

## 7000 – Utility Billing & Collections Policy

# City of Humboldt

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Policy Title <b>Utility Billing &amp; Collection</b>		Adopted By: City Council	Policy Number 7000	
Origin/Authority <b>Administration</b>	Jurisdiction  <b>City of Humboldt</b>	Effective Date November, 1995 Amended Oct, 28/2013, Feb, 27/2017, Aug. 14/17, Jan. 27/2020		Page  1 (2)
Reviewed By: Executive Committee				

### 1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures for the Utility Clerk, front line staff and Works and Utilities Department for the billing and collection of utility bills in order to achieve an efficient method of utility account collections.

### 2.0 Scope

- 2.1 This policy and procedure applies to the Utility Clerk, front line staff and any Public Works employees that are involved in the provision of utility services.

### 3.0 Responsibility

- 3.1 The Director of Finance and the Public Works Director are responsible for the maintenance and adherence of this policy.

### 4.0 Procedure

- 4.1 The cost of a water meter for new properties and/or deposit (based on size) must be collected prior to water service being provided to any properties.
- 4.2 Tenants applying for water service are required to sign a consent form to allow the owner of the property access to information about the utility account.
- 4.3 Utility Billings will be issued to all applicable customers every month.
- 4.4 Utility Billings will be completed by the 15<sup>th</sup> day of each month or as close to the day as possible. Each bill will be due 20 days from the billing date.
- 4.5 On a residential account, any unpaid amount after 20 days will be subject to 3.0% penalty to be charged to the applicable account.
- 4.5(b) On a commercial account, any unpaid amount after 50 days will be subject to a 3.0% penalty to be charged to the applicable account.

- 4.6 Any residential monthly account over \$50.00 that remains unpaid 25 days after the due date shall be sent a bright coloured door knocker with a notice attached to it and given 5 days to clear all outstanding amounts or risk water disconnection.
- 4.7 A copy of the arrears notice shall be forwarded to the owner of any rental properties.
- 4.8 For commercial accounts in arrears (more than 45 days) with an arrears amount over \$50.00, the Utility Clerk will contact the customer and request payment or payment arrangements.
- 4.9 Water disconnection shall be performed by the Public Works Department. Work orders for shut offs of delinquent accounts will not be issued for Fridays.
- 5.0 Once water disconnection has been performed, a \$50.00 reconnection fee shall be added to the applicable account and must be paid prior to services being re-connected.
- 5.1 **FINAL BILLED ACCOUNTS**
- 5.11 Customers have 20 days to pay a Final Bill, after which, any unpaid amounts are in arrears.
- 5.12 Where an utility customer has a final bill in arrears, the City will promptly begin the process to add the unpaid amount to the tax account for the property in accordance with Section 333(1)(b) of *The Cities Act*.
- 5.13 Owners and tenants shall be notified by registered mail 30 days in advance of the amount being added to the property tax account.
- 5.14 Notwithstanding the process described in Section 5.13 above, the Utility Department will actively seek out forwarding information for the resident in an attempt to contact them regarding their outstanding bill including contacting the property owner in the case of a tenant's account.
- 5.2 At any time during the collection process, the City reserves the right to use the services of a collection agency or bailiff, pursuant to the powers outlined in *The Distress Act*.

#### OUR HUMBOLDT STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT



Value	Strategic Area	PBB Results Area
	Well Governed and Administered City	Provides assurance of regulatory and policy compliance to minimize and mitigate risk.