

BILL NO. 7

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 86.08.050 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE MONROE CITY MUNICIPAL CODE

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF MONROE CITY, MISSOURI, AS FOLLOWS:

Section 86.08.050 – Utility Policy:

(a) New Applicants

- New applicants are required to complete the utility service application.
- A picture ID must be presented so that a copy may be made and attached to the application.
- The social security number will be requested on the application.
- The service initiation fee and deposit must be paid as well as all outstanding utility bills in the name of the applicant's and co-applicant's names prior to the utilities being read in their name.
- All adults living in the household must be listed on the application.
- Commercial and Industrial customers must also complete an application and provide the necessary documentation.
- Renters must have documentation that they are allowed to be residing at the property.

(b) New Co-Applicants

- New co-applicants will be given credit for having utility service at the specified location if they:
 - Are listed on the new applicant's application for utility service.
 - Have provided a picture ID and listed their requested social security number on the application.
 - Have signed the application.

They will also be responsible for payment of the utility bill in the event of default by the applicant.

(c) Customers with Multiple Locations

- Applicants who currently have utilities in their name may have utilities read into their name at another location and will be required to:
 - Make a new application and pay meter deposits for that property
 - Pay the service initiation fee of \$20
- There is no limit on the number of locations in which an applicant may have utilities in their name if none of their locations are delinquent, including residential and commercial accounts.
- If a customer has more than one location in their name and service is disconnected at any location due to non-payment, utility services at ALL locations will be disconnected – this includes corporations, limited liability companies and partnerships.
- Each location must always have meter deposits on the account.

(d) Updates to Existing Accounts

- No name changes on an account will occur until the account reflects a \$0 balance. At the time of the name change request, a new utility application will be required, along with appropriate documentation of the name change (i.e., court documents, marriage license, etc.)
- Removing a name from an account will require an account reflecting a \$0 balance, with a written notice from the individual requesting that they be removed from the account. Should that individual be incapacitated or deceased, appropriate documentation (i.e., court documents, certificates, etc.) and a new utility application for any name change on a utility account will be required.

(e) Landlords

- Landlords must be registered at City Hall and complete a Landlord Designation Form. This sets out what the landlord wants done with the utilities between renters. They can have them automatically shut off, read back into their name, or have the city personnel contact them when a renter reads out the location. If a Landlord Designation form is not on file at City Hall, the utilities for that property will be disconnected.
- If a landlord does not pay a bill in between tenants at any location, all services in the Landlord's name will be shut off and no utilities will be put back into any location until the landlord pays their bill.
- If a landlord is aware that a renter is moving or has moved out, they must contact the city. Landlords must contact the City and confirm that an individual is to be residing at the Landlord's rental property.
- Landlords must pay the \$20 service fee each time a location goes back in the landlords name. The service fee can be added to the landlord's utility bill.

(f) Initial Meter Deposits

- Residential -\$100 per meter for Electric, Gas and Water
- Residential – All Electric Home- \$200 for Electric and \$100 for water
- Commercial – Same as residential unless it is a hotel or restaurant. If it is a hotel or restaurant, it will be an amount equal to a 12-month average and then rounded up to an even figure. (If 12-month average is \$1,265.80 – the deposit will be \$1,300.00)
- Industrial - (If 12-month average is \$1,265.80 – the deposit will be \$1,300.00)

(g) Meter Deposit Retainage

- Meter Deposits will be held the entire time a tenant and/or homeowner has utilities.
- If the customer ceases utility service with the city for any reason, the deposit will be applied to their final bill. Any remaining deposit balance will be applied to any outstanding balances by the customer. Any remaining deposit balance will be sent to them via check. If the final bill exceeds the amount on deposit, a bill will be sent to them.
- When a current resident decides to move to a different location, they may have up to 7 days to not pay deposits at the new location if they need service at the old location longer than 7 days. A deposit must be paid at the new location or disconnection will occur at both locations.

