

UTILITY PROCEDURES

City of Douglas, Georgia

(Revised 12/14/15)

The City of Douglas agrees to furnish continuous and adequate utility service subject to interruption only by agreement or upon advance notice (utility bill notice of dates in case of non-pay interruption), and by accident, acts of God, or other causes not under the reasonable control of the City except where limitations or hours for controlled service are shown in the schedule of rates.

APPLICATION FOR SERVICE

All applicants for services (residential and commercial) whether for new services or transfer of services, must comply with all provision contained within this manual and the City's Identity Theft Ordinance. Each person, firm, or corporation desiring utility service of the City Of Douglas shall make application appearing in person, through fax, or by e-mail. If by fax or e-mail, driver's license must be distinct enough to be able to positively identify. In the case of a firm or corporation, such application shall be made by a duly authorized officer or agent of said firm or corporation. No application for service will be acceptable unless and until all conditions and provisions of the regulations contained herein have been complied with. In applying for service to a given address, the person responsible for payment of all fees, charges, deposits, monthly bills, etc., shall be considered the applicant.

NEW ACCOUNT UTILITY CUSTOMER - RESIDENTIAL

- (1) All requests for utility service must be on the City of Douglas application form.
- (2) Picture identification is required (valid government issued ID).
- (3) Sufficient location and address information is required.
- (4) Proof of ownership, Rent Receipt, or Lease Agreement is required.
- (5) Applicant name and rent receipt/lease agreement name shall be the same.
- (6) Utility bill name shall be the same name as the applicant.
- (7) A verification check will be done on all the information given on application for service.
- (8) Customer must pay any debt that is owed to the City.
- (9) A service order is generated for each new customer account.
- (10) Customer must sign service order requesting the services and assuming responsibility for paying monthly utility bills.

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The Service Order can be faxed or e-mailed to the customer to sign in the case where customer will not arrive in Douglas until after City Hall is closed but will need services when they arrive in Douglas. Signature on Service Order will be compared to all other signatures - especial government issued ID.

- (11) A deposit is required which can be paid over the phone for those customers who complete the account setup requirements by e-mail/fax.

NEW ACCOUNT UTILITY CUSTOMER - COMMERCIAL

- (1) All requests for utility service must be on the City of Douglas application form.
- (2) Picture identification is required (valid government issued ID).
- (3) Sufficient location and address information is required
- (4) Proof of ownership, Rent Receipt, or Lease Agreement is required.
- (5) Representative with authorization to sign for the company shall file application for services.
- (6) Customer must first have received "Occupation Permit".
- (7) Customer must receive approval from "Zoning Officer".
- (8) A Service Order is generated for each new customer.
- (9) Representative must sign service order requesting the services and assuming responsibility that monthly billing is paid in a timely manner.
- (10) A deposit is required.

TEMPORARY SERVICE

The City will furnish Clean-up/Remodel temporary service to a location for a one-month (**maximum**) period. The cut-on order and the cut-off order (with one month between dates) will be generated at the same time. A deposit is required.

The City will furnish New Construction temporary service to a location for a period as determined by the builder and building inspector. A deposit is required.

PROCESSING FEE

A \$30.00 Processing Fee is required of all customers requesting services be connected. This includes: new utility accounts, transfer of service, or non-pay accounts once 8:31 am on actual cut-off day occurs whether or not the location services have been

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disconnected.

DEPOSIT REQUIREMENT

A deposit, as listed below, is required for each service (Electric, Natural Gas, Water, and/or Sewer).

Residential Deposit Requirement:

- (1) Residential Electric - \$75.00
- (2) Residential Natural Gas - \$60.00 if rents or \$40.00 if owns
- (3) Residential Water - \$25.00
- (4) Residential Sewer - \$25.00
- (5) Processing Fee - \$30.00

Commercial Deposit Requirement:

- (1) Deposits will be the sum of the two highest utility bills of location where business is transferring from or the sum of a like kind business if business is new or substantially different than where transferring from.
- (2) Processing Fee - \$30.00.

