

SECTION 9

309.001

BILLING.

- A. Water, sewer and other utilities as authorized by the City Council shall be billed on one bill as applicable to each account. All bills shall contain the address and telephone number of the official in charge of billing; the address and phone number shall be clearly visible and easily readable.
- B. Charges shall be billed to consumers on a monthly basis in such form and manner as determined most appropriate and efficient by the City Clerk-Treasurer. Bills shall be mailed and/or transmitted electronically to the customers according to the name and address on file with the City Clerk-Treasurer and shall specify the water consumed, the sewer and other fees as authorized by the City Council in accordance with the current utility rate schedule together with any other unpaid charges and penalties.

All charges shall be due and payable by the 10th day of the month following the month of such billing. If payment is not made by that date, the account shall be deemed delinquent. A penalty fee shall be added to each monthly statement until paid in full. Payments made by check or other written instrument shall be first subject to collection. There shall be only one bill or statement for each water meter and the City shall not split bills between or among multiple users of one water meter.

- C. **Sale of Water and State Sales Tax.** Sale of water by the City shall be subject to State Sales Tax, or other state mandated fees. All bills forwarded to users shall indicate the taxes or fees as a separate and additional charge for water sold by the City and used by the user during the period for which the bill was sent. This section shall not apply to such users as are specifically exempt by State law.
- D. **Meter Readings.** Water meters will be read monthly on such a date as may be established from time to time and reported to the offices of the City Clerk-Treasurer or designee, including a report of any meters that are out of repair. The City Clerk-Treasurer or designee shall immediately thereafter prepare monthly utility bills, and each user of water within the City of Winsted shall receive a monthly statement for water consumed. Radio Read Meters are read approximately every thirty (30) days. Estimated readings may also be taken, if access to the meter is not possible or the meter has stopped working. Users with manual read meters must supply a meter read to the City by the 10th day of the month to ensure accurate billing for the user. Users who fail to provide a meter read shall receive a No Read fee, as adopted annually by the City Council.

- E. **Definitions of Fees.**

Water Base Rate. A minimum charge for access to the City's water supply system, regardless of actual use.

Water. Charges to consumers for the amount of water, in thousands of gallons, used or consumed from the City's water supply for indoor use.

External Service Line Base Rate. A minimum charge for access to the City's water supply system for an external service line, regardless of actual use.

External Service Line. Charges to consumers for the amount of water, in thousands of gallons, used or consumed from the City's water supply for outdoor use or fire suppression lines.

Sewer Base Rate. A minimum charge for access to the City's sanitary sewer system, regardless of actual use.

Sewer. Charges to users for the amount of sewage, in thousands of gallons, secreted into the City's sanitary sewer system.

Debt Fee. A debt service charge to retire local capital costs, and for the proportionate share of the operation, maintenance and replacement costs of the waterworks and sewer system facilities, based on the user's proportionate use of the systems, as determined by the City.

State Test Fee. A fee imposed by the Minnesota Department of Health for water testing.

Repair Maintenance Fee. A charge established by the City Council for each account to be collected and deposited into a fund to be used for the replacement of water service lines, shut off valves and lead service lines.

Notice Fee. A fee associated with the process of City staff posting a notice for the user to correct a delinquency or risk discontinuance of service. The notice provides a specific date when disconnection will occur. To prevent disconnection, payment must be received prior to the date specified.

Disconnection Fee. A fee assessed to a user for disconnection of service to any premises due to non-payment, failure to make payment arrangements, discontinuing an account at a property, fraud, unauthorized use of equipment or tampering with City-owned equipment.

Reconnection Fee. A fee assessed to a customer to restore service when service to any premises has been disconnected.

Delinquency Fee. A penalty fee assessed to a user for non-payment when service to any premises has been disconnected or cannot be disconnected due to infrastructure issues, weather conditions, or other factors.

No Read Fee. A fee assessed to a user who does not provide a meter reading with the utility bill payment.

Public Works Service. City personnel may service private water lines in the City of Winsted only upon emergency circumstances. Emergency services provided by City personnel shall be billed to the property owner at the rate as established by the City Council and included with the regular utility rates schedule.

F. **Payments.** All charges for water, sewer and other utilities as authorized by the City Council shall be payable at the office of the City Clerk-Treasurer no later than the 10th day of the month to any particular user, at which time it will be considered delinquent, and notice will be sent out. If not paid by the first Monday of the month following the original due date, the duly authorized personnel shall turn off the water on said service at the cost of the disconnection fee and reconnection fee and it shall not be turned on again until all utility bills and the additional sum of the disconnection and reconnection charges shall be paid.

1. *Forms of Payment.* Payments may be made by cash, check, money order, credit card, automatic bank withdrawal or online via the City's website. No change will be given on a check, money order or credit card payment. No second party or post-dated checks will be accepted. Checks will not be held. Payments made by check or other written instrument shall be first subject to collection.

2. *Non-Sufficient Funds.* A non-sufficient funds check is treated as a non-payment. If notification of the NSF check is received by the City, the customer will be charged an NSF processing fee as adopted annually by the City Council. The customer will be notified by the City and will have three (3) days to make a payment by cash or credit card. If the customer fails to comply, services will be disconnected immediately and the appropriate law enforcement agency will be notified. If

three (3) NSF payments are received for an account, the account will be placed in a cash or credit card-only payment status for the remainder of the life of the account.

3. It is the owner and/or user's responsibility to pay bills on time and in full.

G. **Errors in Billing.** Overcharged customers will be credited on the next statement or refunded on their final billing. Any adjustments resulting in a credit greater than three (3) months billing, will be refunded by check. Overcharges will not be refunded for any errors exceeding two (2) years from the date of notice by the customer. Undercharged customers will be billed with an explanation of charges.

H. **Adjustment Authority.** The City Council may adopt policies providing for the adjustment of charges or credits to charges for accounts or groups of accounts, based upon data supplied by staff, auditors, or affected property owners. The City Clerk-Treasurer, or designee, shall review the data and request and make the adjustment or credit on a case by case basis. An appeal of the City Clerk-Treasurer's determination may be made in writing to the City Council.