

Town of Eatonia Statement of Policy and Procedure			
Subject:	Utility Services Collection Policy	Policy No:	23
Date of Council Approval:	August 8, 2023	Resolution No.	14/8/23
Amended	September 12, 2023	Resolution No.	2/9/23

1. Policy Statement:

The Town of Eatonia recognizes the importance of strong fiscal management policies that incorporate consistent business practices and efficiencies that are fair to water and sewer customers, property owners and to the municipality.

2. Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is:

- a) To ensure the municipality can manage utility accounts receivable effectively by utilizing collection activities to minimize debts owed to the municipality.
- b) To provide consistent and equitable treatment to rate payers.
- c) To establish the protocol for collection of accounts in arrears including the schedule of certain collection of activities.

3. Definitions:

Primary Account Holder – the person, persons, or business name to which the utility account will be registered to. A primary account holder may be the property owner or a tenant/occupant.

Secondary Account Holder – a landlord or property owner for the purpose of receiving a tenant's utility bills or overdue notices.

Property Owner – person registered with Information Services Corporation (ISC) as being the owner of the land.

Landlord – owner of a rental property, an owner's agent, or another person who, on behalf of the owner grants to another person the exclusive right of tenancy to a rental unit.

Tenant – a person who rents property from a landlord.

Utility Arrears – any portion of your utility account that remains unpaid after the due date.

4. Rental Properties:

- a) Property owners that are landlords shall be added by default to accounts where property is leased or rented and receive copies of all bills and notices. Property owners are held responsible for all billings connected to their property and will be held responsible for the arrears in cases of non-payment by tenants. Tenants must complete a Landlord/Tenant Utility Account Agreement authorizing releasing account information to the property owner or authorized agent.

5. Utility Account Collection:

- a) Utility accounts shall cover a period of two successive months and will be billed on the first business day of the next month following such period. Utility services (water, sewer, garbage, recycling, and infrastructure fee) will be prorated if the account is set up part-way through the billing period. Utility bills will be sent to the primary account holder and secondary account holder, if applicable.
- b) Payment for the utility bills must be made by the end of the next month following the billing period. The bill will have the due date printed on the bottom of it. Please take notice of this due date to keep your account from going into arrears.
- c) If an account is not paid by the due date, an interest charge will be added as per the Water and Sewer Rates Bylaw on the first business day following the billing due date. An overdue utility account notice will be sent to the primary and secondary account holder, if applicable, stating that the account is in arrears and the account holder(s) will have until the end of that month to pay the arrears.
- d) If an account is still in arrears and over the period of 60 days from the last day of the billing period, a flag marking the location of the water curb stop will be posted on the property on the next business day. If the next business day lands on a Friday, the flag will be posted on the Monday or Tuesday if the Monday is a stat holiday.
- e) Account holders will then have 24 hours to pay their arrears in full or set up payment arrangements or the utility service will be disconnected without further notice.
- f) The service will not be reconnected until the utility account is paid in full or suitable arrangements are made.
- g) See example below for utility account collection process:
 - Utility bills will be sent out on March 1 for the January-February billing period.
 - If not paid by March 31, a penalty will be added on April 1 and an overdue utility account notice will be sent out.
 - If not paid by April 30, a stake marking the location of the water curb stop will be posted on the property on May 1.
 - Account holders will then have 24 hours to pay their arrears in full or set up payment arrangements or the utility service will be disconnected without further notice on May 2.

6. Interest Charges:

- a) Monthly interest will be charged on overdue accounts not paid by the due date as per the Water and Sewer Rates Bylaw.

7. Utility Account in Arrears:

- a) If your utility account falls into arrears, the Town of Eatonia will not do any custom work for you such as a sewer cleaning. The account must be in a current standing before any custom work will be done.
- b) Unpaid utility accounts for service provided to a property that are 90 days overdue will be added to and form a part of the taxes for the property for which the utility service was provided, in accordance with Section 369 of *The Municipalities Act*.

8. Disconnection of Service:

- a) When the water service is cut off, it will not be turned on until all arrears have been paid in full along with a disconnection and reconnection fee to cover the expenses of turning off the water and turning it on again, as per the Water and Sewer Rates Bylaw. No reconnections will be done after 4:00 p.m. on Monday to Friday or on weekends or holidays. Reconnection will occur on the next business day.

9. Payments:

- a) Payment of utility accounts must be received in the town office, on or before the due date. Payments not received by the due date are subject to an interest charge. The following are payment options available:
 - Internet Banking if you bank at a Credit Union. (Please allow at least 1 – 2 business days)
 - Post Dated Cheques
 - E-Transfer
 - In Person – at the counter by cash, cheque, debit card, or credit card (If using credit card, a 2.3% convenience fee will be added to the amount paying).
 - Payments by mail will be processed on the day they are received.
 - In the secure drop box located on the southwest corner of the Town Office.

10. Returned Payments:

- a) Cheques that are returned by the bank for non-sufficient funds (NSF) will be subject to a fee as set out in the Town of Eatonia's Office Fees Policy. A letter will be mailed out to advise the primary or secondary account holder.

11. Payment Agreements:

- a) A written agreement signed by the property owner and approved by the Administrator may be made to avoid disconnection of services. The agreement will clearly state that any payment arrangements missed will suspend services without prior notice unless extenuating circumstances can be presented to the Town's satisfaction. A payment arrangement will be based upon receiving 50% of the arrears as the first scheduled payment with the balance of arrears paid within 10 days of the first payment.



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LANDLORD/TENANT UTILITY ACCOUNT AGREEMENT

Please complete and return to the Town Office

Date: _____, 20____

Civic Address: _____

Property Owner: _____

Mailing Address: _____ Town: _____

Prov: _____ Postal Code: _____ Phone No: _____

E-mail: _____ (if you would like
bill e-mailed instead of mailed)

Tenant's Name(s): _____

Mailing Address: _____ Town: _____

Prov: _____ Postal Code: _____ Phone No: _____

E-mail: _____ (if you would like
bill e-mailed instead of mailed)

I hereby authorize the Town of Eatonia to forward a copy of the utility bills
and reminder notices to the property owner of the above stated address.

Tenant Signature(s)

Date

For Office Use Only

Account No: _____ Date Received: _____