

Cold water and its billing

In 2023, the foundation "Stiftung Warentest" tested 62 mineral waters from different suppliers in Germany.* The result: tap water is just as good or even better than bottled water! Since water in Austria is considered particularly pure, it can be assumed that the quality here is at least as good. So we can do without water that has travelled a long way in plastic bottles that are bad for the environment, and be happy to get such a precious food right from the tap!

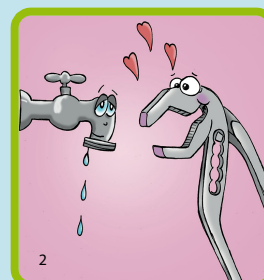
Most of the water in Austrian households flows through taps in bathroom and kitchen sinks (27%), followed by flushing the toilet (25%), showering and bathing (22%) and then the washing machine (10%).**

On average, one person in Austria consumes **130 litres of water per day****. In one year that is slightly more than fits into this 45 cubic metre tanker truck!



Let's use this valuable resource sparingly!

- Shower for 5 rather than 15 minutes.
- Turn off taps when not in use.
- Repair dripping taps! Eight millilitres of water are lost per minute, that's 4,200 litres or 28 full bathtubs per year!***



The supplier of tap water in Vienna is the *Wiener Wasserwerke*. They organise the transport of the water from the Alps to the city, monitor its quality and maintain the distribution system (pipes, etc.) to the front of the house. When the water is used, it flows into the sewer and to the sewage treatment plant for purification. For this service, **water rates (Wasserbezugsgebühren)** and **wastewater fees (Abwassergebühren)** are paid to the City of Vienna.



3: From the Alps to the city:
The "Wiener Hochquellwasserleitung"



5: Vienna main sewage treatment plant

At the time of publishing this info sheet (October 2023), the City of Vienna charges the following fees:

Water rates: 2.14 euros per cubic metre (=1000 litres) and wastewater fees: 2.35 euros per cubic metre.

In addition, there is the rent for the water meter: 28.69 euros per year (for a meter in a rented flat). If the whole house has only one meter, it can cost up to 344.12 euros per year, but this is divided among all the flats (current information at: wien.at > Virtuelles Amt > Umwelt & Entsorgung > Abwasser und Wasser > [Wasserbezugs- und Wasserzählergebühr – Meldung](#))

How is water billed?

The property management or the owner of the flat decides how to settle the account. The two most common methods of billing are as follows:

1. Fresh water and sewage are part of the **operating costs** and are paid **together with the rent**. In this case, the whole house usually has only one water meter. The consumption of all residents is divided between the flats: If you live in a large flat, you pay more because it is assumed that there are more people living there. Of course, this is an estimate: it is a guess as to what each household contributes to the total water consumption of the house.
2. Fresh water and sewage are paid for in the **heating bill**. For example, many (but not all!) district heating customers get their cold water consumption billed this way. They find the item "cold and waste water" ("Kalt- und Abwasser") on the annual invoice. Sometimes "general costs" ("Allgemeinkosten") for water are added - for example if there is a laundry room or water is used for gardening. These are added on a percentage basis (often according to the size of the flat).

Settlement type 1 (example): Fresh water and sewage on the operating costs statement

If fresh water and sewage are billed with the operating costs of the flat, the operating cost statement for the entire building and the operating cost statement for your own flat are required. Both can be obtained from the property management if they are not sent automatically. Among the many items (refuse collection, chimney sweep, etc.) of the operating cost statement for the whole house, there are also the water and sewer charges.

für die Abrechnungseinheit		01.01.2022 bis 31.12.2022		GLA
für den Zeitraum				14.03.2023
Datum	Beleg	Vertragspartner		
Wasser/Kanal				
Teilbetrag Was				
lt. Bescheid				
6.064,91				

Jahresabrechnung vom 01.01.2022 bis 31.12.2022				
von Betriebskosten, besonderen Aufwendungen und sonstigen Kosten der Bewirtschaftung				
Nutzungsobjekt: ...				
Rechnungsnummer: ...				
Rechnungsaussteller: ...				
Sehr geehrte Frau ...				
Nachfolgend Ihre Betriebskostenabrechnung für das vergangene Kalenderjahr:				
	Gesamtaufwand	Ihr Anteil	Anteil in €	Akonto-VS
Aufzug	3.582,82	4,76190 %	170,61	300,00
Betriebskosten	41.911,58	3,88253 %	1.627,23	1.654,44
Saldo exklusive Ust				-156,60
+ 10,00% USt von -156,60				-15,66
Gesamtergebnis				
Fälligkeit:	0			
Das ausgewiesene C oder die Rücküberw				
Für Fragen zur Abre möchten wir Ihnen fü				
mit freundlichen Grü				
Objekt GLA / 010 / 10				
Seite 1				

On the operating cost statement of your own flat, you should find the percentage with which it participates in the total operating costs of the house. The percentage also applies to the cold water. In this example, it is 3.88253%.

