

# Estimated Bills and Billing Options

Winter is just around the corner. While snow and winter weather conditions add to our region's beauty, they can also present challenges for crews tasked with reading electric meters throughout our service area. Occasionally, when access to a meter is obstructed by snow/ice or treacherous road conditions limit our ability to do a meter read, Liberty Utilities must estimate customer usage to keep the billing cycle on schedule.

## How does Liberty Utilities determine an estimated bill?

An estimated bill is determined one of two ways, depending on whether it is a primary or secondary residence.

### Primary Residential Customers

Estimated bills are determined based on the full baseline kilowatt hours (kWh) allotted for your rate per day for your full billing cycle.

### Secondary Residential Customers

Estimated bills are determined based on historical usage.

Historical usage may or may not accurately reflect the conditions of the current billing cycle. For example, if you've added to the

number of people in your household or changed the month when you take your annual vacation, those are factors that could impact the accuracy of a bill estimate for a given period.

## What if my estimated bill is wrong?

In the event that estimated usage is higher or lower than the amount a customer actually used during a billing period, the customer's account will be reconciled during the subsequent billing period when crews have access to read the meter. Even with estimated usage, customers are only charged for electricity they use during the year.

## What can I do to prevent the need for an estimated bill?

First and foremost, keep your meter accessible by clearing away snow and ice to allow for a successful meter read.

A clear meter is a good start to reduce the likelihood of an estimated bill; however, road and parking conditions may prevent a meter reader's ability to access the meters in your neighborhood. Liberty Utilities offers several billing options which are another great way to manage your bill and help eliminate the need for estimated bills.

**“Remember to keep your meters clear of ice and snow! When meter readers have access, we can avoid estimated billing.”**

## Billing Options

### Budget Billing

Liberty Utilities will take your average energy use for the previous 12 months and divide it into equal monthly payments. If you use less energy than projected, you will receive a bill credit. If you use more than projected, the additional amount will be rolled into your next budget billing period.

### Zero Estimate Billing

*(for non-primary, secondary residences)*

Liberty Utilities will issue the minimum monthly service charge and the energy usage during that time will be billed once the meter can be read. This billing option is only available November through April when estimated bills are more likely.

Liberty Utilities is pursuing AMI technology or “smart meters” that will eliminate the need to physically read meters and, therefore, eliminate estimated bills. Until then, we will always do our best to safely read meters and reduce the need to estimate bills. If you would like to inquire about budget billing or zero estimate billing, please contact a customer service representative at **1-800-782-2506**.

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