



**AGENDA FOR THE
WATER & SEWER COMMITTEE MEETING**

May 22, 2019

7:00 p.m.

- **Amendments to Design Manual for Water Service Connections – Public Properties**

• **13.12.040 - Billing policies and procedures.**

- A. The provisions in this section are policy procedures only and constitute guidelines which do not create any requirements or standards which, upon non-compliance, will give rise to any claim, cause of action, or basis for non-payment for services rendered. The failure of the town to comply strictly with any of these policy procedures and guidelines is not a waiver or relinquishment of any of the rights of the town to seek payment for water and sewer services rendered nor does such failure create any defense to the obligation of the user to pay for water and sewer services rendered.
- B. Water and sewer bills are issued quarter-annually and mailed in January, April, July and October of each year for water and sewer usage during the preceding three months. **All water and sewer accounts will be established in the name of the property owner where service is rendered. Bills are mailed in the name of the property owner to the property address. The town will, however, upon written request by the property owner, mail bills to the property owner to such other address as designated by the property owner and will also mail bills in the name of the property owner but in the care of a designated property management company at that company's address. No accounts will be established and no bills will be mailed in the name of tenants.** Late notices, disconnection notices and any other notices will be mailed in the name of the property owner to the property address or to such other address or to such property management company as has been designated by the property owner for the mailing of bills.
- C. Payments of water and sewer bills are due in full on or before thirty (30) days from the date of the bill. Partial payment of bills will not be accepted. All bills may be paid at any of the following locations or in the following manner:
1. Middletown Municipal Center, 31 W. Main Street, Middletown, Maryland from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday;
 2. Middletown Valley Bank main and branch offices;
 3. BB&T Bank, Middletown branch office;
 4. By mailing payment to the Middletown Municipal Center, 31 W. Main Street, Middletown, MD 21769.
 5. By on-line banking, if such payment procedure is available through the customer's bank or other financial institution and is compatible with the procedures and billing systems of the town.
- D. Interest on Unpaid Bills. Interest at the rate of one and one-half percent per month shall be charged on and added to the amount of any bill which remains unpaid more than thirty (30) days after the date of the issuance of the bill. Additional interest of one and one-half percent of the amount of the unpaid portion of the bill shall continue to be charged for each month that the bill remains unpaid.

- E. **Late Notices.** A notice of late payment will be issued for any bill which remains unpaid for more than thirty (30) days after the date of the issuance of the bill. A second notice of late payment and a notice of disconnection of service will be issued for any bill which remains unpaid for more than sixty (60) days after the date of the issuance of the bill. The notice of disconnection of service will state the date by which payment of the water and sewer bill must be made in full in order to avoid the disconnection of service. No further notices will be provided prior to disconnection of service. Notices will be mailed to the property owner, or if applicable, the designated property management company, at the address to which bills are mailed pursuant to subsection B. The notice of disconnection of service will be mailed by certified mail, return receipt requested. A twenty dollar (\$20.00) administrative fee shall be added to any bill for which a notice of disconnection of service is mailed. An additional administrative fee of twenty dollars (\$20.00) shall be assessed against such bill for each subsequent quarter during which the bill remains unpaid and the water service remains disconnected.
- F. **Disconnection and Reconnection Policy.**
1. Payment in full of the water and sewer bill must be made prior to the disconnection date stated in the notice of disconnection of service. If payment is presented on the disconnection date stated in the notice of disconnection of service, payment must be paid in cash and/or money order in person at the Middletown Municipal Center by 9:30 a.m. of that date, and if such payment is not received by that time, the disconnection of water service will begin at 10:00 a.m. No service will be disconnected if the balance due on the bill is less than fifty dollars (\$50.00).
 2. For service to be reconnected after disconnection, a reconnection fee must be paid in the following amounts: For a first occurrence—Fifty dollars (\$50.00); for a second occurrence within any twelve (12) consecutive month period—One hundred dollars (\$100.00); for a third or more occurrence within any twelve (12) consecutive month period—One hundred fifty dollars (\$150.00). In order to have service reconnected, the unpaid balance of the bill and the reconnection fee must be paid, in full, by cash and/or money order in person at the Middletown Municipal Center.
- G. **Returned Checks.** A charge will be added to the water and sewer bill for any check which is returned as non-payable for any reason, including but not limited to, non-sufficient funds. The amount of the added charge will be that amount which is charged to the town by the returning bank or financial institution. If a non-payable check submitted in payment of a bill is returned to and received by the town after the date on which the service was to be disconnected as stated in a notice of disconnection of service, then water service will be disconnected immediately without any further notice, including the notices provided for in subsection E.

