

UNDERSTANDING YOUR UTILITY BILL

August 22, 2023

A recent newspaper headline reading, “**Janesville seeks 8% water rate increase,**” has residents concerned and thinking their entire bill is set to increase by 8%. The only fees that will be impacted by this PSC Application for a Simplified Rate Case are the Fire Protection, Water Base, Water Flow and Main Replacement. Highlighted in green.

In the example below, an 8% increase would result in a quarterly increase of .56 cents in Fire Protection, \$1.26 in Water Base flat rate, \$1.93 in Water Flow (based on actual water use), and .70 cents to main replacement. The quarterly bill in this case would increase from \$203.80 to \$208.25 (\$4.45/qtr or \$1.48/mo). *An overall 8% increase to all fees on the utility bill would have been \$220.10 (\$16.30/qtr. or \$5.43/mo).*

Your utility bill is made up of charges related to metered use of water in addition to several “flat” charges (same each billing cycle) that relate to services provided and are charged to you based on the water service type, meter/pipe size, and impact.

SERVICE ADDRESS	RATE CLASS							
██████████	Residential							
ACCOUNT NUMBER	PREVIOUS BALANCE	CURRENT CHARGES	TOTAL DUE	DUE DATE				
██████████	\$ 0	\$203.80	\$ 203.80	7/26/2023				
THERE IS A \$30 FEE ON ALL RETURNED PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS ARE SUBJECT TO A 1% PENALTY PER MONTH IF PAYMENT IS NOT RECEIVED BY THE DUE DATE								
SERVICE PERIOD	METER NUMBER	TYPE	CURRENT READ AND DATE	PREVIOUS READ AND DATE	DAYS	USAGE IN CCF	READ TYPE	
3/16/2023 - 6/14/2023	██████████	WA	34 6/13/23	23 3/14/23	91	11	ACTUAL	
DESCRIPTION			CONSUMPTION	RATE	CHARGES			
Fire Protection - Residential \$66,000 to 91,999			1.00	7.02	\$7.02			
Sanitation			1.00	38.56	\$38.56			
Storm Water - Residential			1.00	37.45	\$37.45			
Water Base - Residential			1.00	15.70	\$15.70			
Water Flow - Residential 0-15 CCF			11.00	2.19	\$24.09			
Waste Water Base - Residential			1.00	46.10	\$46.10			
Waste Water Flow - Residential			11.00	2.38	\$26.18			
Main Replacement - Residential			1.00	8.70	\$8.70			
Total Current Charges:					\$203.80			

Pink highlights above explain “usage-based” or metered charges.

Water Rates on your bill are applied for and set by the Public Service Commission (PSC). The PSC only controls Water rates: Fire Protection, Water Base, Water Flow, and Main Replacement. Applications for any fee increase to the PSC can be made in either a Simplified Rate Case (SRC) or a Conventional Rate Case (CRC). The SRC is a simple way for the municipal utility to meet specific criteria to provide for an inflationary type increase that helps maintain revenue continuity. The CRC usually involves larger increases, is more labor intensive, requires a public hearing, and takes longer to review.

Below are all definitions and details about each charge in the order it appears on your bill to help you better understand how fees are charged and what they pay for.

Usage in CCF – CCF is a measurement of water use and stands for centum cubic feet. Centum is the Roman numeral for 100, so CCF = 100 Cubic Feet. 1 CCF is the equivalent of 748 gallons. The average American uses around 82 gallons per day per person in the household. It's important for you to find your homes usage trends in order to spot high usage months (like in the summer when we water plants, gardens, or yards and fill pools, etc.) or detect leaks (like running toilets, dripping faucets, outdoor hose leaks, etc.).

Fire Protection – On your street, you will likely see fire hydrants that the City Fire Department can hook into to get high-pressure water in order to fight fire. The rate structure for Public Fire Protection charges is based on the assessed value of the improvements on a parcel of land and not on the property's total assessed valuation. This charge is for the ability to deliver a large quantity of water quickly to the location of a fire. It includes the cost of water pumping, reservoirs, mains, and fire hydrants. The value of the improvements on your property can be determined by reviewing the most recent property tax bill.

