

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS) FOR UTILITY REVIEW FEES & INVESTMENT FEES

How is a utility development review fee calculated?

The fee is based on the amount of affected area associated with your permit. The affected area is a way to determine the amount of work performed, which includes determining the amount of interior work and exterior work. Aspen Municipal Code Section 25.12.025. The affected area is then translated to a fee according to the table below:

Utility Development Fees	2026 Rates
Projects with 0 to 200 sq. ft. of Affected Area	\$475.00
Projects with 201 to 5,000 sq. ft. of Affected Area	\$2.45/sq. ft.
Projects with 5,001 to 15,000 sq. ft. of Affected Area	\$2.45/sq. ft. for 1 st 5,000 sq. ft. + \$2.05/sq. ft. thereafter
Projects with more than 15,000 sq. ft. of Affected Area	\$2.45/sq. ft. for 1 st 5,000 sq. ft. + \$2.05/sq. ft. for next 10,000 sq. ft. + \$1.88 sq. ft. thereafter

How are utility development review fees calculated on a City of Aspen permit?

Project Type	Applicability and Calculation
New Construction (including "scrape and replace") or 50% or greater interior alteration.	Fee calculated according to affected area. Affected area is calculated as square footage of the building footprint, plus the total square footage of exterior disturbance. Calculation instructions are set forth in Section (f), below.
Interior or exterior work that requires a Water review (Utilities, Engineering-Dev, Engineering-Water, WELS) or includes adding, removing, or changing any water fixtures or impacting a component of the ECU table in Section 25.08.090	Fee calculated according to utility affected area. Utility affected area is the total square footage of all rooms/work areas in which water fixtures or components of ECU table are affected, plus the total square footage of any water related exterior disturbance. Calculation instructions are set forth in Section (g), below.
Interior or exterior work that does not require a Water review (Utilities, Engineering-Dev, Engineering-Water, WELS) or includes adding, removing, or changing any water fixtures or impacting a component of the ECU table in Section 25.08.090	No Review or Fee Required.

How is the utility development review fee different from the utility investment charge?

The **utility review fee** recovers costs associated with reviewing your permit for our water utility. These costs include but are not limited to fixture counts performed to determine utility permit connection fees, site plan review including line sizing and location, reviews to ensure compliance with our water efficient landscaping standards, reviews to ensure compliance with water utility agreements and easements, and associated inspections with the permit.

These costs include, but are not limited to:

- Water fixture counts performed to determine utility investment charge
- Site plan review including line sizing and location
- Reviews to ensure compliance with:
 - Our water efficient landscaping standards
 - Water service agreements
 - Any existing or proposed raw water agreement
 - Water utility easements
 - Water rights and use of secondary water sources
 - The city's cross connection control program regulations
- Ongoing site inspections for compliance with irrigation and landscaping plans
- Reimbursement of costs associated with water attorney research and filings
- Final walk through prior to issuance of CO to ensure correct water fixture count and the adopted water efficient landscape ordinance
- Any other reviews and site inspections that may be associated with this permit

The **utility investment charge**, ((UIC), recovers certain capital costs allocated to new and expanded customers. The charge is based on the Equivalent Capacity Unit (ECU) rating and billing area factor for that account. Utility Investment charges are one-time fees assessed to new customers connecting to the water system or existing customers increasing their demand on the system. The fees are collected from new or expanded commercial and residential water customers and allow the new or expanded customers to “buy-in” to the remaining water capacity that the City of Aspen Water Utility has available. The Utility Investment charge also helps fund large-scale water system capital improvement projects such as water treatment plant expansions, upsizing water transmission mains, and water line extensions that are necessary to keep pace with future economic development and growth in Aspen's Water Service Area.

What is an ECU? An *Equivalent Capacity Unit (ECU)* is a unit of measurement that reflects that part of the capacity of the water system necessary to serve a standard water customer. Multiples or fractions of ECUs are assigned to each type of standard water fixture, (e.g., sinks, toilets, hose bibs, etc.), according to the schedule provided in Municipal Code Section 25.08.090 to estimate the potential water use capacity of each type of fixture. Overall fixture counts are performed on every connection to the City's potable water distribution system to calculate the total ECUs on each account to provide the Utility and the Customer with potential, and expected, water use estimates.

How do I receive credit for past UIC payments for remodel and rebuild projects and why are additional UICs based on a dollar paid basis rather than on property's existing ECUs? The history of past payments applicable to a property that is proposed to be rebuilt or substantially remodeled is reviewed in determining the amount of credit available to a particular property. Credits are available based on the dollar amount previously paid as set out in Section 25.12.070 (c) of the Municipal Code. For properties that were developed prior to 1985 the actual fees paid to cover all the costs of buying into the system, as described above under “Utility Investment Charge”, are generally negligible. The allowance for credits is limited to the amount of the charge actually paid in order to allow the City to recover the capital costs that were not charged at the time the structure was initially connected to the water system. Note: When the extent of the project results in increasing the ECU rating by less than 50% (not a “substantial remodel”), the available credit is based on the existing ECU rating of the existing structure(s).