



TOWN OF BOONSBORO

21 NORTH MAIN STREET ♦ BOONSBORO, MARYLAND 21713

WWW.TOWN.BOONSBORO.MD.US ♦ 301-432-5141

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Long and Town Council Members

From: Megan Clark, Town Manager 

Date: December 28, 2016

Subject: BMUC Policy Follow Up

Throughout several workshop sessions, various changes and clarifications to the BMUC Water and Sewer Billing policy have been discussed.

At the December Regular Meeting of the BMUC, **the BMUC unanimously recommended approval of the attached Water and Sewer Billing Policies and Procedures.**

Prior the BMUC recommendation; follow up with MML was completed regarding whether other municipalities have an appeals process for billing disputes. MML found no references of an appeals process other than going to a specified Utilities Board.

You will also notice in the attached, references to billing adjustments were removed. The BMUC discussed various scenarios in which an adjustment to a water/sewer bill would be considered and agreed that the majority of these scenarios were the result of malfunctioning equipment under the property owner's responsibility.

If you have any questions regarding the attached or need additional information, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.



BOONSBORO MUNICIPAL UTILITIES COMMISSION

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WATER AND SEWER BILLING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

BILLING. Utilities are billed quarterly for the following general periods: January 1 through March 31, April 1 through June 30, July 1 through September 30, and October 1 through December 31 and are mailed each April, July, October, and January respectively. **All accounts are established in the property owner's name and are billed to the property owner. (The Town does not mail utility bills or notices to tenants of rental properties.)**

All properties connected to the Town's water supply system, including owners of unoccupied dwellings, shall be billed the quarterly minimum rates for water and actual usage charges.

All properties in the Town of Boonsboro limits connected to the Town's water supply, including owners of unoccupied dwellings, shall be billed the quarterly minimum rates for sewer and actual usage charges, and the Bay Restoration Fee (BRF) which is legislated to be collected by the Town of Boonsboro.

All residential properties in the Town of Boonsboro limits, including unoccupied dwellings, shall be billed the quarterly fee for sanitation collection.

Payments are due in full within thirty (30) days of the billing date noted on the bill and payable to the **Boonsboro Municipal Utilities Commission** or **BMUC**. Personal checks cannot be post-dated, and are not held for a future deposit date.

After thirty (30) days, a one-time interest penalty charge of 5% (five percent) will be added to the overdue bill and a late notice will be mailed.

After sixty (60) days, a disconnection notice – including the deadline for payment and the date and time of the disconnection of water services – will be mailed. (Disconnection notices are the final notification for payment mailed to property owners prior to disconnection of services.)

If services are disconnected, a disconnection fee of \$100.00 will be added to the overdue bill; the full past due amount, including the interest penalty charge and disconnection fee must be paid in full prior to reconnection of services.

DISCONNECTION POLICY. On the day of disconnection, a notice that service has been terminated will be left on the premises or will be presented to the property owner, if present. A payment made after disconnection must be paid in cash, money order or credit card to the Water & Sewer Clerk in the Town Hall, 21 N. Main St. (Public Works personnel are not permitted to accept any form of payment.). Minimum charges as identified above under billing will continue to be assessed after disconnection.

RETURNED CHECKS. An additional \$25.00 fee will be added to the utility bill for a check returned for any reason. If payment is received by check on the day of or just prior to disconnection and the check is later returned for insufficient funds, services will be terminated immediately.

PAYMENT PLANS: A property owner may arrange for a payment plan by contacting the Water & Sewer Clerk immediately after a quarterly utility bill is received by the property owner. Payment Plans are based on the bill being paid in full prior to the issuance of the next quarterly utility bill.



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METER READING. It is necessary for billing cycle meter readings to occur in a timely manner in order to ensure that Quarterly Bills are provided at the beginning of each quarter.

Meter Reads for Quarterly Bills shall begin no more than 2 weeks prior to the mailing date for quarterly bills. Quarterly Bills are to be mailed no later than the 7th day of each month.

There may be a need for the Town to provide an additional meter reading at any time. Below are examples of some potential reasons for which an additional reading could take place:

- Transfer of Property
- Checking for the possible presence of a leak in the owner's system
- A noticed change in water pressure

A customer may request one (1) extra meter reading per quarter if they feel there is a mistake or have concerns with their usage.

When an extra reading has occurred for a transfer of property; whether to a new owner or new tenant; a final bill shall be prepared based upon the new reading. Final bills shall be paid within 30 days and late fees shall be applied thereafter consistent with the Billing section above.

A property owner, whose water meter cannot be accessed by a meter reader, due to weeds or any other impediments, will be in violation of the Town's Property Maintenance Code and subject to a fine of \$100.00 each day the violation remains after written notification is delivered.

REPLACEMENT METERS. If a customer requests a water meter to be tested or calibrated by the manufacturer after the Town's Public Works staff has determined the meter to be in working order, the customer will be billed an additional \$50.00, unless the manufacturer deems the meter to be faulty. If it is faulty, the meter will be repaired/replaced by Public Works Staff and the customer will be notified in writing.

SETTLEMENTS. Property owner(s) and/or the property owner's(s') representative are responsible for the payment of all utility charges. The Town is not responsible for reconciling any overlooked or incorrect charge payments made during the sale or transfer of property.

SPECIAL EVENT USAGE. Water used for special events shall be metered. The Boonsboro Municipal Utilities Commission shall determine the charge for the event.

BULK WATER CUSTOMERS. Groups, contractors, individuals, etc that require water for approved uses (ie geothermal, construction, street-sweeping, etc but, excluding filling pools, washing cars, etc) shall be required to submit for approval of the use and rent a meter, with a deposit.

The user shall then pay for the metered bulk water at the normal commercial water rate as established each fiscal year.

AGENDA SCHEDULING. Items for discussion at the regularly scheduled Utilities Commission meetings, including concerns and complaints, are to be submitted in writing (electronic submittal is acceptable) one week prior to the regularly scheduled meeting in order to be considered. The Utilities Commission may render a decision during the same meeting, however, a decision shall be rendered no later than at the next regularly scheduled meeting or 45 days later, whichever is shorter.