High Utility Bill Investigation Checklist

Customers of City of Goshen Utilities may occasionally receive bills that are higher than normal. Having an unusually high bill may indicate that there is a plumbing issue in your home or business or that there is a problem with your meter reading. Sometimes a high bill may simply reflect an increase in water usage as the result of watering the lawn or garden, filling a swimming pool, having students home from college or having guests in the house.

This checklist is used by City Utilities to investigate a concern about a high bill. You can use the questions on this checklist to determine if there may be a legitimate reason for a higher than usual bill, or if there are reasons to suspect a metering, billing or plumbing issue. If, after using the checklist, you believe there may be a problem with your water meter, please contact City of Goshen Utility Business Office at (574) 533-9399.

If you feel you have a plumbing problem or a water leak that is causing the high bill, you may want to contact a plumber of your choice to investigate and make any needed repairs.

ACCOUNT INFORMATION: Please have this information available if you call City Utilities

Name/Company name	
Address	
Account number	

To begin investigating why your bill may be high, please read your water meter and compare the current reading with the latest reading shown on your most recent bill from City Utilities. If the current reading is **lower** than the last reading on your bill, please call City Utilities Business Office at (574) 533-9399.

If the reading on the meter is **higher** than the reading shown on your most recent bill this is to be expected. Please continue with the checklist below.

CHECKLIST:

Yes	No	
		Make sure all of the water faucets and water using appliances in your house or business are shut off. Now look at the water meter. Is anything spinning on it? A spinning dial indicates water is going through the meter. If the dial is spinning even when you have all the water turned off, you probably have a plumbing leak somewhere that is causing your water bill to be high. The questions below may help you identify where a leak is happening.
		Are any of your faucets or outside spigots dripping?
		Does our water service feed any external buildings or water using systems (such as an irrigation system)?
		Have you had any pipes replaced?
		Have you had any toilets repaired/replaced recently? Have you conducted any dye tests on all your toilets? (See below for instructions on how to use dye to check toilets for leaks.

		Do you have a dishwasher? Have you had it repaired/replaced recently? Have you checked the appliance for leaks?
		Do you have an ice machine? Have you had repairs to the ice machine or replaced it? Have you checked the appliance for leaks?
		Do you have a washing machine? Have you had it repaired/replaced recently? Have you checked the appliance for leaks?
		Do you have a water softener? Have you had any repairs to the water softener or replaced it? Have you checked appliance for leaks? Have you checked the cycle time of the water softener? If water continues to go down the drain after the water softener regenerates it is leaking and needs to be fixed. You may also want to turn the softener off for a month and see if it makes a difference in your water bill.
		Do you have a humidifier on your furnace? Inspect the float in the humidifier to make sure it is not filling higher than the level recommended by the manufacturer.
		Do you have a hot water heater? Do you have boiler heat? Do you have a water cooled air conditioner? Malfunctioning units may contribute to higher bills.
		Do you have a pool or hot tub? Has the pool/hot tub been filled recently? Has water to pool/hot tub been added recently?
		Do you have a sump pump? Is it electric with a water back up system? Does the water back up system run off of city water?
		Did you have guests or extra people in your home? Did you have additional employees in your business during your last billing cycle?

For questions on the checklist where you have answered yes, you may want to investigate further.
Actual usage can cause your water bill to be higher than usual. Leaks may also cause the bill to be higher than normal. Water lost due to a leak is considered by City Utilities to be used by you because it has gone through your water meter and therefore you will be charged for such.

Dye Testing Your Toilet for Leaks
Toilet leaks are a very common cause of high water bills. Many times you can't hear the toilet running or leaking. Here's a simple way to check for a toilet leak:
1. Take the top off the toilet tank. Remove any cleaning agents that may cause the water in the toilet bowl to be colored.
2. Drop a few drops of household food coloring into the tank to dye the water. You could also use a colored drink mix or instant coffee.
3. Wait about 10 minutes. Do not flush the toilet or let anyone use it during this time.
4. Check the color of the water in the toilet bowl. If the color of the dye from the tank appears in the bowl, you have a leak.