Water Conservation

- **Master Plan Update Work: *Rates, data & other information***

Climate Resilience and Sustainability Board
September 18, 2025

Water Consumption Rates

- The policy decision to use rate structures to encourage water conservation is well established by the City Council and state law
- Have had a tier structure for water use for many years
- An early attempt to create a steep, conservation-based tier structure in 2010 was reconsidered & changed by the Mayor and Council in early 2012.
- In recent years, two significant changes to the residential water consumption structure have been implemented
  - In 2020 for rates approved for 2021, 2022, and 2023
  - In 2024 for rates approved for 2025 and 2026

What we looked at in 2020

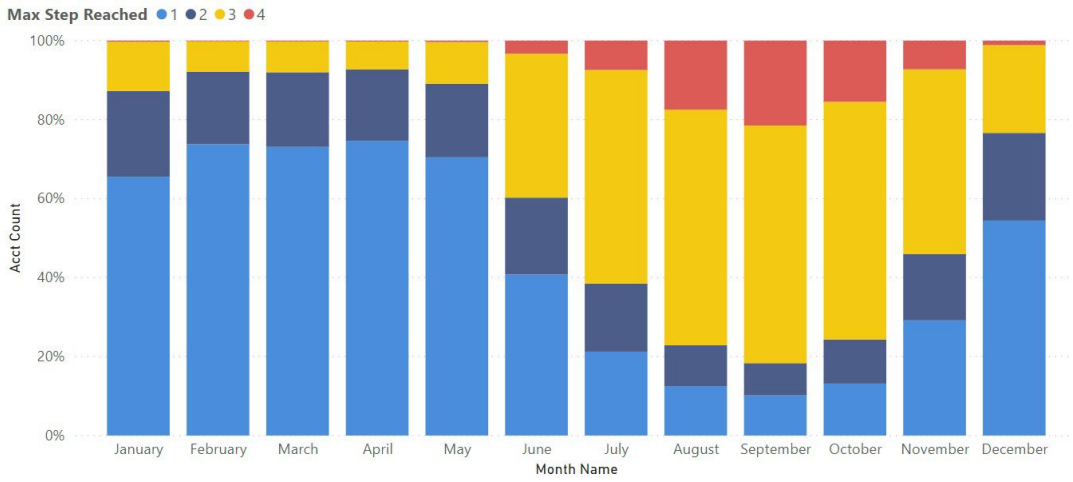
- Small percentage of customers drive water demand

26% of residential customers used **45%** of water used by all residential customers.

Those customers used an average of more than **70 units -52,000 gallons**—in that month!!

Example - August 2019

Max_Step	Acct Count	Pct of Accts	Usage (Units)	Pct of Total
1	7,496	4.18%	29,028	1.55%
2	6,170	6.86%	53,196	2.84%
3	37,317	62.40%	939,270	50.15%
4	11,922	26.56%	851,485	45.46%
Total	**62,749**	**100.00%**	**1,872,979**	**100.00%**

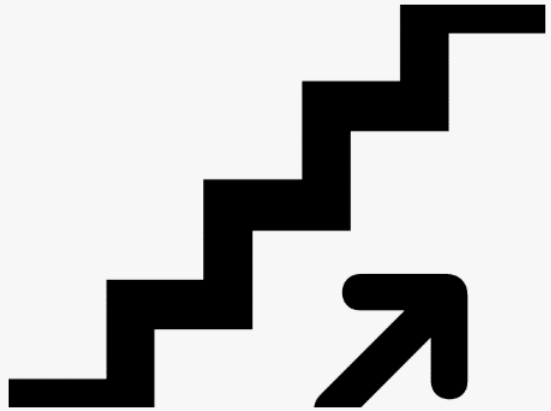


Number of customers in each consumption tier by month from 2019.

