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# “THE PUDDLE”

THE NORTH KINGSTOWN DEPARTMENT OF WATER SUPPLY NEWSLETTER

December 2022

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## **BILL TOO HIGH?**

Please keep in mind that at least half of the town is being billed for water used over the summer months for this current billing. On the face of the bill please note the “date read”. Your usage is for approximately 90 days prior to that date.

You can also check your leak detector. This detector is a small red triangle on the face of the meter. When you aren’t using any water, if this triangle is oscillating you have a leak. If your meter doesn’t have a leak detector, take a reading at night after all water is used, and take another reading before any water is used in the morning. Without a leak, of course, the readings should be the same.

## **SURCHARGE EXEMPTION:**

If you are 65 or older, you are eligible to receive an exemption from the surcharge portion of your bill *on your personal residence*. You could also be exempt if you are a commercial agricultural producer (please call our office for more details). Check the front of your bill and if you have a surcharge line item you are being billed for, please call us at 268-1521 and we will send you an exemption form to fill out. After receiving this signed form, you will be exempt on any future bills.



## **IN SPITE OF FALL’S WARM WEATHER, WINTER IS ON THE WAY!!**

The North Kingstown Department of Water Supply offers the following helpful hints to homeowners preparing for the chill of winter:

- 1) If your home has a crawl space, invest in some heat tape. It uses a small amount of electricity, but can save you lots of money and aggravation by preventing piping freeze-up.
- 2) Cover foundation vents and windows with foam blocks, insulation, or thickly folded newspaper to prevent cold winds from entering and freezing your pipes.
- 3) Turn off and drain in-ground sprinkler systems. An investment of a little time here can save you a huge repair bill in the spring.
- 4) Disconnect and drain all hoses from outside faucets.
- 5) Remove hose bib vacuum breakers from outside faucets.
- 6) If you can’t isolate and drain all outside faucets (most homes have a dedicated shutoff for each outside faucet in the basement), then protect them with insulating blankets or covers.
- 7) Be sure you know where your main shut-off is located in the event of an emergency.
- 8) Don’t forget about the swimming pool! Use environmentally friendly antifreeze products appropriately.

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## Top Five Most Frequent Phone Call Questions

Beyond the obvious, “I could not possibly have used this much water”, we get quite a few of the same questions here at the Water Department office time and time again. Here are some of the most frequent questions we receive and the answers to them.

- 1) **Why did you increase the chlorine level in my water?** Operational issues sometimes require us to slightly increase the chlorine that we add to the water supply in the disinfected portion of our distribution system. The most common of these are water main breaks and seasonal water temperature increases in the late summer and early fall. As soon as feasible we lower the disinfectant level to the minimum amounts required by the RI Department of Health.
- 2) **Why is there so much water pressure in my section of town?** Due to the basic topography of North Kingstown, in order to ensure adequate water pressure in the high elevation neighborhoods in western sections of town, we have no option but to operate at a higher pressure in those areas. Indeed, system water pressure in the Slocum area, due to these conditions, can exceed 100 psi. Although this makes for an invigorating shower, it can cause leakage out of water heater pressure bypass valves. If you wish to have lower water pressure in your home, contract with a plumber to install a pressure-reducing valve next to your water meter.
- 3) **How can I figure out what time period my water bill covers?** All water bills have the information needed to figure this out. On the upper left side of the bill, under the “Date Read” column is the actual day our meter reader took your water consumption reading. The bill covers water used between “Date Read” on your current bill and the “Date Read” on your previous quarterly water bill.
- 4) **Why did you send me a letter saying I might have a leak?** Our newly installed radio read meters have a feature that sends us a message if there is no time during any given 24 hour period where water is not flowing through your meter. Most often, this “leak” is a silent toilet leak where water is constantly but slowly flowing through your toilet. This can waste lots of money and affect your septic system. We offer free leak detection dye tablets here in the office to help pinpoint silent toilet leaks.
- 5) **When I go in my basement, I can hear the sound of water running as if someone was using my garden hose, but no one is. What does that mean?** That sound indicates a pinhole leak in the service line to your house, call us at 268-1521 and we will send a serviceperson out to investigate.