

CITY OF DODGEVILLE

Utility Disconnection Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines which are to be followed in a uniform manner, exercised consistently, and in accordance with the rules of the Wisconsin Administrative Code, Chapter PSC 185.

BILLING & LATE PAYMENT CHARGES

Water and sewer bills are issued monthly in the City of Dodgeville. Customers should receive bills on or about the 1st of each month. Payment is due on or before the 20th of every month. Bills paid after the 20th of the month receive a 3% per month late fee but not less than 50 cent charge will be added to bills if not paid within 20 days of issuance. This one-time 3% late payment fee will be applied only to any unpaid balance for the current billing period's usage. If the 20th falls on Friday, Saturday or Sunday, we will accept payments on Monday without late fee. An additional 10% penalty will be charged if the utility has to transfer any unpaid delinquent balances, as of November 1st, to the tax roll.

Non-Sufficient Fee

A \$30 charge will be applied to your account when a check for a bill payment is returned for any reason.

Any customer presenting two checks or bank drafts which are returned unpaid within a six-month period shall be unable to issue a check for payment on his or her account for the subsequent twelve (12) month period. During this period, the account must be paid with either cash or certified funds or by credit card.

Any customer presenting one check or bank draft which is presented to avoid a disconnection but is returned unpaid shall be unable to issue any additional checks for payment on his or her account for the subsequent twenty-four month period. During this period, the account must be paid with either cash or certified funds or by credit card.

A customer using the automatic payment system is responsible for maintaining sufficient funds in the customer's deposit account on the dates on which payments are drawn. Any customer having insufficient funds in the customer's deposit account or a closed account more than twice within a six-month period shall be disqualified from using the automatic payment system for a subsequent twelve month period. During this period, the account must be paid with cash or certified funds or by credit card and a \$30 NFS charge will be applied to your account.

After five (5) days past the due date, the following procedures will be followed:

A. Written Disconnection Notices

A written disconnection notice will be sent to resident or landlord/tenant around the 25th of every month. This notice will require a response within 10 days of the disconnection notice. Service WILL BE disconnected on or after the date shown on this notice. All delinquent payments are required to be received by 9:30 AM on the disconnection date. Any payment received after the 9:30 AM deadline does not constitute a guarantee that services will still not be disconnected. The City will attempt to collect 50% of the delinquent amount immediately and set up installments to result in full payment prior to the next billing.

Immediately contact the utility office:

1. If you dispute the notice of a delinquent account.
2. If you wish to negotiate a deferred payment arrangement.
3. If any resident is seriously ill.
4. If there are other extenuating circumstances such as: infants, young children, aged, or handicapped residents, residents on life support systems or equipment, residents who have mental retardation of other developmental or mental disabilities.

Services will be continued or restored for 21 days if you submit a statement from a licensed Wisconsin physician or notice from a public health or social service official identifying the serious illness of a resident and the period of time during which disconnection would aggravate the illness.

B. Verbal Notice

Upon ten (10) days without response to the written disconnection notice a phone call may be attempted in order to contact the resident or landlord/tenant to make them aware that disconnection will be occurring within the next 24 hours. Inability to contact, or a failure to respond within this 24 hour period, will advance the collection into an immediate "Disconnection". The City will attempt to collect 50% of the delinquent amount immediately and set up a payment arrangement to result in full payment prior to the next billing.

Any default on a payment arrangement on the part of the customer or responsible party will advance any delinquent balances into a disconnection. Two default payments on a deferred payment arrangement within a six month period will result in the City not offering additional deferred payment arrangement to the defaulting party for a subsequent twelve (12) month period.

C. Disconnection

1. The City will make every effort to disconnect on the second Tuesday of every month.

2. Exceptions may be made based on work schedules, emergencies, holidays etc.
3. The utility billing clerk shall provide the Department of Public Works (DPW) a listing of “Disconnects” to be addressed on a timely basis.
4. DPW staff will NOT enter into further negotiations with a resident, tenant, or landlord on the payment of any amount, nor shall DPW collect any monies in full or partial settlement of a delinquent account. The DPW will refer you to the Utility Billing Clerk regarding matters of this nature.
5. Once on the scene to exercise a disconnection function, DPW shall proceed as planned, unless they are provided proof of a valid, up-to-date deferred payment arrangement or a receipt verifying payment has been made. DPW staff will confirm this with the Utility Billing Clerk.

D. Reconnection

Once a disconnection takes place, the resident or current tenant must pay 100% of the outstanding charges plus a reconnection fee to be reconnected. Reconnection fees for turning on the valve at the curb stop are \$35 between 7:30 a.m. and 3:30 PM Monday through Friday (except holidays) and \$60 at any other time. Fees for reinstallation of a meter, including valving at curb stop are \$35 between 7:30 a.m. and 3:30 PM Monday through Friday (except holidays) and \$60 at any other time. Once service has been disconnected, the DPW staff will have up to 48 hours to perform the reconnection after payment of outstanding charges and fees. There will be NO guarantee that service will be reconnected immediately or within the same day that payment is received.

E. Continued Occupancy During a Disconnection Period

The landlord is ultimately responsible for his/her rental units. Every effort is made by the City to collect from the tenant and keep the landlord informed of action being taken. Landlords are encouraged to protect their own interest in a manner they see fit for each situation. It is not the City’s responsibility to dictate to landlords how they should deal with their tenants.

A tenant with a balance due who is vacating a premise will not be allowed utility services at another premise until the prior bill is paid in full. A balance from one residence will not be allowed to be carried over to the next.

Requests from landlords, realtors, etc. to have the service reconnected will not be honored until the respective outstanding balance is paid in full.

The City’s preference is to work with customers who are having difficulty making payments, out of respect for their various situations. However, the City shall proceed with serving the best interests of the Utilities and their customers.

F. New Connections

An existing resident who will be vacating the premises must complete a Utility Moving Out Form to request a meter reading for the day of moving and provide a forwarding address and telephone contact number.

Approved and Adopted May 2, 2017