

Bill Dispute for December 2017

February 2, 2018

Terri & Robert Maple
1214 264th. Pl. Ocean Park
Account # 1209

North Beach Water District,

I know this letter is lengthy but I ask that you please take the time to read.

This letter is to dispute my December 2017 water bill of \$214.49. I am a home owner and do not rent out my home. I was notified by phone on January 4, 2018, of excessive water usage for my December usage. At the time of the call I advised (Nikki) I was unaware of any problems as we had only used the home for 6 days that month. We never discussed the dollar amount. Upon receiving my bill I was shocked to see it was \$214.49. I am nearing the 5 year mark of owning this home and have only needed to pay the monthly minimum. On January 25th, I made personal contact with Nikki and Jack at the water district office to discuss the matter.

The records indicate my meter ran continuously from December 3rd, 2017 at 4:53 pm to January 14, 2018 when it was shut off at 9:53 am, using 38,000 gallons or roughly 3500 gallons a day. My wife and I arrived at the home on December 2nd and turned the water on at 11:00 am, the meter shows it was 10:53 am. I guessed that we had left the following day December 3rd around noon and the meter shows the water was shut off at 10:53 am. My recollection and the meter pretty much match.

Jack showed me where the meter shows the water was turned back on at 4:53 pm on December 3rd, roughly 6 hours after we had left and then shut off 11 days later on Thursday January 14th at 9:53 am.

What is odd, and I advised Jack of this is, I came back to the home on this mentioned shut off day of January 14th, to repair a leak on my roof. I advised Jack I arrived at 10:00 am essentially 7 minutes prior to the meter reading when it had been shut off. Below I will explain my routine of using my home but, I know when I arrived on January 14th, I turned on my water, watched the garden hose turn on and I then shut it off. I then had to use the bathroom. If I had some momentary lapse of reason of leaving my garden hose on when I left December 3rd, I would have been shutting my water off on my arrival, not turning it on and I cannot believe I would

have made a mistake like that. Plus, when I flushed the toilet I would have obviously noticed the toilet did not properly flush.

Jack, in his experience, believes this was a busted pipe or a garden hose left on. I can guarantee you there was no busted pipes so the only options are, a garden hose left on and or theft. Theft is hard to believe as for someone would have to spend extensive time taking 3500 gallons a day from a garden hose plus my neighbors saw nothing suspicious.

This leaves the garden hose theory. Nearly 5 years ago the peninsula experienced temperatures in the teens which caused one of my neighbor's pipes to burst inside their home causing major damage. Shortly after that, I had the water district install a shut off valve for me. During one visit I turned on my water and a braided water line burst inside my home. Since these two incidents I have a specific procedure for shutting off my water when I leave, that is, I turn off my water heater, turn on my garden hose which is in my front yard and in eyesight of the water shut off and I turn off my water and watch the hose come to a stop. Upon returning I turn the water on and watch the garden hose come on and I then turn the garden hose off during our stay. This I believe helps to reduce the initial surge of pressure to my inside lines to help prevent another line burst. My wife and I always verbally confirm with each other that the water heater is off, garden hose on, and water valve shut off. This has been our routine for years.

I cannot in good conscious believe I did not turn my water valve off that day of December 3rd. I will always believe there was an issue with the meter. The water department supplied me with a locking sleeve that I have now put on my valve just in case someone had turned it on as a possible act of criminal mischief.

I ask that you consider my request of dispute that I did not have a busted pipe or leave my garden hose on and reverse this bill amount or compensation allowed by water department policy. Both Nikki and Jack as well as other employees present were very professional and helpful with assisting me with my dilemma.

Sincerely,

Bob Maple
503-939-2893