UKIAH VALLEY
WATER AUTHORITY

Water Executive Committee
Special Meeting
AGENDA

Ukiah Valley Conference Center ♦ 200 South School Street ♦ Ukiah, CA 95482

To participate or view the virtual meeting, go to the following link: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83268733029

Alternatively, you may view the meeting (without participating) by clicking on the date and name of the meeting at www.cityofukiah.com/meetings, then go to the media tab.

July 24, 2025 - 5:00 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

2. AUDIENCE COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

The Ukiah Valley Water Authority (UVWA) / Water Executive Committee Members welcomes input from the audience. In order for everyone to be heard, please limit your comments to three (3) minutes per person and not more than ten (10) minutes per subject. The Brown Act regulations do not allow action to be taken on audience comments on non-agenda items. If you wish to submit written comments, please provide information to the UVWA, located at 300 Seminary Avenue, Ukiah, CA, 95482.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE AND OPERATIONAL REPORTS

3.a. Report on Status of Application for SAFER Planning Grant.

4. NEW BUSINESS

4.a. Adoption of a Resolution Amending Utility Deposit Requirements, Fees, and Compliance Measures.

Recommended Action: Adopt a resolution amending the Ukiah Valley Water Authority's policies governing water utility deposits, fees, delinquency protocols, and customer billing procedures. This resolution supersedes Resolution No. 2025-1 and shall become effective 60 days after adoption.

Attachments:

1. UVWA Proposed Resolution
2. UVWA Reso 2025-01 - Establishing Utility Payment Info
3. Draft Shut-off Policy

5. ADJOURNMENT

Please be advised that the Ukiah Valley Water Authority (UVWA)/ Water Executive Committee needs to be notified 24 hours in advance of a meeting if any specific accommodations or interpreter services are needed in order for you to attend. UVWA complies with ADA requirements and will attempt to reasonably accommodate individuals with disabilities upon request. Materials related to an item on this Agenda submitted to the UVWA Committee Members after distribution of the agenda packet are available for public inspection at the front counter at the Ukiah Civic Center, 300 Seminary Avenue, Ukiah, CA 95482, during normal business hours, Monday through

Friday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. Any handouts or presentation materials from the public must be submitted to the clerk 48 hours in advance of the meeting; for handouts, please include 10 copies.

I hereby certify under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing agenda was posted on the bulletin board at the main entrance of the City of Ukiah City Hall, located at 300 Seminary Avenue, Ukiah, California; and at the Ukiah Valley Conference Center, located at 200 South School Street, Ukiah, California; not less than 24 hours prior to the meeting set forth on this agenda.

Araceli Sandoval, Ukiah Deputy City Clerk
Dated: 7/21/25

Agenda Item No: 4.a.

MEETING DATE/TIME: 7/24/2025

ITEM NO: 2025-848

WATER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: Adoption of a Resolution Amending Utility Deposit Requirements, Fees, and Compliance Measures.

PREPARED BY: Mary Horger, Financial Services Manager

PRESENTER: Mary Horger, Assistant Finance Director and Olga Keough, Controller

ATTACHMENTS:

1. UVWA Proposed Resolution
2. UVWA Reso 2025-01 - Establishing Utility Payment Info
3. Draft Shut-off Policy

Summary: Staff recommends that the Ukiah Valley Water Authority (UVWA) adopt a resolution which revises and supersedes Resolution No. 2025-1. The new resolution updates and aligns UVWA's policies for utility service deposits, fees, disconnection and reconnection protocols, and notice procedures with current City of Ukiah standards and state requirements, particularly California Senate Bill 998 (the Water Shutoff Protection Act).

Background:

On January 30, 2025, the UVWA adopted Resolution No. 2025-01 to establish utility billing procedures, deposits, and penalties related to water service. While this initial resolution provided an important framework, it did not fully address all operational needs, nor did it incorporate the procedural safeguards required under SB 998 for residential water service disconnection.

The proposed resolution has been prepared to refine and expand upon those initial provisions, providing clearer guidelines for deposit requirements based on customer credit risk, more nuanced delinquency procedures, and formalizing protocols to comply with state law.

