CITY OF TULIA
ADMINISTRATIVE UTILITY DISCONNECT POLICY

Utility Billing:

1. All utility meters (electric and water) are normally read during a week beginning on the 8th of each month.
2. A preliminary billing calculation is prepared after all meters are read and is reviewed by the Utility Billing/Collection Supervisor for potential billing errors.
3. Potential billing errors are investigated/re-read to determine if actual errors exist. Actual errors are corrected prior to the final billing calculation.
4. A final billing calculation and utility billing statements are prepared and mailed on the last business day of the month (excluding weekends and official City Holidays).

Utility Collections:

1. Due Dates – all due dates noted are for that date by 5 pm.
2. Amounts reflected on the monthly billing statements are due and payable upon receipt regardless of proper delivery by the postal service.
3. A penalty of 5% of the total utility bill is assessed if payment is not received by 5:00 pm on the 10th of each month.
4. All utility bills are payable in full by 5:00 p.m. on the 20th of each month to avoid cutoff fees.
5. The initial and delinquent cutoff list will be prepared at 5:00 p.m. on the 20th day of the month. If the 20th falls on a weekend, the initial and delinquent cut-off list will be prepared prior to City Hall opening on the next business day.
6. The City provides a drop box in the parking lot to the East of City Hall as a convenience to customers for payment of utility bills. Drop box payments are collected by the City staff at 7:30 a.m. each business day and any payment collected in the box will be processed that business day. If the 20th falls on a weekend, payments due and in the drop box before 7:30 a.m. on the next business day will be processed as if they were received on the 20th by 5:00 p.m.

Disconnects:

1. The cut-off day is the 21st of the month and is clearly referenced on the monthly utility bill.
2. All customer accounts not paid in full on the 20th by 5:00 p.m. will be considered delinquent unless a current arrangement has been made through PCS or an alternative. The initial and delinquent cut-off list is prepared at this time.
3. Customers must remit full payment of the account, including the $50.00 additional deposit and $10.00 administrative fee, in order to be removed from the initial and delinquent cut-off list (if actual disconnection has not yet taken place). An additional deposit will be collected and then added to the customer's account each time that it is on the initial and delinquent cutoff list for non-payment for an amount to equal not more than a two month average bill.
4. Once the cut-off list is completed it is delivered to utility staff in the field for disconnection of services. Customer accounts on this list are deemed cut-off regardless of actual disconnection and an additional reconnection fee of $35.00 is assessed plus the $50.00 & $10:00 fees in #3 above.

Reconnection after Normal Business Hours:

1. The Utility Department will provide the Police Department dispatch office with a list of all disconnected customers as of 5 p.m. on cut-off day.
2. Customers requesting reconnection after 5 p.m. on weekdays or anytime on weekends or official City holidays must coordinate this activity through police dispatch.
3. The Utility customer must submit full payment of the utility balance in addition to a $100.00 after hours connection charge (which includes a $40.00 after hours reconnection fee, $10.00 administrative fee, and an additional $50.00 deposit) in the form of cash or a money order will be accepted payable to the City of Tulia to the dispatch office prior to the reconnection work order.

Public Assistance:

1. There exist certain programs or organizations that provide public assistance for utility bills. It is up to the utility customer to establish this assistance.
2. If said assistance is obtained, direct payment or a confirmation must be faxed or brought into the utility billing and collection office by customer or by the program or organization providing support.
3. Certain programs or organizations may require a copy of the utility customer's 12 month's billing history in order to establish assistance and can be obtained upon request.
4. Any balance on the customer's account remaining after the assistance payment has been applied must be paid in full by 5:00 pm on the 20th to avoid being placed on the cut-off list.

Tampering:

1. As per ordinance no. 2003-05 passed, approved, and adopted by City Council of the City of Tulia, TX on June 17, 2003 "Unlawful Activities:

   (a) It shall be unlawful for any person or persons to do, commit or assist in the commission of any of the following things or acts in the City of Tulia, Texas:

   (1) To interfere with, tamper with, destroy, deface, deface, impair, injure, or wantonly force open any date, lid, door or meter, or in any way whatsoever destroy, injure, or deface any part of any fixture, property or apparatus of the electric system of the City of Tulia, Texas.

   (2) To resort to any fraudulent device or arrangement for the purpose of procuring electricity for himself or others contrary to the city regulations or ordinances;

   (b) Penalty – Any person, firm or corporation violating any of the provision of this article shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction in municipal court shall be fined in an amount not to exceed five hundred dollars ($500.00) and each days violation of this ordinance shall constitute a separate offense or violation of this ordinance.

Refusal of Services:

1. The City of Tulia reserves the right to refuse utility services based on the following: residence or location does not comply with municipal regulations according to our Code Enforcement Office, if the applicant is known to be indebted to the city in the past due to any unsettled accounts, for refusal to submit a deposit, insufficient identification, inability to provide proof of ownership or permission to be at requested location, or any additional reason deemed by the Utilities Supervisor.

Andrew Freeman, City Manager

05/22/2014

Effective Date