	Gesamtaufwand	Ihr Anteil
Aufzug	3.582,82	4,76190 %
Betriebskosten	41.911,58	3,88253 %

The calculation of this flat's water costs looks like this:
 $6.064,91 \text{ €} \times 3,88253\% = \mathbf{235,47 \text{ €}}$ (from 1.1.22 to 31.12.22).

Billing type 2 (example): Fresh water and sewage on the district heating bill

Preliminary note: Not everyone who has district heating is also billed for cold water on the same invoice! If the cold water is billed with the district heating, the bill will look like in this example. Then there is usually one water meter for hot water and one for cold water in the flat. For BOTH – also for the hot water – there is a line under the heading "cold water/waste water" ("Kalt-/Abwasser"). There you can see for each meter how many cubic metres (abbreviated: m³) were consumed in the billing period (usually one year). One cubic metre corresponds to 1000 litres.

- ★ The larger value is always for cold water (here: 88.43 m³).
- ★ The value for hot water (here 33.828 m³) also appears further up in the statement under "Heat for hot water" ("Wärme für Warmwasser"). Here, only the **energy** used to heat the water is billed, not the water itself.
- ★ In this example, one m³ of water costs 3.7865 euros.

The water bill for this flat looks like this:

(33.828 m³ hot water + 88.43 m³ cold water = 122.258 m³
122.258 x 3.7865 euros = 462.93 euros. In this case, there are also general costs (for example, for a water tap in the yard) and "service charges" ("Dienstleistungskosten") – for example, for the reading of the meter.

JAHRESABRECHNUNG vom 20.01.2023 - Detail
Kundennummer: 00000000000000000000

Raumheizung	Zeitraum	Zählerstand alt	Zählerstand neu	Verbrauchsanteile
	01.09.2021 - 31.08.2022	9.792	15.963	6,211 MWh
Verbrauchsentwicklung:				
Diese Abrechnung	6,211 MWh			
Letzte Abrechnung	4,862 MWh			
Durchschnitt wirtschaftliche Einheit	1,6161 MWh			
Position	Zeitraum	Verrechnungsbasis	Verrechnungspreis	Nettobetrag EUR
Grundkosten	01.09.2021 - 31.08.2022	365 Tage, 43,82 m ³	0,180488 EUR/m ³ /Monat	95,12
Arbeitskosten	01.09.2021 - 31.08.2022	6,211 MWh	137,337894 EUR/MWh	853,00
Dienstleistungskosten	01.09.2021 - 31.08.2022			85,14
Raumheizung Gesamt				1.033,26
Wärme für Warmwasser				
	Zeitraum	Verbrauchsanteile		
	01.09.2021 - 31.08.2022	33,828 m ³		
Verbrauchsentwicklung:				
Diese Abrechnung	33,828 m ³			
Letzte Abrechnung	29,562 m ³			
Durchschnitt wirtschaftliche Einheit	15,196 m ³			
Position	Zeitraum	Verrechnungsbasis	Verrechnungspreis	Nettobetrag EUR
Grundkosten	01.09.2021 - 31.08.2022	365 Tage, 43,82 m ³	0,136464 EUR/m ³ /Monat	71,82
Arbeitskosten	01.09.2021 - 31.08.2022	33,828 m ³	11,043286 EUR/m ³	373,57
Dienstleistungskosten	01.09.2021 - 31.08.2022			42,89
Wärme für Warmwasser Gesamt				488,27
Kalt-/Abwasser				
	Zeitraum	Verbrauchsanteile		
	01.09.2021 - 31.08.2022	88,43 m ³		
	01.09.2021 - 31.08.2022	122,258 m ³		
Verbrauchsentwicklung:				
Diese Abrechnung	122,258 m ³			
Letzte Abrechnung	101,914 m ³			
Position	Zeitraum	Verrechnungsbasis	Verrechnungspreis	Nettobetrag EUR
Grundkosten	01.09.2021 - 31.08.2022	88,43 m ³	3,7865 EUR/m ³	334,84
Arbeitskosten	01.09.2021 - 31.08.2022	33,828 m ³	3,7865 EUR/m ³	128,09
Allgemeinkosten	01.09.2021 - 31.08.2022			6,11
Dienstleistungskosten	01.09.2021 - 31.08.2022			48,56
Kalt-/Abwasser Gesamt				517,60
				Summe exkl. USt: 2.039,23