A cash deposit, Letter of Credit (from a banking facility issued to the City of Douglas), a Utility/Surety Bond (insurance product issued to the City of Douglas) a Certificate of Deposit (CD - from a banking facility assigned to the City of Douglas) is required of the applicant to guarantee the payment of final bills and for the protection of the City's property on the customer's premises. The required deposit cannot be applied at any time against a current bill but is to be considered only as a guarantee of payment of final bills.

EXCEPTION TO DEPOSIT REQUIREMENT

The only exceptions to the Deposit Requirement are:

- (1) **Apartment Owners/Managers** - Whenever an apartment is vacated, temporary service will be turned on to allow for apartment to be cleaned before it is rented again.
- (2) **Multi-Rental Property Owners/Managers** - To qualify for this exemption, owner/manager must have at least two (2) properties and be in "GOOD" standing with the City. Whenever a rental property is vacated, temporary service will be turned on for that property to be cleaned before it is rented again. All properties must be on file at City Hall.
- (3) **Real Estate Agents** - Whenever an agent takes over a building to sell, temporary service will be turned on to allow to be cleaned and/or shown to the prospective buyers.
- (4) **Building Contractors** - Whenever contractor(s) have more than

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one construction taking place, temporary service will be turned on for additional constructions.

- (5) **Business Owners/Managers** - Whenever a business requires more than one structure to operate, service will be turned on for additional structure(s). Business owners/managers who have account(s) with current deposit(s) and who have a good paying history will be allowed to have additional service without paying the new required deposit.

The Processing Fee of \$30.00 is required and can be billed for the above deposit exceptions.

AT ANY TIME EITHER THE PERMANENT ACCOUNT OR THE ADDITIONAL TEMPORARY ACCOUNT BECOMES A DELINQUENT ACCOUNT (LATE CHARGE OR CUT OFF), A DEPOSIT MAY BE DEMANDED.

ADDITIONAL DEPOSITS

The City reserves the right to require the original deposit to be increased at any time deemed necessary by the City for its full protection. The City may require a new deposit of any customer who becomes delinquent at any time.

REFUND OF DEPOSIT

When service is discontinued, the amount of the deposit, without interest, will be credited on the final bill to the customer. An amount in excess of the final bill shall be paid to the customer.

CONDITIONS FOR DENIAL OR DISCONTINUANCE OF SERVICE

(1) FRAUDULENT USE OF SERVICE

In the event that evidence is found indicating larceny of utility services, attempted fraudulent use, or tampering with the City's meters or equipment on the premises occupied by the customer, with or without the customer's knowledge, the City shall have the right to discontinue service immediately without notice to the customer. The City shall not be required to restore service in such cases until proper restitution or arrangement for restitution is made, including payment for any unpaid bills, any estimated un-metered usage (if account is finalized), damage to property, payment of \$75.00 Tampering Fee and other costs incurred by the City and/or payment as determined by a court of competent jurisdiction.

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(2) **RESALE OF UTILITIES**

In case utilities supplied by the City to the customer are resold without the written consent of the City, service may be discontinued upon notice to the customer.

(3) **CONDITION OF PREMISES**

The City may discontinue utility service where, in its judgment, the wiring or piping is unsafe, interferes with the service of other consumers, damages City's property or violates any requirements in any section of these rules and regulations. Any inspection and approval by the City shall be made solely for the purpose of insuring proper protection for the City's property and continuity of service and shall not be construed to impose any duty or liability on the City by reason thereof. In cases where any duly constitute governmental authority requires inspection and approval of customer's wiring or piping, the City will not make connection and render services until such inspection has been made and approval has been given by the duly designated inspector.

BILLING FOR SERVICE

- (1) A monthly bill will be rendered for all service(s) provided and for each separate electric meter according to the applicable schedule. There will be no combining of meter readings for the computing of bills. Meters shall be read at intervals of approximately one month and bills mailed as soon thereafter as is practical. When a meter cannot be read on the schedule date of the meter reading corresponding use for the month may be estimated based on use by the customer in previous months. Since meter readings are continuous from month to month, any error in such estimate will automatically be corrected in the next subsequent month when the meter is actually read. In the event that the meters installed by the City fail to register properly during any period, the bill will be estimated by the City from readings for a like billing period or periods.
- (2) **Rate Code Assignment:** Applicant for utility services shall be assigned an approved rate that complies with the type service requested.
- (3) **Correction of mistakes in meter readings and billing** will be made when discovered by adding or deducting the proper amount to or from the bill. If the customer's records can determine the date, when the error occurred, such date shall be the starting point. If not, the City's one-year history will be the starting point.

