

Understanding your City of Arcata Water and Sewer bill:

Read Cycles: The City of Arcata reads each water meter every month. The date of read is approximately the same as your billing date.

Billing Dates: The billing date for your bill depends upon where in the city you are located. The city is divided into a number of areas with each area having its own read and billing date. Your billing date cannot be changed.

Due Dates: The due date is typically 30 after the Billing date. Payments received after the Due date may be subject to 10 percent delinquent charge.

Billing Units: The City of Arcata uses water meters that read in cubic feet. 1 cubic foot equals 7.48 gallons. The City of Arcata bills in units of 100 cubic feet. You are not charged for water consumption until the water meter dial has reached a full 100 cubic feet. You are billed on the difference between meter reads taken. For example, an initial read of 435 cubic is subtracted from a final read of 987 cubic feet as follows: 987 is billed as 9 hundred cubic feet and 435 is billed as 4 hundred cubic feet. The consumption for this bill would then be 9 minus 4 which equal 5 hundred cubic feet.

Base rates and consumption: Your water and sewer bills are calculated based on two parts. Base rates and consumption. Even if you use no water during a month base rates will still be assessed. The rates reflect the overhead cost associated with providing water and sewer service. Consumption charges reflect the direct cost associate for a given amount of service.

Sewer consumption: Sewers are not metered in the City of Arcata. Sewer consumption is based on water consumptions. Your sewer consumption charge is calculated assuming that the sewer use is 90 percent of the water consumption. During the summer months of July through October residential customer's sewer bills are calculated based on their "Winter Average" water consumption to offset irrigation use. The "Winter Average" is based on their use during the January through April bills. This is intended to offset increased use of water during the summer that does not enter the sewer.

Account numbers: Each customer has a customer number. Each water service with its own meter has a service account number. The account number used to process bills and payments is a combination of the customer number and service account number. When making payments please include the payment stub from your bill or the customer and service account numbers. Payments received that do not contain the proper account information may be delayed in processing. The City of Arcata is not responsible for delinquent charges that result because of insufficient or incorrect account information.

Rates: The City of Arcata normally adopts new rates starting with the new fiscal year on July 1st. Notices of proposed fee increases are mailed in April with a public hearing scheduled in June.

Estimated reads: There may be times when the City of Arcata cannot read your meter. Heavy rains, vehicles parked over the meter, damage to the meter, can result in the meter reader not being able to obtain a current read. If this occurs your bill will be estimated based your normal usage for the time of year. The City may contact you if the problem occurs on a regular basis to arrange for a solution to the problem.

Water leaks and meter misreads: From time to time customers may feel that their water consumption is too large. This can be the result of a number of factors including leaks, meter misreads, changes in the household, and irrigations (see sewer consumption above). If you feel that your water and sewer consumption has an unusual increase you may request that your meter be reread and checked for leaks. A City of Arcata meter technician will check the reading on the meter and look to see if there are indications of a water leak. If the meter was found to be misread a correction will be made to the account and a revised bill mailed. The account holder will be notified if there is any indication of a leak.

Leak Adjustments: Customers may request an adjustment for excessive water/sewer charges due to a water leak **once** during a 12-month period. Any adjustment will be made only after repairs have been made and verified by a city water technician. Adjustments will be based on average annual water consumption. Only one month's bill may be adjusted during any 12-month period.

Closing your account: Please call the Finance Department at 822-5951 to discontinue service. Have the following information ready:

1. Customer name and account numbers
2. Date service is to be discontinued.
3. Forwarding address and phone number for final bill or deposit refund.

It is the account holder's responsibility to notify the City when you wish service to be discontinued. If you fail to discontinue service you will be responsible for charges after you move out! Requests to discontinue service retroactively will not be honored!