



TOWN OF SMITHSBURG, MD RESIDENTIAL UTILITY BILLING POLICY

PROVIDING FOR THE MANNER IN WHICH TOWN PROVIDED RESIDENTIAL UTILITIES ARE BILLED AND COLLECTED.

BILLING. Quarterly bills are mailed each January, April, July and October. All accounts are established in the property owner's name and are billed to the property owner. (The Town does not mail utility bills or notices to tenants of rental properties.)

All users of the Town's water supply system, including owners of unoccupied dwellings, shall be billed the quarterly minimum rates for water and/or sewer.

Owners of all established residential units, including unoccupied dwellings, shall be billed the quarterly fee for sanitation collection.

***All payments are due by midnight on the last business day of the billing month and includes online payments.**

Checks are to be made payable to the "Town of Smithsburg." Personal checks cannot be post-dated, and are not held for a future deposit date and post-marked envelopes are also not accepted. After this time, an interest penalty charge of 10% (ten per cent) will be added to the overdue bill. Checks having to be returned for non-signatures or incomplete information are also subject to late fees. The town is not responsible for the non-receipt of invoices or payments due to post office related matters.

After the billing due date, a disconnection notice – including the deadline for payment and the date and time of the disconnection of water services – will be mailed. (Disconnection notices are the final notification for payment mailed to property owners prior to disconnection of services.) Disconnection will occur on the third Wednesday following the utility bill due date.

If services are disconnected, a reconnection fee of \$100.00 will be added to the overdue bill; the reconnection fee must be paid in full prior to reconnection of services.

DISCONNECTION POLICY. On the day of disconnection, a notice that service has been terminated will be left on the premises or will be presented to the property owner, if present. (Public Works personnel are not permitted to accept any form of payment.)

RETURNED CHECKS. An additional \$35.00 fee will be added to the utility bill for a check returned for any reason. If payment is received by check on the day of or just prior to disconnection and the check is later returned for insufficient funds, services will be terminated immediately.

PAYMENT PLANS. If a leak has occurred on the property which results in the quarterly bill at least doubling the average of the last four quarters, payment arrangements may be made to pay the overage over a six month period. The second quarterly bill that is distributed during the payment plan period must be paid in full by its due date.

METER READING. A property owner, whose water meter cannot be accessed by a meter reader, due to weeds or other impediments, will be in violation of the Town's Property Maintenance Code and subject to a fine of \$100 each day the violation remains.

REPLACEMENT METERS. If a customer requests a water meter to be tested or calibrated by the manufacturer after the Town's Public Works staff has determined the meter to be in working order, the customer will be billed an additional \$50, unless the manufacturer deems the meter to be faulty. If the manufacturer deems the meter faulty, the meter will be repaired/replaced by Public Works Staff and the customer will be notified.

TAMPERING WITH WATER METERS. The Public Works Department is the ONLY authorized agency permitted to access a meter vault. Anyone found to have accessed a meter vault, tampered with a water meter, or turned a meter on or off; will be subject to fines, termination of service and all applicable penalties under the law.

UNUSUALLY EXCESSIVE WATER USE. In the event that a meter reading reflects an unusually high water usage which is due to a broken pipe or leak in the plumbing on the property, then the town will allow, for a first such occurrence during a five (5) year period, a reduction in the amount of the water bill. In order to be granted the reduction, the property owner must submit a written request to the Town for the reduction and state the nature of the cause of the high water usage and the action taken to correct and resolve the problem. The revised bill will be established as based upon two (2) times the average of the water usage for the property for the four (4) quarters immediately preceding the high water reading. In the event that there is a second occurrence within five (5) years of an unusually high meter reading for a same property, then the property owner shall be responsible for the entire water bill; provided, however, that if it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Town that the leaking water did not empty into the Town's sanitary sewer system, then the Town may, but is not required to, waive all or some of the sewer bill.**

Effective July 1, 2016

Amended February 7, 2017

Amended July 9, 2019

Amended November 5, 2019*

Amended April 2021**