(h) Utility Billing Process, Billing, Billing Concerns and Payments

- Meter Reading

- All meters are read the second Tuesday and Wednesday of each month. This may change due to weekends, holidays, and the availability of meter reading personnel.
- If you receive a bill you feel is incorrect, please contact City Hall as soon as possible so that the meters can be re-read. If it is incorrect then a corrective bill can be issued.
- If you incur a water leak and the leak did not go through the city sewer system, the sewer usage will be adjusted down to the average of the customers prior 3 months water usage.
- Any customer that feels a meter is not operating correctly can request that the meter be sent in for testing. However, the customer must pay \$100 up front for the testing. If the testing determines that the meter was reading accurately the money is kept to pay for the shipping of the meter and the test itself. If the testing determines that the meter was not reading accurately then the money is refunded to the customer. All results will be sent to the customer and their utility account will be adjusted accordingly.
- If you have an issue with a utility service – whether electric, gas, water, or sewer - please contact City Hall so that a utility worker can review the issue and determine whether it is a city issue or a customer issue. If a contractor is hired by the customer to fix the issue and it is then determined that it was a city issue, the City will NOT reimburse any expenses as they were not given the opportunity to review the situation prior to the contractor being called.
- **Disputed Utility Accounts**
 - If the customer does not agree with a billing and feels that there is an issue that needs to be resolved, the customer must contract City Hall and file a Utility Dispute Form which sets out the customer's name address, date of dispute, the service being disputed and the issue as well as how the customer feels the issue should be resolved.
 - The information is reviewed by the City Administration. The City personnel must investigate the issue, document their findings on the form, document their proposed resolution on the form and inform the customer in writing within five (5) days of receiving the dispute.
 - If the City does not receive any follow-up from the customer within 10 days of issuing the proposed resolution, the dispute is considered resolved and the appropriate box is checked on the form and the dispute is closed.
 - If the customer does not agree with the resolution, he/she may appeal the decision and request a hearing with the Board of Alderman (their decision is final). The appeal must be submitted in writing and reviewed by the City Administration office within 10 days of the date of the resolution.
 - A hearing will be held at the next regularly scheduled Board of Alderman meeting – provided the appeal has been received 24 hours prior to the meeting. If it has not been, then the hearing will be held at the next regularly scheduled meeting.
 - At the hearing, both sides will be able to present evidence and to call witnesses to support their version of the facts surrounding the dispute.

- The Board will render their decision at or before the next regularly scheduled Board of Aldermen meeting. The decision will be in writing and will document the reasons for their decision and mailed to the citizen within 5 days of the decision being made.
- If the decision is made in favor of the customer, corrective measures shall be taken as soon as possible. If the decision is made in favor of the city, the amount will be due as if it were part of the regular monthly statement.
- All documentation will be kept on file at City Hall for two years after the date of final resolution.
- Billing and Payments
 - Utility bills are generated and mailed to the customers with the intention that the bills are received on the first day of the next month.
 - Utility bills are due on the 20th of the month.
 - All residential accounts that have not been paid by the due date will receive a 5% penalty. All commercial and industrial accounts that have not been paid by the due date will receive a 10% penalty.
 - Payments can be sent via regular mail to the City of Monroe City, PO Box 67, Monroe City MO, 63456, personally delivered to City Hall at 109 Second Street, or through the Monroe City Missouri website.
- **(i) Termination and Reconnection of Service**
- Termination Criteria
 - Utilities can be disconnected Monday through Friday between the hours of 8 am and 3:30 pm.
 - Utilities will not be disconnected if the bill is subject to a dispute which has not been resolved.
 - Utilities will not be disconnected before 30 days if the city is advised that a customer will be receiving assistance from any agency; including, but not limited to NECAC, Division of Family Services, Social Services, Ministerial Alliance, charitable organization, etc.
 - Medical Emergencies – with proper medical documentation, termination will be postponed for 21 days after the due date if the utility termination will aggravate an existing serious medical emergency, chronic or acute, of the customer or other member of the household where services are rendered.
- Termination for non-payment
 - If the customer cannot pay their bill in full by the end of the business day on the 25th, they will be disconnected.
 - Disconnection will take place on the 26th of the month after 9am without further notice.
 - If the industrial customer cannot pay their bill in full by the end of the business day on the 25th they will be disconnected on the 26th after 9am. Due to the potential of a heavy load that an industrial customer utilizes, there can be significant safety hazard to the employee as there can be a large arc between the meters and the meter base as the meter is removed. The industry will be given 30 minutes notice that the utilities will be shut off so that their processes can be disconnected. If the industry

