



**FINANCE DEPARTMENT** City Hall ♦ 210 Lottie Street, Bellingham, WA 98225  
Telephone: (360) 778-8011 ♦ Email: [utilitybilling@cob.org](mailto:utilitybilling@cob.org)

## **APPLICATION FOR ADJUSTMENT TO WATER AND/OR SEWER BILL**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby apply to the Finance Director for an adjustment in my metered water [ ] and/or sewer [ ] bill in accordance with Bellingham Municipal Code (BMC) 15.04.095, (Ordinance 2002-03-016) for the following described property:

Service Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Customer Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date leak started (if known): \_\_\_\_\_ Date repaired: \_\_\_\_\_

Per BMC 15.04.095(A2): "No customer may obtain more than one leak adjustment for the same metered water account in any 10-year period." Has a leak adjustment been made by the Finance Department for this account/property on any previous occasion? ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

Description of leak location and repair:

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***Attach additional sheets as necessary along with documentation required by BMC 15.04.095(A3).***

[Documentation shall include a licensed plumber's itemized invoice, repair order, City of Bellingham Public Works Department inspection documentation or other documentation as necessary to support the adjustment request and to document any repairs.]

***Note: Property owners performing repairs themselves are required to submit a copy of an approved Public Works permit for any leak adjustment to be authorized. This permit is obtained from the City of Bellingham's permit center located at 210 Lottie Street.***

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Other Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Bellingham Municipal Code

### 15.04.095 Finance director's authority to adjust water and sewer bills.

The finance director or the finance director's designee is authorized to adjust water, sewer, and surface and stormwater utility bills as follows:

*A. Breaks or Leaks in Water Service Line.* When the customer has suffered a break or leak in the portion of the water service line between the water meter and the external entrance to the structure being served, the customer may apply to the finance director for an adjustment of his or her water and sewer bill, subject to the following requirements as limitations:

1. No adjustment for water bills shall be allowed for any leaks or service breaks that occur after the external entrance to the premises. This shall include, by way of example and not limitation, leaks in toilets, faucets, water heaters, and spigots. No adjustment for water bills shall be allowed for any leaks or breaks in a metered irrigation line.
2. No customer may obtain more than one leak adjustment for the same metered water account in any 10-year period. Sewer billings may be adjusted for additional leaks in the water service line: provided, that the owner demonstrates to the finance director's reasonable satisfaction that the excess water consumption did not enter the sewer system.
3. The break or leak in the service line and its repair must be documented in a manner that is acceptable to the finance director. Documentation shall include a licensed plumber's itemized invoice, repair order, city of Bellingham public works department inspection documentation or other documentation as necessary to support the adjustment request and to document any repairs.
4. A request for an adjustment shall be on form(s) provided by the finance department.
5. The finance director shall determine the amount of the adjustment in his or her discretion. The adjustment amount shall not exceed 50 percent of the amount determined to be the excess usage charge for water and 100 percent of the excess usage charge for sewer; provided, that the excess water consumption did not enter the sewer system. No adjustment for sewer charges shall be allowed if the excess consumption entered the sewer. Historical records may be used to assist in the determination of the adjustment amount.
6. No adjustment shall be made for billings made more than one year prior to the date of the customer's application for adjustment, or the date the city discovered the leak or break, whichever occurred first. No more than two billing cycles may be adjusted per leak adjustment.

*C. Appeals.* Any determination made under this section may be appealed in accordance with the procedures in BMC 15.04.120. [Ord. 2021-04-014; Ord. 2002-03-016].