

City of Big Sandy

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Water/Wastewater/Sanitation Service Policies

1. Application for Service

Service Application and Agreement must be filled out completely prior to connection for service.

2. Deposits

- Only one deposit is required for each utility connection.
- The name of the applicant and/or co-applicant cannot be changed unless agreed to by applicant(s). Deposits are not transferable unless written proof of marriage, death or divorce can be presented and kept on record.
- Additional Deposit: If a customer is on the disconnect list more than (3) three consecutive times, the customer may be required to pay an additional deposit equal to or greater than the original deposit amount to continue service.
- Deposits are not required for temporary service for up to (3) three days for cleaning, repairs, or real estate inspections.
- Deposits may be transferred when a customer relocates from one address to another after a transfer fee of \$25 has been paid.
- Refund: Upon disconnection of service, the deposit will be applied to the final utility bill and the balance of the deposit (if any) will be mailed to the customer's forwarding address. After 90 days, any unclaimed deposits become the property of the City's water and wastewater fund. Refunds less than \$5 will not be issued and will become the property of the City's water and wastewater fund. Deposit fees are:
 - Residential Owner: \$100
 - Residential Renter: \$150
 - Commercial: \$150

3. Connection

After an applicant has completed the application for service and paid the applicable deposit, a work order shall be written up for connection.

If an attempt to connect service results in a meter not pressuring up, the City representative will leave a door hanger to let the customer know why service was not connected with instructions to call City Hall at 903.636.4343 to make an appointment to attempt connection with the customer present.

4. Bills

- Meters will be read around the 15th day of each month.
- Utility bills will be mailed on the 2nd business day before the end of the month (usually the 28th day).

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4. Bills continued

- If a customer does not receive a utility bill by the 3rd day of the month, it is the customer's responsibility to come by or call City Hall at 903.636.4343 to get the balance on their account. The customer is responsible for notifying the city of any address changes.
- All utility bills are to be paid in full by 4:00 p.m. on the 20th of the month. If the 20th falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or federal holiday, payment must be made by 4:00 p.m. on the next business day or service will be subject to disconnection.

5. Payments

All utility bill payments are to be made at City Hall. Public Works employees are not allowed to accept utility bill payments.

- Bank Draft:
 - Customers can have their monthly utility bills drafted by the bank of their choice once the Direct Pay Authorization Agreement has been completed and accepted by a City representative.
- Cash
- Check:
 - No temporary or two party checks will be accepted.
 - Checks will only be presented for payment one time.
 - If a check presented for payment of utility services is returned for insufficient funds, a \$35 fee will be added to the customer's account and the customer is subject to immediate disconnection of service.
 - Once a customer presents an insufficient funds check, the City will no longer accept checks from that customer.
- Credit Card

6. Penalties

- From the 1st through the 10th of the month: NO PENALTY
- From the 10th through the 20th of the month: 10% penalty will be assessed.
- After 4:00p.m. on the 20th of each month, a \$40.00 delinquent fee will be assessed and utility service will be subject to disconnection for non-payment.

7. Extensions

Extensions on utility bills may be granted once every 6 months. An Extension Agreement must be completed before the 21st disconnect day. No extensions will be granted after that date.

If an extension is granted, payment can be extended to the 28th day of the month for each billing period and a \$25 extension fee will be applied to the customer's utility bill. If a customer fails to uphold the Extension Agreement, utility service can be disconnected and will not be reconnected until the customer pays the past due balance plus the \$40 delinquent fee.

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8. Disconnection

- **For non-payment**
 - Disconnection can occur if payment for a utility bill is not received by 4:00 p.m. on the 20th of each month. If the 20th falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or federal holiday, payment must be made by 4:00 p.m. on the next business day or service will be subject to disconnection.
- **For discontinuation of service**
 - Service can be disconnected after a Disconnection of Service Request Form has been completed and accepted by a City representative.

9. Reconnection

Utility services can be reconnected once any delinquent balance on a customer's account (including all incurred fees) has been paid in full.

If reconnection is requested after hours, which is considered Monday through Friday after 4:00 p.m. or on Saturday and Sunday or federal holiday, there will be an additional \$40 after hours fee charged. Customers can call 903.539.7622 to arrange after hours reconnections.

10. Tampering

Any unauthorized connection or reconnection of utility services constitutes tampering and is punishable by law. Customers guilty of tampering are subject to:

- Immediate disconnection of utility services
- Tampering Fees:
 - 1st Offense: \$100 Tampering Fee
 - 2nd Offense: \$200 Tampering Fee
- Service can be reconnected when the delinquent balance on a customer's account (including all incurred fees) has been paid in full.

11. Testing Meters

Customers may request (1) one confirmation of their meter reading at no charge per month. If the meter reading is correct, the customer may request for their meter to be tested.

If the meter test results show that the meter is accurate according to the standard set by the American Water Works Association, the customer will be charged the current rate paid by the City of Big Sandy for the meter test. If the test shows a failing meter, the City reserves the right to bill the customer for utility services based on the previous (3) three months consumption before the failure occurred.

12. Water Leaks

- It is the customer's responsibility to maintain all water and sewer lines on their property from the point where it connects to the City main or meter.
- An excessive bill due to an undetected water leak may be brought to the City Council for a variance negotiation once the leak has been fixed.

Approved: January 19, 2016