RESIDENTIAL		MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL/NON-RESIDENTIAL	
Improvement Value	Qrtly Chg	Improvement Value	Qrtly Chg
\$0 to 14,999	\$0.79	House Equivalent	\$7.02
15,000 to 40,999	\$3.00	\$0 to 114,999	\$7.80
41,000 to 65,999	\$5.00	115,000 to 234,999	\$14.33
66,000 to 91,999	\$7.02	235,000 to 714,999	\$32.96
92,000 to 132,999	\$9.89	715,000 to 2,349,999	\$103.18
133,000 to 199,999	\$14.46	2,350,000 to 7,139,999	\$313.83
200,000 to 264,000	\$20.78	7,140,000 to 17,849,999	\$1,073.31
265,000 and over	\$31.52	17,850,000 to 41,599,999	\$2,470.47
		41,600,000 and over	\$5,956.95

Sanitation – On your regular trash day(s), you place your trash container and/or recycling carts at the curb by 7 a.m., and the City of Janesville picks it up, delivers it to the facility, and processes it. Trash and recycling fees include trash collection and disposal, collection and processing of recyclable materials, fall and spring curbside collection of bagged yard waste and bundled brush, and the operation of the yard waste drop-off and compost site. Residents and participating businesses are charged a collection fee of \$154.23 per year (or \$38.56 per billing cycle).

Stormwater - Stormwater is rainwater plus anything the rain carries along with it. As rainwater runs across different surfaces, it can pick up various types of pollutants, including: sediment from exposed soil. oil and grease from driveways and roads. The ERU method (also known as the Equivalent Service Unit (ESU) method) is the charge found on your bill under stormwater. It bills an amount proportional to the impervious area on a parcel, regardless of the parcel's total area. 1 ERU=3,200sq ft. and 1 ERU costs \$37.45/qtr.

Water Base and Waste Water Base – These fees are fixed quarterly service charges on your bill that are charged to properties based on the meter size in your home (pipe diameter) and are a uniform rate charged to all residents.

FIXED QUARTERLY SERVICE CHARGE			
Meter Size (Inches)	Water	Wastewater	Water Main Replacement
5/8	\$15.70	\$46.10	\$8.70
3/4	\$20.20	\$50.20	\$13.00
1	\$26.10	\$58.20	\$21.70
1-1/2	\$45.00	\$78.50	\$43.40
2	\$63.00	\$102.70	\$69.40
3	\$97.40	\$159.30	\$130.10
4	\$150.00	\$240.20	\$216.80
6	\$258.00	\$442.30	\$433.60
8	\$387.00	\$684.90	\$693.80
10	\$552.00	\$1,008.30	\$1,040.60
12	\$726.00	\$1,555.50	\$1,387.50

Water Flow – This fee reflects the actual consumption of water on your property as reported by your water meter. This is the clean water coming into the home/property.

Waste Water Flow – This fee reflects the water that goes down the drains and toilets on your property and is the equivalent of the water in.

VOLUME CHARGES (per 100 cubic feet)		
Residential Water		Wastewater
First 15 ccf	\$2.19	\$2.38
Next 25 ccf	\$2.87	
Over 40 ccf	\$3.70	
Multifamily Residential Non-Residential Water		Wastewater
First 100 ccf	\$2.64	\$2.38
Next 1,900 ccf	\$2.40	
Over 2,000 ccf	\$2.29	

The first 15 ccf is one rate, the next 25 ccf is a higher rate, and over 40 ccf is the highest rate. Higher volume users will pay more and incentivize self-governing of our water resources.

Main Replacement – this is the newest fee on the bill and is the City’s effort to reduce borrowing of funds to maintain the utility and move to a pay-as-we-go platform. Not borrowing to pay for maintenance increases the City’s credit rating and saves the taxpayer interest and penalties. This is a uniform rate charged to all accounts.