



DID YOUR WATER BILL INCREASE BY MORE THAN 25%?



Review the below for common reasons your water bill may have significantly increased.

Leaks

- **Toilet leaks:** A toilet leak can waste an average of 1/2 gallon per minute and increase a water bill by more than \$140. Toilet leaks can be silent so checking your toilet twice a year is recommended. To check for leaks: use dye tablets, available at the Water Department, or food coloring. Simply remove the tank lid, and drop the tablets or a few drops of food coloring in the tank (not the bowl). Do not flush the toilet. Wait ½ hour - 1 hour and look in the bowl. If the bowl has a coloration, you have a leak and need to replace the flapper or install a rebuild kit.
- **Garden hose:** Tighten your positive shut off nozzle and hose connection. If leaks are still present, new items may be required.
- **Washing machine:** Check the area around the drain pump of your washing machine to check for leaks. Other leaks can be found by removing the front panel. Always wash full loads of laundry to be water efficient.
- **Dishwasher:** Several items should be checked for issues including a leaking inlet valve (where water enters the dishwasher,) broken washer arm, cracked motor shaft seal, faulty door gasket or a defective pump and/or pump seal.
- **Faucet aerators:** Replacing leaking aerators with a 1.5 or 2 GPM aerator can save several gallons per minute in your bathrooms and kitchen. Simply remove the old aerator and install the new one.
- **Showerheads:** Showerheads may have a leak in the seal or suffer from calcium buildup. For calcium buildup, soak in white vinegar. For a leaky seal, try replacing the O-ring or washer. If the leaks persist, a plumber may be required.

Lawn Irrigation


- **Over-irrigating your lawn:** Outdoor water use is typically the highest water use at a residence (Up to 60% of total household consumption.) If your water bill jumped during the summer months, or after making adjustments to the sprinkler timer, outdoor irrigation may be the cause of a higher water bill. Over-watering is actually harmful to the lawn and the environment.

Westminster has a permanent watering schedule that applies to all Westminster Water customers.

Watering days are maximums.
To help conserve, only water when your lawn needs it.

APRIL 1 – OCTOBER 31						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						

NOVEMBER 1 – MARCH 31						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						

 = Denotes allowable watering days for all City of Westminster Water Customers

* Water use restrictions and watering schedule shall apply at all times

- **Automatic sprinkler timer malfunction:** Check your sprinkler timer regularly. If your sprinkler timer batteries have died, it can cause schedule glitches. When inserting new batteries, reprogram days and times as the timer will automatically revert to the factory settings of watering seven days a week for fifteen minutes.
- **Warm season:** Grasses actively grow from mid-April (when the soil temperature warms up) to mid-October, and go dormant in the winter. Watering every day will not increase the grass's health. To check if your grass needs to be watered, use a moisture meter, an inexpensive tool that measures the moisture level in the soil.
- **Water early in the morning and late in the evening:** Watering during the warmer hours in the day results in evaporation and can cook your grass/plants. (Similar to steaming vegetables!) Watering early in the morning or after the sun has gone down allows the water to percolate into the soil and grass/plant roots to grow deeper, making them more sturdy and requiring less water.
- **Check sprinkler heads and valves regularly:** Sprinkler heads can get hit by lawn mowers or kicked. Check sprinkler heads once a month. Valves can get stuck open or close. Since watering typically takes place very early or very late, you may not see the water wasting, causing a large increase in water use and your bill.
- **Cool season:** Grasses may or may not go dormant during the winter cold. Browner grass does not necessarily mean it needs more water; the grass may just be in winter hibernation.
- **Water duration:** Westminster soil cannot handle more than six minutes of watering at a time. Any longer than 6 minutes, the water will simply runoff and is of no use. The Water Division suggests watering for 3-6 minutes twice a day to get a deep soak that promotes longer root growth. Use the step test to see if your grass needs water: if walking across the lawn leaves footprints (blades don't spring back up,) it's time to water.

Call the Water Division at 714-548-3690 for more information.