



Serving Hartselle's People, Building for Hartselle's Future

Why is your sewer bill more than your water bill?

You (hopefully) would never drink water from the Tennessee River before it was treated. And, also hopefully, you would never run a pipe from your toilet, washing machine and dishwasher straight into Shoal Creek. Turning river water into drinking water has a cost. Cleaning waste water so that it can be returned to the environment has an even higher cost.

If you buy your water from Hartselle Utilities and are connected to our sewer system, your bill will have separate line items for water and wastewater.

Each sewer customer has a base sewer charge that is designed to provide a portion of the required revenue to help maintain HU's sewer system infrastructure; fund capital projects within our sewer collection system and at our Wastewater Treatment Plant; and ensure that HU can meet its debt repayment obligations for loans taken out to maintain the wastewater system infrastructure. Additionally, customers are charged a volumetric charge for sewer system usage based on their water usage, because most of the time the water a household uses exits the home through the sewer system as wastewater.

Hartselle Utilities purchases water from Decatur Utilities. Decatur Utilities bears the costs of turning water from the Tennessee River into safe drinking water, and they have the benefit of scale from a large customer base to spread the cost over many individual water customers.

Wastewater – sewage – that enters HU's system is treated in Hartselle. The Hartselle Utilities Wastewater Treatment Plant cleans

Summer Sewer Cap Ends October 31

Typically, most of the water a household uses enters the sewer system as wastewater, and sewer charges are based on water usage. During the summer, many residents use water outdoors for gardening, filling pools and washing cars, and this water does not enter the sewer system. For this reason, HU sets a cap for the summer sewer rates, and from May 1 through October 31, customers are not charged a sewer fee for water used above the cap. HU uses the months between November and April to calculate each customer's winter average, and then caps the customer's summer sewer rate at 120 percent of that amount.

wastewater and sewage so that it can be returned safely to our environment.

Everything that enters our sewer system is processed to meet both federal and state standards. And as environmental regulations have become more stringent, the cost to meet the standards has increased.

In addition, as scientific discoveries about the harmful effects of pollution provide more information about what is safe, treating wastewater becomes increasingly more complicated. At the turn of the century, if wastewater was treated at all, it was only to remove really big, obvious items. Later, settling tanks were introduced to remove small solids, but the water released back into the environment was still polluted by today's standards.

Today, HU's wastewater treatment process first removes solids – everything from rags and plastics to sand and smaller particles – found in the wastewater. Then, naturally-occurring 'helpful' bacteria and other microorganisms consume organic matter and pollutants in the wastewater, and are then separated from the water. Finally, the wastewater is treated to restore oxygen back into the water to ensure that it can support life, before it is released into Shoal Creek.

It is an effective system, but an expensive one to operate.

In addition to the treatment plant costs, a sewer system's infrastructure is more expensive to build, replace and maintain than that of a water system.

Drinking water is delivered through pressurized pipes. It can flow uphill as

Continued on back

Summer temps are here: Beat the heat of high utility bills with these tips.

- **Keep it clean – after the sun goes down.** Whenever possible, don't run your dishwasher, washing machine or dryer during the heat of the day
- **Filter it out.** Make sure your air conditioner filter is clean. A dirty filter keeps air from flowing through your air conditioner, and it works harder - and uses more power - than necessary.
- **Shut the doors!** Try to minimize the amount of times you open and shut your main doors leading outside to keep the cool air in. The same theory includes your refrigerator door.
- **Do a fan dance.** Use ceiling and floor fans to keep air moving in your home - they use a lot less power than setting your air conditioner lower.
- **Unplug to power down.** Unplug any unused or unnecessary electronic devices. Even when turned off, if they are plugged in, they are still generating heat..
- **Lighten up.** Make that switch to more energy-efficient light bulbs. You'll save money, and they put off less heat!

Summer
Energy
Tips

Automatic Bank Draft: The Easiest Way to Pay Your Utility Bill

Imagine relaxing on the beach, watching the waves roll in, when suddenly you realize that you forgot to pay your utility bill. It'll be due before you get home, and that's going to cost you. For some of our customers, this is an annual concern. But thousands of others never have to worry about whether they've paid their bill, or mailing a check. Why? They've enrolled in our automatic Bank Draft Plan.

