

NOTICE OF ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Covering Policy, Administration and Community
Relations/Communications

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the San Lorenzo Valley Water District has called a meeting of the Administration Committee to be held Wednesday, December 4, 2019 at 9:15 a.m. at the Operations Building, 13057 Highway 9, Boulder Creek, CA.

AGENDA

1. Convene Meeting/Roll Call
2. Oral Communications
This portion of the agenda is reserved for Oral Communications by the public for items which are not on the Agenda. Please understand that California law (The Brown Act) limits what the Board can do regarding issues raised during Oral Communication. No action or discussion may occur on issues outside of those already listed on today's agenda. Any person may address the Committee at this time, on any subject that lies within the jurisdiction of the District. Normally, presentations must not exceed five (5) minutes in length, and individuals may only speak once during Oral Communications. Any Director may request that the matter be placed on a future agenda or staff may be directed to provide a brief response.
3. Old Business:
Members of the public will be given the opportunity to address each scheduled item prior to Committee action. The Chairperson of the Committee may establish a time limit for members of the public to address the Committee on agenda items.
 - A. WEBSITE UPDATE
Discussion and possible action by the Committee regarding the review of District website, including draft logo designs.
4. New Business:
Members of the public will be given the opportunity to address each scheduled item prior to Committee action. The Chairperson of the Committee may establish a time limit for members of the public to address the Committee on agenda items.
 - A. REVIEW DRAFT UTILITY BILLING POLICY
Discussion and possible action by the Committee regarding the review of District Utility Billing Policy updates to the Rules and Regulations.
5. Informational Material: None.
6. Adjournment

In compliance with the requirements of Title II of the American Disabilities Act of 1990, the San Lorenzo Valley Water District requires that any person in need of any type of special equipment, assistance or accommodation(s) in order to communicate at the District's Public Meeting can contact the District Office at (831) 338-2153 a minimum of 72 hours prior to the scheduled meeting.

Agenda documents, including materials related to an item on this agenda submitted to the Committee after distribution of the agenda packet, are available for public inspection and may be reviewed at the office of the District Secretary, 13060 Highway 9, Boulder Creek, CA 95006 during normal business hours. Such documents may also be available on the District website at www.slwvd.com subject to staff's ability to post the documents before the meeting.

Certification of Posting

I hereby certify that on November 27, 2019, I posted a copy of the foregoing agenda in the outside display case at the District Office, 13060 Highway 9, Boulder Creek, California, said time being at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting of the Administration Committee of the San Lorenzo Valley Water District in compliance with California Government Code Section 54956.

Executed at Boulder Creek, California, on November 27, 2019.

Stephanie Hill, Director of Finance & Business Services
San Lorenzo Valley Water District

San Lorenzo Valley Water District

Utility Billing Policy, section for Rules & Regulations

1. Purpose

- a. These sections are to provide guidance on application for utility billing accounts, billing procedures, past due procedures, and other utility billing policies.

2. Application for Established Water Service

- a. Each applicant, whether owner or tenant, will be required to submit a service application form provided by the District. Applications will include the following:
 - i. Date of application
 - ii. Address of property to be served
 - iii. Date to begin service
 1. Owner account: escrow closing date
 - a. If one is not provided, the County record date will be used.
 2. Tenant account: lease or rental agreement date
 - iv. Applicants full name
 - v. Billing address, if different than service address
 - vi. Contact information: phone number and e-mail address
 - vii. Tenant account: Name and phone number of owner
 - viii. Physical signature, or electronic signature, acknowledging application request and adherence to District rules and regulations.
- b. A non-refundable account establishment fee will be charged to any water service application. Based on current rates and charges established by the Board.
- c. Tenant accounts will be billed an initial security deposit, refundable upon one year of good payment history, or upon closure of the account, net any remaining account balance owed. Deposit is based on current rates and charges established by the Board.
- d. Surplus Water accounts allow for bulk water fill-up at the District's designated sites. Based on current rates and charges established by the Board.
 - i. Security deposits remain on the account, until the account is closed. There are two types of surplus accounts:
 1. Private surplus water applicants must identify the use is for their personal property only and cannot exceed 10 units per month.
 - a. Upon two consecutive months of 10 or more units will require increased deposit to the Commercial rate.
 2. Commercial surplus applicants are for any use in excess of 10 units per month, commercial, or construction use.
- e. Completed application for service will constitute customer's willingness and intention to comply with District rules, regulations, policies, and ordinances.

3. Owner/Tenant Relationship

- a. Tenant accounts are offered at the convenience of the owner/tenant relationship.

