

Winter Meter Reading How To Estimate

Estimating readings can be a very complicated task. Especially the reconciling when meter reading begins again in spring. Water Solutions Pro and Pro Plus offer two choices when it becomes necessary to quit reading meters due to weather related issues.

Recommended Estimating – All versions

Our recommended approach is to adjust the rate table for effected customers removing any usage or overage fees. This means that during the months of estimated readings, each customer will receive a minimum bill. During data entry the customers meter reading will not change from period to period until the first non-estimated meter reading is entered. Once readings commence, adjust the water rate tables to include a basic rate (as before), and adjust the Usage Over amounts equal to an amount times the number of estimated readings plus the current month. An example;

Normal Rates

Basic Rate = 25.00

Usage over 4000 = .18/100 units

Estimated Rate

Basic Rate = \$25.00

Usage over 4000 = 0/100 units

First Non Estimate Rates (assuming 4 months of estimated readings + Current month)

Basic Rate = \$25.00

Usage over 20000 = .18/100 units (4000 units X 5 months (4months estimated + current month))

Afterwards reset the billing rates back to your normal rates. This method allows the customer to be charged appropriately for excessive or tiered water usage with out overcharging the customer.

Alternative Estimating Method

Water Solutions Pro - All versions Water Solutions Pro Plus Version 3.27 build 1.58 or lower

This version is able to approximate customer's water usage by looking at their average of averages. This sounds weird but here is an example of how it works: July a new customer uses 10,000 gal. His average is now 5000 gal (10000/2). August the customer uses an additional 10000 gal and his average is now 7500 gal ((5000+10000)/2). September the customer uses 8000 gal and his average is now 7750 (7500+8000)/2. In October the customer uses 4000 gal and his average is now 5875 gal (7750+4000/2). You should notice that the estimated or average use is lagging behind the actual customer's use but responds fairly fast.

To use this method double click in the current reading box within the Enter Readings form and the program will automatically calculate the appropriate reading and display it in the field. Caution should be exercised to keep the number of estimated readings evenly divided between estimated months. Example start estimating in November and end in March. This way as the customer's usage decreases during the first portion and then begins to increase during the latter estimated months would tend to balance.

The customers first bill may show a negative usage or a rather large usage. If either occurs you will need to look at the readings and determine if a credit or some other adjustment might be due the customer.

Water Solutions Pro Plus 3.27 build 1.59 or newer

This version attempts to estimate the customer's intended usage based on a generic model of water usage. We have discovered that seasonal changes in water usage typically vary 42% from seasonal highs. Low readings tend not to change from November through February. Using this as a base we have implemented a method where we can estimate a customer's current usage based on their last usage and the time of the

year. Of course the accuracy will be dependent on weather and other anomalies. To illustrate this method lets look at a couple of examples;

Customer uses 7000 gal in September the program would estimate his October usage as 5800. If a customer used 4500 gal in November his estimated usage in December, January and February would be 4500 gal. If a customer used 5000 gal in April his May estimate would be 6230.

To use this method of estimated double click in the current reading box of the Enter Readings form. As with the version above you may need to adjust the customer's account manually if large discrepancies are found during the first billing after a long period of estimating.