



Westford Water Department

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This summer many water takers were surprised with how large their water consumption was, and they felt that they had not changed the water use behavior from last year.

It is important to remember that last year was wet and many sprinklers have rain sensors which turn off sprinkler systems when it is damp, this year there was very little rain, in fact this region is still under a drought advisory. There have been many consecutive days hotter than 90 degrees. With out touching the timers, irrigation systems would have run much more this year.

At the end of September, 107 municipalities had informed the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) that they have instituted outdoor water use restrictions to conserve water.

Water meters are extremely accurate, and it is important to know that actual readings were taken.

If the usage is more than 175% of past readings, a report is generated, and as many of the readings as possible are rechecked. Due to the extremely high volume of high reads it has not been possible to recheck every reading.

The water bills were then created and sent out. If a homeowner called to question a high consumption, the first step the Water Department takes is to verify that the meter reading was checked, if that house was not rechecked previously, it is rechecked at this time.

We had the Metering Systems Specialist from the supplier of the water meters verify that the system was correctly taking in the meter readings, and the billing system was checked to insure that the water bills were properly calculated.

The Water Department promotes conservation, at the end of April signs were posted throughout the town reminding residents of the odd/ even outside watering conservation policy.

In August due to the extremely dry conditions it was decided to also place notices on the Water Department and Town websites, the Westford Cable Access TV, in the Westford Eagle. The Westford Police also sent a reverse 911 message encouraging adherence to the odd / even watering restrictions to help avoid large bills.

Information is provided on how to check for leaks in the home and directions are given on how to check the low flow indicator on the meter. This is the small red triangle which if moving indicates that there is a flow going through the meter. You can see the red triangle in the picture of the meter face below.

The Water Department reads your meter and sends out bills four times a year. Therefore as a consumer, it can be very important to know where your water meter is, and how to determine how much water you have used since your last billing period.

Example of a Water Bill and the location of the present meter reading.

Customer				Service Address				
Bill Number	Bill Date	Customer Number	Account Number			Due Date		
	09/30/2010					10/30/2010		
Description	Present Read Date	Previous Read Date	Present Meter Reading	Previous Meter Reading	Read Code	Usage	Charge	
5/8" METER RESIDENTIAL	09/15/2010	06/07/2010	179400	169700	A	9700	507.95	
CUSTOMER SERVICE CHARGE								
							16.28	
HISTORY PERIOD	06/10	03/10	12/09	09/09	06/09	03/09	12/08	
HISTORY USAGE	5800	2100	4100	5400	2400	2300	200	
1st Step	0 - 2,500 cubic feet - \$4.19 per 100 cubic feet							
2nd Step	2,501 - 10,000 cubic feet - \$5.60 per 100 cubic feet							

Example of a water meter, and the dial where the meter reading is located.



Water is billed in 100 cubic foot increments; in this picture of an example meter the reading, enlarged for clarity, is 031466, but would be rounded down to 031400 for billing purposes.

To determine what your water consumption has been since your last bill.

1. Obtain the current reading from your water meter.
2. Locate the Present Meter Reading on the last bill.
3. From the Present Meter Reading on your bill subtract the reading you took from your water meter.

If the reading on the meter is 181600 and the present reading on the bill was 179400, as on the sample bill above, then $181600 - 179400 = 2,200$ cubic feet of water used.

If there are any questions that the Water Department can answer, please call us at 978-692-5529, or stop by our office at 60 Forge Village Road.