



ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY AND PROCEDURES MANUAL FOR UTILITY BILLING AND COLLECTIONS

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EXHIBITS

- Exhibit A. Residential-New User Application (VOCP 203-A)
- Exhibit B. Business-New User Application (VOCP 203-B)
- Exhibit C. Residential-New Utility Application (VOCP 202-A)
- Exhibit D. Business-New Utility Application (VOCP 202-B)
- Exhibit E. Residential-Final Reading (VOCP 204-A)
- Exhibit F. Business-Final Reading (VOCP 204-B)
- Exhibit G. Rates and Fee Schedule (VOCP 210)
- Exhibit H. Application to Change Name (VOCP 214)
- Exhibit I. Application to Change Billing Address (VOCP 213)
- Exhibit K. Leak Adjustment Request (VOCP 216)
- Exhibit L. Payment Deferment Application (VOCP 220)
- Exhibit M. Payment Deferment Terms (VOCP 221)
- Exhibit N. ACH Authorization Form (VOCP 208)
- Exhibit O. Fire Hydrant Application (VOCP 209)



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1.0 FORWARD

This Administrative Policy and Procedures manual is intended for use as a guide to the Village of Commercial Point's Utility Billing and Collecting methods and practices. When used properly and with common sense, the policies and procedures established herein will enable the Village of Commercial Point to bill and collect utility service provided by the Village of Commercial Point, fairly, efficiently and economically while providing great customer service.

While this manual may not answer all questions related to Billing and Collecting, it does provide the foundation for a sound Billing and Collecting process.

The purposes of the Village of Commercial Point's billing and collecting policy are:

1. To professionally administer billing and collecting practices while complying with legal and ethical requirements.
2. To promote good and effective customer relations, cultivated by informed and fair practices and strict maintenance of ethical standards.
3. To establish and charge reasonable and economical Utility Rates and other charges which are sufficient for the Village of Commercial Point to operate and maintain the Utility Fund as a financially self-sustaining Enterprise and to assure continued, uninterrupted utility service to all customers.

If the procedures and guidelines established in this manual are followed, the Utility Billing and Collections Department can efficiently bill and collect revenues, provide fair and effective customer service to all utility customers.

Should you have any questions about this manual or the procedures, contact the Fiscal Officer.

2.0 DEFINITIONS, APPLICABILITY AND AMENDMENTS

2.1 DEFINITIONS

The following words, terms and phrases, when used in these Rules and Regulations, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

Application for service shall mean the written application required by Article 3.1 of these rules and regulations.

Backflow shall mean the reverse flow of water or other liquid, gases or other substances into the distribution piping of the Village of Commercial Point from any source or sources.



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Commercial service shall mean utility service provided to a school, multi-family dwelling, mobile home park, business, industry, public building or public park.

Debt service shall mean the sum of money required to pay installments of principal and interest on bond or other obligations of the Village of Commercial Point in a fiscal year.

Leak adjustment policy shall mean the provisions for adjustment of utility bills on account of leaks set out in Section 6.5 hereof.

Meter testing charge shall mean the charge for which an owner is responsible for the testing of the meter measuring service to the owner.

Owner shall mean simple owner of real property who makes an application for service to the Village of Commercial Point and connects to the utility system, whether or not the owner (or the owner's tenants, guests or licensees) takes service from the utility system.

Owner's service facilities shall mean the utility service facilities owned by an owner and commencing at the connection on the owner's side of the Village of Commercial Point's meter and servicing the facilities of such owner, including pipe, private cutoff valves, backflow prevention device, pressure reducing valve and other components.

Rates schedule shall mean the rates schedule adopted by the Village of Commercial Point.

Reconnection charge means a fee charged by the Village of Commercial Point for reconnection of utility service after it has been terminated for non-payment of a utility bill.

Residential service shall mean service through a $\frac{3}{4}$ " or smaller meter serving a single-family dwelling or church.

Sewer System shall mean a facility consisting of a system of sewers for carrying off liquid and solid waste.

Tap-on fee shall mean a separate charge compensating the Village of Commercial Point for installation of the Village of Commercial Point's service facilities required for service to an owner.

