



# HIGH UTILITY BILL INVESTIGATION CHECKLIST

NWD customers may occasionally receive bills that are higher than normal. Having an unusually high bill may reflect increased water usage, a plumbing issue, or a problem with your meter reading. Use this checklist to investigate a concern about a high bill.

- Are any of your faucets or outside spigots dripping?
- Does your water service feed any external buildings or irrigation systems?
- Have you had any pipes replaced?
- Have you had a washing machine repaired/replaced recently?
- Have you had a dishwasher repaired/replaced recently?
- Have you had any sinks repaired/replaced recently?

- Have you had any tubs or showers repaired/replaced recently?
- Have you had any faucets (outside or inside) repaired/replaced recently?
- Do you have a water softener? If no, skip over the next two questions.
- Have you checked the cycle time of the water softener?

Sometimes a softener will get stuck in the backwash or rinse mode. If water continues to go down the drain after the water softener regenerates it is leaking and needs to be fixed. You may also want to turn the softener off for a month and see if it makes a difference in your water bill.

- Have you had any repairs to the water softener or replaced it?
- Do you have an ice machine? If no, skip over the next question.
- Have you had any repairs to the ice machine or replaced it?
- Did you have extra guests or employees in your home or business last bill cycle?
- Do you have a humidifier on your furnace?

Inspect the float in the humidifier to make sure it's not filling above the level recommended by the manufacturer.

- Is your water heater, boiler heat, or water cooled air conditioner malfunctioning?
- Do you have a pool or hot tub that has recently been filled or water has been added to?
- Do you have a sump pump? If no, skip over next 2 questions.
- Is it electric with a water back up system?
- Does the water back up system run off NWD water?
- Have you had any toilets repaired/replaced recently?

- Do you use one toilet more than the other?
  - Have you conducted any dye tests on all your toilets?
- Dye test your toilet to check for a leak:
1. Take the top off the toilet tank & remove any cleaning agents that might cause water discoloration.
  2. Drop a few drops of food coloring or a similar product into the tank.
  3. Do not use the toilet for 10 minutes.
  4. Check the color of the water in the toilet bowl. If you see the dye, you have a leak & will likely need to replace parts inside the tank.
- Do you believe any of the above are leaking?

For any question where you may have checked yes, you may want to investigate further. Actual usage (filling a pool or having guests) can cause your water bill to be higher than usual. If you feel you have a plumbing problem or a water leak that is causing the high bill, you may want to contact a plumber of your choice to investigate and make any necessary repairs.

If, after using the checklist, you believe there may be a problem with your water meter, please contact the Department of Utilities.  
401-845-5600