What we did

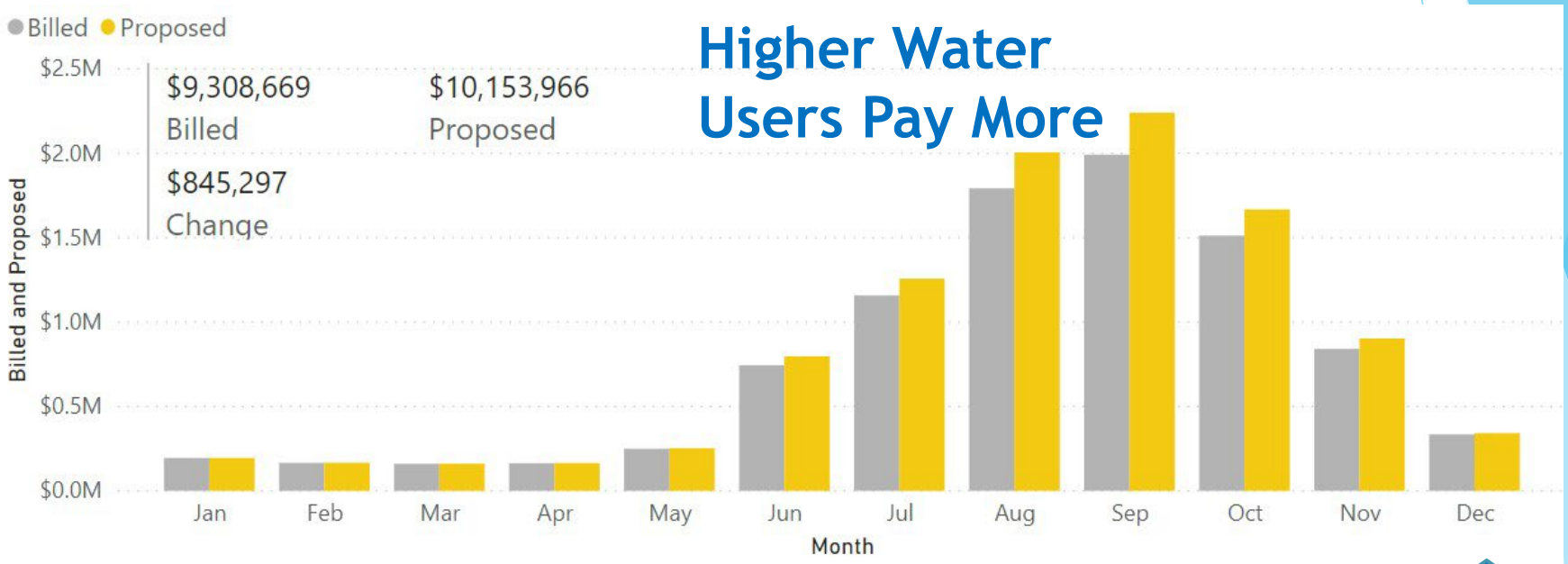
- Added a fifth tier to the structure
- Median usage in **summer** about **23 units/month**
- Year round median usage was **8 units/month**
- Incentivized customers to stay at 25 units or less
- Maintained affordability of life-line needs

Current Tiers	2020 Cost per unit	Proposed New Tiers	Proposed cost per unit (based on 2020 rates)
0-6 units	$0.33	0-6 units	$0.33
7-10 units	$0.70	7-12 units	$0.70
11-45 units	$0.93	13-25 units	$0.93
>45 units	$1.20	26-45 units	$1.20
		>45 units	$1.50



These tiers work like stairs. Water used within the first tier is the least expensive. If water use exceeds that tier, add'l use is charged at the higher second tier and so on.

