



CITY OF HOUSTON

Public Works and Engineering
Department

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Rent Restricted Multi-Family Properties Water/Wastewater Conservation Rebate Program Details

The City of Houston recently enacted Ordinance 2010-305, which raised water/wastewater rates for multi-family properties to cover the cost of service provided. Due in part to the fact that owners of rent restricted multi-family properties must include the costs of water/wastewater in their rents and because the city desires to promote and encourage water conservation, the ordinance provides for assistance to rent restricted multi-family properties. See page 3 for the complete definition of a rent restricted apartment unit.

The City, through the Department of Public Works and Engineering, has adopted a water conservation incentive program for the next two fiscal years, beginning July 2010 and continuing until June 30, 2012 (Fiscal Year 2011 and Fiscal Year 2012). This program focuses on educating tenants to use water efficiently with the goal of water conservation and encourages installation of water saving devices. Property managers will work with tenants by providing conservation education and literature. Adopting conservation practices will save water and reduce water bills over the next two years and beyond. Successful completion of the program will result in a monthly rebate credit applied to the water account, which will reduce the rate increase by 13.53% for Fiscal Year 2011, and 6.97% for Fiscal year 2012. The rebate credit will be applied to the account and will not be refunded by check or voucher.

To participate in the **Rent Restricted Multi-family Conservation Rebate Program**, the property manager must meet the following:

Year One (July 2010 to June 2011):

1. Complete the application and attach a copy of the Land Use Restriction Agreement (LURA), HUD Regulatory Agreement or other evidence documenting the property as rent restricted. Mail both documents to Utility Customer Service on or before September 1, 2010. The email address is Allison.Wolfert@houstontx.gov or by mail to Utility Customer Service, PO Box 4863, Houston, Texas 77210-4863, Attn: Allison Wolfert.
2. Pay all water/wastewater bills for the property in full, by the due date on the bill each month, throughout the program
3. Provide documentation of the property's local, state or federal inspection within the past 18 months by November 1, 2010 to the above email address or post office box.
4. Coordinate a water conservation education program for tenants and submit documentation of completion by November 1, 2010 to the above email address or post office box.

To receive the rebate in year 2, the property manager must do the following:

Year Two (July 2011 to June 2012):

1. Complete the renewal application and mail it to Utility Customer Service on or before September 1, 2011. The email address is Allison.Wolfert@houstontx.gov or by mail to Utility Customer Service, PO Box 4863, Houston, Texas 77210-4863, Attn: Allison Wolfert.
2. Pay all water/wastewater bills for the property in full, by the due date on the bill each month, throughout the program.
3. Complexes meet water conservation goal after Year One, minimum water reduction of 5%. See timeline Year Two for more details.
4. If the qualifying complex fails to meet the minimum 5% reduction, the complex may be eligible again beginning January 2012, if the complex meets the 5% reduction for January 2012.

Calculation of Rebate:

The formula for calculating the rebate is B (total monthly utility bill) \times F (rebate factor for that year) \times U (total number of rent restricted units/total number of units in complex) = Rebate

The rebate will be equal to the complex's total monthly City of Houston water/wastewater bill (starting 7/1/10) \times rebate factor (.1353 in Year 1 and .0697 in Year 2) \times total number of rent restricted units divided by the total number of units in the complex.

If more than 75% of a qualified property's units are rent restricted units, the City shall count all units as rent restricted units at 100%.

Occupancy numbers will be taken into account in determining achievement of the 5% reduction in water consumption and will be subject to audit by the city. Occupancy numbers for July 2009 to June 2010 will need to be provided, along with the occupancy numbers for each month of this program going forward.

Timeline:

Year 1

- July 2010 Letter announcing Year 1 of the program mailed out to prospective applicants
- September 1, 2010 completed application and LURA submitted to City of Houston
- November 1, 2010 documentation of local, state or federal inspection program due
- November 1, 2010 documentation of water conservation education program for tenants due
- Once application, inspection documentation, and water conservation documentation submitted and approved, processing will begin on Year 1 rebates each month for period covering July 2010 – June 2011.

Year 2

- June 2011 Letter announcing Year 2 of the program mailed out to prospective applicants
- September 1, 2011 completed renewal application submitted to City of Houston
- Once application is submitted and approved, processing will begin for Year 2 rebates.

- Starting with July 2011, if the average daily rate for this month is 5% less than the average daily rate for July 2009, the rebate will be computed per the formula. The rebate will continue to be applied each month for period covering July 2011 – June 2012.
- If July 2011 does not show a 5% reduction when compared to July 2009, the customer may be eligible for the rebate starting in January 2012. If the customer can demonstrate a 5% reduction when January 2012 is compared to January 2010, the customer will receive the rebate for the period covering January 2012 - June 2012.

Definition Rent Restricted Apartment Unit:

- A Rent Restricted Apartment Unit means a single apartment unit in a multi-family residential rental property (covering more than 16 rent restricted apartment units) with a maximum monthly rent
 - established by law, deed restriction, or required by a state or federal agency, or by contract with the state or federal government.
 - that includes charges for water and wastewater utility services.

Length of Program:

- 2 year program

Conservation Periods and Fiscal Year Definitions:

- Six-month conservation periods from July – December and January – June
- Fiscal year 2010 is July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010
- Fiscal year 2011 is July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011
- Fiscal year 2012 is July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012

Conservation Rebate Program Coordinator:

- Allison Wolfert 713-371-1158
- Allison.Wolfert@houstontx.gov
- Available to assist with any questions, support/assistance, tenant meetings, and educational materials

The City of Houston is here to help your properties utilize this program successfully. Conservation and educational materials and links are available at this website.