



## UTILITY ACCOUNT POLICIES & PROCEDURES

### SECTION 1. BILLING & DEPOSITS

#### A. Utility Dates

1. Meter Reading Dates - Meters will be read on or about the last week of the month.
2. Billing Date - Bills will be sent out in the first week of the month.
3. Due Date - Payment are due upon receipt. If payment is not received by close of business on the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month a late fee shall be assessed (see Sec. 3B). Payments must physically be in City Hall by close of business day on the 25<sup>th</sup> of month. Payments made in the drop box after close of business on the 25<sup>th</sup> will be considered late. If the 25<sup>th</sup> falls on a holiday, Saturday or Sunday the bill will then become delinquent at 5:00 p.m. on the first business day following the holiday or weekend.
4. Shutoff Date - A notice will be sent to all consumers who are delinquent on their account. Consumers have ten days after the due date to pay the delinquent account. If account is not paid in full all utility services shall be discontinued until account is made current. If the delinquent due date falls on a holiday, Saturday or Sunday the bill will then become delinquent at 5:00 p.m. on the first business day following the holiday or weekend.

#### B. Deposit Requirements

1. The City of Orting shall require a customer utility deposit for establishing water, wastewater, or storm water accounts. Customer utility deposit shall be a flat rate of \$150.00. The deposit of \$150.00 will be waived for owners of the dwelling upon meeting the following conditions:
  - a. The utility account will be billed in the owner's name and the owner of the dwelling has had no delinquencies in the past two years on any utility account with the city; or
  - b. The owner of the dwelling produces a current "Letter of Credit" from their previous utility company stating there have been no delinquencies, shut-off's or NSF checks on their utility account within the last year.
2. If an existing utility account is shutoff for non-payment and there is no utility deposit on file, the City will require a utility deposit in the amount of \$150.00 plus any other fees owed on their account prior to re-establishing service.
3. The utility deposit will be applied to the utility account upon closeout of the account and any remaining balance will be refunded to the customer.
4. Owner Responsibility - Owner will be billed directly for utilities, which will include all rentals. Owner may fill out a "Tenant Information Form" to have the bill in the renter's name, but owner is ultimately responsible for the outstanding account balance.
5. Vacant Rentals, Vacant Homes, Vacations - Owners shall be charged basic rate for water and wastewater regardless of occupancy of dwelling.

## **SECTION 2. UTILITY CONNECTION**

Application for water and/or sewer service shall be made at City Hall. Utilities shall be turned on only if the account balance at the service address is current and only if the customer has no other outstanding utility accounts. Account shall be paid in full prior to connection.

## **SECTION 3. FEES**

### **A. Returned Check Fee**

1. A \$40.00 fee shall be assessed on any returned check. (Resolution #2005-03)
2. A door hanger will be placed at the address. The customer has 24 hours to come in and satisfy the returned check.
3. Customer shall pay, in cash, the amount of the returned check plus the \$40.00 fee.
4. If consumer does not pick up check by given date the utility service shall be disconnected. A shut off processing fee shall be assessed in the amount of \$25.00. Customer shall pay, in cash, the amount of the returned check, \$40.00 returned check fee, and the \$25.00 shutoff processing fee prior to reconnecting the service.

### **B. Late Fee - \$20.00 (Per resolution #2001-11)**

If customer has not paid utility account in full by the due date of the 25th a \$20.00 late fee shall be assessed.

### **C. Shut Off Processing Fee - \$25.00 (Per resolution #2001-11)**

1. If outstanding balance is not paid in full by due date the customer shall be sent a delinquency notice stating the date of shut-off. If account is not paid in full before shutoff date then water and/or sewer shall be turned off and locked out. Payment must physically be in this office before the shutoff date. A shutoff processing fee will automatically be assessed on all delinquent accounts on shutoff day even if payment is received on that day prior to actual physically shutting off of the utility.
2. If the delinquent account was paid in full after the due date and the \$20.00 late charge was assessed then the \$20.00 balance may be carried into the next billing cycle and the water and/or sewer utility will not be shut off.
3. The customer shall pay the past due amount in full, the late fee, and the shut-off fee, prior to reconnecting the utility service.

## **SECTION 4. ADJUSTMENTS**

### **A. Billing/Credit Adjustment**

Any adjustments to utility bills shall be set through policy developed by the City Council.

### **B. Leaks in Water Lines**

1. If the utility bill is judged to be excessive by the owner/renter because of a suspected water-line leak it is the responsibility of the owner to immediately notify city hall of the leak. If owner requests the water bill to be adjusted, the leak must be fixed and proof of repair brought to the city. The utility department shall consider a reduction of amount due only with proof of repair.
2. If suspected leak is not reported to city hall before the next billing cycle, a reduction in the utility bill for the previous months shall not be given any consideration. If a leak is reported but not fixed before the 2nd billing after it was reported an adjustment will not be given.
3. If the City notifies an owner/renter of a suspected water-line leak the leak must be fixed and proof of repair brought to the city. If leak is not fixed before the 2nd billing after it was reported to the owner an adjustment will not be given and further action may be taken by the City to ensure the leak is repaired.