



# Utility Billing Policy

Effective November 9, 2021

## **Monthly Utility Bill**

The utility billing section shall provide each municipal utility customer a combined monthly municipal utility bill which shall include the charges incurred by the customer for regular monthly water, sewer and natural gas services or any combination thereof, plus any fees, penalties or previous balances. Each municipal utility shall be designated as a separate entry on the billing statement. Bills for municipal utility services provided shall be rendered and paid monthly.

## **Billing Cycle**

- a. Meter reading date - Meters shall be read on the last day of the month or as close as possible to this date.
- b. Billing period - Monthly billings shall be rendered by the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month. The total bill shall be due and payable by the close of business no later than the 20<sup>th</sup> day of the following month after which services are billed for.
- c. Delinquent date - If a bill is not paid on or before the close of business of 25<sup>th</sup> of the month, a late charge equal to 10% of the current bill amount shall be added to the charges. If the delinquent date falls on a holiday, Saturday or Sunday the bill shall then become delinquent on the first business day following the holiday or weekend.
- d. Disconnect notification: If a bill is not paid on or before the close of business on the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month, the City will send a past due/disconnection reminder to the customer. The disconnection notice will state the past due amount on the customer's account plus applicable reconnection fees if not paid by the disconnect date along with the opportunity to request a public hearing before the City Council. If an account is already disconnected, base charges still apply to the account. If these accounts become delinquent, they will receive a similar notification and will be required to pay the same fee to reconnect as those accounts that have been disconnected due to nonpayment.

## **Rate Ordinance**

All municipal utility charges shall be calculated in accordance with the specific rate ordinance applicable to each municipal utility or service rendered to a customer.

## **Natural Gas Rental Customers**

Natural gas customers that lease or rent their dwelling will pay an up-front deposit of \$200 when opening their account. The deposit will accrue interest and will be refunded, or applied to the account if there is a balance, when the account is closed. The account will stay in the Landlord's name until the \$200 deposit is received from the renter.

## **Delinquent Customers**

Any customer whose bill remains unpaid at 4:00 pm on the 20<sup>th</sup> day of the month following after which services are billed for shall be considered delinquent. Any customer who is delinquent on any one municipal utility (water, sewer or refuse) or any combination thereof may be disconnected from the municipal utility system and once disconnected shall not be reconnected or reinstated until payment of all charges, fees and penalties necessary to bring the account(s) to a current status. The City may also refer delinquent customers to a collection agency or attorney for collection on a case-by-case basis. Delinquent utilities may also be certified to property taxes to be collected in the same manner as special assessments and other taxes.

**Promissory Agreement**

The City Clerk/Treasurer, or his/her designee, is hereby authorized to enter into a written promissory agreement for a municipal utility bill on a case-by-case basis for municipal utility customers. The Clerk/Treasurer or designee is authorized to enter into a verbal arrangement - it shall be documented appropriately. If a customer fails to make good on any term and/or condition contained within the promissory agreement, the customer's utility services may be disconnected immediately.

**Base Rate Charges on All Properties with Structures**

All properties with a structure and water service to the building will be charged the base fee each month. The same will be charged for all properties with a structure and sewer service to the building will be charged the base fee each month, This fee will be charged even if services have been disconnected to the property; either by the choice of the property owner or for nonpayment. Natural gas base rate shall be charged to all customers that have chosen to connect to the system. The base rate shall start the month following installation of the service line and meter.

**Cold Weather Rule**

The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission has issued a Cold Weather Rule (MN Administrative Rule 7820; MN Statute 216B.096). The City will follow requirements of the Cold Weather Rule listed in the rule along with any future revisions.

Passed by the City Council on February 13, 2018  
Amended on November 9, 2021

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Richard Bullard, Mayor

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Valerie Martin, Clerk/Treasurer