

CITY OF ROSEMOUNT

POLICY TITLE: UTILITY BILLING PROCEDURES

POLICY NUMBER: F-4

PROPOSED BY: UTILITY COMMISSION

DATE APPROVED BY COMMISSION: JANUARY 13, 1992

DATE LAST AMMENDED: DECEMBER 16, 2019

1) OWNERS RESPONSIBILITY

Utility bills are the responsibility of the property owner. Therefore, all (except as a property manager as noted below) accounts will be put into the property owner's name. Utility bills will be sent to the property owner. This shall apply to all owners regardless of city or state of residence. It shall be the responsibility of the property owner to remit payment for billings on or before due dates.

In all cases, the property owner is considered the customer. Property owner shall be defined as a person, persons, agency or company listed at the Dakota County Assessor's Office as the taxpayer on a lot or parcel of property within the City of Rosemount. If a property is sold, it is the selling owner's responsibility to notify the City and set up an appointment for a final meter reading. In the case of a 'storm only' account, the seller must notify the City of the sale date and the new owner name. See item B, Moving in & Moving out below.

NOTE: All commercial/industrial accounts leased or owned on city water and sewer may choose to receive a utility bill in the name of the business. The property owner will be listed for tax roll certification.

A property manager may be identified as the responsible party for utility bills by formally submitting a letter of assignment initiated by the property owner to the Finance Department/Utility Billing. This letter shall be submitted on the form provided by the City and contain live signatures. It shall designate and identify the responsible party, that party's legal mailing address and phone number, and bear the signatures of both the owner and designated party. This authorization will remain in effect until changed by the property owner.

Please call the Finance Department/Utility Billing at 651-322-2099 when you need the following information:

- A. **NEW UTILITY ACCOUNTS** – Provide the name, address, and daytime telephone number of the new property owner to establish the utility account.
- B. **MOVING IN & MOVING OUT (FINAL BILLS)** – If the property is on city water and sewer service the seller must contact Public Works to schedule a final reading appointment for the day of closing. A minimum 24 hour notice is required for an appointment. Office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday – Friday. We require you to provide the closing date, the buyer's name and a forwarding address for the seller for the final billing statement. The City will not schedule a final reading without this information. If the property is 'storm only', we require the same information but scheduling an appointment is not necessary as there is no city water/sewer service. The City recognizes the current owner (seller) as the party responsible for notifying the City of a transfer of ownership on any property.
- C. Any questions or concerns regarding utility bills or meter readings/usages.
- D. Billing status of water, sewer, storm water and street light utility accounts.

Please call the Public Works Department at 651-322-2022 when you need the following utility services:

- A. **WATER AND SEWER MAINTENANCE** – Property owners should call if having some kind of problem with their water meter, need to have service shut off while a repair is done in their home, or any other type of maintenance issue. City staff will determine if the issue requires staff attention or if the problem is the homeowner’s responsibility to contact a plumber. If the issue is the responsibility of the City, an appointment will be set up for the repair at no charge if the problem is not the result of negligence. After business hours or on weekends, for non-emergency calls, a fee will be charged as stated in the current Fee Resolution.
- B. **DOOR TAGS** – A door tag may be left at a property for various reasons. Please follow the instructions on the tag and contact the City as soon as possible.

2) **UTILITY BILLS OR STATEMENTS**

The City processes quarterly cycle billing. The city is divided into 3 sections: Section 1 is all property(s) north of CR42 and west of TH3, and is considered Cycle 1. Section 2 is all property(s) south of CR42 and west of TH3 and all storm water only accounts, and is considered Cycle 2. Section 3 is all property(s) east of TH3 and all commercial, industrial, institutional and multi-family housing, and is considered Cycle 3. Bills are mailed out monthly on a rotating cycle with the billing period a full 3 month (quarter) term. All bills are due on the 20th of the billing month. Statements will reflect that month’s due date. Customers will not be allowed to write post-dated checks to be held. The City will deposit payments received on a daily basis. Any unpaid balance not received by close of business on the due date will result in a 6% late penalty addition to that account balance. Any payment received after close of business on the due date is considered late; there is no grace period.

3) **PAST DUE ACCOUNTS**

When payment in full for a utility balance is not received by the due date, a 6% penalty on water charges, a 6% penalty on sewer charges, a 6% penalty on Capital Improvement Fund charges, a 6% penalty on storm water charges and a 6% penalty on street light charges will be added to the account balance. If a payment received after the due date includes the late penalty charges, no further action is required by the customer. Quarterly billings and subsequent penalties will accrue on the account until paid in full or certified to the property taxes (see Item 12). No additional notice will be sent if late penalties are added. The unpaid balance will be listed on your next quarterly billing statement as a previous balance.

4) **PAYMENTS**

The City accepts utility payments in the following manner:

- a. Check, bank draft or cash by mail. Please allow ample mail processing time; payments must be *received* by the close of business on the due date. We will not accept a postmark date as on time.
- b. Check or cash payments may be placed in one of the City’s drop boxes located in the upper level of City Hall parking lot next to front door, lower level of City Hall parking lot across from main door is a drive-up box, and a drop box on the wall inside City Hall next to the front window/counter.
- c. Cash, check, debit and credit card payments by walk-in at City Hall during normal business hours.
- d. Phone payments are accepted by our online bill pay processor PSN by calling 877-885-7968. You will need to have your complete account number ready when you call.
- e. On-line payments can be made using a credit or debit card or e-check. Visit the city website www.ci.rosemount.mn.us for links to Payment Service Network (PSN) to first register your account. Once registered, you may make payments, view account and payment history, reprint bills, and/or opt-out of paper statements. Please call 877-885-7968 if you have registration and/or set-up questions.

