

From The Superintendent...



Every billing quarter we receive at least some complaints or questions about the amount of a customer bill. Mostly the issues fall in to 1 of 2 categories.

First is the "I couldn't possibly have used that much water -the meter must be wrong" category. Our water meters use a "positive displacement" technology which has been used reliably in the industry for more than 50 years. In that time I am unaware of any instance where any meters have been shown to have registered a higher volume than that actually used by the customer. Water passing through the meter enters and leaves a measured, calibrated chamber which moves a register to tabulate the volume. This mechanism is powered by the moving water and lies dormant when the flow stops. It cannot register water which has not passed through it. This means, in short, that the meter, an objective, mechanical monitor, is accurate, and will always be considered so, unless some actual similar empirical data can be provided to the contrary. Opinions, beliefs and other such reasoning cannot be accepted as viable. Without such contrary data, no reduction can be made in a bill. While there are times when reading, or other clerical errors can occur (and these will be checked as part of an investigation) it is pointless to believe that the fault is with the meter. Further, it is not up to the Village to determine where or how the water registered by your meter was used. That is your duty as a property owner. We have done our duty as a provider by having a measuring device on your property which objectively determines use.

The second category is "Why is the sewer charge so high compared to water?". Quite simply, the treatment of wastewater is a far more intense and costly venture than water treatment in our particular system. Both systems rely upon dedicated layouts of pipes and valves and other associated parts, which require maintenance and repair. Village water is ground water simply pumped from wells and distributed after minimal treatment. The equipment for water provision and treatment consists of 4 small water pumps, 4 disinfectant meter pumps, and a gallon or 2 of chlorine solution each day. The equipment all together, amounts to a value less than \$200,000. Wastewater treatment, on the other hand, is a complex undertaking which uses multiple pumps, air blowers, mechanical screens, grinders, and various other types of equipment, and requires frequent, daily monitoring and testing. The equipment and works amount to several million dollars of inventory. For reasons such as these, sewage treatment costs far more than drinking water treatment in Valatie.

I hope that this will clear up most question and concerns. If you have questions not addressed here, please contact us at water-wastewater@valatievillage.com.