

That “HCUA” line item on your water bill... Source: [PEER report, 2010](#) (54 pages)

What is the Harrison County Utility Authority (HCUA) and why am I paying them every month? First, some history...

Following Hurricane Katrina in 2005, Governor Barbour created a commission to study/offer recommendations for the Gulf Coast’s recovery, one of which was to create an entity to manage sewer, water, storm water, and other utility services across the six counties (Hancock, Harrison, Jackson, Pearl River, Stone, and George). The Gulf Coast Region Utility Act, passed during the 2006 Regular Session of the Legislature, created the HCUA and five other countywide utility authorities.

Soon thereafter, the Mississippi Gulf Region Water and Wastewater Plan (MGRWWP) was authorized to identify immediate water and wastewater infrastructure needs and project those needs over the next twenty five years and promote economic development in the six counties.

While other studies projected slow to moderate growth between 2% and 27% in Harrison County from 2000-2020, the MGRWWP projected explosive growth, 64%, for the same period. These figures were a factor in justifying the construction of water tanks and wastewater facilities; Harrison County now has utility infrastructure sufficient to serve a population level that most likely will not materialize in the near future.

HCUA funds its operations and debt service by assessing each member city and the county an amount in relation to the water and sewer used by citizens within its boundaries.

The HCUA Board is composed of each Harrison County city’s mayor and two Harrison County supervisors. Donald Schaar serves as HCUA’s executive director. The budget and all resolutions enacted must be approved unanimously by this seven member board.

Biloxi’s share of the HCUA budget this current year, FY18, is \$11,555,000 of which 35% goes to debt, 20% for solid waste, 5% for operational reserve, and 40% for water and wastewater.

Looking at your monthly city utility bill, you’ll see charges for: (1) Water, (2) Sewer, (3) Garbage, and (4) HCUA. If you’re a commercial customer you’ll also see Sales Tax, 7%. Residential customers are not charged sales tax for water.

Since most of you, if not all of you, are residential customers, let’s look at an actual residential water bill.

<u>Service</u>	<u>From Date</u>	<u>To Date</u>	<u>Meter No.</u>	<u>Previous Reading</u>	<u>Current Reading</u>	<u>Usage</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Water	04/26/2018	05/26/18	12345678	241259	247547	6288	8.97
Sewer							17.88
Garbage							14.33
HCUA							23.89

Explained as follows... Note that the cost/1,000 gallons used/processed increases categorically for water and sewer.

[Click here to see/print the water and sewer rates for this year and the next two annual step increases.](#)

The charge for the first 3,000 gallons of water is a flat rate, \$4.42.

The charge for the next 2,000 gallons of water, at \$1.30/1,000 gal is \$2.60.

The charge for the remaining 1,288 gallons of water, at \$1.52/1,000 gal is \$1.96.

There’s the total water charge for 6,288 gallons, **\$8.97**. (We’re off a penny due to rounding.)

The charge for the first 3,000 gallons of sewer is a flat rate, \$8.25.

The charge for the next 2,000 gallons of sewer, at \$2.75/1,000 gal is \$5.50.

The charge for the remaining 1,288 gallons of sewer, at \$3.21/1,000 gal is \$4.13.

There’s the total sewer charge for 6,288 gallons, **\$17.88**.

The charge for residential garbage service is a flat rate, **\$14.33** per can.

The HCUA charge is \$3.80/1,000 gal water used... \$380 X 6.228 (thousands of gal) = **\$23.89**

Total Charge for this billing period: **\$65.08** (\$8.97+\$17.88+\$14.33+\$23.89) (We’re off a penny due to rounding.)

[Click here to see/print this same example in spreadsheet form and 1 commercial example.](#)

Notes: If you have an irrigation system, you receive a separate bill for that meter/water... no sewer or HCUA charge!

Senior citizens are eligible for a senior rate.

Questions about your water/sewer bill?

Contact the city water department: 228.435.6236...195 Main Street.

A typical household in Biloxi typically uses a bit less than 5,000 gal/mo.

See [Water conservation tips](#)

This information was originally published in the Ward 5 eblast, 06/24/18.

The Ward 5 eblast is a weekly e-newsletter by Paul A. Tisdale, Councilman, Ward 5, Biloxi>

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