Village of Commercial Point's service facilities shall mean those facilities of the utility system, which have been identified by the Village of Commercial Point in its sole discretion as directly, or indirectly benefiting only the owner using them and generally include the meter, curb box, and shut-off valve related to providing utility service to an owner.

Utilities shall mean a business enterprise, as a public-service corporation, performing an essential public service and regulated by the federal, state, or local Government.



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Water rate shall mean the water rates of the Village of Commercial Point established pursuant to Article 5 of these rules and regulations.

Water system shall mean the water supply facilities owned by the Village of Commercial Point at any time.

2.2. Amendments.

The Village of Commercial Point may from time to time amend these Rules and Regulations. No agreement of the Village of Commercial Point shall be binding unless in writing by Village of Commercial Point Village Administrator and approved by Council.

2.3. Applicability.

These Rules and Regulations, as amended, shall be binding on every owner.

3.0 UTILITY SERVICE

3.1. Application for service.

Any potential owner desiring utility service must make application for utility service to the Village of Commercial Point upon completion of Application Forms (Exhibit A-1 and Exhibit A-2) to be supplied by the Village of Commercial Point, setting forth in detail the type of service requested, the location of the property to be served, and such other information as the Village of Commercial Point may require. Accounts must be set up by property owner; renters will be allowed to set up rental accounts by providing a copy of lease agreement.

3.2. Initial fees.

The application for utility service shall be accompanied by any applicable required fees and charges.

3.3. Rejection of application.

The Village of Commercial Point may reject an application for utility service:

- (a) If the applicant seeks utility service not within the scope of services offered by the Village of Commercial Point.
- (b) If the providing of utility service involves excessive costs or is otherwise not feasible.
- (c) If the provision of utility service may adversely affect the quality and quantity of utility service the Village of Commercial Point is able to provide to existing customers.
- (d) If the applicant intends to resell the water.



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- (e) If the applicant is delinquent in payment of bills incurred for service previously supplied at the location for which utility service is sought or incurred for service previously supplied at any other location.

4.0 CONNECTIONS, METERS AND OTHER SERVICE FACILITIES

4.1. Water service metered.

Each owner shall be supplied through a separate meter.

4.2. Control and maintenance of Village of Commercial Point equipment.

The Village of Commercial Point service facilities and all supply lines, and other equipment of the Village of Commercial Point shall be under its exclusive control, and no persons other than authorized employees, agents or contractors of the Village of Commercial Point, shall repair, change, tamper or interfere with them in any way. It is unlawful for any person to tamper with or bypass a water meter. Tampering with a meter shall include, but not be limited to, the unauthorized entry into locked meter vaults by key or otherwise.

Meters and other Village of Commercial Point service facilities will be maintained by the Village of Commercial Point at its expense insofar as ordinary wear is concerned, but damage to any meter or other Village of Commercial Point service facilities due to hot water, freezing, vehicular traffic, or other external causes arising out of or caused by the owner's service facilities, operations, negligence or carelessness shall be paid by the owner. The amount of such damage or the cost of repairs shall be added to the first water bill of the owner; rendered after the amount of the damage or the cost of the repairs are ascertained by the Village of Commercial Point. Payment of such amount may be enforced in the same manner as payment of utility rates.

4.3 Meter Location/Access to Premises

The location of the metering equipment and space required for said metering equipment shall be established by the Village's service regulation. As a condition of taking service, authorized employees and agents of the Village shall have access to the customer's premises at all reasonable hours to install, turn on, disconnect, inspect, read and repair or remove its meters. Meters should be free from shrubs, trees, debris, etc.

4.4. Tests.

The Village of Commercial Point may at any time remove any meter for routine tests, repairs or replacement. The Village of Commercial Point shall upon request of an owner, test the accuracy of the meter in use, provided the meter has not been tested by the Village of Commercial Point within a period of three (3) months previous of such request, and that the owner will agree to abide by the results of such test in the adjustment of disputed charges.



