



City of Altura Residential Water Softener Rebate Program Funded through a Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Grant

BACKGROUND:

The City of Altura is dedicated to protecting fresh water and keeping sewer bills low. We currently are not meeting the water treatment discharge permit limits for chloride. Minnesota lakes, streams and drinking water are experiencing rising levels of chloride (a component of salt) from road salt application and water softener salt. It is expensive and energy-intensive to remove dissolved chloride from water, so the best way to keep water clean is by reducing the amount of salt that enters water in the first place. We have a window of opportunity right now to keep sewer bills low by reducing chloride from water softeners. We are partnering with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, through Bolton & Menk, Inc. and local water treatment experts to offer FREE water softener system check-ups for residents in the city.

REBATE PROGRAM:

The City of Altura partnered with Bolton & Menk, Inc. and received an MPCA grant to provide **free** water softener setting adjustments (also known as optimization for salt use). The grant also provides rebates of 40% of cost (prior to tax) up to a maximum of \$1,200 based on efficiency, for residential water softener replacements.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- ▶ Residential homes must be serviced by the Altura Wastewater Treatment Plant.
- ▶ Home must currently have a working water softener that fits one of the following criteria:
 - Softener is time-clock based
 - Softener is 15 years or older
 - Softener has an efficiency less than 3,350 grains/lb. of salt
- ▶ Homeowners are eligible for a **free** optimization of settings to be performed by a qualified city approved vendor.
- ▶ Replacement water softeners must be installed by a qualified city approved vendor (list on website). See exception on next line.
- ▶ Homeowners may install their own water softener but will need to demonstrate to city staff that the softener is eligible and set correctly for efficiency.
- ▶ Replacement softeners must be demand-initiated and be set to a minimum salt efficiency of 4000 grains/lb. salt.
- ▶ Rebates are not retroactive; water softener replacement or optimization must be performed after 11/14/2023 to be eligible.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA CONTINUED:

- ▶ Salt-free water conditioners may be eligible if replacing an existing ion-exchange softener but must be pre-approved. See more information about these devices on the City website. Contact the City for pre-approval.
- ▶ Rebate funds are limited to \$1,200 per household and subject to availability; optimization, softener replacement, or removal must be completed, and paperwork submitted by 5/15/2024.
- ▶ The City of Altura reserves the right to inspect optimized and replaced water softeners.

REBATE PROGRAM STEPS USING A CONTRACTOR:

Contact a city-approved water softening/conditioning contractor to inspect your water softener to determine if it can be optimized for salt use or is eligible for replacement. A list of approved contractors can be found here: <http://alturamn.ourlocalview.com//HomeTown/>.

Homeowners with water softeners 15 years or older, timer-based, or with a rated efficiency of less than 3,350 grains/lb. salt are eligible for a rebate of 40% of cost (prior to tax), up to a maximum of \$1,200, to replace the softener with an efficient (minimum 4,000 gains/lb. salt) demand-initiated water softener.

Check your water bill, or contact the city to get your monthly water usage for January to March. Provide this information to the contractor when you call to set up an appointment.

If the water softener can be optimized and is not eligible for replacement or you choose not to replace it, have the contractor complete the optimization (adjust hardness settings, salt dose, reserve capacity, and other settings for lower salt use).

If water softener is eligible for replacement, hire an approved contractor to install a new water softener. Make sure the installer adjusts the hardness setting to match the measure hardness of about 18 grains/gallon hardness and optimizes the softener for low salt use.

REBATE PROGRAM STEPS FOR DO-IT-YOURSELF INSTALLATIONS:

You must follow all local and state plumbing codes if installing a new softener. The eligibility requirements listed above also apply.

Look at your water bill or contact the City to get your monthly water usage for January to March. Provide this information on your rebate form. You will need to call Dan at the City to set up an appointment to have your softener and settings verified for eligibility in order to receive a rebate.

City staff will not program your water softener; it is your responsibility to show city staff that you have set your softener to its maximum salt efficiency and disable any time-based regeneration cycles or overrides. Pictures of your old water softener, its settings and/or estimate of your typical salt usage over the last 6 months are needed for the rebate. Refer to the user manual for how to set the water softener settings. Salt efficiency settings are usually listed in the specifications table. See additional "Tips for Optimizing your Water Softener" on the city web site.

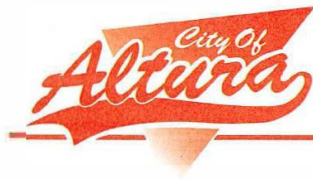
SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION TO RECEIVE THE REBATE:

1. Completed application.
2. Photos of newly installed equipment (see details below depending on type of equipment installed):
 - Water softener: photo of whole system and close-up of controller display screen settings.
 - Water conditioning system: photo of installed device and closeup of device information.
3. Monthly water use information for January to March, or the most recent 3 month period between November and March (from your water bill).
4. Old water softeners efficiency settings: grains of hardness & pounds of salt used per. (This is needed to estimate the salt savings of your new softener when compared to your old softener.) If not available, provide an estimate of annual salt use (pounds/year or number of 40 pound bags per year).
5. Copy of the receipt plus additional information showing the following (if using a city approved contractor have them include completed forms with receipt):
 - Equipment manufacturer and model number.
 - Rated salt efficiency (found in softener manual in specifications chart, homeowners include copy or photo of chart).
 - Salt optimization settings (water hardness should be set at 18 grains or measured hardness, salt dose, reserve capacity, grain capacity, salt efficiency)
 - Amount paid.
6. All homeowners requesting a rebate must submit a completed W9. Link to form: <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf>.



Real People. Real Solutions.

Funding for this project is provided by the Clean Water Land & Legacy Amendment administered by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.



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Residential Water Softener Rebate Program Application

Submit this application along with the required documents by email to publicworks@cityofaltura.org, or mail to Altura City Hall, 25 Main St, Altura, MN 55910. Check the website or call 507-976-5461 ext. 10 with any questions. Please leave a message if not answered and we will return your call.

APPLICANT:

Name: _____

Installation Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Daytime Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Send rebate check to (if different than above address)

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

WATER CONDITIONING VENDOR/CONTRACTOR INFORMATION

Name: _____ Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Or check here if you did the work yourself: _____

PRODUCT INFORMATION

OLD Water Softener

Manufacturer: _____ Model Number: _____

Estimated Age: _____ Estimated number of 40 lb. bags of salt used per year: _____

INSTALLATION COMPLETED

____ Softener Replaced *minimum 4000 gr/lb salt efficiency, 40% of pre-tax cost up to a maximum of \$1,200*

____ Salt-free Water Conditioner Installation* *pre-approved, 50% of pre-tax cost up to a maximum of \$1,200*

Pre-tax cost: _____ x 0.4 or 0.5* = _____ Rebate (40% or 50%* of pre-tax cost, up to \$1,200)

IMPORTANT: Include copy of receipt & required documents.

HOMEOWNER SIGNATURE REQUIRED

I, _____ certify that I meet the program eligibility requirements, and that the information provided is true and correct, that the product was installed at the installation address provided above, the old softener was in working condition and in use, and that the product meets the requirements of this rebate program.

Signature _____ Date _____

Rebate application and documentation must be submitted no later than 5/15/24. Funds are subject to availability and rebates distributed in the order received. Check rebate website to ensure funds are still available before completing work.