

POLICY

Adjustments to Utility Bills

Policy and Purpose:

It is the policy of the City of Nevis to make adjustments to customer utility bills where said adjustment is necessary to correct utility mistakes, equipment failures, or fairly apply the rates and rules of the utility. The purpose of this policy is to improve customer service by enabling staff to quickly and accurately respond to customer requests for adjustments to utility bills rather than waiting for the matter to come before the city council.

Responsibility:

The city clerk-treasurer and the deputy clerk shall determine the amount, if any, of the adjustment to be made. The city clerk-treasurer or designee shall receive requests and notify the customer of the determination.

Adjustments Allowed:

The clerk-treasurer is authorized to make adjustments to utility bills, without council action, for the following situations:

- Billing Errors: Where an error has occurred that results in an inaccurate utility bill being sent to a customer, staff shall correct the error as soon as discovered, whether by the customer or by staff. These adjustments include data recording and entry errors as well as meter failures if tested and found to be inaccurate.
- When an adjustment is made a credit for the amount of the adjustment, including any sales tax payable on the amount, shall be made to the customer's account.
- When a customer makes a written request for an adjustment, the amount under consideration for adjustment shall not be payable until a determination on the adjustment is made. All other amounts not in dispute shall be due according to utility rules.
- When a customer pays an amount that is later adjusted, the credit shall remain on the account. No cash refunds shall be made for adjustments unless the account has been or is subsequently closed and a credit balance remains.

Adjustments Not Allowed:

-The utility will not consider adjustments for the following situations:

- (1) **Water.** Adjustments to water charges where a customer experiences extraordinary water consumption during a billing period due to break or malfunction in customer owned infrastructure or devices not limited to but including plumbing, water lines or related equipment.

- (2) **Sanitary Sewer.** Adjustments to sanitary sewer charges for customers who claim normal outdoor water usage (for example, lawn or garden sprinkling, car washing, filling swimming pools) where the water used did not enter the sanitary sewer system.

Requests for Adjustments:

The city clerk-treasurer shall require the request to be in writing. Written requests shall state the name of the account holder, service address, contact information, and the reason for the requested adjustment. The customer shall further provide all information requested by the utility deemed necessary to make a determination on the request.

Response:

The utility shall respond to the written request for adjustment within twenty (20) business days after receiving from the customer all the information necessary to make a determination on the request.

Reporting:

The city clerk-treasurer shall provide a quarterly report to the city council on adjustments made under this policy exceeding one hundred dollars (\$100).

Appeals:

Customers who disagree with the determination of the city clerk-treasurer regarding their requested adjustments may appeal to the city council. Said appeal must be in writing and shall be scheduled to be heard at the meeting immediately after receipt of the written appeal.