

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

BILLING

Q: I am buying or renting a home in Reynoldsburg. What do I need to do?

A: Please call the Reynoldsburg Water Department at 614-322-6811 to let us know your new Reynoldsburg address. We will need to know your date of closing and your move in date. We also need what name that you want on the account and your telephone number. If your new home does not have an electronic reading device, we will need to set appointment with you so that we may come to your home and get a final reading. If your new home has an electronic reading device, then no appointment will be necessary for us to obtain the final reading and put the account in your name.

You are billed for water, sewer, refuse and storm water. Storm water is a charge that is required by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency to help maintain the lakes, rivers and streams here in the State of Ohio. It also helps to maintain the different storm sewers you see located around town.

In addition, a \$50.00 deposit is required for rental properties.

Q: Moving? How do I finalize my billing?

A: Please call the Reynoldsburg Water Department at 614-322-6811 to schedule your final reading. The following information must be supplied:

- Service address
- Date of final reading
- Forwarding address

Q: How can payments be made on an account?

A: We have two secure lockboxes at our office. One is through the first set of doors in the City Hall Building to your left. The second is a drive up lockbox in the parking lot north of the flagpoles. Both boxes are emptied at 8 AM Monday thru Friday and payments are applied that day. You may also stop in our office Monday thru Friday from 8 AM until 5 PM to make your payment in person. You can also use the U. S. Postal system and have them deliver your payment to us.

Q: Do I have to be billed for the refuse if a house is vacant?

A: If you have an active water service, a City ordinance states that you will be billed for trash service. If you move and still own the house, you will still be charged for trash service as long as the water service is active.

WATER

Q: How do I check for leaks?

A: Overnight check: Read your water meter just before you go to bed and first thing when you get up (before you go to the bathroom); check the meter to see if it has advanced. If it has advanced, you have a leak.

Toilets: 90% of high water bills are leaking toilets. Toilets leak in two places. First, remove the lid from the back of the toilet. Check to see if the tube to the overflow is shutting off. It should not be running when the tank is full. Also check to make sure that the float is shutting off the water before it goes over the overflow tube. The second place a toilet leaks is the flapper valve at the bottom of the tank. Put food coloring in the tank and see if it shows up in the toilet bowl without the toilet being flushed. If the color shows in the bowl, you have a leak.

Q: I hear water running when no one is using it and then it stops. What is it?

A: The flapper valve in your toilet tank is leaking. When the water level drops the float drops and the water comes back on and fills the tank then stops.

Q: What are the pink or dark stains in the toilet or on fixtures?

A: Airborne organisms are usually the cause. You will see grey, black, or sometimes pink film on surfaces that are regularly moist, including toilet bowls, showerheads, sink drains, dishwashers and shower tiles. These organisms are controlled with normal drinking water disinfectants and, therefore, are not found in the water but can come from dust or dirt that is airborne. Regular cleaning and ventilation should reduce these nuisance organisms.

Q: Do I have to be billed for the refuse if a house is vacant?

A: If you have an active water service, a City ordinance states that you will be billed for trash service. If you move and still own the house, you will still be charged for trash service as long as the water service is active.

If the house will be vacant for an extended period of time (30 days minimum), a written request to the Service Director must be submitted to suspend service temporarily.

Q: There is a leak in my line, who's responsible to fix it?

A: The customer service line runs from the curb stop, or service shutoff (usually located near the customer's property line) to the premises served. It is the customer's responsibility to maintain it as well as all the piping within the structure served. Between the curb box and the main is the City's responsibility.

Q: What is an auxiliary meter?

A: A second water meter installed in the internal plumbing of your house that is billed for water only. (See “Regulations for Installation Water Only Auxilliary Meter”)

POOLS

Q: Can I get credit on my sewer bill when I fill my pool?

A: The answer is no and yes. It is no if you fill your pool through your regular house meter. Since 1986, the City has made available an auxiliary water meter (See “Regulations for Installation Water Only Auxilliary Meter”) that is used outside for lawn watering, filling pools, washing cars, etc. The water billed through this meter does not include sewage.

Q: Can I fill my pool through a fire hydrant?

A: No.

COMMON WATER QUALITY CONCERNS

RUSTY WATER

It is important to note that when rusty water is experienced it is normally not a health concern but one of aesthetic quality. Rusty-brown, orange, or light yellow water can be caused by a variety of reasons including: water main breaks, fire fighting operations, hydrant flushing or broken hydrants, construction work or damage, system depressurizations, and corroding iron pipes. Normally rusty water events dissipate in 4 – 6 hours but could last longer depending on water usage in the area. If the event lasts more than 24 hours, please call our water office at 322-4500.

During such an event, it is of little to no value for you to run your water until it turns clear; this is wasteful and costly you as a consumer. During such events, use of HOT water should be kept to a minimum, as it will draw cold rusty water into your hot water tank. If your hot water tank does have rust in it, use caution and please follow the manufacturer’s directions for shutting down, draining, and re-starting your hot water tank.

Clothing washed in rusty water can become stained. Should this occur, it is important not to dry the clothing. Instead, leave the wet clothing in the washer and apply an iron removal product as soon as possible to prevent the iron stain from setting. The Water Department does have the iron removal product available and you can stop by during regular business hours and pick it up. Please follow the manufacturer’s instructions.

