

Benefits of requesting a Final Bill for a Property

If you are buying a property, write down the numbers you see on the dial face of the water meter and call us to report the meter reading and ask for a final bill for the property before you close the purchase.

Final bills help determine:

- Future and current billable account charges
- Bankruptcy balances attached to the property that belong to the seller and the seller is responsible for paying before you purchase the property
- Water meter replacement charges in case a meter was damaged, broken, or stolen
- Possible water leaks within the property
- Other charges attached to the property that are the responsibility of the property seller.

Please note: The buyer or property tax key owner will “inherit” all charges if not addressed in the closing.

More about the Municipal Services Bill

- Visit our website, Milwaukee.gov/water, and choose Customer Service or Account information
- Call Customer Service, **(414) 286-2830**, and ask for a brochure.
- Email Customer Service, watwebcs@milwaukee.gov

Contact Us - Milwaukee Water Works Customer Service

841 N. Broadway, Room 409, Milwaukee, WI 53202

Open Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Interactive voice system is available 24 hours **Phone: (414) 286-2830**

TDD: (414) 286-8801

Fax: (414) 286-5452

24-Hour Water Control Center (414) 286-3710

Email for non-emergency contact: watwebcs@milwaukee.gov

Para una explicación en español, por favor llame al (414) 286-2830.

**Milwaukee
Water Works**

Safe, Abundant Drinking Water.

11/16



Municipal Services Bill Information for Property Owners

The “Water Bill” is named the **Municipal Services Bill** because it includes these water, sewer and City of Milwaukee charges:

- Milwaukee Water Works Water Service Charge and Water Usage Charge
- Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD) Sewer Treatment Service Charge and Sewer Treatment Usage Charge
- Local Sewerage Charge
- Storm Water Management Charge
- Snow and Ice Removal Charge (city streets). This is an annual charge that appears on the last bill of the year.
- Solid Waste Charge (garbage collection)
- Extra Garbage Cart Charge (for more than one cart)

The Milwaukee Water Works, the City’s drinking water utility, has had a billing system since the 1900s. The utility was chosen to manage the Municipal Services billing and forward the collected charges to the City Treasurer and the MMSD. Billing policy is set and enforced by the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC), which regulates utilities.

Responsibilities of the Property Owner

All residential properties in the City of Milwaukee receive a quarterly bill even if the water is disconnected. All commercial properties receive a quarterly or monthly bill even if the water is disconnected.

Property owners must contact the Milwaukee Water Works as soon as possible to update the name, mailing address and telephone number for any given property. We do not waive late fees in the event a bill is mailed to an out-of-date address and you do not receive it.

The Municipal Services Bill is a lien against the property. This means the property owner is responsible for all Municipal Services charges issued for the property. If you own the property tax key, you own the Municipal Services Bill charges that are attached to the property.

Note to Landlords

Renters do not have a lease with the Milwaukee Water Works. If they do not pay the Municipal Services Bill, as expected by their landlord, the property owner, then the unpaid balances will be transferred to the property tax bill for that property, and are the responsibility of the property owner.

We encourage property owner-landlords to arrange with the water utility to mail the Municipal Services Bill to the property owner and not to the tenants. This enables the property owner to be aware of the account balance and monitor water use and billing for anything unusual. Or, property owner-landlords can require tenants who receive and pay the Municipal Services bills for the property to provide meter readings to the landlord with their rent payments.

Water Meters

The property owner is responsible for missing, stolen, or damaged water meters. The water meter is the property of the Milwaukee Water Works and the utility charges you for using it. It is illegal to tamper with or damage the meter.

Water Service Line may be made of lead

The service line connects the water main in the street to the property. The City owns the section of the service line from the water main to the curb stop at the property line. The property owner owns the side of the service line from the curb stop to the water meter, and is responsible for water leaks between the curb and the meter and for all pipes leading from the meter to all fixtures.

Milwaukee's drinking water does not contain lead, but lead can dissolve from lead plumbing, especially when water stands unused for several hours. To control lead dissolving into the water, we treat the water with a compound that forms a protective coating inside pipes. We have provided this corrosion control since 1996.

Years ago, lead was used in paint, plumbing, and other products. The most common source of lead is from paint in older homes built before 1978. Lead can cause health problems if it enters your body. Since lead can accumulate in the body, the Milwaukee Health Department recommends that all sources of lead exposure to children, pregnant

women and breastfeeding women, should be eliminated to prevent childhood lead poisoning.

Search our records to determine if your property has a lead service line and find health-related suggestions at [Milwaukee.gov/water](https://www.milwaukee.gov/water); select Lead Awareness and Drinking Water.

Water Leaks

Internal water leaks from pipes and plumbing or a broken meter are the responsibility of the property owner and are typically not eligible for adjustments of the water usage and service charges.

We encourage property owners to frequently inspect their properties for water leaks, and pipe or meter damage.

Toilet leaks and faucet drips can be silent but result in costly water and sewer charges. Sewer charges are based on water that passes through the meter whether you used the water or it leaked. A leaking or running toilet can waste up to 200 gallons of water a day at an additional cost of over \$400 per year.

Purchase of City Owned, Foreclosed, Sheriff Sale, and Short Sale properties are typically "as is."

Before closing the purchase on a property, the buyer should inspect the property, read and write down the water meter reading, and then call the Milwaukee Water Works Customer Service Center, **(414) 286-2830**, to report the reading and request a final bill.

Unpaid and delinquent balances (all or a portion of) may be transferred to the property owner's tax bill in November per Wisconsin law and City of Milwaukee ordinances.