



CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICIES

Introduction

The City of Maryville (the “City”) serves as provider of water and wastewater utilities within the incorporated City limits and certain service areas outside of the incorporated area. In addition, the City provides electric services as a distributor of power purchased from the Tennessee Valley Authority (“TVA”).

The City’s goal is to provide excellent service to its customers. This document describes customer service policies that are necessary to effectively manage the utilities and their operations as well as follow regulations established by governing authorities.

Payment Hours

The City of Maryville accepts payments with the following times for each method of payment.

1. In person: Payments may be made during the hours of 8:00 am and 4:30 pm.
2. Local Banks: Current amounts may be paid at most local banks. The terms and conditions for payment receipt are based upon the policies and procedures that govern the City’s agreement with the local financial institutions.
3. Drop Box: Payments may be made at any time of day or night. However, payments must be placed in the drop box, located at City Hall, prior to 4:00 pm to receive current day processing. After 4:00 pm all payments will be processed with the next day’s transactions.
4. Web Payments and IVR: Payments may be made 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. However, payments must be made electronically prior to 4:00 pm to receive current day processing. After 4:00 pm, all payments will be processed with the next day’s transactions.

In order to restore service due to non-payment after 4:30 pm, customers must contact the overtime crews to re-establish service. If the overtime crew is called-out the customer will be responsible for any associated charges and additional fees. The electric overtime crew will be dispatched to restore service for both water and electric service. However, if the electric overtime crew experiences problems associated with water service, and a water overtime crew is dispatched, the customer will be charged an additional fee to restore service. These charges become due and payable immediately. Failure to pay these charges may result in the discontinuation of services.

In order to avoid penalties or late fees, payments must be received by the City of Maryville prior to, or on, the due dates that are outlined on the associated bill. Postmarks are not an acceptable measurement of the time payment was received.

Information to Consumers

Information is available for the purpose of conservation, fairness, and communication between the City and its customers.

1. The City will make available to all customers upon application for service and anytime upon request information related to:
 - a. Current service practice policies;
 - b. Current rates applicable to such customer and a written and/or oral explanation of the rate schedule.
2. Upon request a customer will receive a statement of such customer's monthly kWh and/or gallon consumption for the prior 12- month period. There is no charge for this service.
3. Requests for information may be made in person at any office of the City, by phone, or by mail.
4. Consumers shall be notified of the availability of rate schedule, governing policies such as those established by TVA, and consumption information by the most practical combinations of:
 - a. a message printed on utility bills;
 - b. public displays in the office where bills are paid;
 - c. public service announcements on local radio stations periodically;
 - d. advertisements in local newspapers periodically.
5. Consumers shall be notified of any proposed, significant changes in rates and/or policies at least 30 days prior to implementation of such change by the most practical combinations of:
 - a. mail;
 - b. newspaper advertisement;
 - c. public service announcements;
 - d. displays in the office where bills are paid.

Utility Outage

Please contact 273-3300 during the hours of 7:30-4:30 Monday through Friday. Electric Service after hours can be contacted at 983-8722. The after hours number for water is 982-7990.

Meter Tests

The City, at its own expense, makes spot tests and inspections of its meters in order to maintain a high standard of accuracy. Additional tests or inspection will be made at the customer's request. If tests made at the customer's request show that the meter is accurate within two percent (2%) on electric meters, slow or fast, no adjustment will be made in the customer's bill and our standard testing charge, as referenced in the attached rate schedule, will be paid by Customer prior to testing. In case the test shows the **electric** meter to be in excess of two percent (2%) fast or slow, an adjustment shall be made in customer's bill over a period of not over 90 days prior to request of such test and the cost of conducting the test will be borne by the City. **Water** meter tests have a standard testing fee, as referenced in the rate schedule, and the customer should pay this prior to meter testing. If a meter registers with excess of any standardized accuracy limits as disclosed in the adopted WQC Rules and Regulations, an adjustment will be made by the City and any service charges shall be waived.

