



CITY OF BRANDON
WATER & SEWER ADJUSTMENT POLICY

The Mississippi Attorney General has provided the following opinion regarding billing adjustments.

“Any policy allowing for the adjustment of a water customer’s bill must include a factual determination by the Municipal governing authorities that, because of unforeseen circumstances, the customer did not receive the benefits of the water service thereby warranting a reduction or compromise. Such factual determinations should be reflected in the Municipal minutes.”

In accordance with the Mississippi Attorney General’s opinion as stated above, the City of Brandon will use the following policy as a guide in making a determination for approval or denial of any utility bill adjustment request.

1. All utility adjustments are reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Public Works Department.
2. Water and sewer adjustments may be granted for the following reasons:
 - a. Errors in water meter readings or errors in the computer billing system.
 - b. Leaks on water lines or water meter issues which are the City’s responsibility and reflect upon the water account consumption.
 - c. Leaks or breaks in the customer’s water system plumbing for which proof of repair is presented and the following policy guidelines are met.
3. A City of Brandon adjustment form MUST be completed by the customer (or a representative of the customer) for an adjustment to be considered for leaks on the homeowner’s side of the meter or in order to dispute any charges on the customer’s billing account.
4. All adjustment forms must be completed in full, including name, date, account information, type of leak, description of repairs, and signature of applicant. A copy of the plumber’s bill, repair receipts, or a description of repairs if completed by homeowner MUST be attached to the adjustment form for repair verification. If disputing charges on an account that are not knowingly related to a homeowner leak, the customer must give reasoning and details for the dispute, including the billing cycle(s) and charges being disputed.
5. Only one adjustment may be given per 12-month time period for leaks on the homeowners’ side of the meter. See item 1 and item 2 of the attached guide.
6. Only one adjustment may be given per calendar year for pool fills at a property in addition to other adjustments. Sewer charges only may be adjusted for pool fills. See item 3 of the attached guide.
7. No more than two months may be adjusted at a time, unless exigent circumstances are shown.
8. A six-month average prior to the leak reflecting on the account will be used to determine if an account qualifies for an adjustment.
9. Leak consumption must exceed the six month account average plus 50% in order to be considered for an adjustment. (example: average 6 X 1.5 = 9)

10. Accounts will not be considered for an adjustment until the customer's leak has been repaired, and the account usage has returned to within the six month average prior to the leak.
11. Adjustment forms will only be held for review through three billing cycles in which the leak reflects. If the leak reflects past three billing cycles, then the adjustment will be denied, and the customer will be required to complete a new adjustment form for consideration, unless exigent circumstances are shown.
12. No adjustments will be approved on an account that has been cut off for delinquency in the six months prior to the adjustment form being submitted, unless exigent circumstances are shown.
13. Customers that have made application for adjustment on their account shall be required to be current with his/her water account and shall pay a minimum of seventy-five percent (75%) of the bill(s) to be considered for adjustment.
14. Upon final approval, adjustments will be applied directly to account balances. Should an adjustment be granted that creates a credit balance on an account, no refunds will be allowed for said credit. Credits on accounts will apply toward future bills on the account. **No refunds will be given for adjustments.**
15. Upon approval and posting of an adjustment, any remaining account balance is due in full no later than the following bill due date, unless a specific payment plan has been made and approved by the Public Works administrative staff.
16. Upon denial of an adjustment, any remaining account balance is due in full no later than the following bill due date, unless a specific payment plan has been made and approved by the Public Works administrative staff.
17. No adjustment will be considered after the second utility bill that the leak has reflected upon, unless exigent circumstances are shown. Two utility billing cycles provide the customer with adequate time to discover and repair a leak. Customers are responsible for review and dispute of their own billing.
18. The applicant must provide sufficient evidence that a leak occurred in order that a proper determination may be made to the validity of the adjustment request. Sufficient evidence must be in the form of plumbing bills, repair receipts, or other documentation that repairs were made.
19. In the event that the City of Brandon has notified the customer of their leak by way of door hanger, in person, by phone, email, or US mail, no other evidence past the initial two utility billing cycles will be considered for adjustment, unless exigent circumstances are shown.
20. Should an adjustment be granted, the following guide, attached hereto, shall be used for calculating the water and sewer fee adjustments.
21. Adjustments may only be calculated by designated employees of the City of Brandon Public Works Department.
22. Adjustment recommendations will be presented to the Board of Aldermen once per month as an agenda item listing each adjustment and its corresponding recommendation. All adjustment submittals to the Board are a recommendation from the Public Works Department based on the guidelines set forth within the Adjustment Policy.
23. Final approval or denial on all adjustments must be made by the Board of Aldermen.

ADJUSTMENT GUIDE SCHEDULE

1. Leaks which drain into sewer system:

Adjustments will not be given for any leaks which are draining into the sewer system. Customers are responsible for all account charges related to leaks which drain into the sewer system.

- Examples: commode running, indoor faucet leaks, bathtub leaks

2. Leaks which DO NOT drain into sewer system:

- a. Water – No adjustment on water charges for homeowner leaks.
- b. Sewer – Adjust local sewer to monthly average consumption.
- c. West Rankin – Adjust wastewater treatment to monthly average consumption.

Example: Customer billed for usage of 10,000 gallons with average consumption of 3,000 gallons

	Billed Usage	Billed Amt	Avg Usage	Avg Bill	Totals
WA	10,000	22.90	3,000	6.87	-----
LS	10,000	36.40	3,000	10.92	25.48
WR	10,000	64.00	3,000	19.20	44.80
Total Adjustment					70.28

3. Swimming Pool Fills:

- a. Water – No adjustment on water charges for pool fills.
- b. Local Sewer – Adjust for the known amount of water used for pool fill.
- c. West Rankin – Adjust for the known amount of water used for pool fill.

4. Taxes – Adjust taxes at 7% on water adjustment only for applicable accounts (commercial, etc.).

Example: water adjusted - $\$11.92 \times .07 = \0.83 (for taxes)