged according to the water rate table. Credit will be made only after leak is repaired. Notes on customer tab will advise Clerks Office staff to not shut off due to non payment and customer will be advised to make a minimum payment per month until credit is determined.
  5. Phone conversations and/or letter will be documented in phone log and location notes.
- Leak letters or phone call notes and potential sewer rate adjustments are put into a tickler system for follow-up and additional letters, or citations when deemed necessary.
- The customer is responsible to notify the Utility Billing Department once the leak has been repaired, and then another leak test is performed for verification.

**REFUND POLICY**

- A detailed note about the leak shall be recorded in the “location” tab and again once the leak is repaired. Detailed notes shall be made in the “customer” tab at each step of this process recording conversations with the customer. Once the repair is complete a note will be made in the “customer” tab of the amount of adjustment(s) due to leak repair.

**Sewer Rate Adjustment**

- When the leak occurs in the sewer calculation period (five months of winter November – March) it is necessary to make the appropriate adjustment to the new sewer rate calculation upon April’s auto rate change. These accounts will be tracked in a tickler system.

1. Sewer adjustment will either be set to the non metered base rate or to actual current year’s average use (A minimum of 3 months of no leak usage must show in order to determine a current year average) or to the previous year’s average usage, whichever of these three is less.

- Customers that repair a winter leak with no notice to us must notify the Utility Billing department of this winter leak no later than June 15<sup>th</sup> in order to receive sewer rate adjustments following the April sewer rate adjustment period. Notifications after June 15<sup>th</sup> will receive a maximum of two months credit and adjusted to the non metered base rate or to actual current year’s average use. Evidence of a repair bill may be requested.

- Customers who need to run water during the winter to prevent freezing must provide evidence that:

1. freezing has been a problem in the past
2. the excessive water has not been directed to the sewer system

- Customers running water to prevent freezing will be adjusted to the non-metered base rate.

**Policy Approval**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date