



City of Lawrence

The Flame | April 2021

**"We Have
Tomorrow —
Bright Before
Us, Like A
Flame."**

Langston Hughes

City beginning *Block Rate* water billing this April

Beginning with this month's bill (April 2021), City of Lawrence residential water customers will see a change in how they're charged for monthly water usage.

The new water usage calculation will utilize an Individual Inclining Block Rate methodology, which is a three-block system that uses each customer's Winter Quarter Average (WQA) to determine their water consumption rates for the year. The goal is to encourage water conservation and provide better equity among customers. It was approved by the City Commission at its meeting on December 15, 2020.

How It Works

Residential blocks are calculated using each household's WQA, which is calculated from actual water usage in December, January and February (the winter months). The WQA will be used to calculate the monthly water charges for all subsequent months, until a new average usage is calculated during the winter months of the following year.

Starting April 1, 2021, the City's monthly water charges are based off each customer's WQA from the months of December 2020 and January and February 2021. All customers will have a minimum WQA of 3,000 gallons. This helps ensure

that customers who have very low water consumption totals in winter months are not negatively impacted in warmer months.

Billing blocks are determined each month based on each customer's water usage that month. These are the blocks:

- **Block 1:** Monthly consumption up to and including 125% of the WQA.
- **Block 2:** Monthly consumption that is >125% – 200% of the WQA
- **Block 3:** Monthly consumption that is more than 200% of the WQA.

The previous water consumption rate and current block rates are in the chart below.

EXAMPLE

For a customer who uses 2,000 gallons of water in December 2020, 4,000 gallons in January 2021 and 3,000 gallons in February 2021, their WQA starting in April 2021 would be 3,000 gallons (the average usage of the three winter months).

A 3,000 gallon WQA would set the block rate thresholds for that customer at:

- **Block 1:** Up to 3,750 gallons
- **Block 2:** From 3,751 – 6,000 gallons
- **Block 3:** More than 6,000 gallons

Let's say this customer used 3,100 gallons of water in March 2021. The total amount, 3,100 gallons, does not surpass the block 1 threshold (because 3,100 gallons is less than 125% of their WQA). On the bill they receive in April, they will be charged at the Block 1 rate for all 3,100 gallons. The water charges on their bill would total \$22.01 (using the rates in the table below).

Then in April 2021, the customer's water usage increases to 5,700 gallons of water. On the bill they receive in May, they would be charged at the Block 1 rate for the first 3,750 gallons they used (125% of their WQA), and the Block 2 rate for the remaining 1,950 gallons, because their total usage of 5,700 gallons is in the 125-200% range of the WQA. The water charges on their bill would be \$41.86 (\$26.63 for "Water Charges Block 1" and \$15.23 for "Water Charges Block 2").

CUSTOMER IMPACT

Residential customers who use water for everyday tasks with little to no additional warm-weather uses will likely remain in the first block rate all year. Those customers with additional usage in the warmer months (i.e., for irrigation) will be charged for the higher amount of water they use those months.

In addition to the methodology change, customer bills will now look slightly different. To help you understand the new bill layout and see how the new rate calculation will affect your bill, the City has launched an online utility billing estimator.

You can use the estimator and find out more information on utility billing and the inclining block rates on our website at: lawrenceks.org/utility-billing/inclining-block

City of Lawrence Residential Water Consumption Rates		
Previous Rate	Inside City	Outside City
Effective until March 31, 2021	\$7.35/1,000 gal	\$8.09/1,000 gal
Current Block Rates	Inside City	Outside City
Residential Block 1 (up to 125% of WQA)	\$7.10/1,000 gal	\$7.81/1,000 gal
Residential Block 2 (from >125% – 200% of WQA)	\$7.81/1,000 gal	\$8.60/1,000 gal
Residential Block 3 (more than 200% of WQA)	\$8.17/1,000 gal	\$8.99/1,000 gal

Mobile parking payments now available downtown

Parking rates adjusted for meters and garages

The City of Lawrence is bringing enhanced convenience and efficiency to downtown parking with the introduction of mobile payments for metered parking spots. Now in effect, downtown visitors will be able to choose between using coin-operated parking meters or new mobile payment options.

City parking staff implemented the changes to City parking meters in late March, including updating meters to the new downtown parking rates and posting signs and attaching meter stickers for the mobile payment options.

There will be two mobile payment apps available to those who park in Downtown Lawrence: Passport and ParkMobile. Both options are available via either mobile app or website.

- **Passport:** To begin a parking session, users create an account with their email address or phone number then enter their license plate and desired length of stay. Parking sessions can be extended directly from the user's mobile device.
- **ParkMobile:** To begin a parking session, users enter the zone number on stickers posted on the meters at

each parking space. The user then selects the amount of time needed and touches the "Start Parking" button to begin the session. Parking sessions can be extended directly from the user's mobile device.

Additionally, ParkMobile is the mobile payments app currently used for parking at the University of Kansas. Anyone who already has the ParkMobile app will also be able to use it for mobile payments while parking in Downtown Lawrence.

DOWNTOWN PARKING RATES ADJUSTMENT

The downtown parking rates have increased for two-hour meters, 10-hour meters and parking garages. The previous and new rates are noted below:

- Two-hour meters will increase from \$0.50/hour to \$1.00/hour
- 10-hour meters will increase from \$0.10/hour to \$0.20/hour
- Parking garages will increase from \$1.00/day to \$2.00/day

More information on parking, including links to the mobile payment apps and websites, and changes to parking rates, is available on the City of Lawrence website: lawrenceks.org/parking



Common Ground community garden program

Does spring weather have you curious about gardening? Check out some of the volunteer opportunities available through the Lawrence Common Ground community garden program!

Established in 2012, Common Ground transforms vacant public land into vibrant sites for community food production. There are currently 10 Common Ground sites, ranging from community gardens and public-pick sites, to an incubator farm and an orchard.

FEATURE VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- **The Lawrence Community Orchard:** A cooperatively-managed orchard that welcomes the public to pick produce. Located at 830 Garfield St. Contact via email: lawrencefruittreeproject@gmail.com
- **PermaCommons:** A cooperatively-managed permaculture demonstration garden located at 1304 Pennsylvania St. Contact via email: commonground@lawrenceks.org

PUBLIC HARVEST

While all sites give food back to the community, not all are open for public picking. For designated public harvest, you can visit these sites:

- The public section of the Garden Incubator at John Taylor Park, located at 7th St. & Walnut St.
- The Lawrence Community Orchard, located at 830 Garfield St.
- The Public Health Community Garden, located at W 3rd St. & Alabama St.

LEARN MORE

More information about Common Ground is available on our website, lawrenceks.org/common-ground, or you can contact us directly: 785-832-5157 or commonground@lawrenceks.org



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We create a community where all enjoy life and feel at home.