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BILL CREATION DATES/BILL DUE DATE/BILL DISCONNECT DATES

- (1) Should a **bill's normal creation date** fall on a weekend or holiday, it will be created the business day prior to the weekend or holiday.
- (2) Should a **bill's normal Due Date** fall on a weekend or holiday, it will be due the 1st business day after the weekend or holiday.
- (3) A **Disconnect/Cut-Off list** will be prepared and worked on the **8th day past the Due Date** with the following exceptions:
 - A. The City will not disconnect on any day prior to City Hall being closed. The cut-off will occur on following business day not proceeding a day City Hall will be closed UNLESS the customer was notified on the prior day of cut-off, agreed to take care of it that day, but did not.
 - B. Upon receipt of payment for the entire delinquent amount plus Processing Fee of \$30.00 prior to 5:00 P.M., re-connection will be made on that day.
 - C. **After-hours reconnects** are available Monday-Friday from 5:30 pm until 8:00 pm. The customer will agree to the \$85.00 After-Hours Reconnection Agreement with the Call Center. The person whose name the account is in must be the one to agree to the After-Hours Reconnection Agreement. Customer must pay the appropriate after-hours reconnection fee of \$85.00 and all delinquent amounts in "FULL" by 10:00 am next business day. If account is not paid in full by 10:00 am, customer will be disconnected again. If account is disconnected again, the customer will have to pay ALL delinquent amounts, the after hour reconnection fee and another business hour re-connection fee. Should the City find that the customer should have been reconnected the day before, the customer will not be charged the After-Hours Fee.
 - D. Personal or business checks belonging to the disconnected account will not be accepted for non-pay disconnects.
 - E. The City will not disconnect if NOAA (National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration) predicts the following temperature within the next 24 hours:
 - a. In Winter - 32 degrees or colder
 - b. In Summer - 98 degrees or hotter

NOTE: In the event that the state/federal law changes, the City will amend its policy.
 - F. Heavy rain or high prediction of rain by NOAA on the day of non-pay disconnect since this would create a safety hazard for City employee(s) performing the field work.

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RUNNING AVERAGE MONTHLY PAYMENT (AMP)

The Utility Running Average Monthly Payment (AMP) feature of the Incode Utility Billing software is a tool that enables us to offer our residential customers a more level monthly bill amount than would occur with normal seasonal variations in services. Amp became available to the residential public on July 1, 2013. Each month the system will adjust the actual bill to equal the average bill amount. The adjustment will go into the customer's AMP Reserve. The AMP Reserve is applied to the customer's account balance when they disconnect their account or decide to stop the AMP. AMP calculation is based on the Running Option with a recapture percentage of 4% of the Reserve.

Pros:

- (1) Recalculates the average amount each time the customer is billed.
- (2) Designed to be self-adjusting as rates change, seasonal changes occur and as customer usage patterns change.
- (3) If customer transfers, can transfer AMP which will use the 11 months at prior location with current bill amount to obtain average until 12 month bills have occurred at the new location.

Cons:

- (1) If customer stops the AMP, there could be a settlement based on time of season.
- (2) Any past dues, returned checks, and/or adjustments can skew the average.

To be eligible for the AMP, the customer must have twelve full months of billing history on the account (or twelve months history on the prior location when transferring) and cannot be under a Contract Payment Plan. While under an AMP, the customer is not eligible for a Contract Payment Plan. If the customer decides to stop the AMP, they will have to settle-up with the City on the next created bill. If the City owes the customer money, this will be a credit to their account unless the customer closes the account and does not establish a new account immediately. If there is a credit balance on the account once the account final out the City will prepare a check to be mailed to the customer. Once a customer closes an AMP either by request or by abandoning the account, the customer will not be eligible for another AMP for twelve months from the time they closed the prior AMP in his/her name.