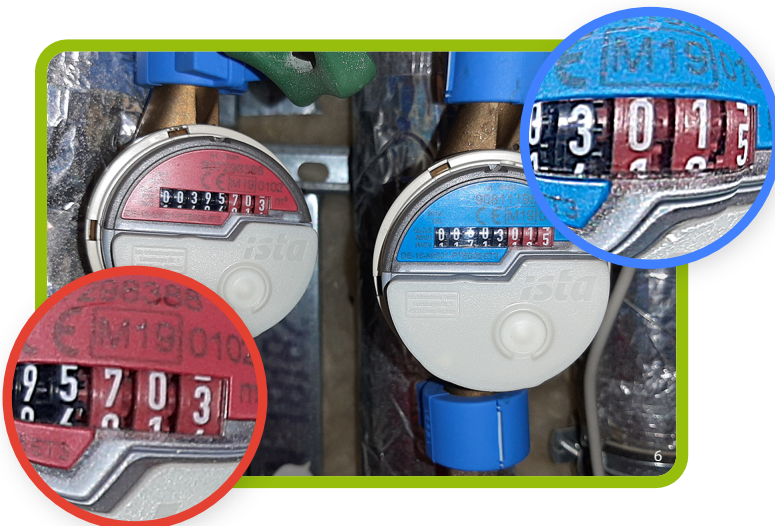
Kalt-/Abwasser

Zeitraum	Verbrauchsanteile
01.09.2021 - 31.08.2022	33,828 m ³
01.09.2021 - 31.08.2022	88,43 m ³
	122,258 m ³

Verbrauchsentwicklung:

Diese Abrechnung	122,258 m ³
Letzte Abrechnung	101,914 m ³

Position	Zeitraum	Verrechnungsbasis	Verrechnungspreis	Nettobetrag EUR
Arbeitskosten	01.09.2021 - 31.08.2022	88,43 m ³	3,7865 EUR/m ³	334,84
	01.09.2021 - 31.08.2022	33,828 m ³	3,7865 EUR/m ³	128,09
Allgemeinkosten	01.09.2021 - 31.08.2022			6,11
Dienstleistungskosten	01.09.2021 - 31.08.2022			48,56
Kalt-/Abwasser Gesamt				517,60



If you know the price of a cubic metre of water, you can keep track of the running costs by observing your own meters. As soon as the last four numbers of the **cold water meter** have moved forward by 1000 (litres), a cubic metre has been consumed. In this example: The blue meter would then read 00504.015. The **red hot water meter** would read 00396.703. In both cases, this would mean costs of 3.7865 euros. In the case of hot water, about 11 euros would be added for heating it up.

Quellen:

* Stiftung Warentest: (2023). Mineralwasser im Test. Die Besten mit und ohne Kohlensäure. <https://www.test.de/Natuerliches-Mineralwasser-im-Test-4258945-0/>

** Bundesministerium für Land- und Forstwirtschaft, Regionen und Wasserwirtschaft (2023). Trinkwasserverbrauch und Wasserversorgung.

<https://info.bml.gv.at/themen/wasser/wasser-oesterreich/zahlen/trinkwasserverbrauch.html>

*** Der Standard (2022). Österreicher könnten 40 Prozent mehr Wasser sparen. <https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000138145540/oesterreicher-koennten-40-prozent-mehrwasser-sparen>

Illustrationen:

Bild 1: Aus privater Kleinanzeige. Bild 2: Horst Pohl. Bild 3: Calauer via [Wikipedia](https://www.wikipedia.org/). Bild 4: storyset via [freepik.com](https://www.freepik.com/). Bild 5: GuentherZ via [Wikipedia](https://www.wikipedia.org/). Bild 6: EB Plus.

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