"When you enroll in the Bank Draft Plan, you can set it and forget it," says HU Customer Service Manager Terri Harris. "Whether during vacation, the holidays, whenever your busiest time of year is – paying Hartselle Utilities has already been taken care of, and you'll never have to worry about late utility bills again. And if you aren't happy with it, it just takes one phone call to cancel."

When you enroll in Bank Draft, the amount of your bill is automatically deducted from your bank account on the day it is due each month. The transaction will appear on your bank statement as a payment to Hartselle Utilities.

You still receive your utility bill each month as usual, and your due date does not change. The message "Paid by Bank Draft" will appear on your bill.

To enroll in the program, all you need to do is complete an enrollment form and bring it or mail it to HU along with a voided check. It takes about two minutes to enroll, and costs absolutely nothing. The form is on our website (go to www.hartselleutilities.com > Information > Automatic Bank Draft), available in our office, or we can mail you a form.

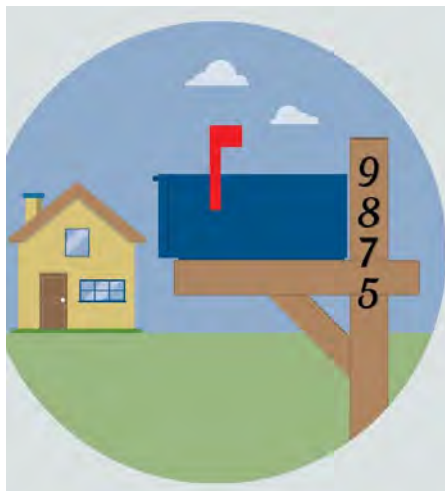
For more information and to request an enrollment form, call HU at (256) 773-3340 or send an email to Customer Service at inquiries@hartselleutilities.org.

Sewer Bill ... *continued from front*

well as downhill, so water lines can be placed only a few feet underground. Water pipes can generally be constructed in already cleared right-of-way areas. By contrast, the flow of wastewater through sewer lines is controlled by gravity. Sewer pipes must be installed in lower lying areas, and placed deeper in the ground, both of which can increase construction costs, replacement cost and the cost to maintain our sewer system. In addition, there are less sewer customers to spread these increased costs to than those of our water system.

There are ways you can help HU keep our wastewater treatment costs down and help protect our environment. Here are a few suggestions:

- Don't put anything into toilets other than human waste and toilet paper. Even if a wet wipe is advertised as 'flushable,' it's a solid. Throw it in the trash.
- Scrape food leftovers into the trash, or even better, into a compost bin
- Pour fats, oils and milk into used containers, with lids, and put into the trash, instead of pouring them down the drain.
- Use environmentally friendly detergents and cleaning products.
- Wash paint brushes in a bucket and pour the water into your yard or garden, away from drains.
- Dispose of household chemicals in safe containers instead of pouring them down the drain.
- Never pour leftover medicine down the drain or into the toilet.



Make sure your house number can be seen from the road.

Clearly display your house number so the Hartselle Fire and Police departments – and other emergency responders – can quickly find you in an emergency.



Rates Increasing July 1

Rates for water and natural gas services will increase effective July 1, 2018.

Water rates will increase by two percent, which will affect the average residential monthly water bill by approximately \$0.52.

Natural gas rates will increase by 2.165 percent. The average residential monthly natural gas bill during the heating season, when customers use the most natural gas, may increase by approximately \$0.93.

Have you signed up for E-Bill?



Less paper to handle
Get your statement faster
Access your utility bill from anywhere!
www.hartselleutilities.org/e-bill

Hartselle Recycling Calendar

Here are the next four months of Hartselle's Recycling Calendar. If you have a question about sanitation pickup or containers, visit hartselle.org or call Public Works at (256) 773-2643.

Recycling Pick Up

July '18						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

September '18						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

City Holiday

August '18						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	1

October '18						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Have a non-emergency question or a question about your bill? Email us at inquiries@hartselleutilities.org.

We try to respond to billing and general questions within 24 hours; service issues that need investigation may take up to 48 hours.

To report a gas leak, sewer backup or power outage, call our office. Our phones are answered 24 hours a day, seven days a week. During business hours (M-F, 7:30 am - 4:30 pm), call (256) 773-3340. After hours, call (256) 773-2533 or (256) 773-2588.



256-773-2533 or 911



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