


Policy Title:	Special Use Meters Pilot Program (Residential Irrigation)		
	OFFICE OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER	Category	Billing
		Administrative Policy #	___-FIN-Special Use Meters Pilot Program
		Revision #	N/A
		Review Frequency	One year from date implemented.
Administrative Division	Billing	Reviewed By	Chief Engineer, Chief Financial Officer, Billing Manager, Meter Operations
BOWC Approval		Last Reviewed/Update Date	
Implementation Date		Resolution #	

1. AUTHORITY

- 1.1. The City of Detroit is expressly authorized to operate a water and sewer system and to bill for services rendered under numerous laws, ordinances, and charter provisions (e.g., Michigan Constitution, Article VII, Section 24; MCL 117.4a (4)(j); MCL 117.4b(2); MCL 117.4e; MCL 117.4f; MCL 117.5e; MCL 117.35; Chapter 35, Section 7-1501, et seq of the 1997 Detroit Home Rule Charter, and Chapter 56 of the Detroit City Code).
- 1.2. Under Michigan Act 178 of 1939, *Municipal Water Liens* (MCL 123.161, *et seq.*) “the Water Lien Act”) and Chapter 56, *Utilities*, of the Detroit City Code (“City Code”), Detroit Water and Sewerage (“DWSD”) provides water and sewerage service to customers and under certain conditions, has a lien that becomes effective immediately upon the distribution of water or provision of water and sewerage system service on the premises or property supplied. Further, water and sewerage service may be discontinued for nonpayment of charges and/or civil collection action may be filed.

2. OBJECTIVES

- 2.1. To set forth policies and procedures for residential Property Owners who want to install Special Use Meters, as defined herein.
- 2.2. To establish a one-year pilot program to determine pilot program efficacy and level of participation from residential, non-domestic water users.

3. PURPOSE

- 3.1. Many residents choose to thoroughly and routinely irrigate lawns and gardens. Detroit’s current sewage billing practice applies the sewage rate to every gallon of potable water that passes through the property’s water meter. This creates a perceived or real inequity for non-domestic water users as it does not provide consideration for water that primarily is absorbed by vegetation such as grass and landscaping rather than entering the sewage disposal system.
- 3.2. This will serve as an interim policy for one (1) year, after which time, DWSD will evaluate data and determine if the policy should continue, terminate, expand to non-residential customers or require other amendments. DWSD will limit the number of participants to 100 residential customers for this pilot program.

4. DEFINITIONS

“Applicant” and “Account Owner” mean a Property Owner who wants to install a Special Use Meter for non-domestic water usage.

“Backflow Prevention Device” means a device which prevents the domestic primary water service and the public water supply from contamination or pollution due to backflow. Backflow occurs where there is a loss of system pressure.

“Domestic Primary Water Meter” means a device installed on the water service line connected to the DWSD water supply system. This device measures domestic water use.

“Domestic Water Use” means water used for indoor purposes such as drinking, food preparation, bathing, washing clothes and dishes, and flushing toilets.

“Meter Interface Unit (MIU)” means a device which records and transmits the water usage to the DWSD.

“Non-Domestic Water Use” means water used to process, treat, or manufacture goods; or to irrigate lawns and gardens or other agricultural purpose.

“Owner” means the person that holds legal title to a property.

“Parcel” means a plot of land identified by the City of Detroit Assessor with a unique identification number or "parcel number."

“Property” means a parcel or group of parcels treated as one unit for purposes of obtaining water and sewerage service.

“Sewerage” means a combination of the water-carried wastes from residences, business buildings, institutions, and industrial establishments, together with such ground, surface, and storm waters as may be present.

“Special Use (Secondary) Meter” means a meter requested by a Property Owner who wishes to separate water usage into (a) domestic use and (b) non-domestic water use. Customer may do so with the installation of a second meter.

“Special Use Meter Account” means the DWSD account established to bill usage charges recorded by the Special Use (Secondary) Meter.

5. SCOPE

5.1. This policy applies only to residential customers seeking a Special Use Meter for non-domestic water usage.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1. Customer

6.1.1. Abides by the DWSD Terms and Conditions for Special Use Meters and this Policy.

6.2. DWSD

- 6.2.1. Provides the appropriate metering equipment for Applicant to install a special use meter.
- 6.2.2. Reviews this policy after one (1) year.