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If the meter is shown to have an error as described in Section 4.4 hereof, the Village of Commercial Point will replace or correct the meter at no charge to the owner. If the meter has no such error, the owner will pay a meter testing charge in the amount of \$50.00.

4.5. Error.

Whenever a test of a meter reveals it to have an error, the Village of Commercial Point shall bill or refund to the owner, as the case may be, such percentage of the amount reflected on bills covering the consumption indicated by the meter for the previous six (6) months, as the meter was found to be in error at the time of test, unless it can be shown to the satisfaction of the Village of Commercial Point that the error found had existed for a greater or lesser period, in which case the adjustment shall cover such actual period.

5.0 RATES, FEES AND CHARGES

5.1. Rates schedule.

The rates are incorporated in and shall be a part of these rules and regulations. Exhibit G.

5.2. Other fees and charges.

The Village of Commercial Point may from time to time adopt and impose other rates and charges as it deems appropriate, the amount of which shall be set forth in the rates schedule. Tap-on fees shall be paid at the time of application for service.

5.3. Security deposit.

The Village of Commercial Point does not require a deposit at the time of application for service.

6.0 BILLING AND COLLECTION

6.1. Bills.

Customers shall be billed for utility usage during a specified billing period according to the established schedule of rates.

All bills shall be sent to the billing address shown on the application for utility service unless an owner notifies the Village of Commercial Point in writing of some other address to which bills are to be mailed. (Exhibit I). Failure to receive bills will not be considered justification for nonpayment of amounts due or permit an extension of the date when the account would be considered delinquent. The Village of Commercial Point may at any time correct any bills for service, which may be in error or in accordance with the leak policy, section 6.5.



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If payment is not received by the day after the due date, a 10% late penalty is applied to the account.

Each unit of a multi-family parcel and each mobile home in a mobile home park will be treated as a single-family unit and each unit will be responsible for all applicable Rates, Charges, Fees and penalties pursuant to these Rules and Regulations.

6.2. Payment.

By applying for utility service, an owner agrees to pay the rates, fees and charges of the Village of Commercial Point in accordance with these rules and regulations. All payments must be made thru the billing office or designated collection services and sites of the Village of Commercial Point. Payment can be made in the form of Check, Money Order, Cash or Credit Card.

Customers providing checks that are returned for non-sufficient funds, closed accounts, or stop payments shall be notified and all applicable fees shall be charged to the account. At any time after an owner has presented a second returned check for the payment of any utility bill, the Village of Commercial Point may require that payment be made only by money order or cash.

6.3. Uncollectible Accounts Receivable.

Accounts delinquent more than 90 days of the due date shall be presented to the Law Director to pursue all remedies available for collection of the delinquent accounts.

6.4. Broken seals, meter failures.

If a meter seal is removed other than by Village of Commercial Point personnel or if a meter fails to register correctly or is stopped for any cause, the owner agrees to pay each billing period an estimated water rate based on the average water usage for the immediately preceding 12-month period, or such shorter period of actual use.

6.5. Adjustments for leaks.

Any owner desiring an adjustment for a leak shall fill out a leak request, notifying the Village of Commercial Point of the existence of the leak and provide evidence of its repair. See Exhibit K. Upon determining that the leak existed, and the duration of the period of the leak, the Village of Commercial Point may give a credit based on average of 6 months usage or such shorter period of actual use.



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6.6. Pool Adjustments

For pool/spa adjustments there will be charge for all water consumed and a deduction from sewer will be given. This event shall be limited to one time per calendar. (Exhibit J)

7.0. REDUCTIONS, INTERRUPTIONS AND DISCONTINUANCES

7.1. Shut off for default.

If payment is not received by the due date of the bill the following procedures will begin.

- A 10% late fee will immediately be assessed against the account.
- A Shut Off Notice will be issued 15 days from account due date if payment has not been received.
- 15 days after the Shut Off Notice has been issued, and payment not received, water will be terminated.

7.2. Restoration of service.

When utility service has been suspended for nonpayment of bills, utility service will be restored upon payment in full of all delinquent bills, any current bill that is due and the payment of a reconnection charge in accordance with the Village of Commercial Point's rates schedule.