- i. In any instance in which the owner does not occupy the premise or is not the primary user, the owner will, nevertheless, be primarily responsible for service to the property.
 - 1. This includes balances remaining on tenant accounts, excluding delinquent fees.
- ii. An owner has a right to notify the District, in writing, to not allow tenants to open up water service on their property.
 - 1. If an owner's account is delinquent the tenant has rights to take over the account, see Delinquent Account – Discontinuance of Water Service section herein this policy.
- iii. An owner has a right to inquire with the District if the tenant account is in good standing.
 - 1. An owner has a right to know the account balance if the tenant account is not in good standing.
 - 2. An owner has a right to request an estimated closing bill account balance on a tenant account.
- iv. In the event a tenant account is delinquent and turned off for non-payment, the owner will be notified that the tenant account is being closed out and reverting back into the owners responsibility. The tenants water service balance will be converted to the owners account, excluding tenants delinquent fees.

4. Transfer to New Account

- a. In any instance an owner closes an account with a remaining balance owed to the District and attempts to establish another water service account, the remaining balance owed will transfer to the new account.

5. Billing Procedures

- a. Billing period is monthly. There are two billing cycles, sent out on the 5th or 20th of each month, or following business day if a weekend, based on location within the District.
 - i. Billing and due dates are not able to be modified.
- b. Bills are due upon receipt and are deemed past due 21 days after the bill date.
- c. Bills are made up of a Basic Fee and Consumption Fee. Based on current rates and charges established by the Board.
 - i. Basic Fee
 - 1. Water Service: Based on a calendar month and upon the billing water meter size.
 - a. All customers pay the Basic Fee whether the property is vacant or occupied or water is used or not.
 - 2. Sewer Service: Based on a calendar month.
 - a. All customers pay the Basic Fee whether the property is vacant or occupied.
 - ii. Consumption Fee: Meters are read as near as possible to a 30 day cycle. Consumption charge is based upon the amount of water that has passed through the meter. *This typically does not coincide with the actual calendar month.*
- d. Opening and Closing Bills

- i. Opening and closing bills for less than the normal billing period will be pro-rated for both the basic and consumption charges.

6. Delinquent Account – Discontinuance of Water Service Process

- a. Delinquent accounts are hereinafter identified as any account that remains unpaid, and without having an active alternative payment arrangement, by close of business 21 days after the bill date.
- b. Small Balance Accounts
 - i. Any balance on a bill of \$20 or less may be carried over, and added to, the next billing period without being assessed a late fee or incurring further collection action.
- c. Late Fee
 - i. If payment for a bill is not received by the close of business 21 days after the bill date, the District will make a reasonable, good faith effort to notify the customer of an impending late fee. If payment is not received prior to the following bills processing, a late fee will be assessed. The late fee is based on current rates and charges established by the Board.
 - 1. The means of notification will be based upon the notification preference provided by the customer (text, phone or email). Customers who have not selected a means of notification will be notified by the e-mail on file. The District assumes no responsibility for phone or email contact information that has not been kept up-to-date by the customer.
 - ii. At the request of the customer, the District will waive the late fee if there are extenuating circumstances and the customer has not been assessed a late fee for delinquent payment in the preceding twelve (12) months.
- d. Alternative Payment Arrangements (payment plans)
 - i. Any customer who is unable to pay for water service within the normal payment period may request an alternative payment arrangement to avoid late fees or disruption of service. The District will consider all circumstances surrounding the request and make a determination as to whether the payment arrangement is warranted.
 - 1. Certification by a Primary Care Provider (General Practitioner, Obstetrician/Gynecologist, Pediatrician, Family Practice Physician, Primary Care Clinic, Hospital, or Outpatient Clinic) who certifies that the termination of service will be life-threatening or pose a serious threat to the health and safety of any resident of the premises where water service is provided will obligate the District to enter an amortized repayment plan.
 - ii. Payment arrangements that extend into the next billing period are considered an amortization plan, which must be in writing and signed by the customer. An amortization plan will amortize the unpaid balance over a period defined by the customer, not to exceed 12 months from the original date of the bill. The amortized payments will be combined with, and subject to the due date of, the customer's regular bill(s). The customer must comply with the terms of the amortization plan and remain current as charges accrue in each subsequent

billing period. The customer may not request further amortization of any subsequent unpaid charges while paying delinquent charges pursuant to an amortization plan. Failure to comply with the terms of an amortization plan will result in the issuance of a written disconnection notice. The disconnection notice will be in the form of a door hanger, delivered to the premises no less than 5 business days in advance of discontinuance of service.

e. Formal Discontinuance Notice

i. The District shall not discontinue water service for non-payment until payment by the customer has been delinquent for at least 60 days. The District will make a reasonable, good faith effort to contact the customer at least 10 business days before discontinuation of water service for non-payment.