Effect of 2020 Tier Change on Bills



Higher Water Users Pay More

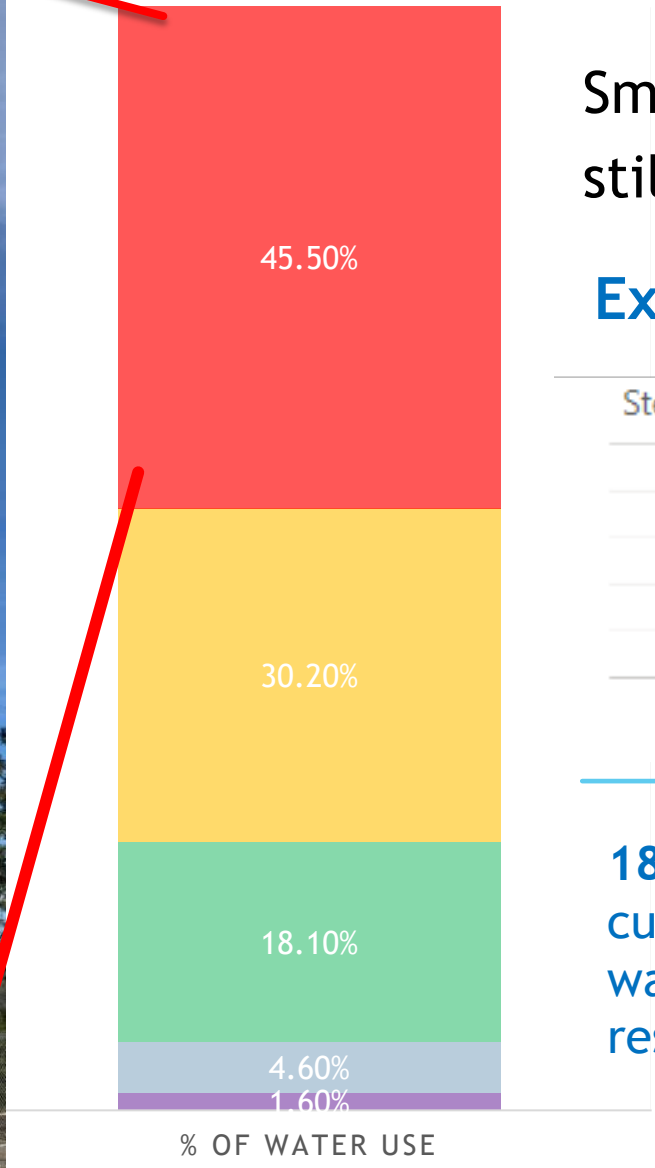
Customer Impacts

Over **90%** of customers would have same or lower bills for at least half the year.

Over **50%** wouldn't see higher bills during peak irrigation season.

Median increase would be **$11 total** over the 3 summer months.