BILL EXPLANATION SHEETS

Each new utility customer is given a sheet with meter reading date

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and billing date information along with other helpful information.

The location of services being provided dictates the Zone the services are in. No change of dates are allowed.

BILLING ZONES

The *City of Douglas* is divided into **4 ZONES** for utility billing purposes. Zones used to be called Wards or Cycles.

- ZONE 1**
- ZONE 2**
- ZONE 3**
- ZONE 4**

BILLING INFORMATION

BILLING ZONE 1

- (1) Meters are read between the **1st - 7th** of each month
- (2) Bills are created on the **15th**
- (3) Bills are due on the **30th**
- (4) Disconnected on the **8th** day past the Due Date

BILLING ZONE 2

- (1) Meters are read between the **7th - 14th** of each month
- (2) Bills are created on the **22nd**
- (3) Bills are due on the **6th**
- (4) Disconnected on the **8th** day past the Due Date

BILLING ZONE 3

- (1) Meters are read between the **14th - 21st** of each month
- (2) Bills are created on the **30th**
- (3) Bills are due on the **16th**
- (4) Disconnected on the **8th** day past the Due Date

BILLING ZONE 4

- (1) Meters are read between the **21st - 28th** of each month
- (2) Bills are created on the **8th**
- (3) Bills are due on the **23rd**
- (4) Disconnected on the **8th** day past the Due Date

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METHOD OF PAYMENT

Regardless of method of payment, customer is encouraged to bring, mail or send entire utility bill for faster service.

OFFICE HOURS ARE FROM 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM, Monday - Friday

- (1) In person: counter payment customers are requested to bring entire utility bill for proper validation, obtain receipt, and retain receipt. Drive-up customers must have current utility bill to be served at the drive-up.
- (2) Night Deposit Box is located near the front door of City Hall. Box is opened daily at 7:45 am and again at 8:00 A.M. All payments dropped prior to 8:01 A.M. will be considered paid on that date. Any payments dropped after 8:00 am will be processed on the next business day.
- (3) Mailed payment must be received in City Hall or at the processing center by the due date to avoid paying penalties. As of April 1, 2006 the United States Post Office postmark will not be accepted as the payment date of bills
- (4) BANK DRAFTS available upon request
- (5) On-Line Payment using the City's On-Line Bill Pay system - visit www.cityofdouglas.com

Checks: No two party checks are accepted. A Return Check Fee or Draft Fee of \$30.00 is charged for each check or draft returned by the bank. The City of Douglas does not re-deposit returned checks or drafts.

BILL PENALTIES

- (1) **Penalties** post 1st thing on the 2nd business day past the Due Date. A 10% penalty is assessed. Failure to receive the bill shall not entitle customer to a waiver of the late payment penalty.
- (2) Account will be set up on "No Penalties" if:
 - A. Account is set up on Draft
 - B. Mailing address is greater than 200 miles
- (3) **Penalty Adjustment Policy**:

The City of Douglas will grant a penalty adjustment to any requesting utility customer (residential and commercial) once every twenty-four (24) months as long as the account has not incurred a penalty in the prior twenty-four (24) months, is not currently disconnected for non-pay, finalized or inactive. In the case of a transfer of services in the customer's name, the length of time of a penalty adjustment from the old account to the new account will be taken into

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consideration for the twenty-four (24) months period calculation. If a penalty is incurred due to an error on the part of the City and is waived, this penalty will not be counted as a penalty in the prior twenty-four (24) months period.

CHANGE IN BILLING STATUS

No change in the status of said application shall be permitted to avoid the payment of delinquent bills, Processing Fees, Tampering Fees, deposits, etc. The City of Douglas 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.

- (1) A customer wishing to **TRANSFER** the billing account one from location to another must first pay current account in full. Service may be left on at old location up to two weeks. A Processing Fee of \$30.00 is required. 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 **death of spouse** must first pay any bill past due at location, pay a Fee of \$1.00 to make changes to the account, and complete an application accepting responsibility of paying monthly bills, and must comply with all requirements listed in the New Account Utility Customer section. The customer will provide evidence of death with either a Certified Death Certificate, a Bulletin from the funeral showing details or a clipping of the obituary from the paper.
- (3) A customer wishing to **CHANGE NAMES** on account due to **marriage or divorce**, must furnish City with proper legal document (license/certificate/Divorce Decree), complete application accepting responsibility of paying monthly bills and pay the required Fee of \$1.00.

