

Multi-Family Conservation Program (MCP) Frequently Asked Questions

Abbreviations Used in this FAQ

AMR Automated Meter Reading

GPD Gallons Per Day

GPF Gallons Per Flush

GPM Gallons Per Minute

What is the Multiple-family Conservation Program (MCP)?

The MCP is a per-unit flat-rate billing program designed for buildings with four or more residential units that complete a set of water efficiency measures. Properties with four or more apartments that were billed under the old “frontage” flat-rate program as of July 1, 2012 were automatically converted to the MCP rate on that date. These buildings must be properly metered with meters that are equipped with Automated Meter Reading (AMR) devices, and they must complete required water efficiency measures by December 31, 2018 to continue to be billed on the MCP rate. If they fail to certify or demonstrate that they qualify their annual MCP bill will include a 10% surcharge beginning on July 1, 2019.

Buildings that are on metered billing are able to apply for the MCP rate on a prospective basis, but they must complete all applicable water efficiency requirements before they submit an MCP application.

Is the MCP rate right for my building?

DEP strongly recommends that property owners understand each building’s water use and compare the MCP unit rate with what the unit cost might be if the property were billed on metered charges. To assist with this analysis, customers are able to view their daily water use on DEP’s website through My DEP Account, and buildings on the MCP rate are able to utilize the Flat Rate Comparison Tool.

What is the Flat Rate Comparison Tool?

The Flat Rate Comparison Tool is available through My DEP Account, and it allows customers on the MCP rate or frontage charges to see what their metered consumption was for a specific period of time and to compare their flat-rate charges with what consumption-based charges would have been. The Tool can help customers make an informed decision on which option is best for them: metered billing or flat-rate charges.

How do I access the Flat Rate Comparison Tool?

If your property is billed on flat-rate charges and metered by an AMR-equipped meter, you can access the Flat Rate Comparison Tool by visiting My DEP Account. After you click the “See My Water Use” link, click the flashing “Flat Rate Comparison” button. For the comparison to be accurate, your property’s meter and AMR device must have been functioning for a full year.

Why does the Flat Rate Comparison Tool reference my meter’s age?

Some meters slow down as they age. Therefore, a message on the Flat Rate Comparison Tool alerts you that the posted metered usage may be understated and your property’s actual usage may be higher if your meter is old. This is a consideration to take into account when choosing to be billed at a flat rate or based on metered consumption.

Should I convert to metered billing or stay on MCP?

DEP cannot advise you as to whether you should convert to meter billing, but your property’s consumption information and the Flat Rate Comparison Tool are both available through My DEP Account to help you evaluate which option is right for you. Please note that customers who convert to meter billing cannot return to the MCP for a period of two years.

When do I have to make a decision to stay on MCP or switch to meter billing?

As long as your property is in compliance with MCP, you may remain on MCP as long as you wish or switch to meter billing at any time.

Where did you get my building’s unit count?

Your unit count is based on a combination of DEP’s records and the Department of Finance’s Real Property tax records. If the unit count noted on your water and sewer bill is not accurate, please contact DEP’s customer service at (718) 595-7000. You will need to submit a copy of the building’s Certificate of Occupancy.

MCP Conservation Requirements

What are the fixture conservation requirements and when must they be completed?

MCP requires participants to implement certain conservation measures in order to remain on annual flat rate billing. Properties must have installed water-saving toilets (1.6 gallon) and showerheads/faucets (2.5 gpm) in 70% of all units by 2012 or 1.28 gpf and 2 gpm if installed after July 1, 2012 and due by December 31, 2018. Toilets installed as a part of DEP’s original 1994 to 1997 Toilet Rebate Program will count towards this requirement. If your building was constructed or substantially renovated since 1995, it is also likely that you have water-saving fixtures installed; however, you must certify your building’s fixtures by completing an MCP application.

How do I know if I have low-consumption toilets already?

All low-consumption toilets have a marking indicating that they use 1.6 gallons or less per flush. Also, it is likely that customers who had toilets installed between 1994 and 1997 as a part of DEP’s Toilet Rebate Program already meet the MCP toilet and showerhead requirement.

What if I need to replace my toilets to fulfill the MCP fixture requirement?

For a limited time, DEP is offering a Toilet Replacement Program that will provide a voucher for \$125 per toilet that can be redeemed at qualified suppliers. Please keep in mind that you must have an AMR-equipped meter installed for at least three months before you can qualify to receive a voucher. If the building didn’t participate in DEP’s 1994-1997 TRP then there should be a tab on the account’s My DEP Account page with an application and instructions.

What about leaks?

Once a property has been approved for the MCP rate it has an ongoing responsibility for basic water management. All toilet leaks, all other leaks in excess of 50 gpd and any leaks between 10 and 50 gpd that cost less than \$250 to repair are defined as “Substantial Leaks” that must be repaired by the owner.