Customers had a choice



What happened

Small percentage of customers still using bulk of the water

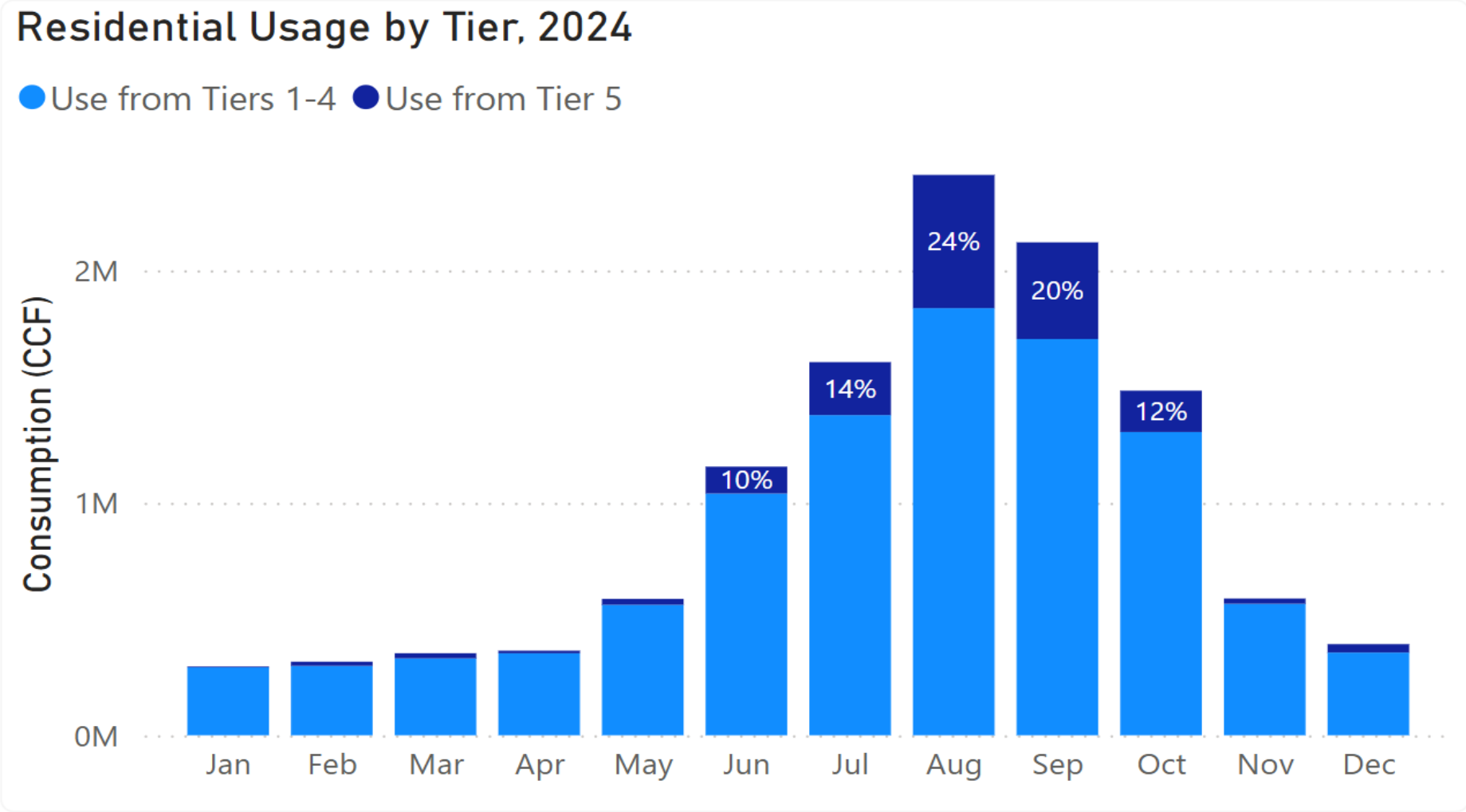
Example - September 2023

Step Reached	Acct Count	Pct of Accts	Usage (Units)	Pct of Total
1	9,249	14.0%	30,564	1.6%
2	9,426	14.3%	88,230	4.6%
3	18,648	28.3%	348,271	18.1%
4	17,021	25.8%	579,228	30.2%
5	11,663	17.7%	874,849	45.5%
Total	**65,861**	**100.0%**	**1,921,143**	**100.0%**

18% of residential customers used **46%** of water used by all residential customers.

Those customers used an average of **75 units - 56,100 gallons**—in one month!!

Looking at the Data



What we did in 2024

Median usage in **summer** was about **22 units/month**

Year-round median usage was **7 units/month**

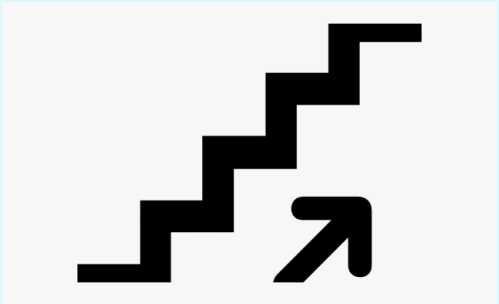
Continued to incentivize customers to stay at 25 units or less

Maintained affordability of life-line needs

No change in the first three water use tiers

Also, limited the increase for **Monthly Base Charge for Water** to 1.5%. Went from $19.01 from $18.76 a month.

