

Air Force Utility Allowance Program (UAP) Frequently Asked Questions (4-4-18)

How was my “Utility Allowance” calculated?

Your home was placed into a group of like homes based upon the following criteria:

- Age
- Square footage (may vary)
- Floor count
- Bedroom count

Once the group of homes is established we remove the top and bottom 10% along with any vacant units for the billing period. All electrical usage is then added together for the group and divided by the number of homes. That number translates into your utility allowance, or base line average, for the month. It is important to note that prior to the start of the program, Hickam Communities was required to present the Air Force with a listing of all profile groups for their review and approval.

What should I do if I have questions on my monthly utility statement?

Hickam Communities selected Minol USA as its meter billing and maintenance partner. Minol has a solid reputation in the industry that includes priding utility management services to more than 75% of U.S. Military installations, including utility billing programs to over 73,000 military families. Minol issues statements monthly to residents, which are based upon the actual metered use of your home. If you have any questions relative to your statement, please contact its Resident Customer Care center at 1-888-636-0493 or on line at: www.minolusa.com.

When will I receive my monthly utility statement?

Statements are typically mailed to residents on the 20th of each month from the Minol offices located in Atkinson, Texas. The statement you receive will be based upon the previous month's electrical usage. You may expect to receive your monthly statement around the 25th of each month.

What happens to my balance at the end of each month if it less than \$50?

If your balance is under \$50, it carries forward to the next billing cycle. If you are owed a rebate and it's under \$50 then that would carry forward as well. Once a balance exceeds \$50 in any given month you will be asked to pay the amount or we will issue a rebate check. Keep this in mind as you review your statements each month. You are also allowed to make a payment of a balance under \$50 if you chose. For more information, please contact the Minol resident Customer Care Center at 1-888-636-0493.

What if a member of my family requires specialized medical equipment, how is this additional electrical need addressed?

The Air Force realizes that some families may have medical needs requiring the use of specialized medical equipment that may contribute to increased electrical consumption. If this is an issue affecting your family, please visit Hickam Communities main Housing Office at 211 Mercury Street to pick up a Reasonable Accommodation and Modification packet (RAM), Complete the forms and return it to the office for review and consideration for an adjustment to your monthly bill.

I live in an older home, which is not as energy efficient as the newly built homes located in the Onizuka or Earhart communities. Is this taken into account in my monthly Utility Allowance calculation?

Yes, when we grouped homes together we grouped them by the age of the structure as well. A three-bedroom home in Office Field with single pane windows is not grouped together with our LEED certified three-bedroom homes in Onizuka. By grouping like homes together this accounts for the fairest method to determine how much of a utility allowance is allowed for each individual grouping.

My neighbor's home has solar panels on their roof and our home does not. Do they receive additional benefits for having these?

No. Roof-mounted solar panels produce energy that feeds directly into the power grid and not the individual home. This benefits all homes by reducing the amount of energy Hickam Communities needs to purchase from the Navy.

I have a large family. Does the UA program make adjustments for this?

At this time, the Air Force program does not include family size in its profiles. Utilities are a component of the BAH, and it does not change with family size.

How can I learn about what BAH covers?

Go to <http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/perdiem/BAH-Primer.pdf>

Who benefits from the cost savings from resident utility conservation?

Current and future residents of Hickam Communities benefit. All savings realized through reduced energy use are designated to fund new housing, renovations, community amenities and other quality of life programs for the entire life of the project. **It's very important to note that the savings are not a profit for Hickam Communities or the Air Force.**

How can I reduce my monthly electricity usage?

Air Conditioner

- Keep filter clean. Changing filters at least monthly will help your air conditioner run most efficiently
- Make sure air intake registers are unobstructed
- Set thermostats as high as your comfortably can
- On cooler, breezy days open windows and let the breeze cool your home
- Never run air conditioner with windows and doors open
- If your home has a programmable thermostat set it higher (78-80 degrees) for times you will not be home, lower upon return. Use manually adjusted thermostats the same way

Water Heater

- If your home has solar hot water panels, make sure your timers are set correctly. Hickam Communities is happy to help with this you are unsure how to operate it, give our Maintenance Office a call to schedule an appointment.

