

#468159 311 Ryan Ave - Q4 2023 Assessment Inquiry (WM) - LH REDUCE

Submitted	Received via	Requester
March 23, 2024 at 11:23	Web Form	Christina Gibbons <tinajoygib@gmail.com>

CCs
Sarah Haas <sarah.haas@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Status category	Ticket status	Type	Priority	Group	Assignee
Open	Re-opened	Question	Normal	PW - Garbage	Lydia Campbell

Assessment No.	Property ID Number	Project Number	Do you need an interpreter?
240111	062822320521	CG2401A1	No

Latitude/Longitude	Location	Other Name	Garbage Hauler
-93.10445,44.93999	311 Ryan Ave, St. Paul, Minnesota, 55102	Christina Gibbons	Waste Management

Rescheduled LH Date:	Have you contacted your hauler about this garbage bill before?
04/18/2024	Yes

Staff Comments

PO purchased home in Dec 2022 and did not set up garbage service at that time. PO states that she was not receiving bills. Note: WM now has the correct address, so PO received Q4 bill. PO states that she called WM in 9-2023 to change service levels and only then realized an account had not been set up. PO states that, at that time, she attempted to pay over the phone. Neither WM nor PO were able to provide record of that payment. PO states that she has attempted to call WM multiple times to remedy the situation, but she cannot get through the automated system to speak to a person to resolve the issue. WM bill for Q4 2023 included service for Q2 and Q3 of 2023. Haulers are not allowed to back-bill more than one quarter, so I am recommending assessment be reduced to only include Q3 & Q4 charges with no late fees. There was a service level change in Q3 that was also adjusted for. That is a total reduction of \$71.74 for a new assessment total of \$134.09.

Billing year for Delinquent Garbage Bill Assessment	Date of CP (MM/DD/YYYY)
2023	05/15/2024

Total amount due for Delinquent Garbage Bill Assessment	Legislative Hearing Required
205.83	Yes

Other Telephone	Date of LH (MM/DD/YYYY)	Other Email
6512300916	04/04/2024	tinajoygib@gmail.com

Stated Reason for Appeal (if given)

I paid the bill with Waste Management

Did you receive a Saint Paul City Council Public Hearing Notice Ratification of Assessment?

Yes

Garbage Invoice Dates (i.e. January 1- March 31)

October 1 - December 31

Billing period for Delinquent Garbage Bill Assessment	Time of LH
Quarter 4 (October - December)	9:00AM

Christina Gibbons March 23, 2024 at 11:23

I paid the bill with waste management - my account shows PAID.

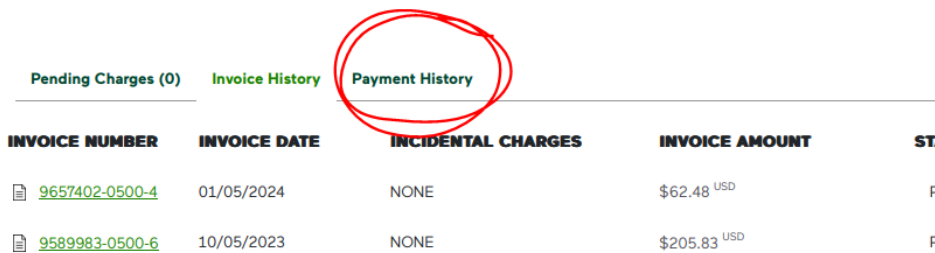
Lydia Campbell March 23, 2024 at 18:43

Dear Christina,

Thank you for contacting the city regarding your pending assessment for 311 Ryan Ave, St. Paul, Minnesota, 55102. You stated that you have already made the payment to the hauler and would like to have the assessment removed.

The attachment that you sent me is open to the page "Invoice History." This simply shows what you were billed, not who paid or when. I will need to see more detail. Can you please reply to this email with a bank statement, receipt, or account ledger with your hauler. Make sure that the date, amount, and Waste Management are all visible in the image. You can send a picture, screenshot, or file and attach it to your email reply.

For example, I should be able to see those details if you open the tab "Payment History,"



INVOICE NUMBER	INVOICE DATE	INCIDENTAL CHARGES	INVOICE AMOUNT	STA
9657402-0500-4	01/05/2024	NONE	\$62.48 ^{USD}	PA
9589983-0500-6	10/05/2023	NONE	\$205.83 ^{USD}	PA

For reference, if a bill is paid late, in this case after December 31, the City pays it on behalf of the homeowner and then sends the assessment as recompense. After that, the account will still show a zero balance, regardless of where the funds came from.

