

DEKALB COUNTY

ITEM NO. H-9

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

BUSINESS AGENDA / MINUTES

MEETING DATE: January 10, 2017

HEARING TYPE

Preliminary

ACTION TYPE

Resolution

SUBSTITUTE

SUBJECT: Resolution to Establish a Wastewater Retainage Credit Policy

DEPARTMENT: Department of Watershed Management

PUBLIC HEARING: YES NO

ATTACHMENT: YES No

INFORMATION DWM Director Scott Towler

PAGES: 6

CONTACT 770-621-7234
PHONE NUMBER:

PURPOSE: To consider approving a Wastewater Retainage Credit Policy Applicable to Certain Industrial, Commercial and Residential Customers Served by the Department of Watershed Management.

NEED/IMPACT: The Governing Authority has previously approved rates for the provision of water and wastewater services by the Department of Watershed Management. Currently, a customer's volume of water use is metered while the volume of wastewater returned to the system is estimated based on general use patterns. The purpose of the Wastewater Retainage Credit Policy is to allow an adjustment in the wastewater related charges for those industrial, commercial and residential users that do not return the anticipated amount of wastewater to the system due to the nature of their water use. Specifically, the Policy would allow adjustment in the wastewater related charges for (1) those industrial and commercial users whose use consumes water, thereby reducing the amount of wastewater returned to the system, and (2) those residential users who use water to fill private, residential swimming pools or to hand water a private garden.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

Approve the attached Resolution Establishing a Wastewater Retainage Credit Policy and authorize the Chief Executive Officer to execute all necessary documents.

RESOLUTION

**A RESOLUTION BY THE GOVERNING AUTHORITY OF
DEKALB COUNTY, GEORGIA, TO ESTABLISH A
WASTEWATER RETAINAGE CREDIT POLICY**

WHEREAS, the Governing Authority of DeKalb County is charged with protecting the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of DeKalb County; and

WHEREAS, Article 9, Section 2, Paragraph 3 of the Constitution of the State of Georgia confers upon the Governing Authority of DeKalb County the power to provide water and wastewater services; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 9 of the Organizational Act of DeKalb County, Georgia and Chapter 25, Article 2, Division 4 of the Code of DeKalb County, the Governing Authority is empowered to set fees for services offered by the DeKalb County Department of Watershed Management; and

WHEREAS, the Governing Authority has previously approved rates for the provision of water and wastewater services in which the volume of water is metered and the volume of wastewater is estimated based on general use patterns; and

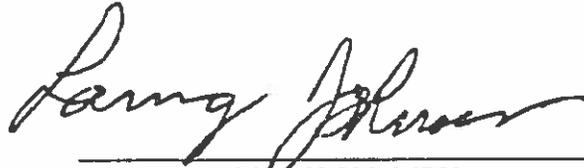
WHEREAS, the Governing Authority has been made aware of certain categories of customer use that consume some portion of the water delivered and do not return the volume of wastewater to the County's wastewater system as does a typical user; and

WHEREAS, the Governing Authority finds that this resolution will allow adjustment of the wastewater related charged to better align with the actual use of water and wastewater by certain users; and

WHEREAS, the Governing Authority finds that this resolution will expand and attract businesses, create jobs, and increase economic growth, thereby improving the general welfare of the County;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it ordained by the Governing Authority of DeKalb County, Georgia, and it is hereby ordained by the authority of same, that that the attached Water Retainage Credit Policy (Exhibit A) is adopted.

ADOPTED by the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners, this 10 day of JANUARY, 2017.



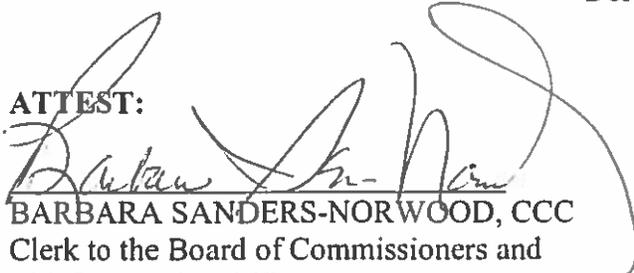
LARRY L. JOHNSON, MPH
Presiding Officer
Board of Commissioners
DeKalb County, Georgia

APPROVED by the Chief Executive Officer of DeKalb County, this 12 day of JANUARY 2017.



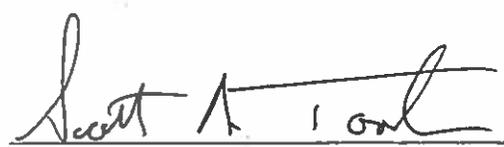
MICHAEL L. THURMOND
Chief Executive Officer
DeKalb County, Georgia

ATTEST:



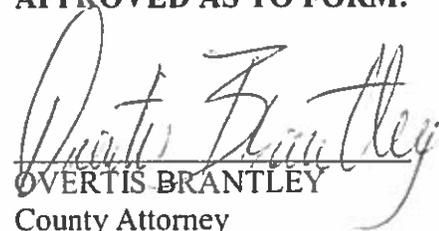
BARBARA SANDERS-NORWOOD, CCC
Clerk to the Board of Commissioners and
Chief Executive Officer
DeKalb County, Georgia