Application for Service

Each prospective customer desiring service is required to sign a standard form before service is supplied. The standard application includes information pertaining to the receipt of adequate identification, such as driver's license and a social security card. Also, a copy of a customer's rental agreement or lease must be presented if the service location is not owner occupied. Service will not be supplied to an applicant who does not (1) sign the required form, (2) provide adequate identification, or (3) provide the required rental documents for properties that are not owner occupied (if applicable). Furthermore, service will not be supplied if the applicant is a past customer who has a delinquent account with the City.

Limitations of Liability

The City's liability shall not extend beyond the customer's delivery point. The delivery point for residential electric shall be defined as the point at which City of Maryville Utilities facility connects with the customer's facility and further being defined as: at customer owned weather head for overhead service and at source side of terminal of meter pan for underground service. For other points of delivery refer to the electric department's rules and regulations. The delivery point for water service shall be defined as the point at which the City of Maryville Utilities' facility connects with customer owned service lines.

In accordance with the TVA operating rules, the Utility is not liable for lightning, power surges, low voltage, high voltage, loss of power or other temporary abnormal system conditions that are caused by weather, long term equipment failures or other causes not due to direct negligence by the Utility or its employees. The customer shall be responsible for purchasing and installing any protective devices required to protect the customer's equipment from any temporary abnormal system condition that may occur occasionally.

Service Charge

A standard charge, as adopted by the applicable rate schedule, will be applied to all classes of service for supplying service. Higher charges are established when connections are performed after normal office hours or when special services are required.

Security Lights

If an existing utility pole is not available, a customer will be charged a pole rental fee plus the monthly rate for usage. If an existing utility pole can be utilized, no monthly pole rental charge will be necessary. In order to recover the initial costs of providing the service, a customer is required to pay a minimum of 12 months of service regardless of their continuance as a customer of City of Maryville Utilities. Any unutilized portion of the 12 month period will be collected on the final billing.

Denial of Service

The City shall have the right to refuse to render service to any applicant where such service benefits a third party who is in default in the payment of any obligation to the City or has had his or her services disconnected because of a violation of the ordinance, rules and regulations of the City. Such third party may include, but is not limited to, the following: Roommates, spouses, girlfriends, boyfriends, tenants, landlords, brothers, sisters, or other family members.

The City may deny service on the basis of the refusal to pay past due balances owed to the City. Whenever the City is able to substantiate such past due balances, the City may observe its normal disconnection procedure process that will terminate service due to non-payment of the outstanding bill.

The City may deny service to a potential tenant if the landlord has an outstanding past due balance at the requested service address.

The City shall deny service if it is determined that the service would be a potential hazard to the health, safety, and welfare of our customers.

When service is being furnished to an occupant of premises under contract and such contract is not in the occupant's name, the City reserves the right to impose the following conditions on the right of the customer to discontinue service under such a contract:

1. Written notice of the customer's desire for such service to be discontinued may be required.
2. The City may require that the service continue for a period not to exceed seven (7) days after the receipt of such notice during which time the customer would be responsible to the City for all charges for such service. During such seven (7) day period or thereafter, the occupant of the premises to which service has been ordered disconnected by the customer, other than the occupant, may be allowed by the City to enter into a contract for service in the occupant's own name if the occupant is deemed to comply with the City's rules and regulations with respect to his or her own application for service.

Deposit-Commercial Customers

1. Deposit policies are to be applied without regard to race, color, creed, gender, age, national origin, or marital status.
2. A deposit is required of any customer before service will be supplied. The amount required is two times the amount of an actual or estimated 12 month average utility bill. The City reserves the right to upgrade deposits as needed.
3. Upon termination of service, any outstanding balance due to the City will be paid in full from the deposit funds and then the balance if any shall be paid to the customer.
4. No interest shall be paid on deposits that are required to obtain utility services.

