



City of Hempstead

1125 Austin Street

Hempstead, Texas 77445

Tel: 979-826-2486 • Fax: 979-826-6703

City of Hempstead Utility Department Policies and Procedures

Revised 10/01/08

UTILITY PAYMENTS

1. Utility bills are mailed the last working day of each month.
2. You have from the 1st through the 10th of the month to pay without a penalty.
3. From the 11th through the 20th of the month to pay with a 10% penalty.
4. On the 21st the utilities are disconnected for non-payment.
5. If you do not receive your bill by at least the 3rd day of the month, it is your responsibility to come by or call this office, (979) 826-2486, and we will be able to tell you the amount of your bill. However, maybe the reason you are not receiving your bill could be an incorrect address. You are responsible for notifying us of a correct mailing address.

DEPOSITS

1. Residential deposit is \$350.00 (three hundred fifty dollars), cash only.
2. Commercial deposit is \$500.00 (five hundred dollars) or two and one-half (2 ½) times the amount of the estimated bill, cash only. A letter of credit from a bank may be accepted in lieu of deposit when the deposit required is over \$1,000 (one thousand dollars).
3. No checks are accepted for residential or commercial deposits, cash only.

4. No partial payment is accepted for deposit and no one can guarantee another person's deposit.
5. A deposit is issued in only one name. Application must be made in person and applicant must be 18 years of age or older. Identification will be required to show proof of age.
6. Deposits are transferable from one address to another. Name change from one person to another, both parties must be present. Duplicate receipts are not issued.

Deposit receipts should be kept in a safe place to be presented at the time of disconnect for final bill or homeowner refund*.

* NOTE: See Refunding Homeowner Deposit (Ord. 94-105)

CHECKS

1. Two party checks are not accepted for payment of utility bills.
2. Checks are presented for payment only one time.
3. We do not accept checks for landfill use.
4. Insufficient check fee is \$25.00
5. Checks are not accepted for final bill.

CONNECTS AND DISCONNECTS

1. Connects and disconnects will only be performed between the hours of 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday during office hours. Customer must come to City Hall in Person to request connect and/or disconnect.
2. Connects for water and gas on manufactured homes will only be made when manufactured home is tied/anchored down.
3. If transferring from one location to another within our service area, any current bill must be paid in full before new connection will be made.
4. The City will not turn on a water or gas meter unless someone is at home.

DISCONNECT FOR NON-PAYMENT

1. All utility bills are to be paid in full by 5:00 p.m. on the 20th of the month. If the 20th is on a Saturday or Sunday, an additional day will be given. Utilities will be disconnected for accounts not paid in full by the 21st of the month.
2. Due to unavoidable circumstances a five (5) day extension may be obtained, prior to the 20th of each month, by signing a written request for extension, if the bill is not over \$50.00 (fifty dollars). **NO MORE THAN ONE EXTENSION WILL BE GIVEN.** Special situations will be handled on a per case basis.
3. All utility payments are to be made in the office. Servicemen are not allowed to accept utility payments.
4. Once the disconnect (cut off) list has left the utility office the customer is considered disconnected for non-payment, the account must be paid in full and a reconnect fee of \$15.00 (fifteen dollars) per service must be paid before a reconnect can be made. **NO CHECKS** are accepted for payment of an account that has been turned off for non-payment. **Once the disconnect (cut off) list is given (leaves the utility office) to the servicemen for disconnects, the reconnect fee(s) will be applied to the account.**
5. The City will not turn on a water or gas meter unless someone is at home.

FINAL BILLS

1. The only person who can authorize a disconnect is the customer who has the account in their name. It is best not to take disconnects in advance because sometimes they can be forgotten. It is the responsibility of the customer to make sure the utilities have been disconnected as requested.
2. For deposit refunds, we must have the green deposit receipt endorsed by the customer or an affidavit signed by the customer. Identification will be required unless we know the customer. Refund checks are issued only in the utility customer's name.
3. Friday morning is the only day that Final Bills are processed. In order to receive a refund on Friday, a customer must disconnect by 4:30 p.m. Thursday. Disconnects requested after 4:30 p.m. Thursday will be processed Friday of the following week.
4. Refund check may be picked up after 1:00 p.m. on Friday.
5. Current mailing address is required if customer wants his/her refund check mailed.

