

Chicagoland Skydiving Center

1207 Gurler Road
Rochelle, IL 61068
815.561.3663



7/29/2026

Zeke Jackson, City Manager

City of Rochelle

420 North 6th Street

Rochelle, IL 61068

RE: Request for Utility Bill Adjustment & Payment Arrangement — Underground Leak at CSC RV Park

Zeke,

I am writing to respectfully request your review—and, if necessary, consideration by the Mayor and City Council—regarding an extraordinary utility bill incurred following an underground water leak at our RV park at the Rochelle Municipal Airport in April 2026.

As long-standing tenants at the airport, Chicagoland Skydiving Center and Flight Deck Bar & Grill take great pride in our relationship with the City of Rochelle. We support dozens of local jobs, generate local sales taxes, pay our municipal utility bills on time, and draw tens of thousands of visitors to Rochelle each year. These visitors stay in local hotels, dine at area restaurants, and contribute significantly to our local economy. We view ourselves as dedicated partners in Rochelle's growth.

Incident Background & Corrective Action

In April 2026, we discovered a major underground line leak in our RV park area. Upon identifying the spike in our water bill, Rochelle Municipal Utilities (RMU) provided us with an assistance application form. However, we were later informed that RMU's current leak adjustment policy applies strictly to residential accounts.

We took immediate action to resolve the issue and safeguard future utility infrastructure:

- **Immediate Repairs:** We contracted repairs upon discovery, incurring a \$4,300 repair bill out-of-pocket to fix the damaged lines.
- **Proactive Mitigation:** To prevent an incident like this from ever happening again, we have since installed an advanced water leak detection and monitoring system on the property.

While we understand that standard policies exist to regulate normal operations, the circumstances surrounding this leak were exceptional. The vast majority of the volume from this subterranean line leak absorbed directly into the soil rather than entering the municipal sewer system for processing. While we did

experience a concurrent sewer leak—meaning a portion of the water did re-enter the system—it is impossible to calculate the exact ratio. Charging standard reclamation/sewer treatment fees on water that naturally dissipated into the ground creates a severe financial hardship for services the utility did not have to render.

Requested Relief

While we fully recognize our responsibility as property managers for the water volume lost, we respectfully ask the City to consider our track record, our immediate corrective actions, and our substantial repair investments, and grant the following relief:

1. **Partial or Full Reclamation Abatement:** We request that the City credit or abate all (or a fair determined portion) of the sewer/reclamation charges associated with the leak, reflecting the reality that most of the water was absorbed directly into the ground.
2. **90-Day Payment Plan:** We request authorization to pay the remaining adjusted balance over a structured 90-day payment plan to help us manage cash flow alongside the unexpected repair and mitigation costs we have already absorbed.

If this request exceeds administrative authority, I kindly ask that this matter be placed on an upcoming City Council agenda so we may present our request to the Council for consideration.

Thank you for your time, leadership, and continued partnership. I am available at your convenience to meet, answer questions, or provide repair invoices and documentation.

Regards,



Douglas Smith
President
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