



Calhoun Utilities

**Policy Regarding Utility Adjustments,
Procedures for Maintenance of Accounts,
and Theft of Service**

February 28, 2013

Adopted: April 22, 2013

Purpose:

This document is intended to clarify and standardize specific methods for the adjustment of billing amounts due to leaks, meter errors, service provided, account maintenance, and theft of service. To provide an opportunity for account holders to request adjustments to water, sewer, and electric user charges when a leak or error occurs in the utility systems on the customer side of the meter or when the meter is in error;

To describe conditions when a leak adjustment request will be considered, establish repair expectations and ensure the consistent application of leak adjustments to accounts, account maintenance, and procedures;

To provide the necessary guidelines and requirements for addressing theft of service of any utility service provided by the City of Calhoun;

To provide the necessary guidelines and procedures for addressing vacant or “stand-by” connections.

Scope: The policy shall address the following areas of concern:

- **Sec. 1 Qualification for Adjustments**
- **(a) Define conditions that qualify for adjustments.**
- **(b) Define conditions where a leak adjustment would not apply.**
- **(c) Procedures for filing an adjustment claim.**
- **(d) Method of Adjustments for customer-side leaks.**
- **(e) Frequency of adjustments.**
- **Sec. 2 Sanitary Sewer Adjustments.**
- **(a) Sanitary Sewer Adjustments for swimming pools**
- **(b) Sanitary Sewer Adjustments for irrigation use.**
- **(c) Sanitary Sewer Adjustments for process water loss.**

- **Sec 3. Vacant or “stand-by” connections.**
- **Sec. 4 Water usage from fire sprinkler systems.**
- **Sec. 5 Meter Modifications**
- **Sec.6 Meter Testing**
- **(a) Request Guidelines**
- **(b) Adjustments**
- **Sec.7 Theft of Service**
- **Sec. 8 Notice of Violation**
- **Sec. 9 Penalties**
- **Sec. 10 Reinstatement of Service**
- **Sec. 11 Refusal of service**
- **Sec. 12 New accounts**

Leak Adjustments

Leak Policy Statement:

Calhoun Utilities may under unusual and/or special circumstances, non-reoccurring, and rare in nature, provide reasonable adjustments based upon such mitigating conditions, which appear to require such adjustment to a utility bill. The burden of proof shall rest with the customer and shall be subject to review by the General Manager or his/her assignee.

Sec. 1 Qualification for Leak Adjustments:

(a) A leak is defined as an unintentional water loss caused by a broken and/or malfunctioning plumbing fitting or pipes being underground or within the walls of the structure. The leak must create an increased water usage of 50% above the twelve (12) month average from the previous year’s water use and must be five thousand (5000) gallons or greater. Customers must be of good standing in order to

qualify and have a current account. Leaks must be repaired within ten (10) working days of discovery or from date of notification in order qualify for an adjustment.

(b) No adjustment will be given for visible leaks such as leaking faucets, toilets, water heaters, or exposed plumbing (including pipes in an under-sink cabinet for example). No adjustment shall be given for water loss due to human error.

(c) No adjustments for inactive connections or inactive accounts.

Filing a Leak Adjustment claim:

(c) The customer must complete and submit the required Adjustment Request form within thirty (30) days of the billing due date for the period in question. The form may be picked up at Customer Service, 700 West Line Street, Calhoun Georgia, 30701, requested by phone at (706) 602-5678, or may be downloaded from the City of Calhoun web site at <http://www.cityofcalhoun-ga.com/>

In order to receive an adjustment, the following criteria must be met:

- **The leak must be repaired according to policy stated herein.**
- **Leak Adjustments are limited to two (2) adjustments per twelve month period.**
- **In order to receive an adjustment, you must mail (via certified mail), fax, or deliver proof of repair, i.e., receipts, for parts, and/or plumber's statement/invoice along with the completed form to:**

**Calhoun Utilities
700 West Line Street
Calhoun Georgia, 30701
Fax: (706) 602-5560**

Sample form:

Adjustment Request Form



Calhoun Utilities adjustment policy is designed to assist a customer with a high water bill resulting from a leak on the customer's side of the service. However, the leak adjustment will still be higher than your normal bill, since Calhoun Utilities will share in one-half (1)/2 of the cost above your average water bill. In effect you pay your averaged normal bill plus (+) twenty-five percent (25%) of the excess amount.

