

UTL-3.08 - Water, Sewer and/or Storm Water Billing Appeal Policy - [Printable Version](#)

WATER, SEWER, AND/OR STORM WATER BILLING APPEAL POLICY

Administrative Rule Adopted by Water Bureau Pursuant to Rule-Making Authority

ARB-UTL-3.08

OBJECTIVE:

The objective of the Water, Sewer, and Storm Water Appeal Policy is to provide customers with a process beyond the normal services offered by the Customer Service Group to resolve disputes with water, sewer, and/or storm water accounts and billing issues. The Water-Sewer Administrative Review Committee is established to review customer requests for account adjustments, proposed account actions, or other disputes concerning the customer's water, sewer, and/or storm water account and to provide a final decision representing each Bureau on any resolution of disputes.

AUTHORITY:

City Code Sections 21.16.120, Adjustments and Refunds, and 17.16.130, Adjustment of Bills, give authority to the Water Bureau Administrator and the Director of the Bureau of Environmental Services to make adjustments on water, sewer, or stormwater charges when deemed necessary for the proper conduct of business for their respective bureaus. Furthermore, Section 21.16.040, Delinquent Water Bills, establishes the right for customers to a review prior to the shut off of water services. For this purpose, the Directors of the Water Bureau and Environmental Services delegate authority to the Water-Sewer Administrative Review Committee to review customer requests and provide written decisions regarding adjustments on water, sewer, or storm water charges within the limitations stated below. This committee is comprised of one representative each from the Bureau of Water Works and the Bureau of Environmental Services, along with one representative from the staff of the Commissioner(s)-in-Charge for each Bureau.

PROCESS:

1. Customers must submit appeals in writing, describing the circumstances, why they feel an adjustment is warranted, and the specific remedy requested. Information about all previous contacts with the City or Customer Service staff relative to the issue is helpful to include in the request.
2. When appeals are received, all pending actions on the account will be suspended until the Committee reviews the merits of the case and render their decision.
3. The Committee will meet as needed. Requests will be evaluated using City Code, rate ordinances, and account/customer history to assist in rendering decisions.
4. The Committee may accept the customer's requested remedy, authorize an alternate remedy, or deny the appeal.
5. The Committee is authorized to make adjustments up to \$5,000.00 in water charges and \$5,000.00 in sewer/storm water charges.
6. Adjustments greater than \$5,000.00 for either the water or sewer/storm water charges will be referred to the appropriate Bureau Director for approval.
7. The Committee will provide written notification to the customer of its decision within 30 days of receipt of a written request by the customer. The reply will include a brief explanation for their decision and a clear explanation of the future expectations regarding account actions to be taken

by the City.

8. The decision rendered by the Water-Sewer Administrative Review Committee is considered the final decision from both the Water Bureau and the Bureau of Environmental Services. Further appeals by the customer may be addressed to either the Commissioner in Charge of the appropriate Bureau or the City Attorney.

APPLICABILITY:

This policy applies to all customers of the city of Portland receiving water, sewer, and/or storm water services.

HISTORY

Filed for inclusion in PPD August 13, 2004.

Adopted by Water Bureau. Document dated July 30, 2004.