



MEMORANDUM

EUGENE WATER & ELECTRIC BOARD



TO: Commissioners Brown, Carlson, Mital, Simpson and Helgeson
FROM: Sue Fahey, Chief Financial Officer; Gene Austin, Appeals Officer
DATE: July 27, 2018
SUBJECT: Billing Appeals Process Update
OBJECTIVE: Information Only

Issue

In August 2017, EWEB introduced a new approach to review and resolve customer billing appeals. The focus of this new approach was to simplify the internal review process without sacrificing the effectiveness of the outcome, and to maintain fair and equitable results. This memorandum is a one-year review of these changes.

Background

In accordance with Customer Service Policy 2.3, an account holder in disagreement with a utility bill or other charge has the right to file an appeal. The majority of the appeals received have been for water leak credits. Last year the process was changed to allow customer service staff to authorize a bill credit as a result of a water leak once every five years instead of sending the request to the Appeals Committee. For billing issues that cannot be resolved by customer service staff, appeals are reviewed and resolved by a customer service lead, applicable subject matter experts, and the Appeals Officer. The goal is to provide a response within ten days although the procedure allows for thirty days in case resources are constrained.

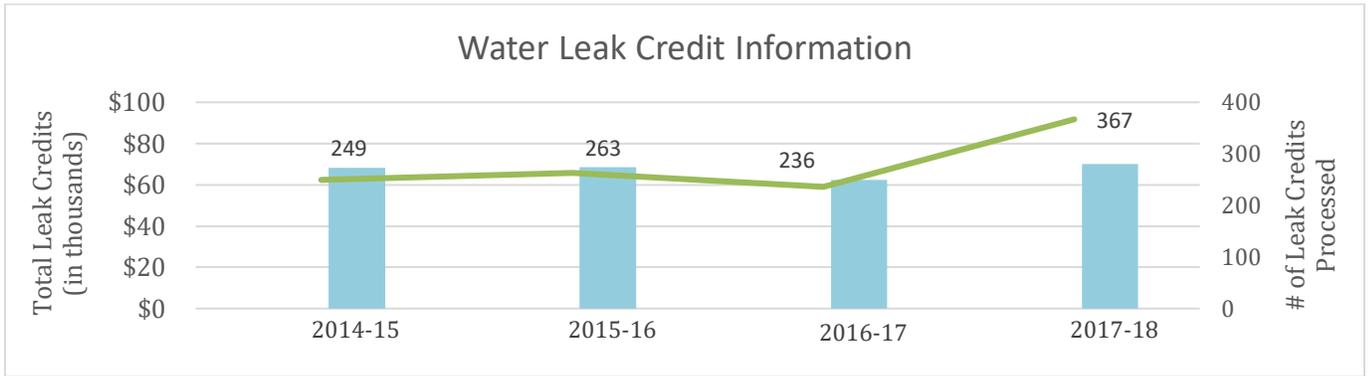
Discussion

As shown below, these process changes have resulted in fewer appeals.

	June 2016 - May 2017	August 2017 - July 2018
Total Number of Appeals	57	25
Appeals related to Water Leaks	72%	44%
Number of Bills Adjusted through Appeals	32	10
Amount of Appeals Bill Adjustments	\$6,700	\$2,100

The chart below indicates that the total amount of bill credits issued over the last year remained relatively consistent compared to prior years. However, as a result of the requests being resolved at the customer service staff level, the total volume of leak credits increased noticeably. This increase in

requests being resolved outside of the appeals process contributes to a faster response and an overall improved customer experience.



Staff believes that the goals of these process changes were met satisfactorily. The process continues to be reviewed for improvements that simplify our customer-owners' experience while maintaining fair and equitable results.

Recommendation/Requested Board Action

Information only. There is no recommendation or requested Board action.