



TOWN OF LEADER

Utility Account Collection Policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a formal procedure in the process of collecting past due utility charges, accrued interest and other allowable fees on behalf of the municipality. The policy will provide a clear process to staff eliminating a need for interpretation or differential treatment. This policy will establish fair and equitable processes for the collection of utility accounts.

DEFINITIONS

“Account Deposit” means a deposit made by each customer for an individual service including only one meter.

“Due Date” means the date as defined in the utility administration bylaw and the water-sewer rates bylaw as 30 days after original invoicing.

“Customer” means the holder of the account for utility which may include water, sewer, and/or solid waste (recycling, garbage and/or compost) picked up from the property. A customer may be a property owner or renter.

POLICY

Property Owner Accounts:

1. At the expiration of the due date printed on the utility billing, if payment has not been received in full, Administration will send a reminder notice stamped “past due” immediately by post mail, regardless if the customer’s preference is by email, interest will be charged on the amount outstanding.
2. A reminder invoice will be mailed out each month the arrears remain outstanding and interest will continue to accrue. Balances ageing over 90 days will be charged a \$25.00 administrative fee.
3. On the first working day of December, registered letters will be mailed to all accounts with outstanding arrears to provide notice of utility arrears being added to their property tax account. The cost of the registered mail will be added to the utility account.
4. Utility arrears will be added to the appropriate tax account in accordance with *The Municipalities Act*, Section 369(1) on the last working day of December.
5. Utility charges are not subject to refund or adjustment due to vacancy. It is the responsibility of the customer or the property owner to ensure the Town Office is notified when a utility service is to be suspended.



Rental Property Accounts:

1. At the expiration of the due date printed on the utility billing, if payment has not been received in full, Administration will send a reminder notice stamped “past due” immediately by post mail, regardless if the customer’s preference is by email, interest will be charged on the amount outstanding.
2. Should the outstanding amount, greater than \$50.00, remain unpaid at the 15th of the month immediately following the due date and the customer has not made reasonable payment arrangements, an order for disconnection will be prepared by the Administration. The Utility Department will tag the dwelling or business for disconnection (red tag).
3. Tagging for disconnection of utility services will be done on, or before, the 25th of the month and will be for a minimum of forty-eight (48) hours, with disconnections being scheduled for the following Tuesday between 8:30 am and 12:00 noon. Prior to tagging, a \$25.00 administration fee will be added to the utility account.
4. The customer may stop the disconnection by paying the full balance of arrears, interest and administration fees at the Town Office by any of the Town’s acceptable methods or by making reasonable payment arrangements with Administration prior to the expiration of the forty-eight-hour period.
5. Customers who make payment arrangements are required to sign a written agreement approved by the Administration.
6. Should the customer who made reasonable payment arrangements neglect to follow up with the arrangements or make suitable and reasonable notification with alternate reasonable arrangements will have their services disconnected without further notice.
7. Where the utility service has been disconnected, full payment of current and arrears, interest, administrative fees AND the reconnection fee must be received at the Town Office by any of the Town’s acceptable payment methods, in order for the services to be reconnected.
 - a) Payments received between 8:30 am and 12:00 noon will be scheduled for reconnection the same day by 4:30 pm at the latest.
 - b) Payments received between 1:00 pm and 4:30 pm will be scheduled for reconnection the following business day by 12:00 noon at the latest.
 - c) Payments received between 1:00 pm and 4:30 pm on a Friday or the day before a statutory holiday will be scheduled for reconnection the next regular business day by 12:00 noon at the latest.
8. Properties that do not have a shut off valve or an inoperable shut off valve to disconnect services will have utility arrears added to the property’s tax roll after 90 days of aging, will receive the same collection notice as above, the same administration fees will be charged, plus the cost of the required registered mail. These arrears will be collected on the tax roll in the same manner as taxes. *The Municipalities Act Section 369(1)*.



9. During the winter months (December – April) utility arrears will be added to the appropriate tax account in accordance with *The Municipalities Act Section 369(1)* after 90 days of aging. These additions will receive the same collection notices as above and the same administration fees will be charged, plus the cost of the required registered mail.
10. Customers with poor payment history may be required to have a minimum account deposit of one and a half billings, as to be determined by the CAO. A customer required to have a minimum account deposit, at the direction of the CAO, will not have their utility services reconnected until the minimum deposit has been received by the Town Office.
11. Utility charges are not subject to refund or adjustment due to vacancy. It is the responsibility of the customer or the property owner to ensure the Town Office is notified when a utility service is to be suspended.

POLICIES REPLACED

This Policy replaces and supersedes any prior policies.

REVISION HISTORY

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