- H. Rental Properties. Property owners are responsible for the payment of any overdue bills, interest charges or disconnection, reconnection and administrative fees, and the town will not seek payment of such expenses from tenants of the property owner.
- I. Meter Reading. When a meter cannot be easily and clearly read due to obstructions such as weeds, structures, excavations, animals or other impediments, an estimate of water usage will be made based upon prior usage at that location. In that event, the town will enclose a letter with the following bill requesting that the owner correct the problem prior to the next meter reading. If an obstruction problem remains present at the time of the next reading, an estimate of water usage will again be made based upon prior usage at that location. In that event, the town will mail a letter by certified mail, return receipt requested with the following bill stating that the property owner has fifteen (15) business days in which to correct the problem or the water service will be disconnected. An administrative fee of twenty dollars (\$20.00) will be added to the bill for the cost of the certified/return receipt letter and related administrative costs.
- J. Broken Meters. If at the time of reading the meter a meter is not operating and recording no usage, then an estimate of water usage will be made based upon prior usage at that location. In that event, the town will mail a letter by certified mail, return receipt requested with the following bill stating that the property owner has fifteen (15) working days to schedule an appointment for meter repair or the water service will be disconnected. An administrative fee of twenty dollars (\$20.00) will be added to the bill for the cost of the certified/return receipt letter and related administrative costs.
- K. Replacement Meters. If a customer contends that his or her water meter is defective and informs the town of this contention, the town's water and sewer personnel will examine and test the meter. If the meter is greater than ten (10) years old, it will be replaced at no cost to the customer. If the meter is ten (10) years old or less and determined by town personnel to be working properly, the meter will be replaced upon request of the customer, however the customer must pay one hundred dollars (\$100.00) for the cost and installation of the new meter if the manufacturer of the meter confirms that the meter was working properly. If the manufacturer determines that the meter was defective, there will be no cost to the customer.
- L. Unusually Excessive Water Use. In the event that a meter reading reflects an unusually high water usage which is due to a broken pipe or leak in the plumbing on the property, then the Town will allow, for a first such occurrence during a five-year period, a reduction in the amount of the water and sewer bill. In order to be granted the reduction, the property owner must submit a written request to the town for the reduction and state the nature of the cause of the high water usage and the action taken to correct and resolve the problem. The revised bill will be established as based upon two times the average of the water usage for the property for the four quarters immediately preceding the high water reading. In the event that there is a second occurrence within five years of an unusually high meter reading for a same property, then the property owner shall be responsible for the entire water and sewer bill;

provided, however, that if it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the town that the leaking water did not empty into the town's sanitary sewer system, and therefore did not require treatment at the wastewater treatment facility, then the town may, but is not required to, waive all or some of the sewer portion of the bill.

- M. The town will allow payment plans for financial hardship cases. The terms of the payment plan will be negotiated by the town administrator based upon the financial circumstances of the property owner requesting the payment plan.

(Ord. No. 13-03-02, § 1, 3-11-2013, eff. 3-31-2013; Ord. No. 12-08-01, § 1, 8-13-2012, eff. 9-2-2012; Ord. 07-02-01 § 1, 2007; Res. 99-13, 1999)

WATER SYSTEM DESIGN MANUAL

1.0 GENERAL

1.1 Introduction

This chapter of the Middletown Design Manual outlines the policies, minimum design criteria and design procedures for the preparation of feasibility reports and construction plans and specifications for Town-maintained and on-site water system improvements. Developers and/or Design Engineers shall check with the Town Office of Planning and Zoning to determine the availability of water at the site of a proposed subdivision.

1.1.1 Town Policy

a. Town-Maintained Facilities

The parts of the water supply system which are considered as the property and responsibility of the Town of Middletown are the water mains, appurtenances and that portion of the water services up to and including the curb stop or valve just inside the property line. The water supply and distribution system within the Town's rights-of-way and easements for Middletown is maintained by the Town of Middletown.

b. On-Site Facilities

The parts of the water services which lie within private property are the responsibility of the owner and are constructed and maintained by the Owner.

c. Requirements for Water Service

1. All properties will be connected to the water system of Middletown.

a.) Each building shall be serviced by a separate water tap.

(1) Multiple dwelling units such as an apartment dwelling, duplex or residential unit with apartment(s) may be served by a single water tap but will be billed quarterly water and sewer fees based on the number of dwelling units in the building.