Deposit-Residential Customers

1. Deposit policies are to be applied without regard to race, color, creed, gender, age, national origin, or marital status.
2. A deposit will be required of all residential customers that do not meet the minimum credit score established by the Director of Financial Services or his/her designee.
3. Upon termination of service, any outstanding balance due to the City will be paid in full from the deposit funds and then the balance if any shall be paid to the customer.
4. To receive a refund for deposit, a customer must have maintained service at one location for a period of at least 12 consecutive months and have a good payment history. A good payment history is defined as not having any late penalties applied to an account for a period of 12 consecutive months.
5. No interest shall be paid on deposits that are required to obtain utility services.

Billing

1. Bills will be rendered monthly and shall be paid at the office of the City or at other designated locations.
2. Failure to receive a bill will not release customer from payment obligation.
3. The due date for payment of the bill will be at least 15 days for all cycles from the day the bill is mailed to the customer.
4. Payments made after the due date will be subject to a late payment charge. The late payment charge will be computed as a charge of 5 percent on the unpaid portion.

Collection and Termination Procedure

1. Whenever practical, the following process will be followed to discontinue service. However, this process may be modified so long as the intent of notification remains intact and is deemed to be more efficient in the administration of providing utility services and receiving utility payments.
2. A notice that service is subject to termination for non-payment will be printed on the monthly bill.
3. Written notice of termination (“cut off notice”) shall be mailed to customer with the final notice at least 5 days prior to the scheduled date of termination.
4. The City may notify the customer in person, in addition to such written notice, when practical.
5. The cut off notice will include the amount due, including any other charges.
6. If the customer does not make payment, notify the City of a billing dispute or make other acceptable arrangements by the last date of payment, the City will proceed on schedule with termination.
7. Hearings on disputed bills will be held by appointment between the office hours of 8:00 am and 4:30 pm by an appointment with the staff member designated by the Director of Financial Services.
8. A customer requesting a hearing has the right to examine records pertaining to that customer’s service.
9. The hearing will be conducted by the staff member designated by the Director of Financial Services. After hearing the evidence, a written decision will be promptly provided to the customer.
10. A customer may appeal the decision of the designee of the Director of Financial Services. In such case the Director of Financial Services will hear the evidence and render a decision in writing and shall promptly provide the customer a copy of such final decision.
11. The customer has the right to a post termination hearing under the above procedures within 2 business days following such termination.
12. Discontinuance of service shall not release the customer from liability for service already received or from liability for payment that thereafter become due under the minimum bill provisions or other provisions of the customer’s contract.
13. A standard reconnection charge will be expected for reconnection after termination for non-payment during normal business hours. Payment forms accepted during normal business hours are cash, credit card and money order. During all other times an overtime charge will apply. Overtime payments are accepted in the form of cash or check.
14. A cutoff charge will be added to all accounts that have made the cut off list, regardless of whether they are disconnected.
15. If the City terminates its customer’s service for non-payment of a returned check, a reconnection charge will apply plus any and all check fees. Full payment of all past

due amounts and applicable fees owed to the City must be received in order to restore service.

16. A service charge will be made to a customer's account for each returned bank draft. After the third returned draft the customer will no longer be eligible to participate in the bank draft program.
17. For a customer with hardship or other extenuating circumstances, special counseling is available. When requested by the customer, the City may arrange to extend payment a week from last due date. The customer is allowed to have 3 such extensions within a 12 month period as long as the customer pays by the date stated on agreement and past due balance and applicable fees are paid in full.

Service underpayments or overpayments

Pursuant to the provisions of T.C.A. 28-3-301 and 28-3-302, if gallonage for water or sewer services or both or if kilowatt usage for electricity is inaccurately recorded or registered due to equipment failure and results in the customer being undercharged or overcharged and the customer is unaware of the error, defect, or failure, the City may collect for such usage up to 36 months from when the error is discovered and billed. However, if a date certain can be established for the error which is less than 36 months, then the City is authorized to collect or assess a charge for such usage or to reimburse the customer of such usage with reference to such date.

