
City Council Regular Meeting

DEPARTMENT: Finance

FROM: Lauren Seay, Deputy Director of Administrative Services

MEETING: October 19, 2026

SUBJECT:

Receive a report, hold a discussion, and provide staff direction regarding winter-quarter averaging for utility billing. (*Staff Contact: Lauren Seay, Deputy Director of Administrative Services*)

STRATEGIC PRIORITY AND GOAL(S):

Strategic Priority	Strategic Goal
 High Performing City Organization Providing Exceptional, People Focused Services	1.2 Continue to improve the efficiency and productivity of operations 1.3 Deliver high-quality service and communications to external and internal customers

SUMMARY:

The City uses winter-quarter averaging (WQA), the most common practice among our peer cities, to establish residential wastewater billing volume. Because wastewater (sewer) discharged from individual residences is not separately metered, water consumption is used as the basis for wastewater billing. However, not all water used at a residence enters the wastewater system. Irrigation, pool filling, and other outdoor water uses generally do not enter the sanitary sewer. Using winter consumption, when outdoor water use is typically lower, helps provide a more equitable basis for wastewater billing.

The City currently calculates residential wastewater billing volume using the average water consumption billed during January, February, and March, up to a maximum of 12,000 gallons. If a customer has not established an average for those three months, the citywide residential average is used.

Staff reviewed the City's current methodology and practices among peer cities. While winter averaging is the most common approach among the cities reviewed, practices differ in the months used, how the average is calculated, and how customers without an established winter average are billed.

On October 7, 2026, staff presented the City's current methodology, peer city practices, billing examples, and potential policy considerations to the Council Policy & Valuation Committee. The Committee recommended moving the item forward to the full City Council as presented and maintaining the City's current residential wastewater billing methodology.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council receive the report and the Policy & Valuation Committee's recommendation and provide direction on the City's residential wastewater billing methodology.

PRIOR ACTION/INPUT (Council, Boards, Citizens):

October 7, 2026 – Council Policy and Valuation Committee

REFERENCE:

CSO#5908-09-2025

FISCAL IMPACT:

NA

STAFF CONTACT:

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