Utility Billing
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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – WATER & SEWER BILLS

QUESTION: Would a high water bill ever be caused by leak in the Township's water system?

No, if a leak is causing a high water bill, the leak must be inside the building as the water has already passed through your water meter located in your basement or meter pit. Additionally, if there was a leak in the Township's water system, you would know as a sinkhole would form very quickly near the road due to the water pressure.

QUESTION: I received a water bill that is higher than usual, what should I do?

Before contacting Meridian Township, you must take the following steps. If you have a high water bill, you have a leak in the home/business that is causing the increase in your water bill. You may need to contact a plumber and/or your irrigation company to help you with these steps:

1. **Monitor Usage When the Home is Empty** – If no one is home during the day, write down your meter read numbers when you leave in the morning (After you are done used water. If you are running a washer or dishwasher, you are still using water.), and again when you get home. Do NOT flush toilets or run water during this time. Compare the numbers. If the numbers have not changed, there is no water going through your meter and therefore, you do not have a leak. If the numbers do change, there is a water leak somewhere inside your home.

2. **Toilets** – A leaking toilet can waste up to 200-1,000 gallons a day, or 6,000 gallons per month. This means that one leaking toilet can increase your bill by $85 per month, or $255 per quarter/bill.

   Toilet leaks may be easy to repair but detecting them and diagnosing what is causing the leak can be a challenge. We recommend the following methods to detect a toilet leak:

   Step 1: Remove the tank lid of the toilet.
   Step 2: Flush your toilet as usual. Wait for the water to rise again to the designated water line of the tank.
   Step 3: Put 20-25 drops of food coloring in the toilet tank. Plumbing stores also sell dye tests. You will want to use a dark color such as blue or red.
   Step 4: Watch to see if the food coloring or dye makes it to the bowl of the toilet. If the food coloring/dye does make its way to the bowl, you have a toilet leak that needs to be repaired.
   Toilet leaks could be caused by several different parts inside the tank that could, or have, failed. You can purchase replacement parts at most hardware stores.

   Click here for a video tutorial on how to complete a food coloring/dye test on your toilets.

3. **Faucets –** A high water bill might be a clue that the leak in your faucet isn't as minor as you may have thought. Those tiny drips add up very quickly, wasting gallons of water each day. A leaky faucet that drips at the rate of one drip per second can waste more than 1,000 gallons per quarter/billing cycle. This means that one dripping faucet alone can increase your bill by about $45 per quarter/bill.

   Fortunately, a leaky faucet is easy to spot and, often, easy to fix. Check all the faucets and showerheads in your house for drips. Be sure to check faucets in guest rooms, the basement, the exterior of the home, and other areas you don't use daily. In most cases, replacing a rubber washer will take care of the leak. At most, you might need a new faucet or showerhead. It's a minor repair in comparison to the money you will pay in wasted water over time.

4. **Sump Pump with Water Powered Back-Up –** If you have a sump pump with a water powered back-up,

you should consider replacing it with an electric or a battery backup sump pump to save on your water bill. Some houses require a sump pump to keep groundwater from getting into the basement or crawl spaces. The type of sump pump you use could result in you using a lot of water to keep your home dry.

A water-powered pump doesn't require electricity or a battery backup. Instead, it connects to your water lines. It uses your drinking water supply and increased pressure to pump out the groundwater.

