

working for clean rivers

The Bureau of Environmental Services works with Portland residents and businesses to protect water quality, public health, and the environment through wastewater collection and treatment, sewer construction and maintenance, stormwater management, and stream and watershed restoration.



Businesses that discharge less water to the sewer than the amount coming into the building could save through the Submeter Program.

Environmental Services Submeter Program

For most businesses, the volume of water that flows into their building is roughly equal to the volume of water drained to the sewer. In those cases, a business' sewer volume is billed based on the incoming water meter. For some businesses, the volume of water discharged to the sewer can be significantly more or less than the incoming City water. These businesses may benefit from the Environmental Services' Submeter Program.

Participation requires meeting [Portland City Code \(PCC\) chapter 17.36.050](#) and [Submeter Program Administrative Rules ENB-4.32](#). Customers install submeters on their business' internal plumbing to accurately measure and bill for water that is discharged to the sewer.

Examples of business processes where water in does not equal water out

Water flowing to sewer is less than water in

- Cooling towers or boilers are used
- Landscape irrigation
- Beverage bottling, food production and packaging

Water flowing to sewer is more than water in

- Uses water from a well
- Rainfall harvesting
- Brings in hauled water for discharge to the sewer

Types of Submeters

Credit Submeter. This type of submeter is installed on a water line that "feeds" to water-loss processes such as beverage or food production, irrigation pipes, and cooling towers. The reduction in sewer charges shows as a credit on the utility bill that equals the current commercial/industrial sanitary sewage volume rate.



ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
CITY OF PORTLAND

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THE ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES SUBMETER PROGRAM

Discharge Submeter. This type of submeter is installed on the outgoing sewer pipe to measure water discharged to the sewer system. Discharge meters can be complex to install and operate. They must be approved by Environmental Services prior to installation and must be carefully selected for the type of water the meter will measure. Working with a meter vendor or technician can ensure the proper meter is selected. The meter owner must maintain and calibrate the meter to ensure accuracy.

When a physical meter is infeasible to install or may not accurately record flows, Environmental Services may allow a sewer user to propose an alternative method of calculation in lieu of installing submeters. Any alternative methods used for sewer billing must be measurable, verifiable, and approved by Environmental Services.

Program fees

There are administrative fees to participate in the program. When deciding if your business can benefit from the program, you should consider all costs related to participation. Find current fees at www.portlandoregon.gov/bes/submeter.

Am I eligible to participate?

Your company is eligible if you can answer “yes” to all the following questions:

- Are you a City of Portland sewer/stormwater/water customer?
- Does your company pay water/sewer user services charges at the commercial rate?
- Does your company put water into a manufactured product, cooling towers, or other systems that evaporate water or irrigate a landscape?
- Does the cost of the water volume going into product, evaporation, and/or irrigation exceed the costs and fees for a submeter? Contact the Submeter Program at 503-823-7856 for assistance with these calculations.
- Is your company willing to purchase, install, regularly maintain and calibrate a meter for the

purposes of measuring water/sewer that may affect sewer billing?

- Is your company willing to read, record, and submit submeter reads per an Environmental Services’ established schedule?

Businesses that discharge wastewater to the sewer in greater volumes than the water coming in may be required to install a submeter and comply with the conditions of the program.

How do I enroll in the Program?

1. Consult with the Environmental Services Submeter Program on estimated use, meter application, and meter types prior to installation. Call us at 503-823-7856.
2. Purchase and install the submeter(s) in compliance with PCC 17.36.050 and Administrative Rules ENB-4.32
3. Submit a completed Submeter Program application form.
4. Meet with Submeter Program representative for inspection of submeter(s).
5. Complete any required changes/modification necessary to comply with PCC 17.36.050 and Administrative Rules ENB-4.32.

If required, submit Submeter Reporting Form on or before scheduled due date(s). Participation in the program requires timely submeter read reporting.

For questions or more information

Call: 503-823-7856

Email: submeterprogram@portlandoregon.gov

Online: www.portlandoregon.gov/bes/submeter

Address: City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services Submeter Program, 6543 N. Burlington Ave., Portland, OR 97203

Portland City Code (PCC) chapter 17.36.050:

www.portlandoregon.gov/citycode/28863#cid_588642

Submeter Program Administrative Rules ENB-4.32:

www.portlandoregon.gov/citycode/article/518084



The Bureau of Environmental Services is committed to providing meaningful access. To request translation, interpretation, modifications, accommodations, or other auxiliary aids, please call 503-823-7740 or Oregon Relay Service 711.

Traducción e Interpretación | Biên Dịch và Thông Dịch | अनुवादन तथा व्याख्या | 口笔译服务 | Устный и письменный перевод | Turjumaad iyo Fasiraad | Письмовий і усний переклад | Traducere și interpretariat | Chiaku me Awewen Kapas

503-823-7740