Tiers	2024 Rates	2025 Rates
0-6 units	$0.36	$0.36
7-12 units	$0.76	$0.76
13-25 units	$1.02	$1.02
26-45 units	$1.30	**$1.61**
>45 units	$1.63	**$2.31**



These tiers work like stairs. Water used within the first tier is the least expensive. If water use exceeds that tier, add'l use is charged at the higher second tier and so on.

Throughout the year, 84% of monthly bills for Water will see an increase of 1.5% or less

Includes tier changes and limited base rate increase of 1.5%

What Should be Next?

- What does the residential data show following this change?
- What about Commercial Rates?
  - More diverse class of customers

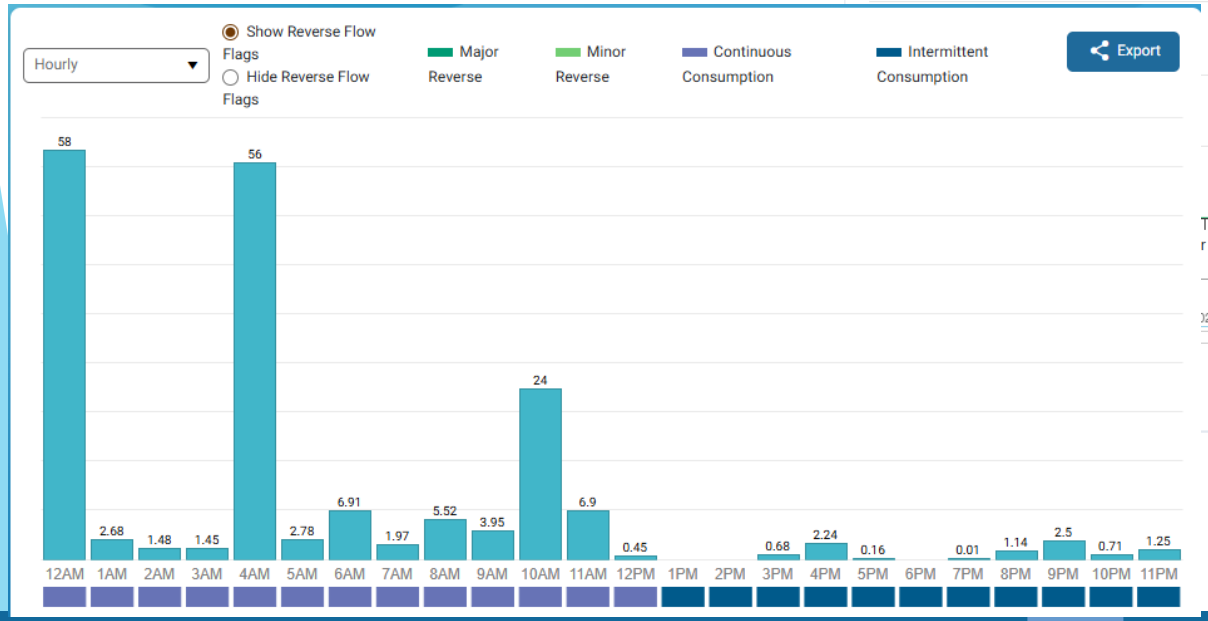
Water Consumption Charges

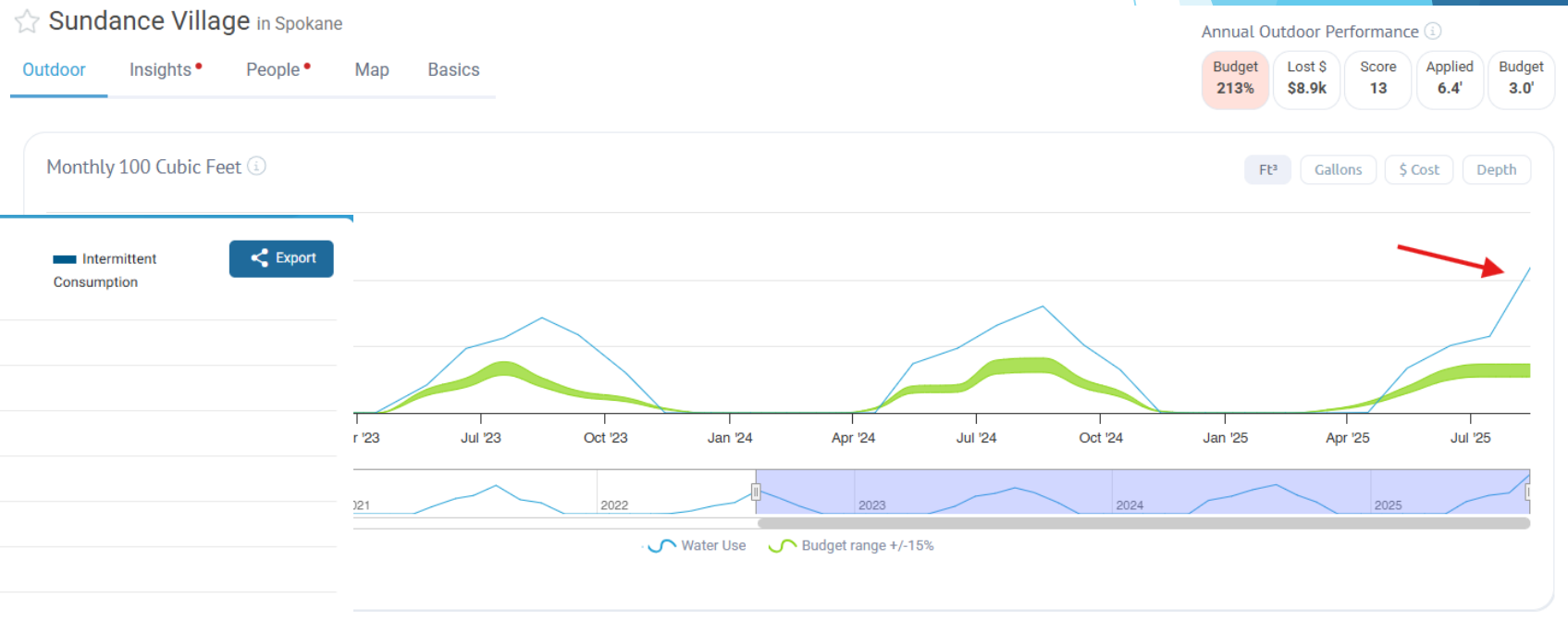
Water meters measure in cubic feet. The City of Spokane bills consumption based on units. A unit is equal to 100 cubic feet or approximately 748 gallons. This chart is based on per month usage.

Usage	Inside City Rate (Per hundred cubic feet)	Outside City Rate (Per hundred cubic feet)
Zero up to 600 cubic feet (Charge for all use: zero up to 600.)	$0.3975	$0.5962
Greater than 600 up to 1,000 cubic feet (Charge for all use: zero up to 1,000.)	$0.8249	$1.2377
Greater than 1,000 cubic feet (Charge for all use: zero to amount used.)	$1.1933	$1.7899

A glimpse at better data

- AMI - Advanced Metering Infrastructure
- Outward facing customer water web portal - RFQ is out!





Water Meter Size

Composition. Usage, and Water Use Factors

Year

All

Use Category, Premise Descripti...