In accordance with T.C.A. 28-3-110 if a customer is undercharged or overcharged, and the error is in the favor of the customer, and the error is not due to equipment failure, the City of Maryville will reimburse for a period of 10 years from the date the error is discovered.

If the error is in the favor of the City, the City will collect for a period of 3 years from the date the error is discovered.

Leak Adjustment Policy

In order to qualify for a leak adjustment, a customer must apply for the leak adjustment by certifying that they have experienced a leak and have it fixed within their internal water distribution system. Only one adjustment will be allowed every 12 months and any adjustment will only affect a maximum of three separate billings.

Water Bill

If a customer experiences a leak in their internal water distribution system, the water portion of the bill will be adjusted to a level that is equal to the average monthly bill, plus fifty percent (50%) of the difference between the actual bill and the average bill.

Sewer Bill

If a customer experiences a leak in the internal water distribution system, the sewer portion of the bill will be adjusted to the average when the leakage **does not** enter the sewer collection system.

Theft of Service

When theft of service is reported, City staff person will visit the premises and evaluate the situation. If the meter has been tampered with, police will be notified. If the customer's meter has been tampered with or bypassed after being disconnected for non-payment, the service will be disconnected and the account immediately closed. All past due, present due, applicable fees, additional deposits and tampering related costs must then be paid or acceptable arrangement made to pay the total before service will be reconnected. The City reserves the right to refer all

meter tampering and theft of service cases to the Attorney General's office for possible prosecution under Tennessee Law.

Any theft of service fees adopted by the City rate schedule will be applied to all accounts, as appropriate.

Deposits and Fees

Deposits:

Electric-Homeowner	\$ 70.00
Electric-Renter	\$120.00
Water	\$ 15.00
Sewer	\$ 15.00

Other Fees:

Installation of service drop	\$ 25.00
Electric connection/transfer fee	\$ 15.00
Water connection/transfer fee	\$ 10.00
Reconnection fee regular hours	\$ 40.00
Reconnection Fee @ weather-head (cut loose fee)	\$150.00
Electric after hours service fee	\$150.00
Water after hours reconnection fee	\$ 70.00
Cutoff fee	\$ 10.00
Electric meter test	\$ 10.00
Water meter test	\$ 10.00
Returned check/draft fee	\$ 20.00
Main Water Line Connections	\$1,500.00 advance payment and billed on actual cost
Water Line Extensions	Actual cost
Sewer Line Extensions	Actual cost

Theft of Service Fees:

Electric

- Energy fee- (Highest 12 month bill/30days) times number of days meter was disconnected.
- Cut seal fee- \$25.00
- Inspection fee-\$20.00
- Damage fee- \$35/hr.
- Power diversion fee regular hours \$150.00, after hours \$220.00

Water & Sewer

- Usage Fee (Highest 12 month bill/30days) times number of days meter was disconnected.
- Inspection Fee \$20.00
- Damage Fee \$35/hr.
- Service diversion fee regular hours \$70.00, after hours \$110.00

Hydrant Usage Theft

Usage Fee \$250.00

Inspection Fee \$ 20.00

Damage Fee \$ 35/hr.

Service diversion fee regular hours \$70.00, after hours \$110.00

All charges are subject to appropriate sales tax.

Rates and Charges for Services

Rates and Charges for Electric and Water & Sewer Services are located in the applicable Rate Schedule. A copy of the current Rate Schedules is available upon request during the business hours of 8:00am to 4:30pm. Such request may be given in person or by calling 273-3456.

Rates and Charges for Electric, Water and Sewer Services are established upon adoption by the City Council. One exception to this policy is the adoption of a quarterly fuel rate charge as adjusted by the Tennessee Valley Authority. Such charges shall be automatically adopted and included in the Electric Rate Schedule when no additional proceeds are to be received by the City.