refuses to shut down the loads, then the service would be disconnected at the pole.

- Reinstatement of Service
 - When service is terminated for non-payment, the reconnect fee of \$40 per service meter must be paid, the full amount of the bill must be paid, and any previous utility account balances in the person's name must be paid prior to being reconnected. Payment must be received prior to 3:30 pm to be reconnected the same day.
 - When service is terminated for non-payment, utility personnel will not reinstate services after normal business hours.

(j) Assistance from Outside Agencies

- Before the City shall accept written, faxed, or oral verification from NECAC, Family Services or any other agency pledging funds for a delinquent customer's utility the customer must pay their water, sewer, and sanitation on their account.
- Verifications must include the name of the agency, contact person, and specific information about who they are assisting and what dollar amount.
- It is the customers' responsibility to make an application or contact agencies.

(k) Special Medical Needs

- This registration does NOT prevent them from getting their utilities disconnected due to non-payment. It does, however, place them on a list so that if the electricity goes out, they will be one of the first turned back on if it is a sizeable outage.

(l) Estates

- If the bill goes unpaid and every reasonable attempt is made to determine a contact person, the utilities will be subject to disconnection.

(m) Final Billed Accounts

- Final billed accounts that are not paid within 30 days are referred to the City's collection agency. Final billed customers that did not provide a forwarding address may be referred to the City's collection agency sooner at the expense of the utility customer.
- Write-offs are at the discretion of the Board of Aldermen. Final billed accounts that have been referred to a collection agency and have been deemed as uncollectible by the agency may be written off for accounting purposes only upon a vote by the Aldermen. Regardless as to whether the Aldermen vote to write off the accounts for account purposes only, the City Administration will still pursue collection of the accounts.
- When an individual does come back into town and has left the City owing money, they will not be allowed a new service until the final bill (including any collection fees the City has incurred trying to collect the bill), meter deposits and a service fee have been paid. No payment plan will be set up for this situation.

(n) Budget Payment Plan – Residential Customers Only

- Residential customers will not be set up on the budget plan unless they sign the agreement and return it to City Hall by the given deadline.
- Residential customers who have lived continuously at the same location for 12 months may elect to participate in the Budget Payment Plan. The budget payment plan will not be available to commercial or industrial utility accounts. To obtain the

residential customer's monthly budget, the previous 12-month consumption will be averaged.

- The residential customer will pay this amount every month except for the months the primacy fee and sewer user fees must be assessed. Customers who are unable to pay their budget amount on or before the 26th of each month will be removed from the budget payment plan and any balance on the account must be paid in full.
- The budget payment plan year is October to September. The city refigures the budget payment for each residential customer and their new budget payment plan will begin with the November 1 bill date. The budget payment plan information is sent to each customer.
- If your utility account has a balance at this time, it will be factored into the new budget year. If your utility account has a credit balance it will be factored into the new budget year.
- If the City Hall is not contacted by the residential customer of any concerns with the new budget amount, the new amount will go into effect with the November 1 billing provided the new budget plan is signed and returned.
- If the residential customer has concerns about the new amount, they need to contact City Hall as soon as possible.
- Residential budget customers can make extra payments to their utility bill accounts at any time.

Passed and finally approved by the Board of Aldermen of the City of Monroe City, Missouri, on this _____ day of _____ 2024.

MAYOR

ATTEST:

CITY CLERK

FIRST READING _____

SECOND READING _____