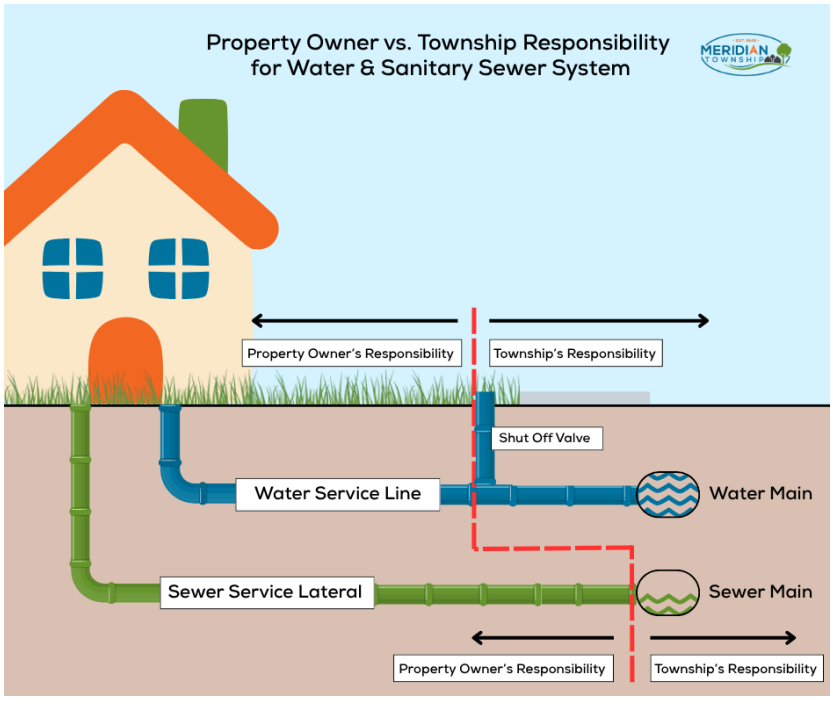
Homeowners looking for an energy-efficient sump pump might choose one powered by water. However, the cost of the Township water that it takes to operate this sump pump is more expensive than the electricity that an electrical sump pump uses.

5. **Irrigation/Sprinkler Systems –** If you have a small leak in one of your irrigation water lines, they could end up using a lot more water expected. All it takes is a small crack or a leaky joint to cause major water loss. If your irrigation system does have a leak, and the system is on with full pressure, water will begin bubbling to the surface like a small fountain almost immediately. You will also typically see sand washing up to the surface with the water.

   Another common problem with irrigation systems is that the timers don't always work properly. They may turn on more frequently and/or wait too long before cutting off. Monitor your system to see if it needs re-programming or if the timer needs to be replaced.

6. **Water Service Line** – If you have a meter pit (meaning your water meter is located in a pit in your yard, rather than in your basement), you should check to make sure there is no water bubbling to the surface in your yard.

   The Township is responsible for the water main, water service line from the main to the curb stop, the curb stop, and the water meter. The property owner is responsible for the water service line from the curb stop to the home/business. The property owner is also responsible for all plumbing in the home/business. The Township does not troubleshoot private plumbing issues.



If your service line does have a leak, water will begin bubbling to the surface like a small fountain almost immediately. You will also typically see sand washing up to the surface with the water. **Click here to view**

a short video clip of what it will look like when you have a water service line leak in your yard.

QUESTION: Could my water meter be the cause of a high water bill?

No, the meter is a mechanical instrument that simply reads how much water passes through the meter. You can monitor your usage by keeping a log of your readings each day, week, or month. If you are going to monitor your usage, you should check and record the usage on a consistent basis.

QUESTION: How do I set up online payments for water bills?

To set up online payments for water bills, please visit our website by clicking here, then click on the blue "Online Payments" button.

QUESTION: Can late fees be waived?

No, the Township does not waive late fees. We must receive your payment by the due date.

QUESTION: Are water bills negotiable.

In fairness to all of our customers, the Township does not negotiate water bills.

Bills are based on the amount of water that was used as there is a cost to every gallon of water that needs to be treated and delivered to homes/businesses. There is also a cost to every gallon of resulting sanitary waste that needs to be collected and treated after it is used by the home/business.

QUESTION: Why are water rates so high?

Meridian Township has the lowest water rates in the Greater Lansing Region by a considerable margin. If you live in any other community, your bill would be 13-104% higher:

Water & Sewer Rate Comparison

Based on 12,500 gallons per quarter

Average Quarterly Bill for a Single-Family Home

Water and Sewer System	2025 Average Quarterly Bill	% Higher Than Meridian Township
Grand Ledge	$434.73	104.21%
Leslie	$352.28	65.48%
Potterville	$325.98	53.13%
Mason	$317.25	49.03%
Delhi Township	$303.51	42.57%
Lansing	$300.18	41.01%
Williamston	$299.28	40.58%
St Johns	$293.76	37.99%
East Lansing	$264.79	24.38%
Eaton Rapids	$248.66	16.81%
Bath Township	$240.08	12.78%
Meridian Township	**$212.88**	**N/A**