In order to receive an adjustment, the following criteria must be met:

- The leak must be repaired.
- The leak must not be due to human error.
- No more than two (2) leak adjustments per twelve (12) month period.
- In order to receive an adjustment, you must mail (via certified mail), fax, or deliver proof of repair, i.e., receipts, for parts,, and/or plumber's statement/invoice to:

Calhoun Utilities
700 West Line Street
Calhoun Georgia, 30701
Fax: (706) 602-5560

Customer's Name: _____

Service Address: _____

Account Number: _____ Phone Number _____

Inside Repair : _____ Outside Repair : _____

Date of Repair: _____

Please attach all receipts and or plumber's statement.

Customer's Signature _____ Date: _____

Method of Leak Adjustments:

(d) Once the claim is verified, the leak adjustment shall be as follows; the customer's past twelve months water usage shall be averaged and subtracted from the total amount of the usage in question. This amount shall be reduced by seventy-five (75%) percent, becoming the amount of the adjustment. The average water usage plus (+) the amount of the adjustment shall be used to determine the amount of the bill. Tiered rates shall not apply to the adjustment amount.

(e) No leak adjustments for amounts below five thousand (5000) gallons shall be made.

(f) No more than two leak adjustments may be made during a twelve (12) month period for any one account.

Sec. 2 Sanitary Sewer Adjustments

(a) Sanitary Sewer Adjustments for Swimming Pools Calhoun Utilities will give each customer one pool credit per year. The amount of the credit shall be based on the average usage for the past twelve months excepting that month in which the pool is filled. No sewer adjustment will be given for pools less than five thousand (5000) gallons in volume.

(b) Calhoun Utilities will give sanitary sewer adjustments for irrigation during the months of April through September. The adjustment shall be based on the average usage for the months of October through March. The adjustment will be the usage during the irrigation period less the average usage for the months October through March. No adjustments shall be made for water use not meeting the current rules and guidelines for outdoor water use or for periods when a total outdoor water use ban is in place.

(c) Sanitary sewer adjustments due to water loss as part of a business or industry process shall be addressed on an individual basis.

Sec. 3 Vacant or Unused Accounts

(a) Meters attached to the City of Calhoun water system and used as “stand-by” connections or a secondary water source must be associated with an active account. Active accounts are subject to the current Rate Resolution, as adopted. A customer may have a meter removed and the meter setter capped in order to avoid the monthly charges, thus making the account truly “inactive”. A fee of \$100.00 shall be assessed for reactivating a “stand-by” connection and establishing an account. A deposit shall be required as per the current “Rate Resolution”. All water connections attached to the City of Calhoun water system are subject to the Calhoun, Georgia, Code of Ordinances, Article III, Division II, Cross-Connections.

(b) METERS attached to the City of Calhoun water system and used for residential service for rental or leased properties must be associated with an active account or rendered inactive. When an account is closed by the customer; the meter shall be locked by city personnel after thirty days of account closing. Landlords or property owners who wish to have the water service continued must establish an active account with the City of Calhoun and a monthly minimum, monthly billing, and all other items within this policy shall apply during the period the account is active.

Sec. 4 Water Usage from Fire Sprinkler Systems

(a) Leaks: Leaks on fire sprinkler systems shall be adjusted using the meter readings taken from the detector meter and using the multiplier from the table below associated with the fire connection size to determine the amount of usage. This amount shall be reduced by seventy-five (75%) percent, becoming the

amount of the adjustment. No more than two (2) adjustments may be requested within a twelve month period.

