

Rates & Charges: Dispute Resolution

The Metropolitan Council approved a billing dispute process that incorporates into procedure a means to resolve potential disputes with communities. Disputes have included questions on meter accuracy and results of measures taken to reduce [Inflow & Infiltration \(I & I\)](#). This process was devised to assure a fair, uniform, and timely method for customer communities to contest flows and the related billings, while maintaining the integrity of the MCES revenue system.

Steps in the Process

1. Negotiations around technical agreements: MCES will offer internal and external technical expertise to facilitate consensus building.
2. Third part neutral mediation: MCES will offer mediation using a mutually agreed upon and jointly paid mediator.
3. Binding arbitration: If a Community and Council agree, binding arbitration will be used to settle a dispute.

Legal Notes

1. In order to preserve the full rights to contest any bill, the City/Township must file a written complaint with the MCES Finance Director within 60 days of the MCES billing.
2. The Council shall limit any reimbursements or billings for prior periods to no more than two years from the latter of the date of the formal complaint or the date at which an audit uncovers the issue.
3. If a community refuses to participate in this process in good faith, or refuses to pay, Council staff may certify a deficiency tax levy (Minn. Statutes, section 473.521 (4)) to collect the funds.

Questions?

Contact Ned Smith, MCES Finance Director,
at 651.602.1196 or ned.smith@metc.state.mn.us