



City of Rochester, New York

Department of Environmental Services  
Bureau of Water

## Water Billing Frequently Asked Questions

Pay your water bill online at  
[cityofrochester.gov/payments](http://cityofrochester.gov/payments)

**Questions? Call 311**

Outside the City call 428-5990

06795-0319PD

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Water Bill  
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### 1. I have a penalty on my bill. Can I request to have it removed?

Removals of penalties are handled on a case by case basis. Penalties are not typically removed for ownership changes, failure to update mailing addresses, or because a designated third party is not paying on time. Any outstanding water bills associated with ownership changes should be negotiated at closing. Mailing changes and on-time payments are the responsibility of the property owner.

### 2. There is a credit on my water account. How can I receive a refund?

Not all credits are refundable. The City of Rochester's Treasury Bureau will review the account in question to assess the reason for the credit.

- If the credit was due to an overpayment, Treasury will refund the originator of the payment only.
- If the credit was due to a Water Bureau billing adjustment, the credit will be paid out only if the pre-adjustment balance was already paid. If the pre-adjustment balance was never paid, the credit will apply to the next water bill(s) until exhausted.

### 3. I want my water payments auto deducted from my checking account. Can I send a voided check?

**Do not send voided checks to City Hall.**

To have payments auto deducted from your checking account, you can register for an account with **E-citizen bill pay** via the City's website and select the "recurring payment" option. <https://secure.ecitizenportal.com/billpay/public/index.xhtml>

Depending on your banking institution, you may also be able to utilize your bank's online bill-pay service, however, please note that the



City cannot guarantee your payments will be delivered to us by the due date. You will need to manually adjust the amount entered **every billing period**, as there is no link to your water billing statements.

### 4. How can I make changes to my E-Citizen Hamer online bill pay account?

E-Citizen bill pay is self-service and administered by a third party. If you need technical assistance, call Hamer at **1-800-926-3466**.

### 5. I received a letter indicating I had a "bad check." May I have the \$20 fee waived?

Bad check fees are only waived under extraordinary circumstances such as identity theft. Contact the City of Rochester's Treasury Bureau at **(585) 428-6940**.

### 6. I paid my water bill on X date, why does my bill say it was paid on a different date?

The paid date on the bill is when the City posted the payment to your account. The posted date is not when you mailed it or when the City received it.



**7. I just bought this property, can I have the prior owner's unpaid water charge taken off my bill?**

Water usage and associated charges are billed to the property, not individuals. Charges will remain on the account regardless of an ownership change. Any challenges should be referred to your closing attorney.

**8. I just bought a property and turned the water on (it was previously inactive). Why does my bill show service charges for dates prior to my activation?**

When an activation is requested, the meter on the property is read. If the read reflects that there was running water occurring, it will be charged and these charges will not be removed. Please contact the Water Bureau for additional information.

**9. I bought a property at an auction and there are still water charges on the account. Why have these charges not been removed?**

**City of Rochester auction**—we will only remove charges for bills dated prior to the auction date. Water charges become the responsibility of winning bidders the day of the auction.

**All other auctions (County, bank, etc.)**—City water charges are not removed.

**10. What is the base charge on my bill?**

The base charge is the charge for having a water meter on your property. The meter is City property and the City charges for its use. The charge for the meter is based on its size and number of days of service (see Water Pricing pamphlet).

**11. Why has the base charge changed since my last bill?**

The base charge is based on a daily rate. The number of days between reads are on the

water bill and usually fluctuate depending on the meter readers' schedules.

**12. I received two bills within a few days of each other. How did this happen?**

This could have happened for one of several reasons:

- A final read was done during the regularly scheduled billing period.
- Meter readers got an actual read after an estimate was issued.
- A replacement bill was issued.

**13. Why are there two different names on my water bill?**

Your mailing address can be updated at any time, however, the name on the bottom of the bill is the registered owner per the City Assessment system. For more information, please contact the City Assessor's office **(585) 428-7221**.

**14. The name on the bottom of my bill is the prior owner. How can I change this?**

Please contact the City Assessor's office at **(585) 428-7221**.