Building laundry rooms

Upgrade of laundry room clothes washers to Energy Star-rated products is required at the time of route operator contract award or renewal or within five years if the laundry room is managed by the owner rather than a contractor (“route operator”). If tenants, condo owners or cooperators own their own clothes washers, lease language, bylaws or other appropriate governing documents must be amended to require Energy Star appliances in the future.

Boiler makeup water meter

In high-use buildings DEP may require that the owner install a makeup water submeter on their heating boiler.

Site leak detection survey

Properties that have long water distribution piping runs between buildings must allow DEP to conduct a distribution leak survey of the property if requested.

Commercial tenant meters

Do I have to separately meter my commercial spaces? What if I physically cannot meter them?

MCP customers do not have to separately meter “Low-Consumption Commercial Units”. Water in these units is used primarily by employees for sanitary purposes with projected annual consumption of less than 63,000 gallons annually (about 170 – 250 gallons per day). However, commercial units with projected annual consumption of more than 63,000 gallons annually (e.g., laundry, food, medical or beverage-related businesses) must be separately metered. Properties that fail to meter such units will be assessed a 10% surcharge on their annual MCP bill. Please refer to DEP’s FAQ concerning commercial meter requirements and placement at nyc.gov/dep at the Property Managers and Trade Professionals link.

MCP and Billing Issues

What happens if I am delinquent on my water and sewer bill for more than 90 days?

MCP customers who are more than 90 days delinquent may be converted to meter billing. Meter billing customers who are delinquent are not eligible for the MCP.

I’m in a payment agreement. Am I still eligible for MCP?

Yes, your participation in a payment agreement does not affect your eligibility for MCP as long as you remain current on your new charges and the payment agreement.

If I have a Wastewater Allowance can I keep it after I am enrolled in MCP?

Any Wastewater Allowance, including but not limited to air conditioning and refrigeration allowances, that was previously authorized for a property is discontinued with the effective date of the MCP charge(s), unless such Wastewater Allowance is attributable to a separately-metered commercial unit.

Properties on metered billing

I just bought the property and found out that I am on meter charges. Can I convert to MCP?

Four-family properties or larger can apply for the MCP from meter billing. Applicants must meet all the conservation requirements of the program before being accepted, and conversion to MCP is prospective only. Please note that properties that have converted to meter billing cannot return to MCP for a period of two years, regardless of a change in ownership.

Entire Building Water Meter and AMR

How long do I have to install a meter and AMR device to remain on MCP billing?

Auto-enrolled MCP customers must install a meter that is equipped with an AMR device by December 31, 2018.

What do I have to do to have a meter installed?

You can contact a NYC Master Licensed Plumber to arrange for a meter to be installed. Permits from DEP are required for all meter installations, and the meter must be a DEP-approved meter.

How much will it cost to install a meter with my own Licensed Plumber if I wish to do that?

DEP will credit the cost of meter installation according to the schedule provided in the Reimbursable Metering Program (RMP) regulation at nyc.gov/waterboard. You can also download information concerning the Reimbursable Metering Program at nyc.gov/dep under Property Managers & Trade Professionals.

I'm metered but I don't have an AMR box. How to I resolve that?

DEP-BCS Inspectors from any of our Borough Offices should be able to install an AMR box ("MTU") on request. There are some older meters that may be advantageous to replace as part of this process. The meters in this category have meter numbers beginning with an "N", "K", or "I". You can see your meter number on your annual bill. DEP has issued work orders to our Meter Contractors to replace these meters so you should have already received a letter or email from us to contact a Meter Contractor. You can also replace the meter using the Reimbursable Metering Program.

Relationship to Multi-family Water Assistance Program (MWAP) Administered by HPD

Please note that MCP certification (or meter billing) is required to qualify for the Multi-family Water Assistance Program administered by HPD.

Resources for Owners

Water and Wastewater Rate Schedule, Part IV Section 2 contains the complete detailed MCP rules.

Compliance Document: DEP no longer issues approval letters for MCP applications except for properties moving from meter-based billing. You can print out a Compliance Letter through DEP's website ("Compliant Multi-family Conservation Program Properties") in the Property Managers and Trade Professionals section of the DEP website.

Toilet Replacement Program: If the building needs to replace its toilets to attain MCP compliance, DEP offers vouchers for purchasing High-Efficiency toilets, while funding is available. Go to "Conservation Programs" on the DEP website.

Residential Water Surveys: If you are not sure whether your building has water-saving toilets a DEP Contractor will perform a water survey of a sample of the apartments with a written report to you. This service can only be provided once and is not available on a repeat basis. A request form is available on the DEP website under "Conservation Programs".

Leaking Toilets Brochure: "Repair Your Leaking Toilets" is available on the DEP website, "Water Saving Tips" page.

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