



TO: Hyun Kim, Interim City Manager
FROM: Geoffrey M. Smyth, P.E., Interim Director, Environmental Services Department
COPY: Government Performance & Finance Committee
PRESENTER: Christina Curran, Assistant Division Manager, Director's Office
Mark Westland, Principal Data Analyst
SUBJECT: Amend Section 12.08B.120 of the Tacoma Municipal Code – Rates and Fees
DATE: June 12, 2025

PRESENTATION TYPE:

Request for Ordinance

SUMMARY:

The Environmental Services Department (ES) recommends amending Section 12.08B.120C of the Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC), related to rates and fees for wastewater services, to update the assumed water usage for residential customers with incomplete or no winter flow records. The amendment would update assumed water use for single-family dwellings to 5.0 cubic feet of water (ccf) per month and 4.0 ccf per unit per month for multi-family dwellings. This change will align the assumed consumption for new customers closer to actual consumption based on the average consumption for residential customers in recent years.

BACKGROUND:

Rates for residential wastewater services include both a fixed component and a flow charge based on water consumption during the winter months referred to as Winter Quarter Average (WQA). For new customers that do not have flow history from a prior winter period, the TMC provides an assumed consumption amount. The current amounts are 6.0 ccf per month for single-family dwellings and 5.0 ccf per unit per month for multi-family dwellings.

ISSUE:

The assumed consumption rate for new wastewater customers in the TMC has remained unchanged for multiple rate cycles. Since the last update, the average consumption for wastewater customers has decreased by approximately one ccf for both single- and multi-family dwellings based on analysis of winter consumption data of the last three years performed by the ES Rates and Budget team.

ALTERNATIVES:

Maintain Status Quo: Maintain the current usage amounts in the TMC today.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The proposed amendment would reduce the wastewater bill for new customers, or customers with otherwise incomplete consumption records, by \$6.34 per month in single-family dwellings until actual usage data can be established. For new multi-family customers, the \$6.34 per month reduction would be per unit.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Environmental Services Department recommends amending Section 12.08B.120C of the TMC to update the assumed water usage for single-family dwellings to 5.0 ccf per month and 4.0 ccf per unit per month for multi-family dwellings.