Guides, Tips, and Resources:
Water Consumption, Water Meter, and Checking for Leaks

DeKalb County Utility Customer Operations
Updated February 2016
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DeKalb County Population

DeKalb County Population

Year

- 2005
- 2006
- 2007
- 2008
- 2009
- 2010
- 2011
- 2012
- 2013
- 2014

Population:
- 670,000
- 680,000
- 690,000
- 700,000
- 710,000
- 720,000
- 730,000
- 740,000
Service Line Responsibility & How Do We Use Our Household Water?

* Service Line Responsibility
* Average Indoor Usage
* Average Overall Usage
* Irrigation System
Service Line Responsibility
Average Indoor Usage

- Toilets: 33%
- Washing Machine: 22%
- Showers: 21%
- Kitchen Faucets & Dishwashers: 9%
- Bathrooms: 9%
- Bathroom Faucets: 6%

Source: SENSUS Meter Systems
Average Overall Usage Comparison

Residential Average Water Use

- Outdoor: 59%
- Toilet: 11%
- Laundry: 9%
- Shower: 7%
- Faucet: 6%
- Leak: 6%
- Bath & Dishwasher: 1% Each

Source: American Water Works Association Research Foundation, End Uses of Water
Irrigation System

Sprinkler System Overview

DeKalb County, Georgia
Your water bill will display monthly or bi-monthly usage

How much water do you use?

Water, Sewer, and Service Charges

NOTE: The calculation generated by the usage calculator is only an estimate and is not a reflection of your current or future bill.
DeKalb County Meters

- **Brass Meters** - mechanical meters with a dial that moves when water goes through the meter. While many residents have these meters, these meters are no longer being installed in the county.

- **Electronic Meters** – a meter with no moving parts which uses a magnetic field generated by water movement to determine the volume. They are accurate to the hundredth (0.01) of a gallon. They also contain an on board computer that can download usage history (**30 days from current time**) to help determine how you use your water.
Durability of DeKalb County Meters

- **Brass Meters** - can last up to 25 years or much longer

- **Electronic Meters** – The iPERL system has a twenty (20) year life cycle, along with a twenty (20) year battery life guarantee
How are the meters read in DeKalb County?

- **Manual readings** are made by lifting the meter lid and entering the numbers shown into the handheld device, which is then loaded into the billing system to calculate the bill amount.

- **Touch read** is a type of reading where the meter reader touches the end of their reading device to the pad on top of the meter lid and the reading and meter information are automatically entered into the reading system.

- **Radio read** is also known as a ‘drive by reading’. The meter is equipped with a transmission device that sends a signal to the reading unit in the truck.

- **Automatic read** meters have a special device, known as a Meter Transceiver Unit (MXU). These automatically send the meter reading to a fixed base unit to record the readings and meter data whenever desired or scheduled.

- **Estimated readings** take place when it is not possible to read the meter directly. This could be in cases where a meter is covered by landscape, a car is parked over the meter, meter has been damaged, or weather prohibits gathering a read safely.
How are the meters read in DeKalb County?

- **Manual readings**
- **Touch read**
- **Radio read**
- **Automatic read**
NOTE: Picture is not representation of actual SENSUS meter or other meters used in the County
What Is Inside a Water Meter?

- Maincase
- Register
- Measuring Chamber

iPERL Meter

iPERL Digital Display

✓ Read 5 Digits from the left = 100 G units
How to Read Your Meter

- Thousands of Gallons
- Hundreds of Gallons
- Tens of Gallons
- Single Gallon
How to Read Your Meter

* Read the dial, write down all the numbers
* Then, write down the date of the reading
* After a period of time (we suggest 7 days), read the dial again and write down the date and reading
* Subtract the first reading from the second reading
* This is your water usage in gallons
Do It Yourself: Checking the Meter

* Turn off all faucets and water-consuming appliances
* Read your water meter
* Read the water meter again after 30 to 60 minutes
* If the reading has changed, you may have a leak
* Also, if triangle or leak detection hand moves, you may have a leak
Indicators of Water Leaks

- Sudden increases in your water bill
- Water marks on floors, walls, or ceilings
- Patches of greener grass/More grass
- Standing water on the ground or on pavement when there has not been any rainfall
  - This can indicate a broken underground pipe
- A “running” toilet: A toilet which constantly has water going through the basin
- **Keep in mind: Not all water leaks are visible**
County residents are responsible for all water running through the meter

If leak detected, you may need to seek a licensed source for additional help

Residents who are comfortable with ‘Do-It-Yourself’ home maintenance and the associated risks can perform certain leak detection and associated repairs
Sometimes, this piece comes off and creates a water siphon.
Steps to Check for Toilet Leaks

1. Remove your tank lid
2. Drop a dye tablet or food coloring in tank
3. DO NOT FLUSH!
4. Clean toilet basin, means no leak

- Flush toilet and make sure the water line is at the correct water level
- Wait 15-20 minutes. If water in basin is colored, then you have a leak.
How to determine the cause of a leaky toilet?