DISCONTINUANCE OF SERVICE

A customer wishing to discontinue service with the City of Douglas must do so in writing either on the City's Service Order, by letter, fax, or email with the following information: Account name, account location, date to be discontinued, forwarding address, proper signature, and government issued picture ID.

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SERVICE DISCONTINUED WITHOUT NOTICE

Service will be discontinued without notice in the event of:

- (1) A condition on the customer's premises is determined by the City to be hazardous to life or property.
- (2) The customer is using equipment in such a manner as to adversely affect the City's equipment or the service of the City to the other consumers.
- (3) The customer has tampered with the equipment furnished and owned by the City.
- (4) Customers whose checks or drafts in payment of City charges are returned by bank for **"bank account closed" or "no account"**.

SERVICE DISCONTINUED WITH NOTICE

- (1) For the nonpayment of a utility bill for service (bill serves as the official notice).
- (2) Written notice will be given to customers by first-class mail not less than five (5) days, excluding Sundays and legal holidays, before service to any customer will be discontinued for the following causes:
 - A. For failure of the customer or prospective customer to furnish such service equipment, permits, easement or rights-of-way as are specified to be furnished as conditions of obtaining service, or for the withdrawal of that same equipment, termination of those same permissions or rights, or failure to the customer or prospective customer to fulfill the contractual obligations imposed upon him as conditions of obtaining service by any contract.
 - B. For failure of the customer to permit the City reasonable access to its equipment.
 - C. For failure of the customer to provide the City with a deposit when required.
 - D. For check or draft paying City charges being returned from bank for reason other than **"bank account closed" or "no account"**.

RE-CONNECTION AFTER DISCONTINUANCE

After service has been disconnected at the request of the customer, for nonpayment of a bill, violation of the contract for service, or violation of any of the City's rules and regulations herein, such service will not be reconnected until satisfactory arrangements have been made to correct the

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reason for the disconnection, including payment of all delinquent amounts plus any other applicable fees.

During business hours re-connections will be made between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm (or prior to leaving for the day). If non-payment bill is paid prior to 5:00 pm, re-connection will be made that business day.

UTILITY PAYMENT POSTPONEMENTS

(1) **Extension of Payments - 7 Days Grace Period**

All utility customers will have a seven (7) day grace period from the Due Date of the bill and be subject to disconnect for non-payment on the eighth (8th) day after the Due Date. On the second business day after the Due Date, a penalty of 10% will post to the account.

(2) **Medical Delay**

Under the prior Procedure Manual, bills were disconnected on the 4th day past the Due Date. Medical Delay was for any account holder who provided a signed letter from a medical doctor stating that disconnection of services would be "life threatening" to the account holder. Once letter was received the account would be granted 3 extra days to pay prior to disconnect in order to give the person additional time to pay the amount owed or to move to a location with utility services. However, now that the customer is granted until the 8th day past the Due Date prior to disconnect, the procedure followed for Medical Delay is no longer valid. Should an account holder's medical condition be "life threatening" they should have a generator in place as a backup power source in case power goes out due to act of God.

(3) **VOUCHERS**

Vouchers must have required information: Customer Name, address, account number, and voucher amount. The customer is responsible for any amount due above the voucher amount within the City's time frame.

A. The City will except vouchers from:

1. Concerted Services,
 - a. Concerted Services is the only agreed upon organization which can provide a Voucher to the City stating they will have funds to us within 30 days and the City will NOT cut these customers for non-pay or assess a penalty within the 30 days.
2. Salvation Army,
3. Open Hands Ministry,
4. The Department of Family and Children Services (DEFACS),

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5. Any other "Known" assistance agencies.
- (4) Any other postponement of discontinuation of utility service shall be presented to the City of Douglas Utility Committee and may be granted by a favorable vote of the majority of that body.
- (5) **Contract Payment Plans (Extensions)**
Any request by a customer for a Contract Payment Plan must be documented on the Utility Committee Form. This form is necessary for documentation of the request, to evidence properly posting the Contract Payment Plan on the utility account and if necessary to take to the Utility Appeals Commission.

