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Gainesville Works to Smooth Out Utility Billing After Software Transition

Gainesville, Texas— The City of Gainesville’s staff is actively addressing issues that have arisen following the transition of its utility billing system to new software powered by Tyler Technologies. As part of an unavoidable complete system shutdown during the transition, bills were issued early using estimated averages to avoid missing billing cycles. As a result, many customers received unusually low bills over the summer months and are now seeing higher bills as the system corrects and balances usage data.

City Staff are aware of the impact this has had on customers and are working quickly to resolve all issues and return billing operations to normal.

Two years ago, City Staff were informed that the old system (STW) was bought out and discontinued. All services relying on that system would need to be transitioned to a new software system, so City Staff immediately began investigating options and opted for Tyler Technologies to support current City needs and provide room for future growth. Since then, City Staff has been working diligently to prepare for and execute the transition.

“Despite extensive planning, training, and testing, the Utility Billing system presented some issues that only became apparent once we were fully live,” said J.I. Johnson, Finance Director for the City of Gainesville. “We appreciate our customers’ patience and understanding as we wrestle with the new software. This has been a long and turbulent process, but our team is working as quickly and effectively as possible to resolve every issue and restore full functionality.”

During the transition, City Staff were unable to bill or read meters for more than a week because the system had to be completely shut down to perform the data migration. To manage this blackout period, some bills were prepared early using each account’s estimated average



usage. Since these averages were based on the average annual consumption, they resulted in unusually low summer-month bills, even considering the mild summer weather in the region.

Another issue was a delay in billing once the system was back online because of unexpected system issues. Some customers were billed for more than a single month's usage because we were unable to bill for weeks after the new system went live due to unforeseen errors. Below are a few examples using only the customer's water usage. No other utilities (e.g., sewer, trash) are part of the examples.

Example 1: The customer's average usage was estimated to be 9,760 gallons on 07/31/2025 and was billed \$63.37. Actual usage ended up being 30,060 gallons, which should have been billed \$155.94 for usage from 06/09/2025 to 07/31/2025. The \$96.93 difference was added to the next bill on 08/29/2025. The base for this bill was \$96.93, but the total billed was \$189.50, accounting for the undercharge that occurred on the 07/31/2025 average bill. This customer's most recent bill was \$100.48.

Example 2: The customer's average usage was estimated to be 420 gallons on 07/31/2025 and billed \$23.42. Actual usage ended up being 13,683 gallons, which should've been billed \$35.00 for usage from 06/16/2025-07/31/2025. The \$11.58 difference was added to the next bill on 08/29/2025. The base for this bill was \$49.64, but the total bill was \$61.22 to account for the undercharged that occurred on the 07/31/2025 average bill. This customer's most recent bill was \$47.73.

Example 3: The customer's average usage was estimated to be 9,340 gallons on 07/31/2025 and billed \$92.35. Actual usage ended up being 13,683 gallons, which should've been billed \$119.86 for usage from 06/16/2025-07/31/2025. The \$27.51 difference was added to the next bill on 08/29/2025. The base for this bill was \$97.29, but the total bill was \$124.80 to account for the undercharged that occurred on the 07/31/2025 average bill.

Now that the system is live and meter readings have resumed, customers are receiving "catch-up" bills that reflect actual usage, added to their regular bills. It is important to note that no one was charged for more than their actual consumption. These adjustments are temporary, and future bills will normalize once the system is fully stabilized.

Once bills are trued up, customers may still notice slightly higher bills moving forward because of the 4.5% utility rate adjustment that took effect October 1, 2025, but the bills will be much closer to expected amounts.

City Manager Barry Sullivan said these challenges, while frustrating, are part of the necessary modernization process that will serve Gainesville well for decades.



“This transition has certainly come with growing pains, but the long-term benefits are on the horizon,” said Sullivan. “Once the system is fully stabilized, it will provide the city with more accurate data, improved service, and modern tools that can accommodate Gainesville’s projected growth. We shouldn’t need another major system upgrade like this for a very long time.”

Customer Resources

If you have questions or need assistance understanding your bill, please reach out:

- Ongoing Project Updates: GainesvilleTXEngage.org
- Call: 940-668-4500
- Visit: City Hall, 200 S Rusk St, Gainesville, TX 76240
- Email: CityOfGainesville@cogtx.org

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