



2806 Bryan Road / P.O. Drawer 1269
Van Buren, Arkansas 72957
479-474-5067

CITY OF VAN BUREN MUNICIPAL UTILITIES
CHARGES and FEES POLICY

<u>DEPOSIT FEES:</u>	<u>3/4"-1" Meter</u>	<u>\$100.00</u>
	<u>2"-3" Meter</u>	<u>\$250.00</u>
	<u>4" and larger Meter</u>	<u>\$500.00</u>

Deposits are normally required to be paid before service is connected, requests for Deposits to be added to no more than the first four (4) bills may be granted. Deposit amount will be applied to the account after the bill has been paid for twelve (12) consecutive months without any late payments. In lieu of a deposit, a Letter of Reference from a utility or previous VBMU service showing twelve (12) consecutive months without late payments will be accepted. Letter of Reference customers with late payments occurring more than once in the initial twelve (12) month period may be required to pay a Deposit Fee. A deposit may be transferred from current service address to a new service address. Deposit may be waived for temporary connections for home inspections, plumbing repairs, etc. A new and/or increased Deposit Fee may be required after a Tampering incident or other circumstances.

NEW SERVICE CONNECTION FEE: **\$20.00**

(Turn on or Transfer fee) May be added to the first bill.

LATE PAYMENT FEE

A ten percent (10%) penalty will be assessed if bill is not paid by due date.

DELINQUENT RE-CONNECTION FEE : **\$25.00**

(In addition to amount past due)

AFTER HOURS CONNECTION/RE-CONNECTION FEE: **\$15.00**

(In addition to Connection/Re-Connection fee)

RETURNED CHECK/INSUFFICIENT FUNDS FEE:

(Fees are in addition to amount past due and applicable service charges)

Customer picks up check at bank: **\$5.00**

VBMU picks up check at bank: **\$25.00**

Insufficient Funds fee on bank draft accounts: **\$1.00**

FIRE PROTECTION (SPRINKLER) SYSTEM FEES:

\$4.00 per month Minimum Charge

\$0.30 per sprinkler head per year fee (divided by 12 to calculate monthly charge)

TAMPERING FEE:

\$35.00

(In addition to the cost of repairing damages, parts, labor, water loss etc.)

Meter Tampering: Interfering with the meter seal, the lock/locking device, valves, meter setter, meter box/vault, bypassing a meter and/or installing a "straight", knowingly consuming any water which has not been correctly registered on the meter because of tampering, reconnecting water service that has been disconnected for nonpayment or other reasons, knowingly consuming any water which has been unlawfully reconnected. Proof that a meter, pipe, valve, or other attachment has been tampered with or reconnected is presumptive evidence that the customer or user has caused the tampering or reconnecting. It is not necessary to catch a person in the act of tampering or reconnecting.

NEW SERVICE CONNECTION POLICY:

New customers are required to submit a completed VBMU NEW SERVICE APPLICATION. New Service Applications may be completed in the VBMU Office or downloaded from vbmu.org, applications may be delivered to VBMU or emailed to vbmu@vbmu.org. Applicants may be required to show current government issued Photo Identification to and proof of address to set up service. VBMU recommends that the applicant also includes their spouse/partner's/roommate's name on the application in case that person may need to make inquiries regarding the account in the future.

New service application process may be waived for temporary connections for home inspections, plumbing repairs, account holder name transfers due to a death, etc. billing information will still be required for a temporary connection.

Someone must be present before the water service is turned on. **If the water is turned on and a faucet or valve is open or there is a broken pipe, the possibility of property damage exists. VBMU is not responsible for damages.**

Social Security Number or proof of identification may be required to authorize disconnection of services in an effort to prevent unauthorized, fraudulent, or erroneous service disconnections. This does not apply to service disconnections due to non-payment of bill.

PAYMENT EXTENSIONS AND DELAYED PAYMENT AGREEMENT (DPA)

Payment Extension Agreement

If a customer is unable to pay their bill by the due date, they may be allowed to enter into a Payment Extension Agreement (PEA). A PEA is a verbal agreement that requires the bill to be paid within thirty calendar days of the due date of the bill. If the customer does not keep the PEA, service may be disconnected without advance notice.

Delayed Payment Agreements

If, due to extreme or unusual circumstances, a customer is unable to pay the bill by the PEA date, that customer may be allowed to enter into a Delayed Payment Agreement (DPA). A DPA is a written contract between the customer and the City of Van Buren Municipal Utilities setting out a payment plan through which you may pay a reasonable down payment and an installment plan to pay the remaining outstanding balance over a specified period of time (normally up to six months). If the customer does not keep the DPA, service may be disconnected without advance notice.

ONLINE, TELEPHONE, and FINANCIAL INSTITUTION PAYMENTS and FEES:

Customers utilizing the VBMU online or telephone payment service as provided by a third party are responsible for related transaction fees paid directly to the third party. Customers utilizing a "Bill Pay" method of payment as provided by their financial institution are responsible for any associated fees charged and for ensuring that payments reach the City of Van Buren Municipal Utilities by the customers' due date.

LEAK ADJUSTMENTS

The purpose of this policy is to establish a consistent framework for processing customer water bill adjustments that is reasonable and fair to all customers.

Normally, a Leak Adjustment is permitted for one leak per year per address, in certain situations a Leak Adjustment may result in an adjustment of up to three (3) billing cycles. The Customer is normally required to provide documentation that the leak repair has been completed, which may be waived in certain circumstances.

WATER: The current water volume rate per 1000 gallons is applied to the customer's average water consumption. A leak adjustment rate of approximately 60% of the current water volume rate per 1000 gallons is applied to the above average volume consumption for the determined Leak Adjustment period.

SEWER: As Residential Class customers are charged sewer based on a winter average calculation of metered water consumption; a water leak does not normally affect the sewer volume. Residential leak adjustments during the winter average period, and non-residential leak adjustments may be calculated at the same rate and volume as the water Leak Adjustment for leaks occurring within the building plumbing system. For leaks that occur between the water meter and the building (when the leaking water does not enter the sewer system) the sewer volume per 1000 gallons will be adjusted to the average consumption for the Leak Adjustment period.

DAMAGE TO THE PUBLIC WATER OR SEWER SYSTEM

Any person negligently breaking or causing damage to the City of Van Buren Municipal Utilities Public Water and/or Sewer System shall be liable to the City of Van Buren Municipal Utilities for the cost of repairing the break or damage plus the retail cost of water lost. Violation of the Arkansas Underground Facilities Damage Prevention Act shall be considered evidence of the person's negligence. The cost of damages may be added to an existing City of Van Buren Municipal Utilities Bill of the person, business, or entity for collection.

If the damages prescribed herein are not paid when due, the City of Van Buren Municipal Utilities may bring an action in any court of competent jurisdiction to collect such damages, including, without limitation, an action to collect on any bond posted with the City of Van Buren.

If a person breaking or causing damage to any City of Van Buren Municipal Utilities Public Water and/or Sewer System is operating under a permit or permission of another department of the city, the City of Van Buren Municipal Utilities may request that the other city department having jurisdiction issue a stop work order or take other appropriate actions to prevent damage to City of Van Buren Municipal Utilities Public Water and/or Sewer System.

The remedies listed herein are cumulative and do not limit the ability of the City of Van Buren Municipal Utilities to prevent damage to its lines and facilities. City of Van Buren Municipal Utilities may pursue any and all legal or equitable remedies available to it.

Adopted on the 16th day of September 2025.



Todd Young, Chairman
City of Van Buren Municipal Utilities Commission

ATTEST



Kathy Geppert, SECRETARY