Customer Care/Customer Service personnel can grant Contract Payment Plans up to twelve (12) months. If the customer is requesting a Contract Payment Plan, the customer must complete a Utility Committee Form prior to 8:31 am on the day Customer Service is actually disconnecting customers in the particular Ward for non-pay. The Customer Service Manager or one appointed by him will review these forms to make sure of eligibility and evidence this review by initialing the form and dating. The Utility Committee will meet twice a month and at this meeting, will review any determined by the Customer Care/Customer Service Manager to warrant their review and any which the customer was denied but wishes to appeal. If a customer is deemed not eligible, the customer will be notified. If the customer does not agree with the Utility Committee's decision, the customer has the right to appeal to the Utility Appeals Board.

Each customer is allowed one (1) request for the Contract Payment Plan every twelve (12) months from his/her prior Contract Payment Plan issue date. The only exception is for Senior Citizens age 55 or old - see below. If the customer is under a Running Average Monthly Payment (AMP) plan, the customer is not eligible for a Contract Payment Plan.

Senior Citizens, age 55 and above, are allowed two requests per year if needed to help with high utility bills as long as the bill with the last payment of the prior Contract Payment Plan has been paid in full.

NO ELECTED OR APPOINTED OFFICIAL SHALL HAVE THE RIGHT TO EXTEND PAYMENTS, DUE DATES, OR HAVE ACCOUNTS RE-CONNECTED WITH PARTIAL AND/OR NO PAYMENTS. ONLY A MAJORITY OF THE UTILITY COMMITTEE IS AUTHORIZED TO EXTEND A DEADLINE DATE FOR

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PAYMENT WITH CUSTOMER CARE/CUSTOMER SERVICE PERSONNEL BEING GRANTED THE ABILITY TO ISSUE CONTRACT PAYMENT PLANS UP TO TWELVE (12) MONTHS.

UTILITY COMMITTEE

The UTILITY COMMITTEE is made up of the City Manager, an appointed City Commissioner, the Electric Department Director, the Natural Gas Department Director, the Water Department Director, the Customer Care Manager, and the Customer Service Manager.

The UTILITY COMMITTEE meets two times per month. A majority of the Committee may 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.

No elected or appointed official shall have the right to extend a deadline date for payment. Only a majority of the UTILITY COMMITTEE can extend any deadlines.

UTILITY APPEALS BOARD

The UTILITY APPEALS BOARD is made up of the city commissioners and the Mayor. This board will review appeals from customers who do not agree with the decision that the Utility Committee has made. The Board will review the Utility Committee information and all supporting documents to ensure the decision was based on City policy. No customer shall be allowed to appeal to the Board until the Committee has first reviewed the case and made a decision.

METER LOCATION/ACCESS TO PREMISES

The location of the metering equipment and space required for said metering equipment shall be established by the City's service regulation. As a condition of taking service, authorized employees and agents of the City 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.

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UNLAWFUL ENTRY/METER TAMPERING/BROKEN METER SEALS

- (1) It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation (not authorized by the City) to tamper with or open any meter cabinet, enclosure or equipment or other devices owned by the City that is secured by a seal, lock, and/or inter-lock valve thereon.
- (2) Broken meter seals will constitute grounds for questions as to accuracy of meter registration. Should the meter fail to register properly, monthly billings will be estimated, based either upon a meter reading taken during the next billing period after the meter has been repaired, or replaced, or upon the amount charged during a previous corresponding period at the discretion of the City. A police report will be filed for each incidence of a broken seal and a **TAMPERING FEE** OF \$75.00 will be accessed to the account.

ELECTRIC METER TESTING

If the customer requests an electric meter test, the City will require the consumer to make a deposit of \$5.00 and the electric meter will be tested for accuracy and the findings reported to the consumer. The customer may be present when his/her meter is tested. If the electric meter is found to be accurate within 2 percent or 3 percent in the case of demand meters, the City will retain the \$5.00 deposit. If the meter is found to be registering more than 2 percent fast or 3 percent high in the case of demand meters, the customer will be reimbursed the \$5.00 deposit and overcharge will be adjusted accordingly.

