



Town of Apex Utility Billing Process Review



May 13, 2025

Objective, Approach, and Status

Objective: The objective of the engagement is to review the current utility billing processes, understand the steps taken to recover from the security incident, and conduct a simulation of billing to confirm the steps taken in recovery and to identify any significant discrepancies.

Approach: The approach includes three key phases and numerous tasks and activities. In summary:

1. Discover current state processes including tools and technologies used
2. Conduct a simulated test of processes over a three-month period to compare to actual bills generated following the security incident
3. Summarize findings and recommend actions for the Town

Status:

1. Discovery and simulations are complete, BerryDunn has begun reviewing the simulation output files, with some files in varying formats. The timeline has been impacted by Town staff availability due to operations, competing projects, turnover, and weather-related closures.
2. 50 accounts from Cycle 1 and 50 accounts from Cycle 2 have been reviewed in detail as of May 9th. Additional spot-checking is ongoing.

Preliminary Key Findings

The following preliminary key findings have been identified based upon the review of simulation testing output files:

1. In totality, the data indicates customers did not overpay.
2. The initial review shows a total under collection for Cycle 1 in the amount of approximately \$255,000 (approx. 2.4%).
3. The initial review shows a total under collection for Cycle 2 in the amount of approximately \$45,000 (approx. 0.4%).
4. Of the 100 total accounts reviewed in Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 to-date, a single account appears to have been overbilled by \$19.05 on 145,000 gallons usage. Accounts were sampled for a cross-section.
5. It appears the source of most inquiries in a given bill was due to timing and how credits and base charges were managed in an attempt to provide relief.
6. Due to the way in which data is available, analysis is time consuming and labor intensive.

Preliminary Paths Forward

Based upon the positive customer results to-date and the significant time and labor involved in reviewing customer accounts, the following preliminary paths are recommended for consideration at this time:

- A. Proceed with a full account by account review on a rolling basis
- B. Recognize the under-collection situation and proceed with no further review
- C. Initiate an opt-in account review campaign and otherwise pause a full review
- D. Isolate high usage accounts for review and otherwise pause a full review

Additional considerations:

1. Paths A, C, and D above will benefit from leadership clarification related to how customers who were under-charged will be managed as well as minimal thresholds for collection/credits.
2. The Town has paused collections and shutoffs for a significant (and growing) time period.
3. The upcoming replacement utility billing system implementation is requiring Town resources.

Questions and Discussion