



Town of Little Elm
100 West Eldorado Parkway
Little Elm, TX 75068
(214) 975-0406
www.littleelm.org

News Release

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Media Contact: Celso Martinez 972-623-8836

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Water averaging can help families manage budgets

LITTLE ELM (June 21, 2018) Whether it's a consumer purchase, like a car or large appliance, or a service like lawn maintenance or housecleaning, homeowners count on knowing how much their monthly charge will be, allowing them the ability to set and maintain their household budget.

"Knowing their monthly payments for their budget every month will make it easier for families to allocate their discretionary spending," says the Town's Chief Financial Officer Karla Stovall. "But when the monthly cost of an essential service like water is unpredictable, it's difficult to develop and maintain a family budget."

To address the uncertainties of household water bills, Little Elm's Utility Billing Department has introduced the Average Monthly Payment Plan (AMPP), a payment-leveling program.

"When customers switch to AMPP, previous usage information is used to determine their average billing amount," added Stovall. "Each month the average bill is then adjusted based on their actual usage."

The payment plan is based on an average of the previous rolling 12 months' charges and current actual charges. A customer's bill will fluctuate according to the average water consumption.

The program removes the summer peaks and winter valleys of water billing, giving customers a chance to more accurately budget their family finances. The predictability of the utility bill can make it possible for households to create and maintain a reliable and accurate spending profile.

Customers who are interested in enrolling in the program should contact the Utility Billing Department at (214) 975- 0480 or visit the Utility Billing office, located on the second floor of Town Hall, 100 West Eldorado Parkway. There is no additional charge to participate in the program but there are some eligibility requirements.

"This is not a discount program, and there is no change in the costs," said Stovall. "It is a way for families and households to manage their finances in a more equitable way, month to month."

While the program can be a welcome relief in the summer, participants should be mindful that traditionally light winter water bills will match those of the summer, putting all 12 months of the billing cycle on an even footing.

The program, while important to those families seeking a more even budgeting process, can allow for individuals to become somewhat complacent in their summer watering habits.

"Just because the summer peak is evened out to a lower cost does not automatically mean that irrigation watering can be increased," she said. "Conservation and smart watering is still required, and in fact, will be even more important since the high-water bills that typically signal high usage will no longer be there."

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ABOUT LITTLE ELM – Little Elm is one of the state's fastest growing communities. Nestled on the shores of Lake Lewisville, the Town was incorporated in 1966, adopting the Council/Manager form of government. The population increased dramatically over the last several years, growing from under 4,000 in 2000 to over 30,000 today. Little Elm's population exceeds the state average in education and income, and is increasingly trending younger and technologically proficient. The Town's footprint is just over 21 square miles and boasts some 66 linear miles of shoreline within its boundaries.