

Utility Billing Policy & Procedures
Effective March 5, 2025

Water Billing Process: The bills are mailed out on the last business day of the month. All bills are due on the 22nd of the month. On the next business day, disconnects are then processed, which include a \$25.00 Administrative Delivery Fee and a Late Fee Assessment. Disconnects are delivered that day. Customers are allowed 48 hours to pay the balance due, or fill out a payment agreement. The next business day following the 48 hours, water service will be disconnected. The water will not be turned back on until the delinquent bill is paid in full plus a \$25.00 reconnection fee, \$25.00 processing fee, and if the customer does not have a deposit, a deposit will be required. The water will be turned back on during normal business hours. If service is restored after regular working hours, an additional fee of \$50 shall be charged before service is restored. *As a courtesy, water will not be disconnected on Friday or the day before a holiday.*

Pro-rated Bills: When a customer moves in or out of a residence, the bill will be calculated on a pro-rated basis.

Payment Agreements:

- A. The City Office does offer the customer an opportunity to arrange a payment agreement. The terms of the payment agreement shall include a minimum of 25% paid down on the delinquent bill, with scheduled payments bringing the past due amount to a zero balance by the last day of the month.

- B. If a customer defaults on a payment agreement, a disconnect notice will be delivered, with a \$25.00 administrative delivery fee assessed to the customer. The customer will have forty-eight hours to make a payment in full. If payment is not received, the water service will be disconnected. In order to have the water reconnected, the customer must pay the delinquent bill in full, plus a \$25.00 reconnect fee, a \$25.00 processing fee, and if the customer does not have a deposit, a deposit will be required. If a customer defaults on a payment agreement more than two times in a twelve-month period, no further payment agreements will be allowed.

- C. Payment Agreements are intended to help customers pay their utility bills when they have incurred a financial burden or emergency situations preventing them from meeting their obligations to the City of Sheldon. No more than 6 payment agreements will be allowed in a calendar year. *Payment Agreements are not intended for customers to use on any regular or ongoing basis.*

Deposit Requirement: Before utility services are started, the City of Sheldon requires a \$150.00 deposit to be paid, and an application to be filled out in person. The individual signing the application must be eighteen years or older, and provide the following identifying information: name, date of birth, residential or business address, SSN, U.S. government issued photo identification, and one other form of identification.

If a current customer decides to have rental property under a different name, an application and deposit will be required. Also, a new business owner, who currently does not reside in the City of Sheldon, will need to fill out an application and pay a deposit.

Deposit Refunds: The City will hold the deposit until the customer's name is removed from the City's utility account. The City will refund the deposit to the depositor named on the account. The deposit refund will be the amount paid, less any amount owed to the City.

Discontinuance of Service: The City Office will contact the Water Department to read out a meter, when the request to discontinue service is made by the individual responsible for paying the account. If a tenant states that the account should go back into the landlord's name, the City Office does not need to contact the landlord for verification. Also, if we do not have an application and deposit from a new tenant, the residence will go back into the landlord's name. If a tenant informs us that the house has been sold to someone new, the City Office will contact the past owner and try to obtain information about the new owner. If we are unable to find out this information, we will need to disconnect the water service. (In the event of the death of a customer or him/her becoming incapacitated, the next of kin or other designee can provide a legible written request for a change in utility services.)

In order for water service to be discontinued and the water meter to be removed, arrangements must be made with the Water Department. This requires the curb stop to be in working order. If multiple residents are on one shut off, the valve will be shut off in the basement and the water meter will be taken out. When the meter is re-installed, a \$25.00 reconnection fee will be assessed, plus a \$25.00 processing fee.

Before a meter is released from the Water Department, they will contact the City Office to make sure that we have an application and deposit for the customer. When a customer requests a building permit for a new home or new business, and does not currently have water service in his/her name within the City of Sheldon, the City Office will also provide a water deposit application and information about the deposit requirement. Prior to releasing the water meter, putting the account in the customer's name, and receiving the building permit, the water deposit application will need to be completed and the deposit fee and/or building permit fee will need to be paid. The one time fee of \$25.00 for new water connection and \$25.00 for new sewer connection will be included on the first utility bill.

Multiple Service Addresses: If a customer has more than one service address in their name, and water service is to be disconnected for non-payment or insufficient monies, the City has the right to disconnect all service addresses in the customer's name.

Snowbirds: A property owner may request water service to be discontinued and the water shut off at the curb valve when the property is expected to be vacant. During said period of service, discontinuance as provided for herein, there shall be no monthly minimum service charge, if the length of time is at least four months. There will be a \$50.00 charge for shutting off the water at the curb valve and a charge of \$50.00 will be made for reinstallation. The City will not be responsible for the draining of pipes. In the event that the curb valve for said property is

inoperable, it shall be the responsibility of the property owner to repair or replace the same with an operable curb valve before the request for discontinuance of water service will be honored.

Lien Forms On Rental Property: According to Iowa Code Section 384.84 (d), it is a requirement that the landlord is ultimately responsible for payment of charges associated with water service on rental property, exempting him only by written notice to the City Utility. If a landlord provides the City Office with this written notice waiving this lien requirement on the water account, but the new tenant has not filled out an application and paid a deposit, the account will stay in the landlord's name until the forms are received from the tenant. It is not the City Office's responsibility to contact the landlord. However, it is the landlord's responsibility to inform his tenant of the procedures required.

If the landlord would like to know the status of a tenant's account, the City Office will provide that information.

Insufficient Checks: If the City Office receives an insufficient check from a customer, a \$30.00 insufficient check fee will be assessed. If the check was written on another bank, the City Office will need to assess an additional bank fee to cover the cost that the City is charged by the bank. When the insufficient check was written to pay a water/sewer bill, a disconnect notice will be delivered to the customer, due within forty-eight hours of the notice. This payment must be in the form of cash, or a money order payable to the City of Sheldon. If the customer has not made payment at this time, the water service will be disconnected. If a customer has more than two insufficient checks, the terms of payment for utility services will be on a cash only basis.

Garbage Service: The City of Sheldon has a mandatory garbage pickup ordinance. It is the customer's responsibility to contact his hauler to find out the specific dates for pickup in his area. If a customer's water service has been disconnected, the garbage will be discontinued.

If there is an apartment within a home, there will only be one garbage fee assessed. Three or more apartments are considered to be commercial, and the individual garbage haulers bill commercial garbage.

If a customer is going to be gone for a minimum of two months, the customer can fill out a garbage form, in which the garbage fee will be waived and the garbage service will be discontinued, pending there is zero consumption.

This policy is approved and adopted by the Sheldon City Council on _____.

Attest

Mayor