APPROVED AS TO SUBSTANCE:



SCOTT A. TOWLER, P.E.
Director, Department of Watershed Management

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



OVERTIS BRANTLEY
County Attorney

Exhibit A

Wastewater Retainage Credit Policy

I. Background and Eligibility

Pursuant to the current rates for water and waste water services, the volume of water provided to a user is metered and the volume of wastewater returned to DeKalb County's wastewater system by such user is estimated based on typical use patterns. As certain users consume some portion of the water provided and/or do not return the typical amount of wastewater to DeKalb County's wastewater system, this policy will allow for the adjustment of the sewer commodity charge to be paid by users who meet the criteria set out herein. Users admitted to the Wastewater Retainage Credit Program (Program) will pay the applicable standard water rate and sewer commodity charge for the water provided as recorded by their master meter, but will pay the applicable irrigation rate only (with no sewer commodity charges applied) for the volume of water directed to consumptive use and/or not discharged to the sanitary sewer system.

II. Application

The Department of Watershed Management (DWM) shall develop an application for admission to the Program by residential or commercial/industrial users. Interested users should contact the DeKalb County Department of Watershed, Deputy Director of Operations (or designee) to discuss the basic requirements of the program, its applicability to particular situations, typical metering arrangements, reporting, and other pertinent information. DWM personnel (or designee) shall be available to visit a prospective applicant's property and advise on the placement of sub-meters, wastewater meters, and/or the other requirements of the Program.

III. Industrial and Commercial Users

Any active current industrial, commercial, or institutional user of the DeKalb County Water and Sewer System that is in good standing and compliance with water and sewer billing is eligible for an adjustment on wastewater service charges for metered water that is not discharged to the sanitary sewer system upon admission to the Program. This guidance and fee structure is not applicable to the water and sewer access fees required by DeKalb County. Admission to the Program for industrial and commercial users will require the sub-metering of the water line or lines feeding any such consumptive use, allowing the Department of Watershed Management to accurately record the volume of water directed to such consumptive use. As an alternate to sub-metering consumptive uses, the industrial or commercial user may meter all combined wastewater discharged to the County's sanitary sewer system, allowing the Department of Watershed Management to accurately record the volume of water supplied as compared to the volume of water discharged to the County's sanitary sewer system.

The following describes the procedures for potential participants in the Program and the requirements for periodic reporting of water use and discharges to the sanitary sewer system.

a. **Procedures and Reporting**

The User may consult with DWM or retain the services of an independent engineering firm to develop a location plan for sub-meters, along with a meter-reading schedule, and to prepare the Semi-Annual Retainage Analyses. The User is required to pay all costs associated with engineering services, the installation and maintenance of sub-meters, and other related work. The sub-meters shall be compatible with DWM's automated metering infrastructure (AMI) system with the ability to transmit water meter data in accordance with DWM's requirements. Applications requiring metering of the wastewater volumes discharged to the sanitary sewer system shall have the ability for integration with DWM's AMI system to provide for remote reading and data transmission of wastewater meter data.

Sub-meters shall be installed to measure make-up water, water used in a product, boiler supply water, or other consumptive uses. Also, sub-meters are required on chemical blow-downs, cooling towers, basin overflows, or product waste streams to measure the return from these sources to the sanitary sewer system. As an alternate to sub-metering consumptive uses, the industrial or commercial user may meter all combined wastewater discharged to the County's sanitary sewer. The difference in readings between the supply, "consumptive use" and wastewater discharge sub-meters will reflect the "retained" amount. The user shall ensure that all meters are properly calibrated semi-annually to maintain accuracy.

Water and/or wastewater meter readings for all water meters, including the sub-meters will be remotely read by DWM monthly. These water meter readings will be used to generate the water bill calculated on the basis of total water supplied to the customer and factoring direct allowances for "consumptive" use water meter readings and wastewater volume discharged to the DWM sanitary sewer system. The applicable water and sewer rates approved by the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners will be determined for the respective uses and discharges. Generally, users admitted to the Program will be charged the irrigation rate for all water flowing through such sub-meters without application of the sewer commodity charge while being charged the standard water rates and the applicable sewer commodity charge for the remaining volume of water supplied to that user. Alternatively, if combined wastewater discharge meters are utilized, the measured wastewater volume will be charged at both the applicable water and sewer rates. Any difference in volume between the master water meter and the combined wastewater discharge meters, known as the "retained water," will be charged at the applicable irrigation rate only with no sewer commodity charges applied to such retained water.