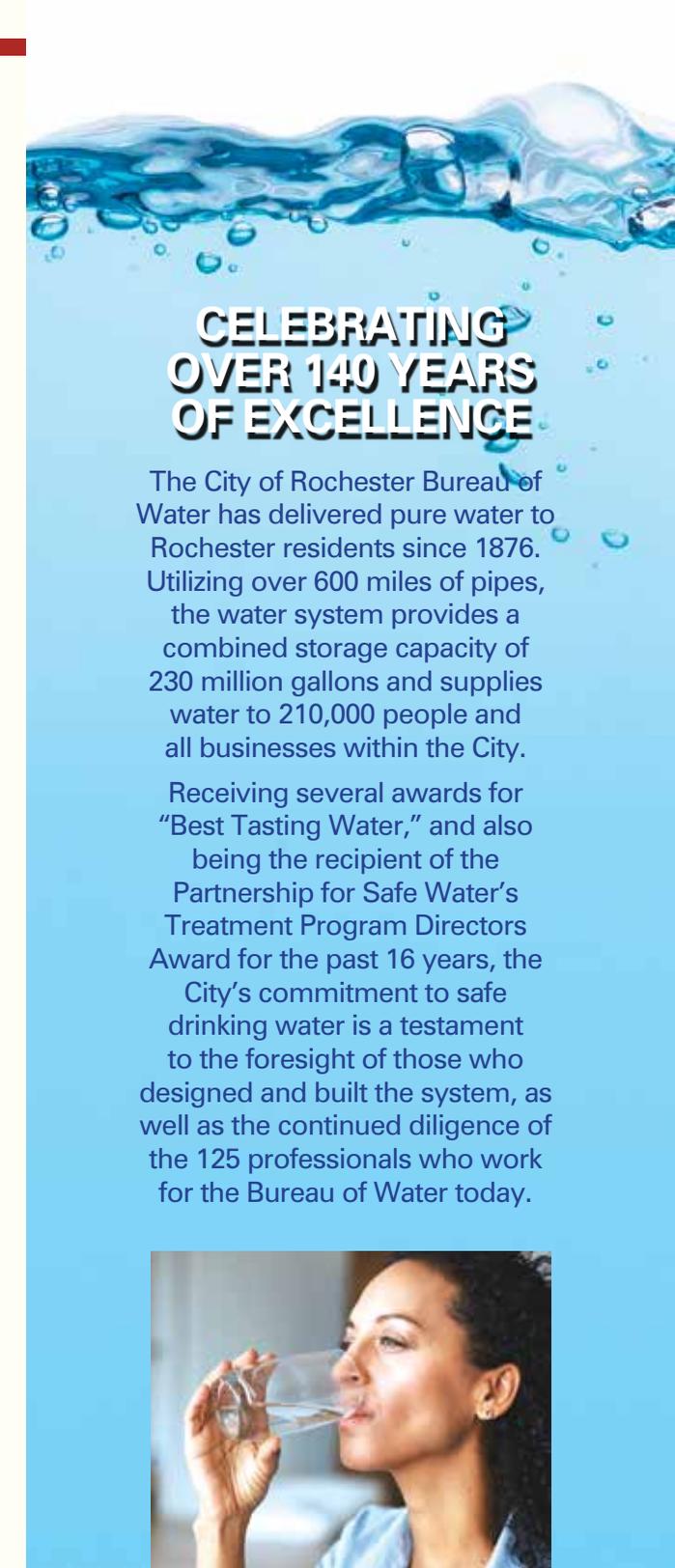
**15. Why does my account show an adjustment?**

This could have happened for a couple of reasons:

- A recent meter change, or
- If the account was billed on an estimate.

**16. How do I set up special mailings for tenants?**

Request a **tenant billing authorization** form by either calling **311** or going to **www.cityofrochester.gov/311**



**CELEBRATING  
OVER 140 YEARS  
OF EXCELLENCE**

The City of Rochester Bureau of Water has delivered pure water to Rochester residents since 1876. Utilizing over 600 miles of pipes, the water system provides a combined storage capacity of 230 million gallons and supplies water to 210,000 people and all businesses within the City.

Receiving several awards for "Best Tasting Water," and also being the recipient of the Partnership for Safe Water's Treatment Program Directors Award for the past 16 years, the City's commitment to safe drinking water is a testament to the foresight of those who designed and built the system, as well as the continued diligence of the 125 professionals who work for the Bureau of Water today.