Lydia

City of Saint Paul
Public Works - Solid Waste
651-266-6101

Christina Gibbons March 24, 2024 at 09:24

Thank you for the response. I have tried contacting waste management but without success due to the weekend. I will ask them to pull records of the phone calls because I paid the bill over the phone. I'm wondering if there may have been an error with the phone payment which is why I am trying to contact them. I will try again during normal business hours and see what they can provide me. Thanks!

Lydia Campbell March 25, 2024 at 12:20

Thank you, Christina.

I have reached out to Waste Management as well, so if you're not able to get in touch, hopefully I'll hear from them.

That said, you should still be able to see a record of payment in either your bank statement or in the Waste Management account under the Payment History tab that I noted. If you're able to find that and share, it would be helpful.

Lydia

Christina Gibbons March 25, 2024 at 12:26

Hi Lydia. I am unable to get in touch with Waste Management. I cannot get the automated voice system to connect me with an actual person. I do not see the payment in my account under payment history. I highly suspect that someone messed up my payment over the phone and it was eventually "paid" by the city. How would I go about paying the bill with the city but also holding waste management accountable for the mistake?

Thanks for your help!

Christina Gibbons March 25, 2024 at 12:51

I have called waste management 7 times over the course of today and have not been able to connect with someone. Less than helpful. If I could pay with the city and also file a complaint with waste management that would be my goal.

Lydia Campbell March 27, 2024 at 16:11

Christina,

I'm sorry that you've had so much trouble getting ahold of them! I reached out and received the following response:

Did she happen to say when she made this payment to WM over the phone? I don't show any payment from her prior to the one she made on 1.14.24 for \$62.48. That was applied to Quarter 1, 2024 (Jan-Mar) bill.

Only communication would be when she called to set up service and when she called to double check on service level. Did not ask about any past due amount or what her balance was.

The bill that WM shared shows that you were charged for three quarters of service at once: Quarter 2 (Apr-Jun); Quarter 3 (Jul-Sep); and Quarter 4 (Oct-Dec). Then, when it went unpaid, it was all sent to the City for payment and you were assessed. At a minimum, I am going to recommend that the Quarter 2 (Apr-Jun) bill be removed from this assessment. Haulers are not allowed to back-bill for more than one quarter of service, even if you owed it.

It looks like you purchased the property in Dec 2022. Do you remember (or have phone records for) the calls that you made to WM in 2023?

FYI, the only way this assessment can be reduced/removed now is at a legislative hearing. The next one is next Thursday 4/4. At this point, I am planning to add this case to the agenda and, at a minimum, request removal of the Quarter 2 bill total. If you and I agree on the recommendation, there is no need to attend. If you disagree with my recommendation, then you are welcome to attend, either in-person or on the phone, and plead your case to the hearing officer.

I will be in touch once I hear back from WM.

Thank you for your patience with this process,

Lydia

Lydia Campbell March 29, 2024 at 16:24

Christina,

Waste Management is still saying that they did not receive any payments from you in 2023. If you disagree, please provide me with proof of payment.

Otherwise, moving forward, the only recommendation I will be making for the assessment is to remove the charge from Quarter 2 that should not have been added to your Quarter 4 bill. Note- it is permissible that they added the Quarter 3 bill onto the Quarter 4 bill. This will bring the assessment down from \$205.83 to \$136.83.

Let me know if you have any additional questions,

Lydia

Lydia Campbell March 29, 2024 at 16:47

Internal note

PO purchased home in Dec 2022 and did not set up garbage service. PO states that she was not receiving bills, although WM records show that most recent (Q4) notices were being sent to correct address. PO states that she called WM later in 2023 to change service levels and only then realized an account had not been set up. PO states that, at that time, she attempted to pay over the phone. Neither WM nor PO were able to provide record of that payment. PO states that she has attempted to call WM multiple times, but she cannot get through the automated system to speak to a person to resolve the issue.

WM bill for 2023 included service for Q2 and Q3 of 2023. Haulers are not allowed to back-bill more than one quarter, so I am recommending assessment be reduced to only include Q3 & Q4 charges with no late fees. That is a total reduction of \$69 for a new assessment total of \$136.83.

Christina Gibbons March 30, 2024 at 09:29

Hi Lydia.

First I want to say a huge THANK YOU for the follow-up you have provided. I greatly appreciate it. I do agree with the \$136.83 balance and am fine paying that.