7. POLICY

7.1. Applying for Special Use Meter Account

- 7.1.1. Only residential Property Owners may apply for a Special Use Meter Account.
- 7.1.2. Applicant must obtain a Permit from DWSD Permits Division to install a Special Use Meter and to set up a Special Use Meter Account.
- 7.1.3. Applicant must pay a permit fee in order to apply for a Special Use Meter Account.
- 7.1.4. If Applicant has an outstanding balance on any account in its name, the Applicant must pay the balance in full prior to establishing a Special Use Meter Account.

7.2. Equipment Required to Set Special Use Meter

- 7.2.1. Property must have Automatic Meter Reading Technology (AMR) installed on primary and secondary meters in order to establish a Special Use Meter Account.
- 7.2.2. Property Owner must have the proper plumbing and spacing requirements pursuant to DWSD specifications in order to install a Special Use Meter.
- 7.2.3. Property Owner must have a backflow prevention device to prevent potential cross connection/contamination of domestic water supply and submit an annual backflow prevention device certification test report.
- 7.2.4. Property Owner is responsible for making necessary plumbing repairs to support installation of the meter.
- 7.2.5. DWSD will provide the appropriate metering equipment for Applicant's intended non-domestic water usage.

7.3. Hours of Usage

- 7.3.1. Property Owners may allow water to flow through the Special Use Meter between 12:00 a.m. (midnight) and 6:00 a.m. only.
- 7.3.1. Property Owner must adhere to mandatory water use restrictions if DWSD declares a water emergency or issues a boil water alert.
- 7.3.2. DWSD may assess penalties for failure to comply with restrictions on hours of usage.

7.4. Charges for Special Use Meter Services

- 7.4.1. During the one (1) year pilot program, Account Holder is charged as follows:
 - a. A monthly meter fee.
 - b. Domestic water usage rate for each centum cubic feet (CCF) of water flowing through the Special Use Meter.

- c. Account Holder does not incur a monthly sewerage service charge, per-CCF sewerage charge, or drainage charge on the Special Use Meter Account.

7.5. Permit Revocation

7.5.1. **Use of Non-Domestic Meter Connection for Domestic Water Use.** DWSD may revoke permit if Property Owner or household occupants use non-domestic meter connection for domestic water use.

7.5.1.1. Based upon its investigation, DWSD may back bill sewer charges for the time period of improper non-domestic water usage and assess late fees.

7.5.1.2. DWSD may remove Special Use Meter and assess costs for restoring domestic meter set up to original condition.

7.5.2. **Account in Arrears.** DWSD may revoke permit if either the Primary Domestic Water Meter Account or the Special Use Meter Account is in arrears.

7.5.2.1. DWSD may remove Special Use Meter and assess costs for restoring domestic meter set up to original condition.

7.6 Reasonable and Necessary Accommodations

7.5.1. Management may take reasonable and necessary actions to accomplish the intent of this policy.

8. PROCEDURE

8.1 Application for Service

8.1.1 Applicant completes Special Use Meter Account Application and agrees to Terms of Service. (See attached form.)

8.1.2 Applicant submits application form to DWSD Permits Division for review and approval and pays permit fee.

8.1.3 Permits Division confirms Applicant is Property Owner and has a Primary Water Meter Account.

8.1.4 Permits Customer Service verifies whether Account Holder's account(s) is in good standing.

8.1.4.1 If the Applicant is past due on any DWSD account(s), the Permits Division Customer Service Specialist (CSS) informs Applicant.

8.1.4.2 Applicant pays account(s) in full or withdraws Application.

8.1.5 If Property ownership and payment history are confirmed, the Permits CSS creates Special Use Meter Account.

8.2 Meter Installation

8.2.1 DWSD's Meter Operations Division contacts Applicant to schedule a meter installation appointment.

8.2.1.1 DWSD's Meter Operations Division creates a work order for a meter installation and assigns a Field Service Technician to install the Special Use Meter.

8.2.2 DWSD's Field Service Technician visits Property to install Special Use Meter or notifies Property Owner of private plumbing repairs that must be done prior to meter installation.

8.2.2.1 After Property Owner completes private plumbing repairs, the Property Owner contacts DWSD to schedule a meter installation appointment. DWSD's Field Technician returns to the Property to complete meter installation.

8.2.2.2 Field Technician updates the Special Use Meter Account with the newly installed Special Use Meter's identification number and completes the work order.

8.3 **Billing Account**

8.3.1 Permits CSS turns on the Special Use Meter Account.

8.3.2 DWSD's Billing Division receives completed Special Use Meter installation work order and begins billing recorded consumption in accordance with this Policy.