* Draw a pencil line on the inside of the tank
* Turn off the water supply to the toilet
* Wait 30 minutes
* If the water level stays the same, the leak is the refill valve
* If the water level drops below the line, the leak is the flush valve or flapper
- **Residential Bills** cover a sixty (60) day period - divide that bill in half to determine monthly cost and usage of water.

- **Commercial Bills** and some residential bills are sent monthly based on location, automation of the reading system, traffic congestion, etc.
The graph below shows how the costs have risen over time for the same 10,000 gallon usage.

Graph displays constant usage and rate adjustment impact.
How to Read Your Bill

Understanding your new utility bill
The sample bill includes figures and calculations that are for illustrative purposes only.


B. Message Board – Important information about your service and contact information.

C. Service Information – Customer and Service information for the billing statement.

D. Bill Summary – An overview of past bill amount, payment and current charges.

E. Current Charges – Detail of charges for the current bill.

F. Water Usage Graph – A graph showing water usage for the last 12 months as compared to the current month consumption.

G. Meter Reading – Details the service readings for the current bill.

H. Remittance Coupon – Please return this portion with your payment in the enclosed envelope.

- New display allows for easier tracking of consumption
- Message Board will change based on UCO requirements
Authorized Payment Locations

Did You Know?

You can pay your water bill at many authorized locations around the County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>City, State, Zip</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kroger</td>
<td>2875 N. Decatur Rd.</td>
<td>Decatur, GA 30033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kroger</td>
<td>4735 Memorial Dr.</td>
<td>Decatur, GA 30032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kroger</td>
<td>2205 LaVista Rd. NE</td>
<td>Atlanta, GA 30329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kroger</td>
<td>725 Ponce De Leon Ave. STE 100</td>
<td>Atlanta, GA 30306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wal-Mart</td>
<td>3580 Memorial Dr.</td>
<td>Decatur, GA 30032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wal-Mart</td>
<td>1400 Lawrenceville HWY</td>
<td>Lawrenceville, GA 30044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wal-Mart</td>
<td>1825 Rockbridge Rd. Stone Mountain, GA 30087</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wal-Mart</td>
<td>6152 Covington HWY</td>
<td>Lithonia, GA 30058</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For a complete listing of authorized payment locations, please visit: http://www.dekalbwatershed.com/PDF/authorized_payment_locations.pdf
Tips for Conserving Water

- Add low-flow aerators to faucets
- Install low volume showerheads
- Low flow toilets
- Full versus Partial Laundry Loads
- Minimize shower time
- Rain gauge in the front and backyard
10 Ways to Save Water at Home

1. Fix leaks as soon as you notice them
2. Don’t leave the tap running needlessly
3. Check your toilet for leaks
4. Use the dishwasher and washing machine only when full
5. Replace older toilets and showerheads with high efficiency models
6. Choose new appliances wisely
7. Scrape dishes before washing them
8. Only water plants when necessary
9. Reduce the amount of lawn in your yard and landscape with plants or plants well adapted to our region
10. Adjust sprinklers, so only your lawn is watered and not the house, sidewalk, or street

Source: DeKalb County Department of Watershed http://www.mydropcounts.org/ways-to-conserve/
Take the Water Conservation Pledge

Website: http://www.mydropcounts.org/pledge/
This Program was created for DeKalb County water customers to assist in replacing old toilets with low efficiency toilets to conserve water and money.

Toilets being replaced must have been installed prior to 1993.

http://www.dekalbwatershed.com/toilet_rebate.htm
For general information on water conservation

* [http://eartheasy.com/live_water_saving.htm](http://eartheasy.com/live_water_saving.htm)
* [http://wateruseitwisely.com/100-ways-to-conserve/](http://wateruseitwisely.com/100-ways-to-conserve/)