

Date Adopted May 23, 2016Date Amended: September 6, 2023**POLICY FOR UTILITY BILLING AND PAYMENT PROCESS**

When an account is opened a \$250 deposit is required. Deposits are refundable for any account kept in good standing as defined by ordinance 12-100 (6). Deposits shall be billed and collected along with the first usage charges on the new account. There will be no treatment differentiating unpaid deposits from past due balances.

Each month after the initial bill, a monthly bill covering approximately thirty (30) days of water bill usage (please note that the 30 period may vary due to equipment or staff availability) is sent out to each customer on a monthly cycle and is due twenty-five (25) days after the billing date (as posted on the bill). If this bill goes unpaid, upon the due date, a 5% penalty is added to the past due balance when the next bill is prepared in the billing cycle.

If a customer is unable to pay the utility bill in full they may fill out an Application for Temporary Extension to receive up to two weeks of relief or an Application of Hardship for an extension up to two months of relief prior to a letter of disconnect being issued. Temporary Extensions and Hardship Applications are no longer issued once a disconnect letter is sent. However, payment extensions of two weeks may be given regardless of door hanger status to allow for additional processing time upon receipt of a signed promise to pay from an aid agency. Either application can be found online, picked up in person at City Hall or mailed upon request. The applications are to be filled out completely, signed, and returned in person to the Utility Billing Department. Application for Hardship Extension can only be filed once annually per address per customer. Application for Temporary Extension may be filed more than once per year per customer; however, after the first application, a \$20.00 processing fee must be paid with each application that is turned in. The Utility Department has the authority to deny an Application for Temporary Extension or Hardship at its sole discretion.

If a past due utility balance remains unpaid at the time the current bill is due, a letter of disconnect for the total amount owed will be issued. A fee of \$25.00 is assessed to the account. This letter of disconnect will allow six days from postmark as a final payment window prior to disconnection of service. After six days from postmark, if the account balance and disconnect notice fee is not paid in full, the City may shut off utility service. Upon shut off a door hanger, stating the utilities have been shut off due to nonpayment, will be left at the property resulting in an additional \$25.00 fee. To restore service, the utility account, disconnect notice and door hanger charges and the disconnection and reconnection charges must be paid in full. In addition, service shall not be restored to any account without a \$250 deposit on file.

After disconnect, payments must be made with cash, a money order or by credit card. Personal checks are not accepted once the service has been disconnected.

The City of Ishpeming will not be tracking payment plans. The City will manage the Utility Billing system as outlined in Ordinance 12-100 . Payments by customers made outside of these guidelines must have a current and approved Application for Temporary Extension, Application for Hardship Extension, or a signed promise to pay from a local aid agency filed with the City.

At the discretion of the City Manager or the Department of Public Works Director this policy may be lifted in times of extreme weather. The City shall not be required to inform customers of the lift in policy. When lifted, the policy becomes effective immediately on April 1st or as soon as weather permits with disconnect notice going to customers with a past due balance the month prior to enforcing the policy.