



Frequently Asked Billing Questions during the Meter and Transponder Replacement Project

The Department of Water (DOW) is replacing meter transponder units as part of the Meter and Transponder Replacement Project. As part of this process, DOW is reminding customers of potential interruptions in their monthly billing statements and estimated readings based on their recorded lower-than-average monthly water usage due to delayed consumption data retrieval. The project is expected to span over several years and is in its first phase of an island wide plan to upgrade and replace aging and obsolete equipment to improve its advanced metering infrastructure (AMI).

Approximately 25% of our 24k customer accounts are included in phase one of the replacement project to upgrade meter transponder units. Since October 2022, DOW personnel have successfully replaced 1,100 inactive transponder units and are progressively conducting installments as the equipment arrives from the manufacturer.

Once the equipment replacement work is completed, customers will receive an adjusted billing statement based on their actual consumption, which has been maintained by transponders.

The following is a list of frequently asked billing questions related to the Meter and Transponder Replacement Project:

What does a transponder do and how does it affect my bill?

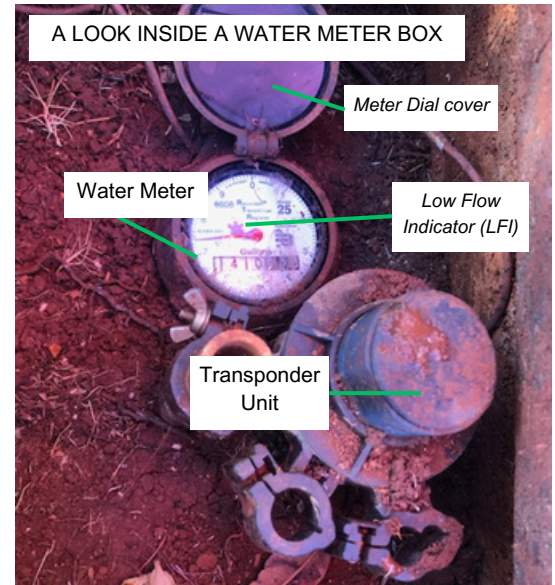
The transponder is 1 of 3 components of the Automated Meter Reading (AMR) equipment in the water meter box. The transponder is connected to the water meter and transmits a meter reading from the customer's meter to the DOW's meter reader system via wireless technology. This data is then used to generate the customer's monthly billing statements.

When the transponder is inactive, it cannot transmit the necessary data to the DOW's meter reader system. Without the current data, the billing system will generate an estimated bill which is based on the customer's recorded lower-than-average monthly water use. After the transponder is replaced and activated, the data is then transferred from the water meter to the system and allows the automated billing process (based on actual consumption) to resume.

Why and how is my bill estimated?

Customers in phase one of the Meter and Transponder Replacement Project may be receiving an estimated water bill due to an inactive transponder. A water bill may be estimated if the actual water consumption data is not available from the customer's water bill. This typically occurs when we are not able to receive water consumption data.

An estimated bill is typically based on the customer's recent or lower-than-average water usage and is generated to maintain the customer's service account statements.



How is my bill adjusted after the actual data is received?

When a customer's actual meter consumption data is received and updated in our system, the difference between the estimated charges and the actual water consumption charges are applied accordingly. As a result, the bill adjustment could include a lump sum of the remaining balance or an account credit.

In some cases, an adjustment is also made to the accurate tier level for water consumption charges in a multi-month situation.

For example, if the actual water consumption is 10k gallons of water use and your account was estimated at 9k gallons of water, you will receive a charge for the remaining difference of 1k gallons owed for your water usage.

I received a billing adjustment, but why is my bill higher than normal?

There are a few reasons why an adjusted bill could be higher than your typical monthly bill. Here are the most common scenarios:

- **Low estimate:** An estimated bill is based on the customer's lower-than-average water consumption. Therefore, if your water use has increased for any reason during this time (such as additional house guests, extra outdoor water use, filling up a pool, etc.), the added usage will result in an increase in your bill that is higher than the estimated water use.
- **Water leak:** During the estimated billing cycle, the customer experiences a water leak. A water leak can result in an increase of unknown water demand and usage that continuously draws water from the system. If you experienced a leak during the estimated billing cycles, the additional water demand will be applied to your account, accordingly, resulting in a higher bill.
- **Non-payment:** If a customer did not continue making monthly payments during the months of active service, the revised billed amount will include charges for water usage that has not yet been paid for.
- **Account credit:** In some cases, the estimated billing amount could be higher than the customer's actual water usage or the customer may have decreased water consumption due to conservation efforts. In these scenarios, after the bill is adjusted, the customer would see a credit posted to their respective account.

Do I need to pay for water use that was not billed to me on time?

Yes. The Department of Water's responsibility is to ensure the delivery of high-quality drinking water 24 hours a day, seven days a week. As a result of this service, customers agree to pay a monthly service fee and water consumption charges for the services received in order to maintain their water service account with the Department.

We apologize for the inconvenience and the delay in the receipt of your monthly billing statements and are working towards improving this process as we advance through the project.

What should I do if I haven't received my monthly water bill?

It is recommended that you continue to make monthly bill payments based on your past water usage. Review your previous water bill statement's, "usage profile" to see your use and determine the amount suitable for your payment. These payments will be credited to your account and adjusted accordingly when your actual water consumption data is received. This will also help to avoid a large lump sum due on your account after the data is updated. For additional information, please contact Billing Services at 808-245-5442 or email billing@kauaiwater.org.

I need more time to pay my balance in full. Can I make partial payments?

Yes, customers experiencing financial hardship or would like to request additional time to make payment in full can submit a request for a monthly payment plan. For information on partial payments or to set-up a payment plan, please contact Billing Services personnel at 808-245-5442 or email billing@kauaiwater.org.

The Department of Water strives to improve operational efficiencies and effectiveness to prevent billing interruptions in the future and thanks customers for their patience and cooperation. The Department's Water Meter and Transponder Replacement Project is finalizing its Invitation for Bid (IFB) which is anticipated to be awarded at the end of the year.

For more information or questions regarding your water bill, please contact DOW's Billing Services at 808-245-5442 or email: billing@kauaiwater.org. Mahalo.



Department of Water, County of Kaua'i | 4398 Pua Loke Street, Lihue, HI, 96766
Main Office: 808-245-5400 | Billing Services: 808-245-5442 | Website: www.kauaiwater.org
To report a water service emergency call 808-245-5444 or After-hours Police Dispatch at 808-241-1711