
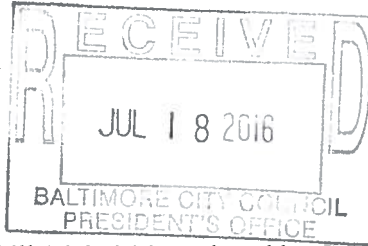


<b>FROM</b>	NAME & TITLE	Rudolph S. Chow, P.E., Director	CITY of <b>BALTIMORE</b> <b>MEMO</b>	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	Department of Public Works 600 Abel Wolman Municipal Building		
	SUBJECT	<b>CITY COUNCIL BILL 16-0704</b>		

**TO**

DATE: July 18, 2016

The Honorable President and Members  
of the Baltimore City Council  
c/o Natawna Austin  
Room 400 – City Hall



I am herein reporting on City Council Bill 16-0704 introduced by Council President Young on behalf of the Administration (Department of Public Works).

The purpose of the Bill is to provide that water charges, sewer charges, and stormwater remediation charges be assessed, billed, due and payable on a monthly basis; delete certain obsolete or obsolescent references; correct, clarify, and conform certain related provisions; provide for special effective dates; and generally relating to billings for and collections of water, sewer, and stormwater remediation charges and all increases, interest, and penalties on those charges.

The Department of Public Works is nearing completion of the multi-year BaltiMeter initiative in Baltimore City that is changing the way in which customer water consumption data is collected. Every meter, residential and commercial, is equipped with a small transmitter that sends the water usage wirelessly to a fixed network of receptors for collection and uploading into the billing system. Water consumption data for each water account is measured in hourly and daily reads, a much more detailed and useful record of water usage and water usage trends than receiving one meter reading every three months. To further modernize the water system, the BaltiMeter program is also replacing the old Legacy billing system with a new, more flexible water billing system. In addition to providing a more customer-friendly bill, the new billing system enables the City to provide customers with monthly bills that will arrive at approximately the same time each month, allowing for better household budgeting. This new billing system and monthly billing are scheduled to “go-live” in Baltimore City on October 11, 2016.

In order to provide monthly billing, City Council Bill 16-0704 amends certain portions of Article 24 {Water}, Article 25 {Sewers}, and Article 27 {Stormwater Remediation Fees} of the Baltimore City Code in the following ways:

- All references to quarterly billing of water, sewer, and stormwater charges are replaced with monthly billing language;
- The penalty rate for billed amounts that become delinquent is reduced from 5% to 1.64%;
- The customer payment deadline is reduced from 30 days for a quarterly bill to 20 days for a monthly bill in order to avoid having balances and penalties carried forward on subsequent bills;
- Obsolete language is deleted and remaining older language is clarified and conformed; and

*Fav w/ Amend*

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- The Bill's effective date for Baltimore City customers is October 11, 2016.

Baltimore County customers will be switching to the new billing system and monthly billing at a later date than the City and will continue to pay quarterly bills under the old Legacy system until then. At the time this legislation was drafted, the anticipated "go live" date for the County was on or after April 1, 2017. The County has now given our Department an effective date of July 1, 2017 to switch County customers to monthly billing. Therefore, the Department of Public Works recommends that Section 3 of the Bill be amended to delete the County effective date of April 1, 2017 and other qualifying language and replace it with the effective date of July 1, 2017. The proposed amendment is attached to this memorandum.

With the switch to monthly billing, the Department of Public Works and our customers will no longer have to rely on an outdated billing system and an outdated billing format. Monthly billing makes it easier for customers to stay on top of their bills and pay in more manageable installments than a quarterly bill. Combined with daily reads, customers will be able to track their water consumption and find opportunities to manage their water usage. The new billing system will also provide a platform for future enhancements and customer services.

The Department of Public Works believes the change to monthly billing will be a significant improvement in customer service and therefore supports passage of City Council Bill 16-0704 as proposed to be amended.

Respectfully,



RUDOLPH S. CHOW, P.E.  
DIRECTOR

RSC/MMC

Attachment

**AMENDMENTS TO COUNCIL BILL 16-0704  
(First Reader Copy)**

By:

{To be offered to the Judiciary and Legislative Investigations Committee}

**Amendment No. 1**

On page 7, in lines 27 and 28, strike “or about April 1, 2017, as the Director of Public Works determines” and substitute “July 1, 2017”.