My response to Waste Management would be this:

I definitely *did* ask about past due balance and payment options. I called Sept 7, 2023 to set up service. I spoke with Chris Garske. I explained that I had bought the home in Dec 2022 but was not living in the home right away after purchase. My call on Sept 7, 2023 was to set up service and ask about a bill I had received in the mail. The call was disconnected and I was unable to reach a representative when I called back. I called the following day and was able to confirm the service was set up for every other week collection. In December (maybe January?) I called back to inquire about the \$205.83 overdue balance. The amount was reflective of *weekly* collections and backdated to April. I am not sure where the April date came from since I started service in September. I requested that it be changed to reflect my requested service of *bi-weekly* collection. I do not remember the name, but it was a female representative. She said she would be able to change the amount to reflect bi-weekly and remove quarter 2. She assured me the call was recorded and the new/lower amount was reflected in my account. I logged in to my account and the amount was *not* changed and showed "paid" - our call was then disconnected. I attempted to call back and was unable to connect with a representative.

Overall, I have had a horrible time trying to connect with Waste Management for customer support. The direction/information I have been given over the phone does not appear to align with what is actually happening on the account. Then when I have questions or need corrections on the account, there is no way to get in touch with someone. It is infuriating. I realize none of this is your fault.

I do agree with your recommendations and am happy to pay Q3 and Q4 assessments. My only request would be that the amount for Q3 and Q4 reflect BIWEEKLY collection for the total amount. Is there a way that WM can confirm that?

Again, thanks for all your help on this!! I am relieved to be getting this taken care of.

Lydia Campbell March 30, 2024 at 13:06

Christina,

I have sent your reply to WM. I asked that they check their records for when the switch to an every-other-week (eow) service cart occurred and asked that they pull any phone records/notes that they have from your previous conversations.

At this point, the \$136.83 includes the two bills for Quarter 3 (Weekly Service \$74.35) + Quarter 4 (EOW Service \$62.48). If we make the change, the new total will be \$124.96. If WM can corroborate your story, either by showing that the switch occurred in September or by finding the verbal request, I will change my recommendation.

If I do not change it, you are welcome to attend the hearing and make the request to the hearing officer directly. She may agree with you and approve the change. You can attend either in-person or over the phone. The hearing is next Thursday 4-4 at 9:00AM, but there is a layover date on 4-18 if this is not resolved by then.

I will be in touch once I hear back from WM.

Thank you,

Lydia

Lydia Campbell April 2, 2024 at 10:17

Internal note

Notes from WM:

So the previous owner called to cancel her service as of 3.11.2023 – even though she sold her home to Christina Gibbons as of 1.1.23. We never were able to remove the 32 gal weekly service cart on site – so when she called us in Sept to start service – the agent went back to 4.1.23. Since the previous account was canceled as of 3.11.23.

We swapped out the 32 gal weekly cart the week of 9.12.23 for a 32 gal EOW cart.

Call from Christina: 09/07/2023 15:53:27 CGARSKE - PER CGARSKE CUSTOMER CALLED FOR NEW SERVICE EFF 01/02/2023 - SCOPE OF SERVICE (SOS) USED: 500

12/22/2023 16:39:18 ESBNOTES EMPCONSOLE TBROWN16 (07729448) CHRISTINA - CI TO INQ BILLING. APPROVAL TO ADJ BACK AMOUNT FROM 32T TO 3TL. - WILL ENT IN ADJ.

Lydia Campbell April 2, 2024 at 12:08

Christina,

I heard back from WM and they state that the every-other-week container was delivered to you on 9-12-2023. Given that you had the smaller container for only *part* of Quarter 3 (Jul-Sep), I suggest pro-rating the cost. Below is summary of what that looks like:

Quarter 3 (Jul-Sep) 2023: Total: \$71.61

- Cost of small, every-week service for 10 weeks: \$57.19
- Cost of small, every-other-week service for 3 weeks: \$14.42

This would change my recommendation for the assessment to the following: Remove the charge from Quarter 2. Keep charge for Quarter 3 of \$71.61. Keep charge for Quarter 4 of \$62.48. Do *not* apply late fees. This will bring the assessment down from \$205.83 to \$134.09.

Let me know if you disagree and would like to attend the hearing to dispute.

Lydia

Lydia Campbell April 2, 2024 at 12:13

Internal note

New summary:

PO purchased home in Dec 2022 and did not set up garbage service at that time. PO states that she was not receiving bills. Note: WM now has the correct address, so PO received Q4 bill. PO states that she called WM in 9-2023 to change service levels and only then realized an account had not been set up. PO states that, at that time, she attempted to pay over the phone. Neither WM nor PO were able to provide record of that payment. PO states that she has attempted to call WM multiple times to remedy the situation, but she cannot get through the automated system to speak to a person to resolve the issue.

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