REFUNDING HOMEOWNER DEPOSIT

Upon written request, a homeowner may receive a refund of his/her utility deposit if all of the following apply:

1. Lived in his/her house at least one (1) year.
2. Has sufficient evidence that there is no mortgage against the house.
3. Customer has always paid his/her utility bill by the 10th of the month.

UTILITY DEPARTMENT **TAP FEES, LINE EXTENSIONS AND METER ENLARGEMENTS**

WATER TAP FEES

Residential ¾" tap	\$300.00
Commercial and larger residential taps	Actual cost of labor and materials

GAS TAP FEES

Residential 1" tap	\$200.00
Commercial and larger residential taps	Actual cost of labor and materials

SEWER SERVICE CONNECTION CHARGES

1. Sewer service connection charges or sewer tap lines made by the City of Hempstead, Texas crew and running from and off of the city main sewage line to any property line owned by private individuals or entity, shall be made by the City of Hempstead, Texas or its authorized agent thereof.
2. The cost of such sewer line tap from the city main line to the property line shall be ten dollars (\$10.00) per linear foot as measured by the City of Hempstead, Texas or its authorized agent, or three hundred dollars (\$300.00), whichever sum is greater, as determined by distance of sewer line tap and connection as needed for any given job site.

LINE EXTENSION

Line extensions for water, natural gas, sanitary sewer and electricity will be paid by the customer.

METER ENLARGEMENTS

Customer pays the difference.

CUSTOMER-OWNED SERVICE LINES

The City of Hempstead is required by the Railroad Commission of Texas to notify our natural gas customers of Rule 192.16.

The City of Hempstead notification rule does require notification that:

1. The City does not maintain customers buried piping.
2. Buried piping is subject to potential hazards of corrosion, leakage and pipe should be:
 - a. periodically inspected for leaks;
 - b. periodically inspected for corrosion;
 - c. repaired when unsafe condition exists.
3. When excavating near buried piping, piping should be located and excavation done by hand.
4. The City can assist in locating natural gas service lines when possible. Plumber and maintenance contractor can assist in inspecting and repairing the customers buried piping.
5. To report a gas leak or any gas emergency, please call (979) 826-2486.

GAS CONNECTS

Routine gas connects consist of a fifteen (15) minute dial test and inspection of the house. All appliances will have to have a shutoff valve, vent and be in good working condition.

The inspector will determine if gas can be turned on. If anything is wrong, the inspector will explain what corrections need to be done. The house will also have to pass a fifteen (15) minute dial test before gas can be left on.

You must be home for us to do this. We do not make connects after 4:30 p.m.

CITY OF HEMPSTEAD

UTILITIES DISCONNECTED FOR NON-PAYMENT

Utility Bills are to be PAID IN FULL BY 5:00 P.M. on the 20th of each month (not the 21st). To avoid being disconnected for non-payment and charged a reconnect fee for each utility service, all payments must be received by 5:00 P.M. on the 20th of each month, unless the 20th falls on a holiday or weekend. If the 20th falls on a holiday or weekend the payments are due the next business day. **ALL DROP BOX AND THROUGH THE DOOR PAYMENTS AFTER 5:00 P.M. ON THE 20TH WILL BE DATED PAID AS ON THE 21ST OF THE MONTH NOT THE 20TH. RECONNECT FEES WILL BE ACCESSED.** The non-payment disconnect list will be given to the servicemen at 5:01 P.M. on the 20th. A reconnect fee of \$15.00 per utility service will be charged on the 21st and must be paid before utilities will be reconnected. Utilities are considered disconnected when the disconnect list is given to the servicemen even though utilities may not have been disconnected at the time you come into City Hall to pay your utility bill. All utility payments must be made at City Hall; servicemen are not allowed to accept utility payments. The water meter and natural gas meters **WILL NOT** be reconnected unless someone is at the home when the serviceman makes the reconnect.

EFFECTIVE MAY 1, 2001