



Dear Ames Lake Water Association Member:

Enclosed is a summary of the ALWA policy regarding water loss and billing adjustments. Also enclosed is a form for you to use if you would like to request an adjustment to the charges.

You, the consumer, are responsible for all water that goes through your meter. ALWA can provide some suggestions about checking for leaks and other possible causes of water loss (see FAQs on our website www.ameslkwater.org). However, the Association cannot do actual testing or detection. Please contact a qualified contractor, if needed.

Request for adjustment must be submitted within 90 days of the payment due date of the first bill following the month in which the loss occurred.

Adjustments are based on the Association's estimate of your average usage for the time period in question. If your request is approved, a credit adjustment will be posted on your account. Charges are adjusted for water consumption over and above the estimated monthly average.

If the repair and/or approval process spans a billing due date, we ask that you continue to remit estimated payments while the request is pending.

Requests are reviewed by the ALWA business office and presented to the Board of Directors at the next meeting for approval.

Please contact the office if you have any questions.



Summary: Water Loss Billing Adjustment Policy

Purpose:

The Ames Lake Water Association's conservation efforts are supported by a steeply graduated billing rate structure that is intended to discourage intentional excessive water use. However, the Board of Directors also recognizes that Members may face serious financial hardship because of an unusual water loss situation. This policy was developed to define conditions and procedure for billing adjustment due to leakage or accidental / unexplained water consumption.

Member Responsibilities:

Each Member is responsible for the use, care and maintenance of all pipes and fixtures on the Member's side of the water meter, and for all water that flows through the meter. Members are responsible for prompt responses to stop water losses and for locating and making repairs to fixtures or devices causing the loss.

Eligibility:

All leak relief adjustments are subject to Board review and approval. There are two categories of water losses in which Members may be granted relief.

1. Water losses eligible for FULL adjustment after repair of failed component(s):

- Leaks in service line between meter and house, or in interior walls or pipes.
- Failure of plumbing fixtures & faucets not related to irrigation systems.
- Frozen and burst pipes not related to irrigation systems.
- Faulty water heaters or pressure-reducing valves.
- Vandalism to plumbing or pipes that is documented with police report.
- Rupture in water facilities due to 'acts of God' i.e. wind, earthquake etc.
- Failed component adjustments may be applied to not more than 2 consecutive billing periods.
- The full adjustment amount is based on application of the Association's determination of cost of water (as posted on the Association's most recent rate schedule) applied to the estimated quantity of water loss.

2. Water losses eligible for LIMITED adjustment:

When a meter registers excessive water consumption due to leakage in an irrigation system or unexplained/unintended use, the following stepped adjustments per Member account shall, upon written request and attestation of an unexplained/unintended use, be approved in any consecutive seven (7) year period:

- First Occurrence in 7 year Period – will receive full water loss adjustment described under ALWA Process.
- Second Occurrence in 7 year period – up to \$2500 in billing charges at normal inclined block rate charges shall apply with charges in excess of that amount subject to full water loss adjustment described under ALWA process.



- Third Occurrence in 7 year period – up to \$3500 in billing charges at normal inclined block rate charges shall apply with charges in excess of that amount subject to full water loss adjustment described under ALWA process.
- Additional Occurrences in 7 year period – will not be eligible for water loss adjustment (all amounts will be billed at normal inclined block charges).
- The seven (7) year period shall begin with the month of the first occurrence of unexplained / unintentional water loss and run for seven (7) consecutive years. The seven year period is personal to the property owner having record title. Each subsequent property owner will begin anew.
- Limited adjustments may be applied to 2 consecutive billing periods.

Member Process:

- Request for adjustment must be in writing and arrive in the ALWA business office within 90 days of the payment due date of the first bill following the month in which the loss occurred.
- Confirmation of repairs must accompany request.
- Regular monthly payments must be made while the request is pending. Payment must include recurring charges (amortization, depreciation and base fee) and an estimated average water usage charge. Failure to keep account current may result in the loss of eligibility for a billing adjustment.

Members having leaks shall not be eligible for adjustment unless an up to date annual cross-connection control examination has been conducted, if applicable.