(b)Unauthorized Water Usage on Fire Sprinkler Systems: This is strictly prohibited. The act of using water from fire sprinkler systems for uses other than suppressing fires or annual testing of the system shall be considered theft and violators shall be punished to fullest extent of the law.

(c)Allowed Usage: Water use for suppressing fires and annual testing is allowed under the following conditions:

- 1. Water used to suppress fires shall not be billed for.**
- 2. Water used for annual testing shall be billed as per the current Rate Resolution.**
- 3. Detector meters are in place on all fire sprinkler systems and are part of the AMR (Automated Meter Reading) System. Total flows are calculated based on flow through the three-quarter inch (3/4") detector meter and a multiplier established based on pipe size. The multiplier shall apply as listed below.**

Sprinkler Service Size	Multiplier
Four Inch (4")	Four (4)
Six Inch (6")	Nine (9)
Eight Inch (8")	Sixteen (16)
Ten Inch (10")	Twenty-five (25)
Twelve Inch (12")	Thirty-seven (37)

Sec. 5 Meter Modifications

(a) Existing meters two inch (2") and larger may be reduced in size to lower the monthly minimum bill. An example of this would be a customer with a two inch (2") meter who does not need the volume supplied by a meter of that size. The meter can be reduced at no cost to the customer. Should the customer wish to change the meter size back to the original size; a charge for labor and materials must be paid. Existing meters may not be increased in size without payment based upon the current rate schedule related to size.

Sec. 6 Request for Meter testing

(a) Request Guidelines: Customers having questions regarding the accuracy of the water or electric meter servicing their address may request that the meter be checked for accuracy. One such request may be made within a twelve month period without charge regardless of the findings. Should the water meter be found to be inaccurate as per the standards AWWA C-700 & C-710; the water bill shall be adjusted as described in subsection (b) and no charge for testing shall apply. Should the electric meter be found to be inaccurate as per the standards ANSI C12.20; the electric bill shall be adjusted as described in subsection (b) and no charge for testing shall apply. If a second request within the twelve month period is made and the meter is found to within the accuracy standards; a testing fee of \$50.00 will be applied to water or electric bill and no adjustment shall be made for the amount of water or electricity used.

(b) Adjustments: Should a water or electric meter be found inaccurate or outside the standard accuracy range; the bill will be adjusted by taking the last twelve months usage and deriving an average monthly usage to determine the utility bill.

Sec. 7 Theft of Service

Policy Statement: Tampering with utility equipment or stealing service shall be subject to penalties under Sec. 8 and will be grounds for discontinuance of utility service. Theft of service shall include, but not be limited to the following:

- (a) Opening valves at the meter or on the city utility's side of the meter, that have been turned off by utility personnel;**
- (b) Breaking, picking or damaging locks placed by utility personnel;**
- (c) By-passing meters in any way;**
- (d) Violating the current Calhoun, Georgia, Code of Ordinances Sec. 94-111 through Sec. 94-115, regarding Fire Hydrants;**
- (e) Removing, disabling or adjusting meter registers;**
- (f) Using any device or system to alter meter readings or the meters ability to accurately determine usage;**
- (g) Altering meter readings via the use of any electronic, acoustic, harmonic or mechanical device or devices;**
- (h) Connecting to or intentionally damaging water lines or other appurtenances for the purpose of stealing or damaging utility equipment;**
- (i) Moving the meter or extending service without permission from the utility;**
- (j) Removing, disabling or adjusting meter registers;**
- (k) Any other intentional act of defacement, destruction or vandalism to utility property or act that affects utility property;**
- (l) Any intentional blockage or obstruction of utility equipment;**
- (m) In addition to the above; customers must adhere to the requirements as stated in the Calhoun, Georgia, Code of Ordinances, Sec 94-5, Damaging Meters.**

