



## CONTINUOUS UTILITY BILLING

### Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

The City of McCall provides water and wastewater services to approximately 3,000 residential and commercial customers within an area of 10 square miles. The City of McCall's Public Works Department maintains a Water Treatment Plant, a Wastewater Treatment Plant, 44 miles of water mains, 40 miles of wastewater mains, 14 wastewater lift stations, two raw water pumping stations, two treated water booster pump stations, 365 fire hydrants and numerous other appurtenances.

#### **What is continuous utility billing?**

Continuous utility billing is the practice of charging all water and wastewater customers the base rate each month, regardless of whether the service has been seasonally suspended per customer request. Continuous billing was approved by the McCall City Council on April 22, 2010. The requirement for continuous billing is found in McCall City Code 6-4-150. The Code can be viewed at [www.mccall.id.us](http://www.mccall.id.us), by clicking on the "City Code" link.

#### **Why does my utility bill include both a base rate and a usage rate?**

There are both fixed and variable costs to operate and maintain the water and wastewater systems. The base rate is designed to cover fixed costs, including: regular and ongoing capital improvements, regular maintenance, debt

Service, and operations costs that are not dependent upon the flow through the system. The usage rate is designed to cover variable costs related to the amount of drinking water produced or wastewater treated.

#### **What does my utility bill pay for?**

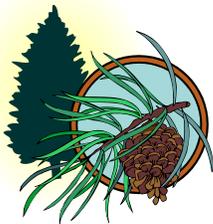
The monies received from utility billing pay for two things. The first is the usage portion of each bill. This is for the actual amount of water used or sewage disposed. The second is for maintaining and improving both the water and wastewater systems through capital improvements. The City of McCall's water and wastewater systems are heavily regulated by the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ) and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). Both of these agencies have rules and regulations that require specific operational standards be met and that necessary improvements to these systems are made regularly.

#### **How do seasonal customers affect the utility systems?**

The City of McCall has a high number of seasonal customers. Even though these customers are not using drinking water or creating wastewater every day, the entire utility



system has to be sized to serve them at any time. For instance, the City is required by the IDEQ to size water pump stations to serve peak demand, with one pump offline. This requires a much larger investment than is necessary during our long periods of low demand, when seasonal customers are not in McCall. There are many other examples where the size and cost of the utility system is driven by the number of customers, not whether those customers are actually using the water or wastewater service.



### **How do seasonal customers affect utility billing?**

Seasonal customers in the past have been allowed to suspend their utility billings while they are not using their home in McCall. The effect of this practice placed a heavier burden on the fulltime customers because seasonal customers have not been required to pay equally for the ongoing maintenance and improvements to the systems. These seasonal customers benefit from the availability of water distribution and wastewater collection to their premises when they need it. They also benefit from the improvements that the City of McCall makes to these utility systems.

### **Why continuous billing?**

Continuous billing provides that all service accounts pay a base rate for water and wastewater service. This base rate is designed to pay for the utility system infrastructure and for future necessary capital improvements. This practice ensures that all City utility customers are paying their share of the fixed costs of the water and wastewater systems.

### **Are there any exemptions?**

Yes. An exemption can be requested for irrigation-only accounts and by public and/or governmental entities. All exemptions expire on July 1, 2013.

### **Can I still have my water turned off when I'm gone for the season?**

Yes. Some seasonal customers may still wish to have their water service turned off by the City, at the meter, as part of the winterization of their home. Utility customers may request that utility services to their premises be turned off on a seasonal basis.

- Notify the Utility Billing office 48 hours in advance of when the services are to be turned off or on.
- A \$65 turn off fee or a \$65 turn on fee will be charged.
- There will be a charge of the monthly base rate for water and wastewater service, even if the water is shut off at the meter by the City of McCall Public Works Department.

### **I still have questions. Where can I find out more?**

More information about utility billing can be found on the City's website:

[http://www.mccall.id.us/government/departments/pub\\_works/pub\\_works.html#Forms](http://www.mccall.id.us/government/departments/pub_works/pub_works.html#Forms) or by calling the Utility Billing office at (208) 634-4803.