

## Town of Oriental Ordinance 2022-285

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE ORIENTAL CODE OF GENERAL ORDINANCES.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE TOWN OF ORIENTAL.

**Section 1.** That the Oriental Code of General Ordinances, Chapter K, Section 6. Composition, be amended as follows:

### ARTICLE XIV – COMPLAINTS AND ADJUSTMENTS

#### Section 6 – Water Leak Adjustments

The purpose of this policy is to provide a basis for the Town of Oriental to adjust high bills caused by leaks in water lines or equipment on user's property that the user could not reasonably have known about with normal diligence. The reason for providing a policy for reducing these bills is to relieve possible financial hardship on residents and businesses caused by no fault of their own. The intent is to provide some relief for catastrophic losses of water but not high uses caused by lack of maintenance or a change in activity at the home or business.

#### A. Leak Adjustments

1. Adjustments for the billing or billings for water consumption based upon a water loss resulting from a leak or leaks in any portion of the water distribution system or plumbing on or within the user's property may be made one time per calendar year.
2. Leak adjustment to water bills will be considered when all of the following conditions have been met:
  - a) Water use volume is 200% of previous twelve months usage history. If the account is new and does not have a full year of history, the Town Manager will estimate average consumption based on available history, usage of similar residences in the neighborhood or on any other relevant factors. ~~All leak credits will be computed at the lowest cost tier water rate.~~ The Town Manager's decision shall be final.

The customer must be able to demonstrate that the repair was made within a reasonable time.

- b) Customers must make a formal request for a leak credit and explain what leaked, where it leaked and all relevant factors. Proof that the leak was fixed may be required. This may be copies of contractor repair or supply receipts.
- c) Account Holder must request adjustment before due date of bill
- d) Account must be up to date and must have paid at least the average bill based on usage history

- e) Account Holder can only receive one adjustment per calendar year.
  - f) The water leak must not have occurred as a result of a willful, criminal or negligent act on the part of the customer.
  - g) Leak adjustments will be calculated for leaks UP TO 40,000 gallons. No adjustment is available for water leaks over 40,000 gallons.
3. The Town shall disallow requests for adjustment for water services for watering of lawn or garden, swimming pool, hot tub, guests, etc.
  4. The period of the leak is limited to two billing periods.
  5. The Town assumes no responsibility for damage, repairs, or inspections necessitated by leaks

**Section 2.** This Ordinance shall be effective July 1, 2022.

Adopted this 7th Day of June 2022.

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Sally Truitt Belangia, Mayor

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Diane H. Miller, Town Clerk