

## DeKalb County Wastewater Retainage Credit Program FAQ

### **What is the Wastewater Retainage Credit Program?**

The Wastewater Retainage Credit Program was enacted by the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners in January 2017 allowing for an adjustment in wastewater related charges for customers who routinely release less wastewater to the sewer system compared to water consumed.

### **Who is eligible for the Wastewater Retainage Credit?**

Active commercial and industrial customers who are in good standing with water and sewer billing are 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.

Active residential customers who are in good standing with water and sewer billing may participate in the program for purposes of filling a private, residential pool or hand watering a garden. Customers filling a private pool who are less than 1,000 feet from a functioning DeKalb County fire hydrant do not need to apply to the program and must follow the procedure for rental of a Fire Hydrant Meter. If an irrigation meter is installed in accordance with DeKalb County requirements on the line serving the private pool the customer does not need to apply to the program and will be charged the irrigation rate for all water flowing through such irrigation meter. Furthermore, residents watering a private garden using an installed sprinkler system or irrigation system will not be required to apply to the program and will be charged the irrigation rate for all water flowing through such a meter.

**Please note** that Georgia Environmental Protection Division drought policies will supersede any DeKalb County Ordinance. Please visit [www.epd.georgia.gov/water-conservation](http://www.epd.georgia.gov/water-conservation) for the most up to date drought information and restrictions.

### **How many times does a customer need to apply to the program?**

A commercial/industrial customer only needs to apply to the program once upon admission. However, if any changes are made to internal processes including adding or removing an effluent meter or sub-meter, DeKalb County Department of Watershed Management will need to be notified immediately.

A residential customer applying for a credit to fill a private, residential pool can apply up to once a year. These customers will only receive an adjustment to their bill no more than once in any twelve-month period. A residential user who hand waters a private garden can apply to the program up to three times in one year. These customers are eligible for an adjustment to their bill no more than three times in any given twelve-month period and shall be capped at no more than 100 gallons per adjustment.

### **Can a participant of the former Sewer Commodity Credit Variance (SCCV) program receive a credit for adjustments in 2016?**

Yes. Former commercial/industrial customers who were previously admitted and received a credit via the SCCV program shall be eligible for a retroactive adjustment to the amounts billed on or after January 1, 2016 in an amount that can be supported by approved sub-meters. The information needed for this credit will be provided by the customer as part of the new Wastewater Retainage Credit Program's application process.

### **Can a residential customer receive an adjustment for filling a private, residential pool in 2016?**

A one-time adjustment will be available to residential customers who filled a private, residential pool in 2016 and were charged both the water and sewer commodity charges for water used for such purposes.

### **What types of meters are included within the program?**

Commercial/industrial users may sub-meter all water consumption lines. These meters should be installed to measure make-up water, water used in a product, boiler supply water, chemical blowdowns, cooling towers, basin overflows, etc. As an alternative, users may meter the combined wastewater discharged to the sanitary sewer system through an effluent meter. All meters shall be the approved manufacturer and model that DeKalb County's Department of Watershed Management's (DWM) has set forth. Additionally it must tie into DWM's advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) system with the ability to transmit water meter data. For a new participant in the program, commercial/industrial customers have six-months from DWM's approval of their application to install all proposed sub-meters or effluent meters including the installation of transmitters to the AMI system. New meters can be acquired from a private vendor and installed by the customer. AMI equipment must be acquired from and installed by DWM. It will be the customer's responsibility to reimburse DWM for all equipment costs incurred by DWM associated with joining this program. For any information about meters please contact Mr. Robert L. Dunning, 770-621-7219/[rlDunning@dekalbcountyga.gov](mailto:rlDunning@dekalbcountyga.gov).

### **What must I do to be approved for the credit?**

To receive an approved application from DWM, a commercial and industrial customer must provide a complete and accurate application including process and instrumentation diagrams and proposed meter specifications. Customers will also need to complete a water use analysis provided as an exhibit in the application. In addition, the commercial/industrial customer must have a DWM representative perform a formal site visit at the proposed location applying for the credit.

A residential customer must provide a complete and accurate application to be approved and receive the adjustment for wastewater related charges.

### **How often are the meters read?**

Water and/or wastewater meter readings for all sub-meters/effluent meters will be remotely read by DWM monthly once AMI is configured. Until AMI is configured, the customer is responsible for reading each meter monthly and recording these meters via the Credit Calculation Form provided by DWM. These water meter readings will be used to calculate the necessary bill adjustments.

### **How will I be charged?**

The applicable water and sewer rates approved by the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners will be used to determine charges for respective water consumption and discharges. Please visit [www.dekalbcountyga.gov/watershed-management/rates-and-fees](http://www.dekalbcountyga.gov/watershed-management/rates-and-fees) for the most up to date fees associated with DWM's water and wastewater charges. Generally, for sub-metered water that is retained and not discharged to the sewer, users admitted to the program will be **charged the irrigation rate without application of the sewer commodity charge**. Standard water rates and the applicable sewer commodity charge will be made for the remaining volume of water supplied to the user that is not retained. Alternatively, if an effluent meter is 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 effluent meter, known as the "retained water", will be charged at the applicable irrigation rate only with no sewer commodity charge applied to the retained water**.

For a new participant in the program, commercial/industrial customers have six-months from DWM's approval of their application to install all proposed sub-meters or effluent meters. DWM staff will provide installation of transmitters for the AMI system within this same six month period. In the interim, the Water Use Analysis submitted as part of the application will be used to calculate the customer's necessary adjustment.

Residential users admitted to the program filling a private pool will receive an adjustment based on the documented volume of water required to fill the pool provided in their application. The **residential user will be charged the irrigation rate for this volume of water without the application of the sewer commodity charge**. Residential users admitted to the program hand watering a private garden will receive an adjustment based on the documented volume of water required in their application and shall be capped at no more than 100 gallons per adjustment. The **residential user will be charged the irrigation rate for this volume of water without the application of the sewer commodity charge**. Please note the irrigation rate is higher than the water commodity charge.

**💧 How will the credit be shown on the water bill?**

The wastewater retainage credit will be included in the 'Credit' line item on the DeKalb County water bill. No refund check will be given at any time.

**💧 Who do I contact if I have any questions about the Wastewater Retainage Credit Program or acquiring an application?**

All questions regarding the Wastewater Retainage Credit Program or requests for applications can be forwarded to Via Email:  
[wastewaterretainage@dekalbcountyga.gov](mailto:wastewaterretainage@dekalbcountyga.gov).