

Additional Information for Landlords

Why will owners of multifamily housing be charged differently than owners of single-family homes? In the past, owners of multifamily units—especially owners of large multifamily housing facilities—were paying less percentage-wise than households in single-family homes. The policy is changing now to make things more fair, so landlords will now pay a set amount per unit, and homeowners, multifamily property owners, and businesses will all be paying a more equal amount proportionally.

How are multifamily residential properties going to be charged?

Multifamily facilities will be charged based on if the property has one meter or numerous meters.

Numerous meters: If your building has several water meters (i.e. each of the apartments has its own meter), then your water availability charge for each unit will still be based on the size of each meter—just like a single-family home. In this case, your water availability charge for each unit will not increase very much.

One meter: If your facility has one water meter that serves multiple apartments, your water availability charge will be based on a system called a Residential Equivalency Unit (REU) system. This method takes into account how one apartment impacts the water and sewer system compared to a single house and charges the property owner accordingly. In Red Wing, a household in one apartment uses an average of 65% of the water that a household in a single-family house does, so consequently, an apartment household impacts the sewer and water infrastructure system at a rate that is 65% of the impact of a single-family house. For that reason, the water availability charge (labeled “WA & SE Availability” on your bill) for each apartment will be 65% of the single-family charge. As an example, if a single-family home was charged \$20 for this portion of their bill, a property owner would be charged \$13 per apartment (65% of the \$20). If the property owner owns four apartments in that building, the owner would owe \$52 for the “WA & SE Availability” portion of the bill ($\$13 \times 4 = \52).

Is it cheaper to have one meter or multiple meters?

It depends. With one meter, you only pay one water availability charge. However, some landlords prefer to have separate meters so they can monitor how each apartment uses water. Having multiple water meters helps you identify any leaks or excessive water use earlier and faster, and that can also save money.

How does the size of my water meter affect the amount I pay? A larger meter size means larger pipes and infrastructure can safely deliver more water. So, the bigger your meter, the more you pay. Water meters come in sizes ranging from 5/8 inch to 6 inches, and most residential homes are the smallest at 5/8 or 3/4 inches.

How can I learn more or connect with someone at the City? The City is happy to talk with you about your specific situation. You can do any of the following:

- Contact the Public Works Department at 651-385-3674 with any immediate questions.
- Contact Deputy Director of Utilities Jerry Plein, at jerry.plein@ci.red-wing.mn.us / 651-385-5112 or Environmental Services Manager Kelsey VanDeusen at kelsey.van.deusen@ci.red-wing.mn.us / 651-385-5143.
- Attend the City's Open House on Wednesday, May 18 at 6 p.m. in the lower level of the Red Wing Public Library. Staff will be available to answer questions and provide more information specific to property owners of multifamily housing units.
- Visit the City's "Water & Sewer Rates" website page at www.red-wing.org.