

POLICY TITLE: Customer Accounts
POLICY NUMBER: 3036

3036.1 Account Holders

As of March 12, 2020, all new service accounts must be under the name of the property owner. Renters will not be allowed to hold accounts in their names. Owners will be responsible for all water and wastewater charges. In the event an Owner fails to pay their water bill, a tenant has rights concerning that service as set forth in Section 3036.8, below

Property owners who have renters currently paying and holding accounts will be required to fill out a new customer application and transfer all charges by November 30, 2020.

3036.2 Deposits

New accounts are subject to a water and sewer deposit. Deposits are refundable after 1 year of service, if the account remains in good standing. If the owner closes the account before one year, or the deposit is held because of delinquent payments, it will be refunded upon close of the account.

3036.2 Billing

Bills are calculated and sent out by the last day of the billing month. The total bill amount is due by the due date each month. If you have any questions regarding your bill or would like to discuss any options to avoid discontinuation of service if a non-payment arises, please contact our office at (530) 336-5263.

3036.3 Late Fees

Late fees are assessed after the Due Date each month at a rate of \$5 plus 1%. Customers on an alternative payment plan will not accrue late fees.

3036.4 Delinquent Account

Accounts are considered delinquent if not paid by the Due Date, unless an alternative payment arrangement has been made with the District, as set forth in Section 3036.6.1, below. Accounts that are not fully paid within 60 days after the Due Date (which sixtieth (60th) day is referred to as the "Shutoff Date") will be subject to service discontinuation as per policy 3036.5

3036.5 Disputed Bills

Customers have a right to appeal a bill, in writing, within fifteen (15) days after the Due Date. An appeal must include the reason why the customer contends the bill is in error. Any such appeal will be considered by the General Manager, who will render a decision within seven (7) days after receipt of the customer's appeal. The customer may appeal the General Manager's decision to the District's Board of Directors within seven (7) days of the date of the General Manager's decision. The Board of Directors will consider the matter at the Board's next regular Board meeting. The customer shall receive notice of that meeting and may appear to present his or her case to the Board. The Board will render a decision after its consideration of the matter. The Board's decision will be final. Accounts will not be subject to shutoff during the appeal process. In addition to the initial appeal process, if a customer has not already appealed his or her bill, the customer may commence a "Late Appeal" only after receiving the 10-day notice set forth in Section 3036.6. The Late Appeal shall be made to the

District's General Manager within three (3) business days ("business days" shall mean those days on which the District's office is open for business) after the date of the 10-day notice. The Late Appeal must state the reason why the customer contends the bill is in error. If charges are found to be incorrect, a corrected invoice will be issued and payment of revised charges will be due within ten (10) calendar days of the revised invoice date. Charges determined to be correct are due and payable two (2) business days after the General Manager's decision is rendered. The General Manager's decision on a Late Appeal shall be considered final.

3036.6 Service Discontinuation

If an account remains unpaid as of the fiftieth (50th) after the Due Date, a customer will receive a written notice at least ten (10) calendar days before the Shutoff Date, delivered to the address of residence or mailing address on file. That notice shall include the required contents set forth in Health & Safety Code Section 116908(a)(1)(C). If payment is not received within 48 hours before the Shutoff Date, a final notice will be delivered to the residence. The final shutoff notification will be delivered at the time service is discontinued. To resume service, customers will be subject to a \$30 reconnection fee in addition to the full balance owed. If reconnection is requested after business hours, a higher fee will be charged, not to exceed \$150. Property owners may be subject to a property lien and/or any other legal form of debt collection.

3036.6.1 Alternative Payment Plans

Residential customers who are unable to pay for water or wastewater service within the standard payment period (3036.4) may request an alternative payment plan (promissory note on delinquent account) to avoid discontinuation of service. FRVCSO will consider the request and decide as to whether the alternative payment plan is warranted. Past due balance will be divided evenly in up to 12 installments plus the current charges each month. If the customer fails to pay the installments and/or the customer's current monthly bill for 60 days after becoming due, they will again be subject to shut-off, as per 3036.6, after receiving a notice of the impending discontinuation of service at least five (5) business days before that discontinuation would occur.

Alternative payment plans will be granted under the following circumstances, where a customer demonstrates his or her willingness to enter into such a plan and:

Health Conditions

An alternative payment plan may be approved if the discontinuation of water or wastewater service will be life threatening or pose a serious threat to the health and safety of any resident. The request for an alternative payment plan must include certification from a primary care provider that the discontinuation of service will be life-threatening or pose a serious threat to the health and safety of any resident.

Financial Inability

The customer must demonstrate that they are financially unable to pay for residential service within the normal billing cycle by either: (a) If any member of the customer's household is a current recipient of CalWORKs, CalFresh, general assistance, Medi-Cal, Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Payment Program, or California Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children; or (b) The customer or occupant declares the

household's annual income is less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

3036.7 Returned Checks

Checks returned for insufficient funds will be charged a \$20 service fee. The customer will be notified by mail, and past due balance plus the service fee will be due upon receipt. The customer will be required to pay by other means from that point forward.

3036.8 Landlord-Tenant Scenario

The below procedures apply to individually metered detached single-family dwellings, multi-unit residential structures and mobile home parks where the property owner or manager is the customer of record and is responsible for payment of the water bill.

3036.8.1. Required Notice:

a. At least 10 calendar days prior if the property is a multi-unit residential structure or mobile home park, or 7 calendar days prior if the property is a detached single-family dwelling, to the possible discontinuation of water service, the District will make a good faith effort to inform the tenants/occupants at the property by written notice that the water service will be discontinued.

b. The written notice must also inform the tenants/occupants that they have the right to become customers to whom the service will be billed (see Subdivision 3036.8.2, below), without having to pay any of the then delinquent amounts.

3036.8.2. Tenants/Occupants Becoming Customers:

a. The District is not required to make service available to the tenants/occupants unless each tenant/occupant agrees to the terms and conditions for service and meets the District's requirements and rules.

b. However, if (i) one or more of the tenants/occupants assumes responsibility for subsequent charges to the account to the District's satisfaction, or (ii) there is a physical means to selectively discontinue service to those tenants/occupants who have not met the District's requirements, then the District may make service available only to those tenants/occupants who have met the requirements.

c. If prior service for a particular length of time is a condition to establish credit with the District, then residence at the property and proof of prompt payment of rent for that length of time, to the District's satisfaction, is a satisfactory equivalent.

d. If a tenant/occupant becomes a customer of the District and the tenant's/occupant's rent payments include charges for residential water service where those charges are not separately stated, the tenant/occupant may deduct from future rent payments all reasonable charges paid to the District during the prior payment period.