ALWA Process:

- On receipt of the written request for adjustment, ALWA business office will review the water loss application form and any additional items to determine eligibility and calculate an average expected monthly usage.
- The member account will be reviewed to verify that payments are current.
- Water loss adjustments are presented at the next Board meeting for Board review and decision.
- If relief is approved, the charges for water consumption in excess of the average will be charged at the Board determined cost for water as posted on the most current fee schedule; excess amounts previously charged as a result of the leak will be credited to the account balance.
- On approval of the request and provided that the account has been kept current, late fees that have accrued since first contact from Member will be reversed.
- After the final determination has been made by the Board of Directors, a letter will be sent to Member with confirmation of adjustment and notification of the adjusted balance due.

After notification, the Member is required to pay the balance owing by the next billing due date. If full payment of the reduced charges creates a financial hardship, a monthly payment plan may be arranged with management or the Board.



Ineligible water loss event:

If the water loss does not meet the eligibility and limitations criteria specified above, the Member may request an adjustment due to extenuating circumstances. The Board of Directors may consider extraordinary situations if the Member shows good cause and acts in good faith. The request should include description of the extenuating circumstances. The request will be brought before the Board at the next regularly scheduled board meeting, which the Member is encouraged to attend.

Detecting Leaks

Locating your meter:

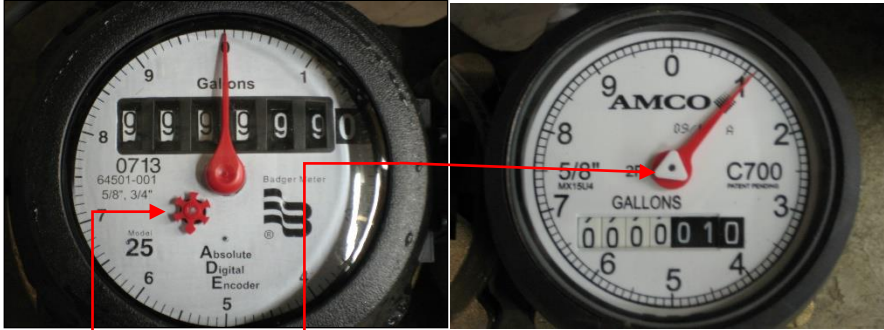
Each meter is located in a meter box near the street on the boundary of your property. Each service with ALWA has an individual meter with a unique serial number. This serial number can be located on your monthly invoice or please call our office and we can provide the serial number for your meter. Having this serial number is especially helpful when more than one meter is located in a meter box.

How to Read Your Meter:

You can monitor your own water use by reading your own meter by looking on the face of each meter. There is a counter that reflects the total gallons of water. A quick way to calculate the current usage, is to find the difference between the current reading and the previous reading. You can find this information on the prior month's invoice, or call our office and we can provide that information.

Below is an example of two different meter faces.

- 1. Detecting Leaks:** Ensure that everything has been turned off on the property that may use water. Once everything has been turned off, go to your meter and watch the counter for a minute or two. If you have a small leak, it is possible that you may not see the usage change for a longer period of time, which is why it is recommended to wait at least a few minutes. In addition to the counter, most of the water meters have a low flow indicator or a leak detector on them. If you look at your meter there will be small star shaped wheel on the face. This little wheel turns whenever there is water flowing through the meter. If you know that everything that uses water on your property is turned off and the low flow indicator is turning, you have a leak. Once you have determined you have a leak, finding it is not always so easy.



Low Flow Indicator

2. You can narrow down where your leak is by turning valves on and off. If for example you have a main shut off valve inside your house and you shut that valve off and the low flow indicator still turns that indicates the leak is in the service line between the water meter and the house. If however you shut off the main valve inside your house and the low flow indicator stop turning that indicates that the leak is downstream of the valve. By using this logic and turning different valves on and off you can quite often narrow down the location of a leak.

Toilets are often a source of leaks in the home. An easy way to check if your toilet is leaking is to place some food coloring in the tank when it is full. Wait a minute or two and if you start to see colored water in the bowl then there is problem with the toilet.

There are also professional services that specialize in detecting leaks. Ames Lake Water Association does not recommend any particular company, but we do know of companies who have previously worked in our area. Plumbers can also be helpful in finding and fixing leaks.



Water Loss Relief Request Form

Member Name _____ **Acct #** _____
Address _____ **Tel #** _____
_____ **Date** _____

Date(s) of Event _____ **Date Alerted** _____

Source of loss Irrigation system service line/Plumbing Hose/Faucet Unknown/other

Description of Event

Resolved by Contractor Self

Resolved how? _____

Attach copies of receipts for repairs (hardware store parts, contractor's invoice, etc)

Signature _____ **Date** _____