Appliances

- Smaller appliances should be unplugged when not in use: rice cookers, slow cookers, toasters and blenders, coffee makers, irons, etc.
- Blow dryers, electric shavers, other bathroom appliances should be unplugged when not in use
- Wash and dry only full loads of laundry. Using coldest settings optimizes conservation. If you use hot water, wash clothes during the daytime to utilize the sun for water heating
- Use dishwasher for full loads only. Use air dry feature instead of heat dry feature. If you use hot water, wash dishes during the daytime to utilize the sun for water heating
- Minimize the time your refrigerator door remains open
- Refrigerators run more efficiently when they are filled

Electronics

- Use power strips for electronics. Turn off power strip when not in use
- Turn off TV's, stereo systems, gaming systems, computers and other electronics at the power strip when not in use
- Unplug cell phone chargers when not in use

Why is Hickam extending the mock billing program?

The intent of mock billing is to give residents time to familiarize themselves with their household energy consumption, and to give Minol USA and Hickam Communities time to validate all hardware and data software are properly working. So, to assure our families are best prepared and program operations are efficient and accurate Hickam Communities and JBPHH leadership have decided to extend the mock billing period.

During the three previous town halls, there were numerous requests to extend the mock billing period so residents could better familiarize themselves with their energy use and make any necessary modifications. We listened to our families' concerns and will now modify the live billing start date. Residents wanting to understand and manage their utility consumption can take advantage of the Know Load program. This in-home energy inspection is free and has proven to be very successful for our families. With the extension of the mock billing period residents now have more time to schedule a Know Load inspection.

A few residents also asked questions about their electric meters. We want to assure everyone that the meters are correctly installed and providing accurate energy consumption data. A few meters were mislabeled and corrected. UPDATE: All home meters were verified in June of 2017 to assure that meters are assigned to the proper unit number.

When will live billing begin?

Live billing will begin 1 September 2017. Residents will receive their first live statement in mid-October 2017.

What is the utility rate charged by Hickam Communities? How does this rate compare to what HECO charges outside the gate?

Hickam Communities purchases its power through NAVFAC at a fixed yearly rate per kWh. Currently the rate charged to us is \$0.243 cents. Using savings from the rooftop solar panels HC passes along these savings to all our residents to create a lower “blended” utility rate. The rate fluctuates each month, depending on solar production, but has remained consistent at \$0.22 per kWh since March. This is a consistent hourly rate without fluctuations for “peak” time usage.

HECO charges residential customers outside the gate different rates depending on how much power they use each month. Effective June 1, 2017 the rates are as follows:

- First 350 kWh per month at 0.259
- Next 850 kWh per month at 0.271
- All kWh over 1,200 kWh per month at 0.290

In addition to these rates customers outside the gate have additional mandatory monthly charges added to their bills by HECO. In addition to your kWh charges HECO charges a \$17 minimum charge, Single phase charge of \$9., and a Green Infrastructure Fee of 1.27 per customer. Hickam Communities rates are favorable to what residents pay outside the gate.

Meter Issues/ Service - Replacement

The amount of electricity used in your home is captured by your individual electric meter and is transmitted multiple times per week over phone lines to Minol. If Minol finds that your meter is not reporting as expected it may require service or replacement. In the event this happens, Minol will send you a letter in lieu of your monthly utility statement (***view a copy of the letter below***).

Minol visits our homes quarterly to provide meter service and address performance issues. While your meter is awaiting service, you will not be charged for utilities used during this period, nor will you be able to receive rebates, as your exact electrical usage will be unknown. Once your meter is replaced you will again begin receiving statements beginning with the next full monthly cycle. Hickam Communities has recently invested in a new reporting infrastructure which will provide for more comprehensive and quicker electricity reads on line for residents. As we replace older meters we will be installing these new Itron meters in our communities. For questions please contact the Minol Customer Care Center at 1-888-636-0493.



IMPORTANT NOTICE

March 12, 2018

Name
Address
City, State Zip

Re: Non receipt of Minol Utility Statement

Dear Resident:

The electric meter installed on your home is in the process of being programmed, serviced or replaced. Metered homes which are in the process of service are excluded from the group average calculation. Upon completion of meter service/replacement, Minol will begin receiving consumption data for your home. Immediately following, you will resume receiving a Live billing statement.

Please note, account balances accrued from usage cycles prior to meters needing service will remain due while your meter is being programmed, serviced or replaced. Conversely, unissued credit balances accrued from prior billing cycles will also remain on your account. During the cycle(s) of meter service, charges or credits are not generated.

During this time, we encourage you to visit our website www.minolusa.com to set up your account online, where you will be able to view all of your account activity.

We appreciate your conservation efforts and encourage you to contact us should you have any questions or concerns regarding your account. We may be reached Monday-Friday 3am to 7pm HST toll free 1-888-636-0493 or via email to: militaryhousing@minolusa.com.

Sincerely,

Minol USA
Military Housing - Billing Department