1. The means of notification will be based upon the notification preference provided by the customer (text, phone or email). Customers who have not selected a means of notification will be notified by the e-mail on file. The District assumes no responsibility for phone or email contact information that has not been kept up-to-date by the customer.

ii. If the mailing address and the address of the property to which water service is provided are different, a second notice will be mailed to the service address and addressed to "Occupant".

1. The written disconnection notice will include:

- a. Customer's name and address
- b. Amount that is past due
- c. Date by which payment or payment arrangements are required to avoid discontinuation of service
- d. Description of the process to apply for an amortization plan
- e. Description of the process to dispute or appeal a bill
- f. District phone number and a web link to the District's written collection policy

2. The written notice will advise the tenant/occupant that they have the right to become customers of the District without being required to pay the amount due on the delinquent account, as long as they are willing to assume financial responsibility for subsequent charges for water service at that address. In order for the amount due on the delinquent account to be waived, the tenant/occupant must provide verification of tenancy in the form of a rental agreement or proof of rent payments.

f. Seventy-Two (72) Hour Notice of Termination - Tag and Fees

i. The District will make a reasonable, good faith effort to notify the customer at least 72 hours in advance of disconnection of water service for non-payment. The means of notification will be to visit the residence and leave a notice of termination of service. The notice will have the date and time all delinquent water service charges and associated fees must be received by to avoid discontinuance of service.

1. The 72 hour Tag fee is based on current rates and charges established by the Board.

- g. Disconnection of Water Service for Non-Payment
 - i. The District will disconnect water service by turning off, and in some cases locking off, the meter. The customer will be charged a fee to re-establish service in the billing system regardless of whether the meter has physically been turned off. The meter will be locked in the off position if payment is not received within 7 days of initial termination.
 - ii. If a security deposit is not on the account, a security deposit will be billed to the account.
- h. Re-establishment of Service
 - i. In order to resume or continue service that has been disconnected for non-payment, the customer must pay a re-establishment fee. The District will endeavor to reconnect service as soon as practicable but, at a minimum, will restore service before the end of the next regular working day following payment of any past due amount and delinquent fees attributable to the termination of service. Water service that is turned on by any person other than District personnel or without District authorization may be subject to fines or additional charges or fees. Any damages that occur as a result of unauthorized restoration of service are the responsibility of the customer.
 - 1. The re-establishment of service fee is based on current rates and charges established by the Board.
 - ii. Water service that is turned on by any person other than District personnel or without District authorization may be subject to fines or additional charges or fees. Any damages that occur as a result of unauthorized restoration of service are the responsibility of the customer.
- i. Re-establishment of Service After Business Hours
 - i. Service restored after 5:00 pm Monday through Friday, weekends, or holidays will be charged an after-hours re-establishment fee. Service will not be restored after regular business hours unless the customer has been informed of the after-hours re-establishment fee and has signed an agreement acknowledging the fee and agreeing to contact the District's billing department no later than noon the following business day to pay the subject fees. The after-hours re-establishment fee is in addition to the regular re-establishment fee and the late fee for a past due account. District staff responding to service calls are not permitted to collect payment, but will instruct the customer to contact the billing department before noon the following business day.
 - 1. The after-hours re-establishment of service fee is based on current rates and charges established by the Board.
 - ii. Sometimes water service is discontinued because the service is a new account and the District has not received a request to establish service. If service is being restored after regular business hours because the customer has yet to establish service, the customer must agree to contact the billing department to establish service the next business day and the after-hours re-establishment will be waived. If service is discontinued for any reason not identified above, the service should be restored as quickly as possible and the customer advised to

contact the billing department to resolve the issue. No after-hours re-establishment fee will be charged in this instance.

- j. See Appendix A for a timetable example of the Discontinuance of Water Service Process.
- k. Customer's may request this policy to be translated by writing to the District:
 - i. By mail: Attention Customer Service, 13060 Hwy 9, Boulder Creek CA 95006
 - ii. By e-mail: CustomerService@slvwd.com

7. Security Deposits

- a. Security deposits are billed upon two occurrences:
 - i. Application of a new tenant account
 - ii. Application of a new surplus account
 - iii. After discontinuance of water service for non-payment
- b. The District may apply, without notice, the amount of any deposit toward the payment of any water bill or other indebtedness owed to the District.
- c. Security despot's are refundable to the account upon one year of good payment history, or upon closure of the account, net any remaining account balance owed.
 - i. With the exception of Surplus accounts, deposits are held until the account is closed.
- d. Security deposits bear no interest.

