



Tiverton Wastewater District Water Shut-Off Policy & Procedure

Effective Date

This policy supersedes the policy documentation that was adopted in November 2014 and is effective upon approval until another policy is enacted.

Approval

This policy has been approved by the Tiverton Wastewater District Board at their regular meeting on **November 30, 2023**.

Policy

This policy is intended to ensure that customers make minimum payments due to the Tiverton Wastewater District (TWWD) on time. Timely collection of payments for sewer service ensures that TWWD has the financial strength to perform its mission: “to safeguard public health, protect and improve ground and surface water resources by implementing efficient and effective wastewater management within the Tiverton Wastewater District in Tiverton, Rhode Island.” TWWD needs customers to have a compelling reason to pay bills on time. Without an incentive customers may not take their payment responsibilities seriously and this will encourage non-payment. The potential for water service interruption is a significant incentive for customers to keep their accounts in good standing.

Customers two quarterly billing periods in arrears (180 days) will be sent a written notice stating that water service will be terminated within two weeks of date of that notice unless a full payment or a payment schedule acceptable to TWWD is documented and signed by the customer. Attached is a sample payment schedule generated from the MuniBilling software program used by TWWD. The written notice will include the amount in arrears and any fees. Final notification will be made with a door hanger the day before the shut-off date.

An acceptable payment schedule will require payment of the oldest unpaid bill within two weeks of the notice and a written agreement stating how payments will be made to satisfy and pay down the unpaid balance. This agreement will be signed by the customer.

Hardship, low income, elderly, handicapped, unemployed, seriously ill persons and cases meeting the stipulations of the Rhode Island Utilities Commission Rules & Regulations Governing the Termination of Residential Electric, Gas & Water Utility Service (810-RICR-10-00-1) may be exempt from this policy. Full text of the rules and regulations are available at: <https://rules.sos.ri.gov/regulations/part/810-10-00-1>

Procedure

On the first day after (or as soon as practical) bills are due, a list of those with two billing periods unpaid shall be prepared and notices will be mailed to those customers. If a response in accordance with the policy is not received from the customer, the TWWD Superintendent shall complete an Order to Terminate Water Supply Service and deliver the order to the respective water district. The water districts shall terminate water service upon receipt of the shut-off order. Authority is granted by Section 17, Paragraph (f) of An Act to Create and Establish the Tiverton Wastewater District signed into Rhode Island General Law on July 3, 2014. The TWWD Superintendent shall notify the property owner of said shutoff in advance and shall accompany water district personnel at time of the shut off.

Discretion of the Executive Director

There may be cases where, due to hardship, a customer is unable to pay the minimum amount necessary to either prevent a water service shut-off, or to initiate the return of water service. In such cases the Executive Director is granted discretion to allow for partial payments to continue service temporarily until the case can be heard by the Tiverton Wastewater District Board (the Board). Final decisions on customer account adjustments are made with authority that rests with the board in hardship cases as well as other cases. This temporary authority granted to the Executive Director is intended to prevent a customer from having to wait for a monthly meeting of the Board to be given a chance to request relief or negotiate payment options while their water is turned off.

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