The User may also read and record the water and/or wastewater system meter at the same time the sub-meters are read, if desired for coordination of data recording intervals; however, DWM billing records will govern if there is a discrepancy in readings.

b. **New Commercial/Industrial Users**

Users without established total consumptive historical records, defined as a minimum of one (1) quarter, shall retain a state of Georgia registered Professional Engineer to prepare a Water Use Analysis report. This report will at a minimum identify the proposed sub-meter locations, proposed flow rates, daily and monthly consumptive volumes as well as the proposed volume of wastewater planned for discharge to the sanitary sewer system. This report will serve as a basis for initial water and sewer billing

with reconciliation of volumes and associated charges upon the installation of the sub-meters. Installation of all proposed sub-meters shall be completed, including installation transmitters to the DWM AMI system, within six months of DWM's acceptance of the Water Use Analysis.

c. Users Admitted to the Prior Sewer Commodity Charge Variance Program

Those users who were previously admitted to the County's Sewer Commodity Charge Variance Program and were current on all amounts billed for water and sewer as of December 31, 2015 shall be eligible for admittance to the Wastewater Retainage Credit Program and the adjustments outlined in this document upon written request submitted to the Department of Watershed Management, Deputy Director of Operations. Previously admitted users who submit such a written request shall be eligible for retroactive adjustments to amounts billed on or after January 1, 2016 in an amount that can be supported by approved sub-meters and upon the approval of the Director of the Department of Watershed Management.

IV. Residential Users

Any active current residential user of the DeKalb County Water and Sewer System that is in good standing and compliance with water and sewer billing is eligible for a limited adjustment on wastewater service charges for metered water that is not discharged to the sanitary sewer system when such meter watered was used to fill a private, residential pool or for hand watering of a private garden and otherwise meets the requirements of this policy as it applies to Residential users. This guidance and fee structure is not applicable to the water and sewer access fees required by DeKalb County. Admission to the program for residential users will require verification of the consumptive use and the volume of water applied to such use, allowing the Department of Watershed Management to accurately record the volume of water directed to such consumptive use. Under no circumstances shall residential users be eligible for an adjustment for water used to fill a pool to which any form of admission is charged, to irrigate a garden that produces items the resident sells, or for any other commercial purpose.

a. Filling a Private, Residential Pool

Residents requesting access to water to fill a private, residential pool that does not discharge to the County's sanitary sewer system will not be required to apply to and shall not be eligible for admission to the Program if there is a functioning DeKalb County fire hydrant located within one-thousand (1000) feet of their property line in any direction. Those residential users who do have a functioning DeKalb County fire hydrant located within one-thousand (1000) feet of their property line in any direction shall be required to follow the Department of Watershed Management's procedure for rental of a Fire Hydrant Meter. The Department of Watershed Management will provide diffusers and/or similar device to requirements to reduce the pressure and/or velocity of the water to allow for filling of the swimming pool in accordance with manufacturer's requirements. Forms related to this procedure are attached hereto as Exhibit 1. Residential users have the additional option to install an irrigation meter on the line serving their private, residential pool. If an irrigation meter is installed in accordance with DeKalb County requirements, the residential user will be charged the irrigation rate on all water flowing through such irrigation meter without application of the sewer commodity charge while being charged the standard

water rates and the applicable sewer commodity charge for the remaining volume of water supplied to that residential user.

For those residential users requesting access to water to fill a private, residential pool and who do not have a functioning DeKalb County fire hydrant within one-thousand (1000) feet of their property line in any direction, do not have a dedicated irrigation meter installed, or whose pool manufacturer recommends against the use of a fire hydrant to fill such pool, such residential users may be eligible for an adjustment to their bill no more than once in any twelve (12) month period for water used for such purposes. Such an adjustment will be based on the documented volume of water required to fill the private, residential pool. The residential user will be charged the irrigation rate for the volume of water used to fill the private, residential pool without the application of the sewer commodity charge, and the standard water rates and the applicable sewer commodity charge for the remaining volume of water provided to that residential user. Acceptable documentation of the volume used to fill a private, residential pool shall be determined in the sole discretion of the Department of Watershed Management, Director of Operations. Such residential users control the rate of flow into the pool and the County shall not be liable in any way for damage to any pool filled in this fashion. Any and all such damage to the residential user's property shall be their personal responsibility. A one-time adjustment will also be available to those residential users who filled private, residential pools in 2016 and were charged both the water and sewer commodity charges for water used for such purpose.

b. Hand Watering of a Private Garden

Residents requesting access to water to water a private garden through use of an installed sprinkler or irrigation system will not be required to apply to or be admitted to this program. Such residential users have the option to install an irrigation meter on the line serving their installed sprinkler or irrigation system. If an irrigation meter is installed in accordance with DeKalb County requirements, the residential user will be charged the irrigation rate on all water flowing through such irrigation meter without application of the sewer commodity charge while being charged the standard water rates and the applicable sewer commodity charge for the remaining volume of water supplied to that residential user.

For those residential users who hand water a private garden and do not have an irrigation meter installed, such residential users may be eligible for an adjustment to their bill no more than three (3) times in any twelve (12) month period for water used for such purposes provided that the water line serving their property is equipped with a smart meter that is integrated into DWM's AMI system. Such an adjustment will be based on the documented volume of water required to hand water the private garden and shall be capped at no more than one-hundred (100) gallons per adjustment. The residential user will be charged the irrigation rate for the volume of water used to hand water the private garden, without the application of the sewer commodity charge, and the standard water rates and the applicable sewer commodity charge for the remaining volume of water provided to that residential user. Acceptable documentation of the volume used for hand watering shall be determined in the sole discretion of the Department of Watershed Management, Director of Operations (or designee).