



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS SEWER BILLING

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**1. What are the current sewer rates?**

For current sewer rates, click [here](#).

**2. How is my bill calculated for a Single Family Residential property?**

Sewer charges are based on water usage. There are two water districts within the City: Helix Water District and Padre Dam Municipal Water District.

Most single-family residential sewer accounts use the Fixed Winter Average (FWA) billing method. Customers are billed based on the average of the two winter water use billing cycles November– April (depending on the billing cycle, found [here](#)). Water usage during these periods is more representative of the amount of sewage produced by the residence.

The rate is \$4.49 per 100 cubic feet of water with a bimonthly Base Charge of \$11.30. The winter-based calculation (FWA) based on the winter water use become effective every July 1<sup>st</sup> for the sewer charge for the following 12 months. For an example of a sewer billing calculation, click [here](#).

For inquiries or additional questions about sewer service charges, please contact a customer service representative at (855) 518-4018.

**3. How is my bill calculated for a Multi-Residential property?**

Sewer charges are based on water usage. There are two water districts within the City: Helix Water District and Padre Dam Municipal Water District.

Multi-family Residential accounts are billed based on the bimonthly water meter reading at \$3.92 per 100 cubic feet of water. If there is a separate landscape meter installed on the property, the sewer rate is \$4.49 per 100 cubic feet of water.

The difference between the two rates is the landscape discount that is applied when there is not landscape meter. Multifamily Residential accounts have a Base Charge of \$11.30 for the first unit, plus \$5.65 for each additional unit. For an example of a sewer billing calculation, click [here](#).

For inquiries or additional questions about sewer service charges, please contact a customer service representative at (855) 518-4018.

**4. How is my bill calculated for a Commercial property?**

Sewer charges are based on water usage. There are two water districts within the City: Helix Water District and Padre Dam Municipal Water District.

Commercial accounts are designated at a low, medium or high strength based on the use of the property. Where there are multiple uses on a particular property served by the same water meter, the City applies the designation that closest represent the overall sewage strength entering the City's sewer system. This may be the designation of the highest strength user located on that property. For an example of a sewer billing calculation, click [here](#).

Industrial waste permits may be required for some users due to the type of materials released to the sewer. Specific questions regarding the strength designation should be directed to a customer service representative at (855) 518-4018.

**5. What is the "base charge" that is shown on my bill?**

The base charge is used to pay "fixed" costs; those expenditures that are not affected by sewage flow such as regular sewer line maintenance. The base charge for most customers is \$10.36 per bi-monthly billing. For multi-family residential units, the base charge is \$10.36 for the first dwelling unit plus \$5.18 per additional dwelling unit.

**6. I had a leak! How does the leak affect my sewer bill?**

If the leak occurred during the winter monitoring period, this may increase the sewer bill. If the account is a consumption-based account, this would increase the sewer bill.

Please call (855) 518-4018, provide a description of the leak and detailed receipts of the repair.

**7. I am moving-in/moving-out.**

All sewer account information is based on the files received from Helix Water District and Padre Dam Municipal Water District. The contact information can be found below.

**8. How can I contact my Water District?**

Residents can contact either Water District for questions pertaining to water accounts. Please note, Water Districts have nothing to do with sewer as the City of El Cajon manages sewer accounts.

Helix Water District  
7811 University Avenue  
La Mesa, CA 91941  
(619) 466-0585  
[www.hwd.com](http://www.hwd.com)

Padre Dam Municipal Water District

10887 Woodside Avenue  
Santee, CA 91941  
(619) 448-3111  
[www.padredam.org](http://www.padredam.org)

**9. How often do I get a sewer bill?**

Sewer is billed every two months.

**10. Do you accept credit card payments?**

Visa or MasterCard are accepted in person at the City of El Cajon Finance Department or through the City's website at <https://elcajon.gwfathom.com>. Please note that payments made on the City's website may take up to three (3) business days to post to your account. Payments can also be made over the telephone by calling Customer Care, toll-free, at (855) 518-4018.

**11. Can I pay my sewer bill in person?**

You can pay for your sewer bill in the Finance Department, located in City Hall at 200 Civic Center Way, El Cajon, CA 92020. Civic Center Way is accessible from Magnolia Avenue. City Hall is the 6-story brown brick building adjacent to the Police Department. You'll need to sign in at the front desk; Finance is located on the Fifth Floor.

**12. Can I sign up for e-billing?**

Visit the City's website at <https://elcajon.gwfathom.com> and register your account using your 10-digit Customer number and 9-digit Account number (listed on the upper right-hand corner of your bill), along with the last four digits of the phone number listed in your account. Once your account is registered with an email address, follow the directions under the "GO GREEN!" button to sign up for e-billing.

**13. How do I sign up for automatic payment?**

The application form is available online at <https://elcajon.gwfathom.com/Pay-Bill-AutoPay-Details.aspx>. You may also pick up a form, in person, from the Finance Department in person at City Hall.

**14. Can I pay my sewer bill and my water bill with one check?**

No. The City of El Cajon is a separate entity from the water districts; therefore, the bills need to be paid separately.

**15. How much time do I have to pay my sewer bill?**

Your sewer bill is due 28 days from the issue date. Late payments are assessed a 10% penalty and accrue interest at 1.5% per month. If you are paying your bill on or near the due date, it is recommended that you pay your bill in person to avoid the late penalty. Please note that payments through the City's website may take up to 3 business days to post to your account.

**16. Can I change the due date of my sewer bill?**

No. The due dates are based on current water meter reads that are provided by the water districts (Helix Water District or Padre Dam Municipal Water District).

**17. Can I make payment arrangements?**

No. A lien is placed on the property for delinquent balances and unpaid delinquent amounts are added to the owner's property tax bill.

**18. I'm a tenant, why do you send a bill to my landlord?**

The City of El Cajon generally sends regular bi-monthly bills to the billing party, alone. When the bill becomes delinquent, a past-due notice is sent to the billing party and a duplicate notice is sent to the property owner. Property owner notices are necessary, because delinquent balances can become a lien on the property, which may be added to the owner's property tax bill.

**19. I'm going on vacation, what can I do about my sewer bill?**

For most single-family residential customers, your sewer charge remains the same amount for a twelve (12) month period beginning with your July/August bill and ending with your May/June bill. You can always prepay your account before you leave on vacation.

Pre-payments can be made by calling Customer Care at (855) 518-4018, in person in the Finance Department at City Hall, over the phone with Customer Care, or a check can be sent to City of El Cajon, Sewer Billing at 200 Civic Center Way, El Cajon, CA 92020. Please note your customer and account numbers on the check.