



# BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS

CITY OF HANNIBAL

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## ELECTRIC, WATER AND SEWER DEPARTMENTS

3 INDUSTRIAL LOOP DRIVE • PO BOX 1589 • HANNIBAL, MISSOURI 63401-1589

**POLICY:** Disconnection for Non-Payment      **DEPARTMENT:** Business Office

**APPROVED:** Robert W Stinson      **REVIEWED / REVISED:** 06/16/11

### Policy Purpose:

It is important that every employee of the Hannibal Board of Public Works (HBPW) understands and supports our policy of treating those customers who act responsibly and pay their bills on time with the respect their actions deserve. Likewise, we must also appreciate that it is not fair that those good-paying customers bear the financial burden of those who act irresponsibly and do not pay for their service as agreed. Thus, it is vital that we adopt and strictly adhere to the policy of shifting the financial burden of potential bad debt away from our best customers to those who pose a credit risk. This policy is aimed at accomplishing that task.

**Responsibility:** The Customer Service Representatives (CSR) shall be responsible to administer this Policy/Procedure in all situations. CSR's must discourage delinquent customers from attempting to seek a different result from higher-level managers.

### Disconnection definition:

The interruption of a utility service due to non-payment of a billed service.

### Disconnection Date:

Disconnection of service may occur on the 31st day after the issue date of a utility bill if payment has not been made in full.

TYPICAL BILLING SCHEDULE		
BILLING TERMS	PAYMENTS DUE TIME TABLE	EXAMPLE
BILLING DATE	DAY BILL IS MAILED	01/01/2010
DUE DATE	17 DAYS AFTER MAILING DATE	01/18/2010
BILL BECOMES DELINQUENT, PENALTY ADDED, AND DELINQUENT NOTICE MAILED	18 DAYS AFTER MAILING DATE	01/19/2010
AUTOMATED COURTESY CALL	23 DAYS AFTER MAILING DATE	01/24/2010
LAST DAY TO POST PAYMENT, DISCONNECT LIST FINALIZED	30 DAYS AFTER MAILING DATE	01/30/2010
DISCONNECTION DATE	31 DAYS AFTER MAILING DATE	01/31/2010

Disconnections will occur Monday through Thursday. No disconnections will be performed on Friday or the day before a holiday. Payments must be received and posted by the HBPW at its office at 3 Industrial Dr. by 4:00 pm prior to the disconnection date to avoid disconnection of service. Payments received at any other location will not be posted until the next business day.

**Notification:**

On the day a bill becomes delinquent, a notice will be mailed to those accounts. The notice will be sent to the mailing address listed on the account eighteen (18) days after the initial billing date. Mailing of the delinquent notice serves as the only notification required prior to disconnection for non-payment. The delinquent notice will include the amount past due and the published Late Payment Penalty.

As a courtesy, the HBPW automated call service will make 3 attempts to contact all delinquent customers. The call service will use the most recent phone number information provided on the customer's account. Such a contact is not guaranteed to every account for every non-payment event.

No additional calls will be made by a CSR except for first time late customers. The CSR responsible for the disconnection list will notify the department supervisor prior to cut-off any industrial, commercial or special circumstance account.

**Disconnection List/Exclusions:**

Disconnection of service is based on the customer's non-payment record. Customers with a good payment record for the previous twelve (12) months may be excluded from the cut off list. Customers without 12 months of prior history will not be excluded from disconnection.

The Disconnection List will be prepared by the designated CSR beginning at 12:00 pm and will be finalized at 4:30 pm on the 30<sup>th</sup> day.

A CSR must place secured notes on the customers account within the utility billing software for all exclusions made.

**Payments:**

The total amount printed on the delinquent notice must be paid in full to avoid disconnection of service. Partial payments can be made, but will not exclude the account from the disconnection list.

The published Reconnection Fee will be assessed to accounts that have been disconnected. Upon request for reconnection, the fee and all past due balance must be paid in full.

**Service Person:**

The disconnection service orders will be placed in the service person's outgoing file by 7:30 am on the 31<sup>st</sup> day. Disconnection will begin immediately. Following disconnection of service, the service person will leave a door tag at each location.

The service person will attempt to make contact with any commercial or industrial account prior to disconnection to allow orderly shut down of equipment. If the service person is unable to make contact, service will be disconnected and a door tag left.

The service person will not be responsible for making any type of payment arrangements.

**Extreme Weather Conditions:**

When the National Weather Service predicts the temperature for the next 24-hour period to be below 32 degrees from October 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup> or above 90 degrees from June 1<sup>st</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup>, the disconnection of electric service will be placed on a one-time per billing cycle five (5) day temporary hold. Weather information will be obtained from The National Weather Service website: <http://www.weather.gov>.

A door tag with the disconnection date and the amount due will be placed at the service address. The published Reconnection Fee will be assessed to each account that is tagged. The door tag will serve as final notification for disconnection regardless of future weather conditions.

When the hold time has expired, any account with an unpaid balance will be disconnected. The same disconnection procedure for follow-ups will take place.

**Reconnection during normal business hours:**

Reconnection will begin after the disconnection service orders have been completed.

Services will not be reconnected until the past due balance and Reconnection Fee is paid in full.

Reconnection of utility service can be called to the service person via cell phone, notification through the SCADA Department Dispatch or a re-instatement service order from the Business Office.

Payments received before 4:00 pm will be reconnected the same business day. Payments received after 4:00 pm will be reconnected the next business day.

**After Hours reconnection:**

Refer to "Reconnection of Service After Hours" policy located in the Business Office Policy folder.

**Follow Up:**

Follow-up for non-payment will occur five (5) days after the initial disconnection is completed. A follow-up consists of disconnecting of electric and/or water service, applying the utility deposit, final billing and closing out of the customer's account. If the balance of the account is not paid within 30 days of the final bill date, the remaining balance will be subject to collections without further notice.

**Special Items:**

Customers having special needs relating to health, disabilities or life-sustaining devices are encouraged to register their circumstances with the HBPW business office including alternative notification desires. Registration does not prevent disconnection for non-payment.

The terms of the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and the Energy Crisis Intervention Program (ECIP) contract prohibit the disconnection of electric service for that current billing period.

In the event the location is covered by the Owner Leave On Request, a CSR will attempt to contact the owner / landlord alerting them of the account status. This is a courtesy only and is not guaranteed.

Special arrangements can be made at the discretion of the Business Office Manager for circumstances beyond the customer's control, such as real estate probate or death of an immediate family member. Applicable service charges may still apply.

**Originated / Revised History**

Originated – 10/27/09

Revision 1 – 11/12/09

Revision 2 – 12/02/09

Revision 3 – 10/07/10

Revision 4 – 11/16/10

Revision 5 – 11/16/10

Revision 6 – 06/16/11