FINALED ACCOUNTS

On the 15th day following a final bill date, the account must be paid in FULL. Thirty (30) days following the Final Bill Due Date, a Final Letter will be mailed to the customer demanding payment in full or the unpaid balance will be turned over for collection approximately 15 days from the date of the Final Letter. At this date, the outstanding balance will be transferred to the City's inactive accounts (charged off). City will attempt to collect such accounts through the use of collection agencies, court actions, through the reviewing/approving process of applications for new services and while reviewing active/current accounts that have services with the City. If amounts are discovered, the customer must PAY IN FULL the old debt before new services will be

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activated and connected. If amounts are discovered that a current/active customer owes, the City will send a letter to the customer informing them of the old amount. The City will give the customer 15 days to pay the debt. If on the 15th day the customer has not paid, the old debt will be transferred to their existing account. If the amount is not paid by the Due date of the current bill, services will be disconnected.

BLUE BOOK WRITE-OFFS

Continuation of using the Blue Book (Security Credit Adjustments, Inc.) to identify any possible collection of old write-off accounts which were prior to June 1, 2001 will continue. Security Credit Adjustments, Inc. was the collection agency used by the City prior to going with Credit Bureau Associates (CBA). If a customer refuses payment arguing they paid or never owe amount reflected in the Blue Book, the City does not collect. If the customer agrees they owe, debt is to be collected. In either case, if the customer is listed in the Blue Book:

- (1) The initials of the employee,
- (2) The amount paid or "refused", and
- (3) The current date should be listed beside the customer's name in the Blue Book to prevent double collection or re-asking the customer about the debt in the future.

CONDITIONS CONCERNING PREVIOUS BILLS FOR SERVICE

Utility services cannot be connected/provided until the applicant has paid or made proper arrangements with the City on all amounts due. This includes any old utility bills owed by anyone which will live with the applicant and benefit from the City's utilities being connected.

Rules Governing Old Debt ("**Special**" Contract Payment Plan Option):

- (1) Ask for the full amount up front.
- (2) If customer cannot pay full amount, then pay according to the following breakdown:
 - A. If amount owed is \$250 or less, customer pays full amount.
 - B. If amount owed is \$251 to \$750, customer pays \$250 plus 20% of the balance and remainder placed to be paid on up to a twelve month plan.

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- C. If amount owed is \$751 to \$1250, customer pays \$400 plus 30% of the balance and remainder placed to be paid on up to a twelve month plan.
- D. If amount owed is \$1251 to \$2000, customer pays \$700 plus 40% of the balance and remainder placed to be paid on up to a twelve month plan.
- E. Any amounts above \$2001, customer pays at 75% and remainder placed to be paid up to a twelve month plan.

While a customer is under a "Special" Contract Payment Plan, they are not eligible to be on Average Monthly Payment plan until last bill with the Special plan is paid in full. The Customer Care/Customer Service Departments personnel will be allowed to extend up to twelve (12) months after explaining pros and cons to the customer.

After services have been established, the City reserves the right to discontinue said service if it finds service is to be shared with or is in whole or part for the benefit of a person or persons owing the City for previous service whether at these or at any other premises.

NONCOMPLIANCE WITH RULES AND REGULATIONS

All utilities furnished to a customer shall be in accordance with these rules and regulations and in the event a customer fails to comply with such rules and regulations, the City may discontinue service until proper remedy has been established.

REVISION OF RULES AND REGULATIONS

The City reserves the right to make any other or additional rules and regulations or amendments or modification to these and such other rules and regulations at any time.

*******NO ELECTED, APPOINTED, OR HIRED OFFICIAL OF THE CITY OF DOUGLAS HAS THE RIGHT TO DEVIATE FROM THE ABOVE RULES AND PROCEDURES. *******

UTILITY BILLING
PROCEDURES MANUAL

ATTEST:

Wynette G. Bolden
City Clerk
12-14-15
Date

CITY OF DOUGLAS, GEORGIA

BY:

James Dennis
Mayor James Dennis

12-14-15
Date