



#### **4. My bill is showing the amount due in parenthesis, (\$73.10). What does this mean?**

Any amount on your bill that is in parenthesis indicates a credit balance on your account, and you do not have to pay the credit balance amount.

#### **5. Why does my bill seem high compared to my neighbors, or compared to previous bills?**

All families use water differently, so it is not advised to compare usage with other households. However, if there is a substantial difference, you may have a leak. See the section in this newsletter that discusses 'High Usage & Investigating Leaks.

### **High Usage & Investigating Leaks**

One of the first indications of a water leak is an unexplained increase in the usage amount and dollar amount of your water bill. If there is an increase in usage that cannot be explained such as extra people in the house, lawn watering, faucet left on, etc, there is a possibility that you may have a leak in your toilet, hot water heater blow off, water softener, sprinkler system, or you may have a dripping faucet. We encourage our customers to check for leaks before scheduling an appointment with the office to save themselves both time and money, however, we will always help whenever we can!

Customers may check if there are any leaks in the house by visually inspecting the meter. Confirm that all sources of water use are shut off, and then observe your meter. On the top there is an odometer, clock-dial, and small red triangle. Observe the triangle for at least a minute—it should be stationary or may wiggle back and forth without completing a full revolution. If it creeps full rotations or spins continually you have a leak somewhere in your household plumbing. Common places to check are sink faucets, toilets, outside faucets, irrigation systems, and boiler reliefs. If your meter looks different than the one pictured, contact us and we will explain how to read your meter.



### **Running Toilets**

A leaking toilet tank can waste up to 200 gallons of water per day. A total of 6,000 gallons per month or 72,000 gallons per year. Most high water bills are caused by leaks in toilets. You can see and hear some leaks, but many are silent and hard to find. A bad flapper valve, flapper valve seat, a bad ballcock valve, an improperly positioned float arm, or a defective overflow tube can cause them. At bedtime, when the toilet is not expected to be used for several hours, drop the dye into the top tank. If there is any dye in the bowl in the morning you have a leak!

### **Dripping Water Faucets**

One hundred drips per minute can waste up to 33 gallons per day, a total of 1,000 gallons per month or 12,000 gallons per year. Water dripping or running from the showerhead when the shower is turned firmly off is usually caused by a bad washer or seat which needs replacing. Also check for leaks from the tub faucet when a tub shower is on. This leak will defeat the purpose of a low flow showerhead because the water you save with a low flow shower is lost from the tub faucet.

## **Other Causes of High Bills**

- Running your sprinkler for just one hour can use 400 gallons of water or more.
- Washing your car can use approximately 100 gallons of water.
- Filling a small child's pool requires approximately 40-300 gallons for each fill.
- "Topping off" a pool can use more than 2,000 gallons of water.
- Filling a hot tub uses about 500 gallons and regular 'top offs'.
- Creating an Ice Rink in your yard can require approximately 4,000 gallons of water.

## **Pools and Abatements**

As we enter the summer months and warmer weather, people will be preparing their pools for summertime fun! The City of Somersworth Water Division will consider abatement for the sewer portion of your bill when you fill a pool under certain circumstances.

You will need to complete an Abatement Form that you can get from the Water Clerk at City Hall.

If the pool is new, we require proof of the size of the pool and the beginning and ending read from your meter is also helpful, but not required.

If you had to make a repair or replace the liner of an existing pool, we will consider abatement of the sewer portion if you provide copies of receipts for the repairs along with the completed Abatement Form.

We do not abate the sewer usage if you are "topping off" a pool, filling a hot tub or a small child-sized pool.

Happy Swimming!

*Of course if you have any questions please call the  
Water Department at 692-9523.*