8. Returned Check or Other Failed Payments

- a. Upon receipt of a returned payment method taken as payment of water service or other charges, the District will consider the account not paid. The District will make a reasonable, good faith effort to notify the customer by phone or email of the returned payment. A 72-hour notice of termination of service due to a returned payment will be generated. The means of notification will be based upon the notification preference (text, phone, or email) selected by the customer. Customers who have not selected a means of notification will be notified by the e-mail on file. If the District is unable to make contact by text, phone, or email, a good faith effort will be made to visit the residence and leave a notice of termination of service.
- b. Water service will be disconnected if the amount of the returned payment and the returned payment charge are not paid on or before the date specified in the notice of termination. All amounts paid to redeem a returned payment charge must be in cash, credit card or certified funds.
 - i. In the event a customer tenders a non-negotiable check as payment to restore water service previously disconnected for non-payment and the District restores service, the District may promptly disconnect service without providing further notice. No 72-hour notice of termination will be given in the case of a non-negotiable check tendered for payment of water charges that were subject to discontinuance.
- c. Any customer issuing a non-negotiable check as payment to restore service turned off for non-payment will be required to pay cash, credit card or certified funds to restore future service disconnections for a period of twelve (12) months from the date of the returned payment.

9. Complaints and Disputed Bills – Appeals Process

- a. If a customer has a complaint regarding water service or disputes the water bill, they may exercise their right to appeal to the District Manager, the District will not discontinue water service for non-payment while the appeal is pending. The following procedures will be followed:
 - i. Customer's written request disputing any fees or charges must be received within five (5) days of the fee becoming due or water service becoming disconnected.
 - ii. The District Manager will review all written requests of the disputed amounts and either deny the request or grant the request, or a portion thereof, within fourteen (14) days.
 - iii. Any customer of the District who disputes the District Manager's final decisions, may appeal by filing a "Notice to Appeal" to the Board of Directors within fifteen (15) days of the District Manager's determination.
 - iv. The District will place the appeal on the next available Board of Directors agenda, and notify the appellant no later than fourteen (14) days prior to the hearing.
 - v. The Board of Directors' decision will be final, and any outstanding balances will be due immediately, unless otherwise extended by the Board.

10. Collection Process

- a. Any amounts that remain outstanding thirty (30) days after discontinuance of service may be collected on the tax roll in the same manner as property taxes.
- b. The District Manager will prepare and file a report with the Board of Directors that describes the affected property and the amount of the charges and delinquencies for the year.
- c. The District Manager will publish notice of the filing of the report and of the time and place for a public hearing in a newspaper of general circulation once a week for two weeks, at least fourteen (14) days prior to the public hearing.
- d. At the public hearing, the Board of Directors will hear and consider any objections or protests to the report. At the conclusion of the public hearing, the Board of Directors may adopt or revise the charges and penalties prior to adopting the final report. The Board of Directors determination on each affected parcel will be final.
- e. After the adoption of the final report, the District Manager will submit the final report to the County on or before June 1st of each year, and the delinquent charges will become an assessment against the affected parcels and collected in the same manner as property taxes.

11. Request for Relief – Leak Adjustment

- a. Any customer of the District may submit for a leak adjustment in accordance with the District's current Leak Adjustment policy.

12. Request for Relief – Waiver of Basic Monthly Charge Due to Natural Disasters

- a. A property owner may file a statement with the District stating that their structure cannot be occupied due to damage resulting from storm events or other natural disasters. Said statement must be filed within 120 days of the cause of occurrence.
- b. Upon making findings and determinations that the customer's structure cannot be occupied as a result of a natural disaster, the District Manager may determine that the

customer is exempt from the basic monthly charge. Exemption will be allowed for a period of up to 3 years from the date of determination or until the customer requests continuance of service, whichever occurs first.

- c. No customer shall at any time, in any manner, obtain water from the service connection while exempt from the liability of the basic monthly charge.
- d. The District may lock or remove the meter to protect the District against fraud or abuse. Should the customer not repair or replace the damaged structure or request continuance of service within the time allowed, the service will be considered vacated.

