

WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AUTHORITY

Town of Trumbull

CONNECTICUT

TOWN HALL



5866 MAIN STREET

PROPOSED CHANGES TO SEWER USE CHARGES

February 8, 2012

Dear Sanitary Sewer Customer:

The Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA) is planning a change in sewer user's billing policies and procedures. **This change will affect the method currently used for calculating the spring and summer quarterly amounts billed to residents connected to the sanitary sewer system.**

Currently two quarterly bills (SPRING and SUMMER) are totaled by using an *averaged consumption* of water billed during the (FALL and WINTER) quarters. The proposed change would eliminate the use of averaging. Future billings would be determined by actual water consumption year round. Residents with higher water consumption during the spring and summer quarters will be charged a sewer use fee based on that consumption.

The WPCA received complaints in the past from residents, primarily with irrigation systems, whose sewage treatment charges were increased due to outdoor watering. The water used to fill swimming pools, gardens and lawns was metered and that consumption was reflected in their sewer user bill. The basis of their complaint was that water used outside the home did not require sewage treatment. An effort to compensate those residents resulted in the current policy that eliminates sewage treatment bills based on summer consumption and reduces them by using an average of their consumption metered during the fall and winter quarters when outdoor watering is reduced.

This concession appeased the residents with irrigation systems and swimming pools. However the average consumption policy was not recognized by Bridgeport. The City of Bridgeport treats Trumbull's sewage and the Bridgeport contract with Trumbull stipulates that every CCF of water metered by town residents is subject to sewage treatment charges. There is no compensation for water that is used outside the home for irrigation, gardening, pools, etc.

The excess expenditures from the difference between the *actual* consumption billed by Bridgeport over revenue collected based on *much smaller averaged* consumption by Trumbull continued to increase. The extra cost of this policy is estimated to exceed \$500,000 this year. A change in the billing

procedures eliminating the current averaging in the summer and basing residential sewage treatment bills on actual consumption for all four quarters is inevitable.

A Public Informational Hearing is scheduled for February 13, 2012 at 7 P.M. at Madison Middle School. Members of the W.P.C.A. have met with an Aquarion representative and together an option of installing a second water meter used exclusively for outdoor watering has been developed. Trumbull would not include the consumption through this second meter as part of their sewage treatment contract obligation. That consumption would be billed by Aquarion but not included in the Sewage Treatment bills. A representative for the Water Company (Aquarion Water Company of Connecticut) will be present to answer questions. A clear understanding of Aquarion's rules and regulations for installing a second meter will be presented. It would be in your best interest to attend.

The W.P.C.A. would like to initiate this policy change by winter's end. The Authority has kept Town Residents informed through discussions at monthly meetings, a public information hearing held on October 13, 2011 at Frenchtown School and this final Information Hearing February 13th. Also a notice was printed on the October-December quarterly bill. The change to a billing policy based on actual consumption year round, will be determined following a February 22, 2012 Public Hearing scheduled to take place at 7 p.m.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. The office phone number is 203-452-5048. I also have a Town sponsored Cell Phone that is available 24/7. Feel free to call anytime at 203-913-1678. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Joseph Solemene
Assistant W.P.C.A. Administrator