



TOWN POLICY

ADMINISTRATION POLICY:

Utility Customer Relations Policy

DEPARTMENT: Public Relations

POLICY NUMBER: PR-065

APPROVAL: 
Jeff Shaw

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 10, 2017
SUPERSEDES: Policy #U/10
UP FOR REVIEW: December 16, 2021

Policy Statement:

The Town of Cardston owns and operates the Electric Distribution system and serves as the wire service provider for the town. The municipal utilities in the community, including the water, sanitary sewer, garbage and recycling, are also provided by the Town of Cardston.

The purpose of this policy is to:

Establish guidelines to help mitigate conflicts between the utility retailer and the customer and to provide guidelines for the purpose of issuing refunds and to discontinue utility billing charges.

Electrical Utilities

Due to the deregulation of electrical utilities by the Province of Alberta, customers can receive their electricity from any retailer. The Town of Cardston is not a retailer of electrical energy and cannot provide any support with the consumption element of the electrical bill. However, because the Town owns the electrical infrastructure, the Town can provide support for meter related issues, including:

- Meter readings,
- Meter disconnects & reconnects,
- Meter installation,
- Meter replacement & removal,
- Any other work related to the electric meters or lines.

Before the Town will perform any work on electric meters, a work order from the utility retailer must be received in the Town Office.

If there is a dispute with a customer's electricity bill, the Town can check the meter readings and the electric meter to confirm accuracy and functionality, but the Town cannot change nor control the consumption rate being billed. Consumption concerns should be dealt with the retailer directly by the customer as the Town is a third party and will not have access to the accounts. In the event that the





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customer needs extra assistance with their bill, the customer may be allowed to call the utility retailer from the Town Office to give their permission for the Town to assist.

Water & Sewer Utilities

All properties with water and/or sewer lines to the property will be charged the basic charges for water & sanitary sewer as per the rates set in the current Utility Bylaw. The charges will be applied when the water is turned on at the curb. Water will not be turned on to a property unless a water meter is installed.

The charges for the water and sewer utilities will only be discontinued due to one of the following conditions:

- The owner or authorized person of the property has filed a Request for Service to have the water shut off at the curb;
- The property owner has a current demolition permit and the water meter will need to be removed,
 - If the demolition is not performed within the permit deadline, the property owner will be retroactively invoiced for all past utility bills in full; or

In the event that the property has been approved for septic sewer service, the sewer utility charges will be removed.

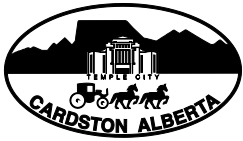
Garbage Utilities

All properties that have improvements on the property will be charged the basic charges for garbage, recycling, and the regional waste authority fee as per the rates set in the current Garbage Bylaw.

The garbage utilities will only be discontinued due to one of the following conditions:

- The property owner has a current demolition permit,
 - If the demolition is not performed within the permit deadline, the property owner will be retroactively invoiced for all past utility bills in full;
- The property does not have access to the municipal garbage collection system (i.e. Rural property with Town documentation that no garbage service is available at that location); or
- It is a commercial property with garbage that cannot be picked up by the Town's municipal garbage collectors and the property owner contracts with a private company for its waste disposal needs.





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- The Town Administration must have verified these facts and documented the customer's file

General

If there is a concern with a customer's water/sewer billing, the customer may bring a copy of the bill in for the utility clerk to check. An investigation may be conducted to check for the accuracy of the billing. If, by investigation, it is proven that the billing is incorrect, the corrections may be adjusted up to a maximum of 12 months. If the error occurred prior to the last 12 months, no adjustments will be made to the billing.

If there is a discrepancy in water consumption or a report of high consumption, an investigation to check the meter reads and meter will be conducted. The water meter may be replaced as a result, but a credit will not be issued unless an error was made in the reading. Water consumption charges will not be credited back if it was a result of a water leak nor if the Town cannot determine the cause of overage.

The customer may appeal any decisions to Council in writing. Appeals cannot exceed 1 year from the time the discrepancy or reported error was billed.





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