The Village of Commercial Point shall not be responsible for any damages that may result from reconnection in the absence of the customer. For terminations other than non-payment (vacated houses, damaged homes) someone must be in attendance when service is restored.

The City of Circleville Health Department will be notified prior to reconnection of sewer.

7.3. Termination of service by owner.

The Village of Commercial Point will terminate service on date requested (or as soon as possible thereafter) after receiving a written request signed by the owner.

7.4. No liability.

The Village of Commercial Point shall not be liable for damage of any kind resulting from water and wastewater or the use of water on the Customer's property. The Village of Commercial Point shall not be responsible for damages done by or resulting from any defect in the piping, fixtures, and/or appliances on the Customer's property. The Village of Commercial Point shall have no liability on account of interruptions of service, erroneous



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shut-offs, failure to deliver water or failure to deliver water at any particular (high or low) pressure.

The Village of Commercial Point shall not be responsible for negligence of third parties or forces beyond the Village of Commercial Point's control resulting in any interruption of service. Otherwise, under normal conditions, all potentially affected customers shall be notified in advance of any interruption of service.

8.0 Deferment of Payments

A Customer can request a Deferment of Payment if the request is submitted to the Fiscal Officer within 15 days after the Due Date. The Utility Committee will meet to determine if customer may defer payments and extend payments. Requests must be made in writing to the Utility Committee on the appropriate Utility Committee Form. (Exhibit L) If Deferment is approved, customer must agree to the Payment Terms (Exhibit M)

9.0 Utility Committee

The Utility Committee is made up of the Mayor, Village Administrator and Fiscal Officer. Only a majority of the Utility Committee can extend any deadlines.

The Utility Committee shall as necessary. A majority of the Committee must approve extending deadlines, adjusting bills and/or reconnecting with partial pay. In the event a legitimate hardship case arises between scheduled meetings, the Utility Committee may convene to review the situation.

Any request to the Utility Committee must be on the appropriate Village of Commercial Point form (Exhibit L). If the form is not complete, it will be voided and will not be considered by the Utility Committee.

Each customer is allowed one (1) request to the Utility Committee in a 12-month period.

ALL REQUEST TO MUST GO THROUGH THE UTILITY COMMITTEE **NO EXCEPTION**

ONLY A MAJORITY OF THE **UTILITY COMMITTEE** IS AUTHORIZED TO EXTEND A DEADLINE DATE FOR PAYMENT.

10.0. Errors in Bill.

10.1. Customer Requests.

A Customer considering his water bill in error shall, before the bill becomes delinquent (15 days after the due date), provide the Village of Commercial Point billing department a written statement of the reasons he considers the bill to be in error. Upon receiving such



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notice, Village of Commercial Point will hold the disputed bill in abeyance and present the matter for consideration to the Public Utilities Director. The Customer shall pay the bill in full within 5 days after the final decision concerning the matter has been made.

If a Customer presents to Village of Commercial Point a written notice after the bill has become delinquent but before service is discontinued for nonpayment of the bill, the matter may be considered provided the bill is paid in full at the time of written notice. If an adjustment is required a credit will be applied to the account within 10 days after the final decision.

11.0 Change in Billing Status

11.1. Avoidance

No change in the status of said application shall be permitted to avoid the payment of delinquent bills, cut in/off fees, connection charges, deposits, etc. The Village of Commercial Point reserves the right to refuse service if it has reason to believe the applicant is attempting to avoid payment of aforesaid sums or any other sums due and payable to the City.

11.2. Transfer

- (1) A customer wishing to *TRANSFER* the billing account from one location to another must first pay *CURRENT ACCOUNT IN FULL*. Service may be left on at previous location up to two weeks. The person whose name the utility bill account is in is the only one who is allowed to transfer the account.
- (2) A customer wishing to *CHANGE NAMES* on account due to marriage, divorce, death, etc. must notify the Fiscal Officer and sign accepting responsibility of paying monthly bills. (Exhibit H)
- (3) A customer wishing to *CHANGE BILLING ADDRESS*, must complete Billing Address Change and submit to Fiscal Officer.