



# Customer Service Connections

A publication of Saint Paul Regional Water Services

Fall 2018

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From Freezing**

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## Board recommends water rates to go up by 9 cents a unit in proposed 2019 budget

Water rates will go up 9 cents a billing unit in 2019 if a budget that the Board of Water Commissioners recommended to the Saint Paul city council for approval gets passed this year. The Board made the recommendation at their Sept. 11 board meeting.

There will be no other changes to the water service base fee or the water main replacement surcharge.

Average residential water use is 17 units of water per residential single-family household each quarter.

The rate increase will cost the average consumer \$1.53 more per quarter than last year or \$6.12 more per year for water use alone.

*Individual results will vary based on meter size and actual consumption.*

The rate increase is necessary to continue investing in system renewal and perform critical operations and maintenance.

The water utility is responsible only for the charges related to water: water service base fees, water consumption rates, and water main replacement charges. A safe water drinking fee is collected on behalf of the state, and in St. Paul, we charge a right-of-way recovery fee.

Water Volume Rates per Billing Unit				
Cities	2018		Proposed 2019	
	Summer	Winter	Summer	Winter
Saint Paul, Falcon Heights, Lauderdale, Maplewood, West Saint Paul	\$2.87	\$2.77	\$2.96	\$2.86
Mendota Heights <i>(20 % more in 2018; 18 % more in 2019)</i>	\$3.44	\$3.32	\$3.49	\$3.37
All other cities <i>(20 % more)</i>	\$3.44	\$3.32	\$3.55	\$3.43

### Cities charge additional fees

However, the water utility adds line item charges for additional city services on behalf of each city we serve. Those charges are set by the city in which you live, and changes to those charges are approved by your city council on an annual basis. Depending on where you live, your bill could include charges for sanitary sewer, storm sewer, street lighting, recycling, water/hydrant, and/or water usage surcharges.

These municipal charges will affect the overall total you see on your bill.

If you have questions about the charges for municipal services provided by the city in which you live, please contact them directly at the number on the back of your bill.

If you have questions about your water charges, please call SPRWS customer service at 651-266-6350.

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**Check your account anytime at  
<https://billpay.saintpaulwater.com>**

**Our mission is to provide reliable, quality water and services at a reasonable cost.**

## To Serve You Better

To talk to a customer service representative call customer service at (651) 266-6350 and press "0" between 7:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday - Friday.

### Bills may be paid in the following ways:

#### Credit Card

We accept *Visa*, *MasterCard*, *Discover*, and *American Express* credit/debit cards. To make a credit card payment, or to get information on your account status 24/7, call (651) 266-6350 or go online to: <https://billpay.saintpaulwater.com>. Or pay in person at McCarrons Center, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., 1900 Rice St., Maplewood

#### Money Order or Check

In person, by return mail with your bill stub, or in our drop box:

For next-day processing, at McCarrons Center. The drop box is located in the visitor parking area; available 24 hours a day.

#### Cash

In person only, at McCarrons Center, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

#### Direct Payment Plan

Have your payment deducted electronically from your checking or savings account. You'll still receive a statement; it will indicate which date the payment will be deducted from your account.

### Do you winter in another residence?

*If you spend your winter months at a second residence and leave your property here vacant, you might consider having your water turned off during your absence.*

*If your heat goes out and your home is vacant, water pipes can freeze and burst.*

*If the home thaws out, the water can cause considerable damage before you return home.*

*If you are interested in having your water shut off for the winter months, contact dispatch at 651-266-6874.*

## Keep your home's pipes and meter from freezing this winter

Every winter hundreds of water meters and pipes freeze in area homes. Make sure that doesn't happen to you.

Water meters, which typically sit several inches off the floor in the basements of most homes, can freeze in unheated space.

Pipes, valves, and the water meter should not touch concrete walls that are exposed to cold.

In addition:

- Check along the foundation and crawl spaces for cold-air leaks
- Close off crawl space vents
- Replace or repair broken or cracked basement windows
- Make sure that basement doors and windows close tightly
- Seal or caulk cracks in walls

- Insulate pipes
- Make sure the valves on either side of the water meter work and can be turned off

If your water meter freezes, the bottom plate will crack. Do not try to repair the meter yourself; call us.

*It is unlawful for anyone other than a water utility employee to remove a water meter except in cases of an emergency. In such cases, call SPRWS immediately.*

If we need to replace a damaged meter, including damage caused by freezing, the homeowner will be charged for the meter. Replacing a new meter can cost \$300 or more.

If you suspect damaged or frozen water pipes or water meter, call the SPRWS 24-hour dispatch office at 651-266-6868.

## Online option attracts 42,000 + users

Get 24/7 access to your billing history, payment options

Are you taking full advantage of the online access to your account?

Called *Infinity.Link*, this online account access will let you do more than simply pay your bill.

If you sign in and register as a customer, you will be able to:

- Pay your bill
- Check your account
- Compare your water use over time
- Get a breakdown of your bill
- View each account, if you

have more than one service address

- Elect to have only electronic, or e-bills, sent to you

If you simply want to go in and make a one-time payment without registering, you can do that, too.

All of these features are available to you anytime, anywhere you have internet access.

More than 42,000 customers have registered their online accounts.

If you are interested in taking full advantage of our online option, please go to <https://billpay.saintpaulwater.com>.

You will need your customer number and your account number to register.

**Check your account anytime at <https://billpay.saintpaulwater.com>**