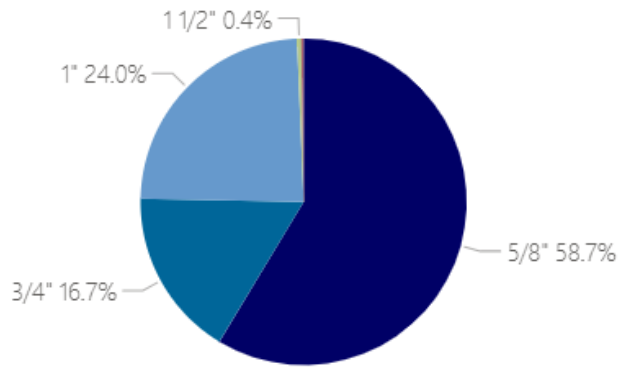
Single Family

Pressure Zone

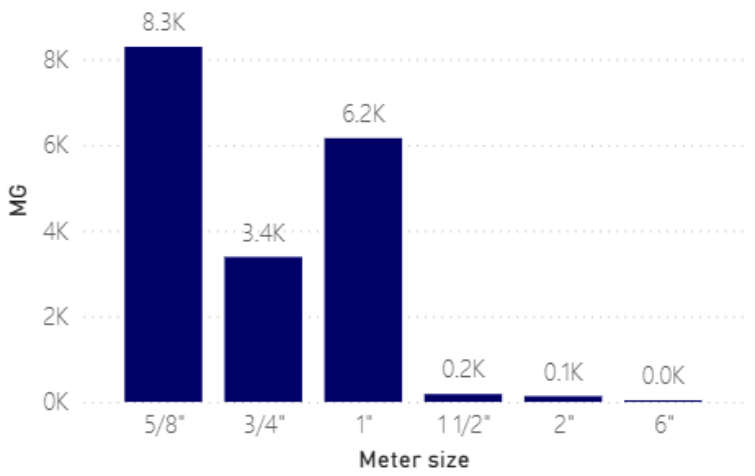
All

- [x] Select all
- [x] (Blank)
- [x] Cedar Hills
- [x] Default
- [x] Eagle Ridge
- [x] Eagle Ridge 2
- [x] Five Mile

Meter size composition

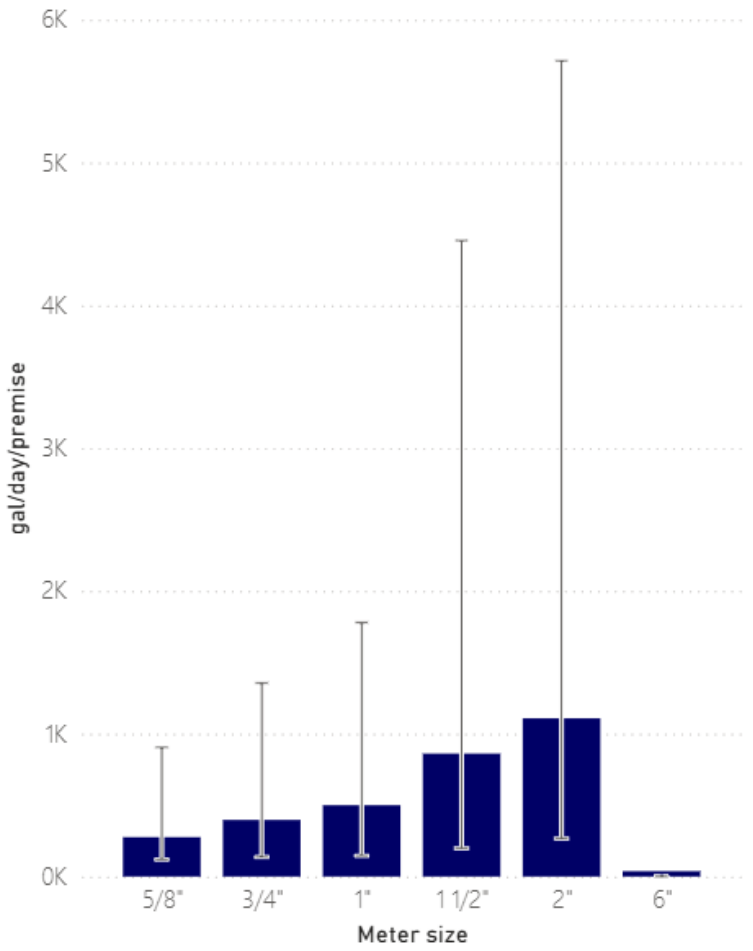


Water usage by meter size



ERU-ADD by meter size

ERU-MDD and ERU-Winter shown as upper and lower limits



QUESTIONS?