FLUORIDATION

Fluoride is added during water treatment in accordance with the American Dental Association's findings and recommendations regarding significant cavity reduction in the population. In 1970, a state law was passed which allowed local government to permanently adopt fluoridation for their local water systems. The City of Columbus voted to fluoridate beginning January 1973. Since then the fluoride concentration in Columbus water has averaged 1 ppm.

CLOUDY WATER

Cloudy water is usually caused by temperature change and the presence of dissolved air in the water. When water appears to have a milky white, gray or carbonated appearance a simple test may suffice to denote its origin. Fill a clear glass with tap water and observe it over a minute or so. If the glass clears from bottom to top, then it is dissolved air escaping into the atmosphere. There is no health risk associated with this situation. Cloudy water is very common in the winter and can last for quite a long time.

WATER HARDNESS

Hardness is a measure of the presence of the minerals calcium and magnesium in water. As water moves through or over the earth, it picks up these minerals and causes the water to become "hard." The usage of the word "hard" in this case refers to the difficulty with which the water produces soapsuds, with successively harder water requiring more and more soap.

The City of Columbus softens its water on average to 120 ppm, or approximately 7 grains per gallon. This is considered moderately hard which is optimal for corrosion control. Very soft water can be corrosive to home plumbing.

WHITE PARTICLES

White or grayish particles in your water can often be attributed to two different sources both of which pertain to the condition of the hot water tank. There is no health risk associated with this situation. The characteristics of the particles will help determine the source.

If you have white, gray, or dark gray particles that give off bubbles when submerged in white vinegar, you most likely have calcium carbonate particles. These particles are often formed from the hardness of Columbus water when it is heated over 140 degrees Fahrenheit (60 degrees Celsius) in your hot water tank. To help prevent it, you should turn the temperature down on the tank. If your hot water tank has calcium carbonate deposited in it, use caution and please follow the manufacturer's directions for shutting down, draining, and re-starting your hot water tank.

If you have white particles that reduce water flow by clogging the aerators on your faucets, and that do not give off bubbles when submerged in white vinegar, you most likely have a disintegrating dip-tube. These particles are formed when the plastic dip-tube from the hot water heater degrades and disintegrates in the tank. Please consult with

your tank's manufacturer. You will need to have the dip-tube replaced either by the manufacturer, or a qualified technician.

CHLORINOUS TASTE & ODOR

The City of Columbus has a long and successful history of water treatment involving the chemical chlorine. The Water Quality Assurance Laboratory and the city water plants check the chlorine content throughout the city **daily** to insure the highest quality control. Without proper initial disinfection and continuing residual protection in the distribution system, the city's entire water distribution system would become vulnerable to bacteriological organisms.

If the taste or odor is found to be objectionable, it should be noted that you could eliminate the taste or smell of chlorine in your water by setting an open pitcher in your refrigerator overnight.

MUSTY TASTE & ODOR

Occasionally Columbus water has an earthy, musty or fishy taste and odor. These seasonal phenomena can be caused by the bi-annual turnover of our city reservoirs, or with the presence of varied algal blooms in the reservoirs or rivers. It is important to note this taste and odor is not a health concern. Advanced treatment techniques involving powder activated carbon and remote real-time sensors are being used to help mitigate this problem.

SULFUROUS TASTE & ODOR

The most likely cause of a sulfurous or rotten-egg like odor is from either the water trap below the sink (i.e. the "P-trap") or from within the faucet itself. As organic material settles in the water trap beneath the sink a sulfurous or rotten egg smell is often mistakenly perceived as coming from the water. The best way to test this theory is by filling a glass of water at the sink and then smelling it away from the sink in a different room. If the smell disappears, then the problem is most likely in the sink itself. Pouring a ¼ cup of bleach down the drain and allowing it to sit overnight should help to relieve the problem. Cleaning the aerator is also recommended. It is important to note that this odor is normally not a health concern but one of aesthetic quality.

COMPARISON CHART FOR WATER USAGE AND SAVINGS

| <i>USAGE</i> | <i>NORMAL USAGE</i> | | <i>CONSERVATION</i> | | |
|------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|---|-------------------|
| | Gals Used | Method | Gals Used | Method | Savings |
| Shower (10mins) | 50 | Shower head running continuously | 25 25 12.5 | Shorter showers (5 mins) Low flow shower head (10 mins) Low flow shower head (5 mins) | 50% 50% 75% |
| Tub Bath | 36 | Standard tub, full | 18 | Standard tub, half full | 50% |
| Toilet Flushing | 5-7 | Depends on tank size | 4-6 | Use a displacement bag, or milk jug in tank reservoir Replace with low flow toilet | 20% 73% |
| Washing Hands | 5 | With tap running continuously | 1 | Fill a standard basin | 80% |
| Brushing Teeth | 10 | With tap running continuously | 1 | Wet brush with brief rinses | 90% |
| Shaving | 20 | With tap running continuously | 1 | Fill a standard basin | 95% |
| Washing Dishes | 30 | With tap running continuously | 10 | Wash & rinse with a half filled standard sink | 66% |
| Dishwasher | 16 | Full cycle | 7 | Short cycle | 56% |
| Washing Machine | 60 | Full cycle; Highest water level | 27 | Short cycle | 55% |
| Outdoor Watering | 10 | Per minute; Average garden hose | Varies | Eliminate night watering etc. | Varies |

Less than 1% of the world's fresh water supplies are available for human consumption