



## **CITY OF OWOSSO COUNCIL RESOLUTION STANDARD PROCEDURES FOR ISSUANCE AND COLLECTION OF UTILITY BILLS**

Pursuant to the authority conferred upon it by the Charter of the City of Owosso, Chapter 34, Article III of the Owosso City Code, the City Council does hereby resolve that all retail water/sewer customers, except as noted below, shall be billed on a quarterly basis beginning with the quarter to be billed at the end of December 2009, with usage charges based upon the meter readings of September (start) and December (end) 2009. The standard billing procedures are as follows, except that modifications may be required in response to unusual circumstances:

1. Beginning with the quarter ending December 31, 2009 retail water and sewer bills shall be based upon quarterly meter readings and billed quarterly except that "Large Users" (as defined by the Director of Public Services) may, at his discretion, be based upon monthly meter readings and be billed monthly.
2. The timeline for quarterly billing is to be as outlined below with the understanding that there may be some variance of dates or time periods due to unusual conditions. The billing and due dates for monthly bills, if any are to be issued, shall continue as previously practiced with modifications as required for consistency with the quarterly billing schedule.

### **Nominal bill dates:**

The nominal bill dates are December 31<sup>st</sup>, March 31<sup>st</sup>, June 30<sup>th</sup>, and September 30<sup>th</sup>. The December 31<sup>st</sup> bill includes applicable Demand Charges for the three months of October, November and December, usage charges based on an initial meter read generally in September and a quarter end read generally in December, and any other applicable miscellaneous charges during that quarter. Other quarters follow a consistent pattern. Note that the meter read dates may vary by one to two weeks due to weather and staffing considerations.

### **Bills processed and mailed:**

Generally within 5 business days following the nominal bill date

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**Bill due date:**

Generally the last business day of the month of mailing with the goal of allowing three full weeks from delivery of the bill to the due date. For example, January 29, 2010 for bills with a nominal billing date of December 31, 2009, which should be delivered by January 8, 2010.

**Late penalty assessment:**

Generally within 3 business days following the due date allowing time for receipt of payments from other collection agents (e.g. banks).

**Past due notice:**

Past due notices with late penalty assessment will generally be mailed by the 5<sup>th</sup> business day following the bill due date. Customers will be advised that past due amounts not received by the 15<sup>th</sup> of that month (or the nearest business day prior to the 15<sup>th</sup> if the 15<sup>th</sup> falls on a weekend or Holiday) will be subject to service disconnect procedures

**Disconnect Notice:**

Disconnect notice, either mailed or door hanger, to be issued as soon as practicable following the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month.

**Non-Pay shut-off date:**

Generally the last Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday following the disconnect notice due date.

3. Water and sewer charges will be converted and/or adjusted, as needed, to a quarterly rate, based upon the monthly rate schedules as outlined in the existing Council Resolution, "WATER AND SEWER RATE SCHEDULE FOR WATER AND SEWER BILLS ISSUED ON OR AFTER SEPTEMBER 30, 2005", Adopted September 6, 2005, or until such time as this resolution is superseded to adjust for a quarterly billing rate schedule.

4. Utility bills shall be based upon water meter size, metered usage charge, other charges for service, late payment charges, and miscellaneous water service charges/circumstances.

5. All bills shall be sent to the mailing address as recorded in the official file of the account.

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6. Bills are due and payable by the “Billing” due date to be considered paid timely and to avoid late payment charges. Partial payments and pre-payments will be accepted, and posted to an account upon receipt, anytime during the utility billing cycle as a convenience to our customers.

7. If a bill is unpaid at its original “Billing” due date, a “Past Due Notice”, and “Disconnect Notice” if necessary, may be sent to the mailing address as recorded in the office file of the account. If the account is in the name of someone other than the owner(s) a “Past Due Notice”, and Disconnect Notice if necessary, may also be mailed to the service address and/or to the owner(s) of record of the parcel as referenced in the tax rolls. “Disconnect Notices” will clearly indicate that, “Service will be scheduled for shut-off if not paid by the due date”, additionally noting, “no further notice will be given prior to shut-off”, and shall serve as final notice prior to shut-off.

8. All water and/or sewer bills may be subject to a late payment charge of 10% of the current amount due. Applicable late payment charges for failure to make prompt payment will be added to the account balance prior to issuance of “Past Due” Notice or the next bill.

9. If a bill is unpaid at its “Disconnect Notice” due date, the account shall be reviewed for eligibility and;

a) scheduled for shut off, or

b) removed from the shut off list by the Director of Public Services and/or his/her designee due to exceptional conditions such as; a review of the account has been requested and is in progress, a correction or adjustment has been made, an agreement for payment has been executed, an appeal is in progress, a minimal amount is due, or for another exceptional condition which is pending.

10. A list of accounts scheduled for shut off shall be prepared, by the Water Office and reviewed/updated on the day prior to the scheduled shut-off day and forwarded to the appropriate staff for shut off.

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11. Non-pay shut-offs will be accomplished following the due date of the “Disconnect Notice”. If any person shall refuse or neglect to pay their utility bill “Disconnect Notice” after it has become due and payable, it shall be the duty of the Utilities Director and/or Director of Public Services to cause the water and/or sewer service to be discontinued. Service shall not be restored until all arrears in water and sewer service charges are paid in full, together with any/all service costs as necessitated by non-payment of water and/or sewer bills.

12. Additional charges incurred by the City may be billed to and paid by any user when it is necessary to collect and analyze wastewater samples discharged by the user to remove or treat prohibited material discharged by the user, or to clean or repair wastewater facilities or any part thereof as a result of the user’s discharge.

13. The Utilities Director shall have the authority to cause a water and/or sewer bill to be adjusted if a determination is made that a significant loss of water has occurred, and was not due to negligence or fault of the customer. These determinations will be made in accordance with guidelines established by the City and will be documented for future reference.

14. A customer may request a final read at any time during a billing cycle, and a final bill will be generated.

Adopted by the Owosso City Council December 21, 2009