5) **REFUND POLICY**

Refunds for overpayments will be made on terminated accounts only, and only if the overpayment is \$100.00 or more. Overpayments less than \$100.00 will be credited to the current and active account. The only exception to the refund policy is in the event of an overpayment resulting from a clerical error. In this case, the owner may decide if they would like a refund or a credit on their account.

6) **COURTESY CREDIT / BILLING ADJUSTMENTS**

A one-time courtesy credit will be allowed for penalty charges if there is a discrepancy in the date the payment was received by the City, once the City is notified by the owner. The adjustment will only be granted during the current billing quarter for only that quarter's late fees.

7) **NEW METER INSTALLATION / DISCONNECT AND RECONNECTION CHARGE**

Water billing shall start at the time of installation/pickup of a water meter. Prior to meter installation, only storm water charges may apply. Water meters shall be purchased from the City at a charge designated by the current Fee Resolution. Where service has been turned off, a service charge for the shut-off will be placed on the final billing or the next quarterly bill per the Fee Resolution. When water service resumes, a service charge for the turn-on will be placed on the final billing or next quarterly bill per the Fee Resolution. **ONLY CITY STAFF MAY TURN WATER ON OR SHUT WATER OFF.** Please schedule an appointment with Public Works if shut-off or turn-on service is needed. Residential meters are to be installed by a licensed plumber or the owner only. All other meters are to be installed by the plumbing contractor but may require an appointment with Public Works to install or program the reading device. Note: While water is shut off, the fixed charges will still be billed quarterly; only the water & sewer usage charges are stopped until the meter is reinstalled.

When a meter has been found to be faulty for some reason, clogged or stopped, the amount of water used and billed will be estimated in accordance with the amount used previously in the year.

The property owner may, by written request, have a meter tested for accuracy by submitting a deposit for the testing in the amount stated in the current Fee Resolution. The fees are based on meter size and the testing is performed by an independent source. If testing indicates an error over 5% of the water consumed, the deposit is refunded, the utility account will be adjusted accordingly, and a new meter will be installed at no charge. Such adjustment shall not extend back more than one billing period from the date of written request.

8) **IRRIGATION METERS FOR COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL & MULTI-FAMILY PROPERTY**

The City will require the management company of an HOA or owner of a commercial/industrial property to seasonally remove and reinstall their irrigation meters if the meter is not located in a temperature controlled building to prevent freezing and meter breakage. They must also schedule an appointment with Public Works for the water shut off and/or turn on so the City may obtain a meter reading to properly bill usage. The City will shut off the water and suspend billing the water fixed charges until the meter(s) are reinstalled. Prior to turning on the water in the spring, the owner or management company must set up an appointment with Public Works to verify the proper reinstallation and turn on the water. **ONLY CITY STAFF MAY TURN ON OR SHUT OFF WATER.** If the City is not notified of a seasonal meter removal, all applicable billing charges will continue uninterrupted.

9) **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND & FIXED CHARGES FOR INSTITUTIONAL ACCOUNTS WITH IRRIGATION**

Schools, churches and government agencies are considered institutional accounts. These accounts shall be exempt from the Capital Improvement Fund charge on their second meter, if they have more than one, and will be billed only the fixed charge and usage. The charges billed on the account for the regular meter will include the Capital Improvement Fund fee based on the largest of the two meter sizes.

10) **FINAL METER READINGS/FINAL BILLS**

A final meter reading will be taken when ordered only if a property is being sold. We do not take meter readings on rental property. The fixed charges will be prorated from the beginning of the period to the closing date. Final bills are processed daily and mailed soon thereafter. If a final reading was not scheduled, we will process the final bill when notified by Dakota County of a property sale using the last period meter read. Any usage since the sale date and the actual final date then falls to the new owner. It is the responsibility of both parties to verify that the utility account has been properly transferred and any and all previous unpaid balances are satisfied upon sale of a home.

11) **RATES**

All utility rates shall be established on an annual basis by resolution recommended by the Utility Commission and adopted by the City Council. Current rates are available in the Fee Resolution.

12) **TAX CERTIFICATION**

At the present time, the City of Rosemount does not shut off water service for non-payment of utility bills. In March and September of each year, any current account or terminated account with a balance due greater than \$15.00 will be certified to the current owner's property taxes as a special assessment with applicable fees and interest.

Owners are notified a minimum of 30 days prior to the certification payment deadline of a pending assessment. After the deadline, all payments for these delinquent amounts must be made to the Dakota County Treasurer and are accepted at the government centers in Apple Valley, Hastings or West St. Paul.

The County will accept payments on the assessments through noon on December 31st of that year. Any unpaid balance at that time will become a lien against the property and will be assessed on the next year's property taxes.

Any utility payment made to the City of Rosemount after the deadline will be credited to the current property owner's account and will in no way affect the tax certification. No refunds will be granted if the delinquent amount is paid to the City in error after the deadline.