Sec. 8 Notice of Violation

A "Notice of Violation" may be issued via registered mail or by other delivery methods if;

- (a) Evidence suggest the possibility of theft of utility service at the customer's premises;**
- (b) In the opinion of the utility general manager, theft of service is definitely evident on the customer's premises;**
- (c) When in the opinion of the general manager a situation exists that may endanger public health;**

Sec. 9 Penalties

- (a) When in the opinion of the general manager theft of service or tampering has taken place; the customer will be subject to a \$250.00 violation payment and may be subject to charges associated with service calls, labor and replacement parts;**
- (b) If the utility determines theft of service has occurred, it reserves the right to adjust the customer's current bill and bills for the past twelve (12) months usage. If the approximate amount of service that was stolen cannot be reasonably determined, the customers usage will be set by multiplying the current amount by as much as four times on a case by case basis based on the determination of the general manager;**
- (c) Service shall not be restored until all assessed payments for the following are received by the utility:**
 - 1) Adjusted payment for service**
 - 2) Violation payment (\$250.00)**
 - 3) All service call charges**
 - 4) Labor**
 - 5) Replacement parts**
 - 6) Reinstatement charge**
 - 7) In addition to the above customers must adhere to the Calhoun, Georgia, Code of Ordinances, Sec. 94-10, Responsibility for Damages.**

Sec. 10 Reinstatement of Service

- (a) Service will be reinstated only during normal working hours Monday-Friday, except in case of an emergency.**
- (b) Discontinuance of service does not release the customer from liability for payment for service already received or from payments that thereafter become due under minimum bill provisions or other provisions of the customer's contract.**
- (c) The utility shall not be liable for any loss or damage resulting from the discontinuance of service;**
- (d) In addition to requirements stated above, the customer shall be subject to the provisions as stated in the Calhoun, Georgia, Code of Ordinances, Chapter 94.**

Sec. 11 Refusal of Service

- a) The utility shall have the right to refuse to render service to an applicant if the Landlord of said property owes a delinquent account balance on the property.**

Sec. 12 NEW ACCOUNTS

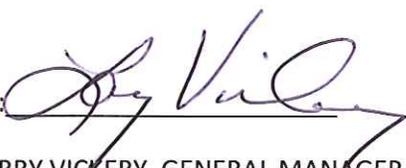
- a) To establish a new service, the customer should furnish a copy of the rent/lease agreement and a picture ID along with legal documentation with the SS number of each adult living in the household.**
- b) Calhoun Utilities shall have the right to refuse to render service to an applicant or to any member of an applicant's household who is living at the same address whenever such person(s) is (are) delinquent on any payment to the utility or had his or her service discontinued because of a violation of the regulations or policies of the utility.**

- c) If the customer is moving from one address to another address within our service area, they may request in writing a transfer of service. Before the transfer can be completed the current account must have a zero balance.**
- d) Calhoun Utilities does not offer “same day” service. The services should be turned on within 2 – 3 business days if the customer’s request has been placed by 3:00 p.m.**

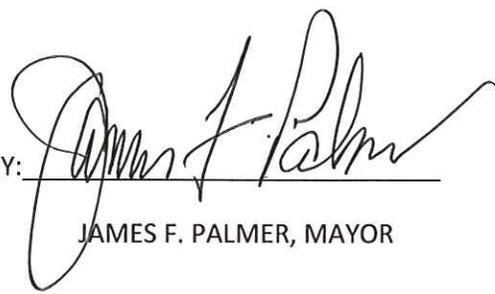
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have set their hands and caused their seals to be affixed hereupon the date and year first above written.

CITY OF CALHOUN, GEORGIA

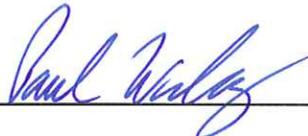
By:


LARRY VICKERY, GENERAL MANAGER

BY:


JAMES F. PALMER, MAYOR

(SEAL)


PAUL WORLEY, CITY CLERK