

**City of Philadelphia
Water Revenue Bureau
Water Department**

**Revised Policy for Zero Usage Accounts
(For Non-theft and Occupied Properties)**

October 9, 2012

To: WRB and PWD Staff
From: Michelle Bethel, Deputy Revenue Commissioner, WRB
Howard Neukrug, Commissioner, Water Department
Re: Revised Policy for Zero Usage Accounts

As of October 2012, approximately 20,000 accounts have received bills that reflect zero usage on the customer water meter for four or more consecutive months. These customers are notified of this zero usage read, and potential shut-off, by a letter mailed by WRB. Although we believe that it is the customer's responsibility to check the accuracy of their monthly bills, we also believe that our agencies equally share a responsibility to ensure that our customers receive accurate bills.

Therefore, for those zero usage accounts that are not related to theft of service or to a vacancy in the property, WRB will offer the customer that responds to their notification for a potential shutoff due to the zero usage read within 30 days of the date of letter the following:

- For customers with zero usage bills that occur within one year or less (12 months or less of zero usage bills) – customer pays all usage fees.
- For customers with zero usage bills that reflect more than one year of billing – customer pays first year (most current year) in full and 50% of usage fees for all previous months/years.

For these accounts, penalties and late fees will be waived. Usage fees owed will be prorated to reflect the rates of the fiscal year they represent.

Customers who call within the 30 day window of their notification letter do not need to go through the WRB Informal Appeals process. These customers will be offered outright the opportunities outlined in this policy.