

Adopted @  
3/25/14 cc. meeting

## HUNTINGBURG MUNICIPAL UTILITIES RESIDENTIAL LEAK ADJUSTMENT POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to provide a basis for Huntingburg Municipal Utilities to adjust unusually high residential water bills caused by physical damage to facilities or equipment supplying water to a residential premises which the customer could not have reasonably known about with normal diligence, as approved by Indiana Code 8-1.5-3.5-4. The reason for providing a policy for reducing these bills is to relieve financial hardship on residents caused by no fault of their own. The intent is to provide some relief for catastrophic losses of water but not high uses caused by lack of maintenance or a change in activity at the residence.

### A. WATER BILL ADJUSTMENTS FOR UNDETECTED LEAKS

#### Leak Adjustment Guidelines

Leak adjustment to an unusually high residential water bill will be considered when all of the following threshold conditions have been met:

- Customer receives a residential water bill that reflects a monthly water use volume which is 200% greater than previous twelve months' average usage history, or 200% greater than the previous full billing period if no history exists;
- Customer demonstrates, and the municipal utility staff must verify, that the excessive usage is attributable to a leak or physical damage to a pipe, equipment or facility supplying water which:
  - a.) is not visible or detectable on the customer's premises, except by excavation or some other form of demolition or similar disturbance to the premises; and
  - b.) is not the result of an act or omission of the customer, an agent, contractor, or tenant of the customer
- The customer reports the unusually large usage to the City within a reasonable time of discovery, or within a reasonable time after discovery is possible in the exercise of reasonable diligence.
- Customer provides proof, and the municipal utility staff verifies, that the leak or damaged facilities have been properly repaired.
- Huntingburg Municipal Utilities will not consider lack of proper maintenance or negligence by customer, his/her agent, tenant, or contractor, which results in a water loss as being appropriate for approving an adjustment in the bill.
- Customer must submit a "Request for Water Leak Adjustment" form in writing before water bill due date.

- Account must not be delinquent (with only the current month usage owed). An approved payment plan agreed upon by customer does not constitute delinquency;
- Customer, has not received a leak adjustment within the last twenty-four (24) months for a previously approved adjustment.
- A water bill leak adjustment shall not be allowed for unusually large bills due to faulty or leaking toilets, faucets, interior fixtures, water heaters, exposed pipes and equipment; hydrants or faucets left on; hot tubs, swimming pools, fish ponds, garden and lawn sprinkler or watering systems.
- A water bill leak adjustment shall not be allowed for commercial or industrial customer accounts.

### **Water Bill Adjustment**

Huntingburg Municipal Utilities assumes no responsibility for damage, repairs, or inspections necessitated by leaks. **If all Leak Adjustment Guideline items have been met**, leak adjustments will be issued as follows:

The unusually large water bill shall be adjusted to equal the customer's most recent twelve month average water consumption. If the leak is corrected immediately after notification but results in unusually high consumption for two consecutive months, Huntingburg Municipal Utilities has the option of calculating the adjustment on the higher month consumption (one month only) and eliminating the other high consumption month from the average calculation. If the customer has not established a twelve month history, an average will be calculated based on the number of months available.

### **B. PROCEDURES TO REQUEST AN ADJUSTMENT**

Customers desiring an adjustment must apply for a water leak adjustment by completing a "Request for Water Leak Adjustment" form and return it to the Huntingburg Utilities billing office. The Request shall be referred to the Water Utility Superintendent or his designee for investigation and verification of the threshold requirements. Upon appropriate verification and approval by the superintendent or his designee, the Clerk-Treasurer or his/her designee will review the account history and calculate the water bill adjustment as provided for herein. Approvals/Disapprovals will be determined within 10 days of receipt of the completed form and documentation. A copy of the approval/disapproval will be mailed to the customer.

CITY OF HUNTINGBURG

REQUEST FOR WATER LEAK ADJUSTMENT

**Customer Information**

Name on Account: \_\_\_\_\_ Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone No#: \_\_\_\_\_ Service Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Leak Repair Information**

Date Leak Discovered: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Leak Repaired: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Leak: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Repaired by (documentation attached)

\_\_\_\_\_ Customer                      \_\_\_\_\_ Contractor

PLEASE NOTE: Completion of this form does not guarantee adjustment will be made to your bill. All adjustments are issued based on average usage for previous account history and are credited on your bill. Once the review is complete, you will receive notification of results from the Utility Billing Office. We cannot guarantee approval/disapproval on current bill. Please return the completed application to Huntingburg Utility Billing Office, P.O. Box 10, Huntingburg, IN 47542 with required documentation.

***I have read, understand, and agree with the leak adjustment guidelines.***

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Property Owner Signature \_\_\_\_\_

For Office Use Only	Date Received	Receipts and/or Photos: Yes _____ No _____
Billing period of leak	Usage on Original Bill	Average Usage
Adjusted Units/Total Leak Credit	Approval Date	Denial Date
Work Order Number	Approval	Denial