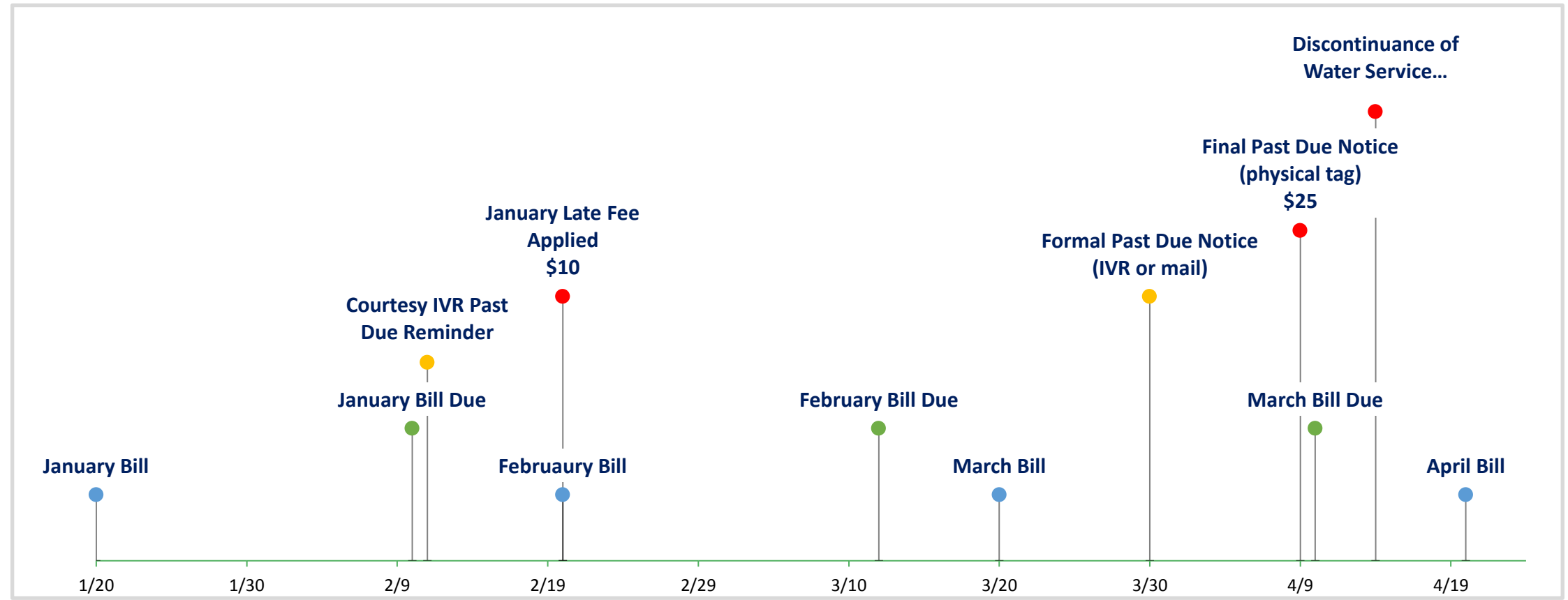
13. Request for Relief – Multiple User Variance

- a. The owner of a parcel which is improved with two or more residential dwelling units may appeal the water meter size requirements set forth in **the Meter Policy** section on the grounds that: The additional unit or units is/are used or occupied fewer than forty days per year; and such use is limited to personal guests of the occupants of the main unit; and that such additional units are not let, leased or rented. An application for a variance must be filed pursuant to the appeal procedure set forth in this section. The Board of directors may grant such a variance, with conditions, including time limitations, and may also revoke such variance for good cause. The Board of Directors will set an annual review date of the first meeting in November of each year to consider expirations, new applications and applications for renewal of such meter size variances. This review date is not exclusive, and the Board may schedule additional hearings on variations as appropriate.

APPENDIX A

These are examples of a timeline for a January bill in each billing cycle for the discontinuance of water service process. This is only an example, exact dates will vary each month. Review your notices for effective dates. This is to help illustrate how multiple bills would come out before a customer had water service discontinued for non-payment.

BILLING DATE EXAMPLE - 20TH	
DATE	DESCRIPTION
1/20	January Bill
2/10	January Bill Due
2/11	Courtesy IVR Past Due Reminder
2/20	January Late Fee Applied \$10
2/20	February Bill
3/12	February Bill Due
3/20	March Bill
3/30	Formal Past Due Notice (IVR or mail)
4/9	Final Past Due Notice (physical tag) \$25
4/10	March Bill Due
4/14	Discontinuance of Water Service \$40
4/20	April Bill



BILLING DATE EXAMPLE - 5TH	
DATE	DESCRIPTION
2/5	January Bill
2/26	January Bill Due
2/27	Courtesy IVR Past Due Reminder
3/5	January Late Fee Applied \$10
3/5	February Bill
3/26	February Bill Due
4/5	March Bill
4/15	Formal Past Due Notice (IVR or mail)
4/23	Final Past Due Notice (physical tag) \$25
4/26	March Bill Due
4/28	Discontinuance of Water Service \$40
5/5	April Bill