Discussion:

Summary of Changes:

The following are the major changes from the prior resolution to this one:

- The proposed resolution (Attachment 1) includes more structured, transparent criteria for deposit requirements and returns.
- It lowers early-stage delinquency fees to better reflect cost and fairness.

- It enhances procedural compliance with state law, especially in safeguarding residential customers from immediate disconnection without due process.
- It clarifies administrative procedures and notice methods, supporting customer communication and billing transparency.

The proposed resolution will apply to all JPA member agencies and, by function of the Joint Powers Agreement, is considered adopted by each member unless a specific agency chooses to adopt alternate provisions. Staff will brief each member agency's governing board on the updated fee structure and policies to ensure consistency and transparency. The same recommendation and presentation will be made to agencies operating under Master Services Agreements (MSAs) with the City.

Comparison of Key Provisions in Resolution 2025-1 (Attachment 2) vs. the proposed Resolution (Attachment 1)

Category	Resolution 2025-1	Proposed Resolution
Application Fees	$25 flat application fee	$38 application fee for water service
Deposit Requirements	Based on credit risk, but only broadly defined	More detailed deposit tiers: no risk, minimal risk (min. $50), and substantial risk (min. $100); commercial deposit minimum $100
Deposit After Disconnection	$150 minimum for disconnected accounts	Maintains $150 minimum, based on twice the average bill over 12 months
Return of Deposits	Not addressed	Returned after 1 year of on-time payments, limited to no delinquencies
Use of Deposits	Limited to termination and disconnection	Includes use during bankruptcy proceedings with required additional deposit notification
Delinquency Fees	Higher fixed penalties: $15 for delinquent, $15 final notice, $40 48-hour notice	Lower and graduated: $1 payment reminder, $2 final notice, $6 48-hour notice, $47 door hanger
Disconnection/Reconnection Fees	Service disconnect: $85; Premium disconnect: $100; Reconnect: $50–$90	Updated fee schedule: $49 standard disconnect, $197 premium disconnect, $58 standard reconnect, $174 premium reconnect
SB 998 Compliance	Not addressed	Explicitly integrated, including reference to Health & Safety Code §§ 116900–116926 and requirement for notice procedures

From this resolution an administrative policy (Attachment 3) is being developed to provide more detailed guidance to staff on the implementation of these provisions.

Recommended Action: Adopt a resolution amending the Ukiah Valley Water Authority's policies governing water utility deposits, fees, delinquency protocols, and customer billing procedures. This resolution supersedes Resolution No. 2025-1 and shall become effective 60 days after adoption.

UKIAH VALLEY WATER AUTHORITY
RESOLUTION NO. 2025-

A RESOLUTION OF THE UKIAH VALLEY WATER AUTHORITY (UVWA) AMENDING UVWA RESOLUTION 2025-01 ESTABLISHING UTILITY PAYMENT DUE DATES, FEES, DEPOSITS, AND DELINQUENCY DATES AND PENALTIES.

WHEREAS Ukiah Valley Water Authority has the authority to establish regulations covering payment regulations governing utility billing procedures and fees; and

WHEREAS it has been determined that certain deposits and rules are necessary and reasonable to ensure that customers of utility services provided by the Ukiah Valley Water Authority pay for the services they receive; and

WHEREAS the UVWA intends to promulgate rules for water utility service payments that are largely consistent with those promulgated by the City of Ukiah's water utility; and

WHEREAS the UVWA intends to ensure compliance with California Senate Bill 998 (Water Shutoff Protection Act), codified at Health and Safety Code §§ 116900–116926, which governs residential water service discontinuation due to nonpayment.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Billing and Payment Deadlines: Utility service billing, payment due dates and related notice procedures as required by the Water Shutoff Protection Act (Health and Safety Code sections 116900–116926) are outlined in a Shut Off Policy that will be established by the City of Ukiah's Finance Department.

Section 2. Application Fees:
- **New Service Application Fee:** $38.00. This fee is not refundable once the application has been submitted.

Section 3. Rules Governing Utility Deposits:
- **Use of a Credit Reporting Agency:** The UVWA uses a Credit Reporting Agency to provide Collection Risk Information.

- **Deposits Required:** Prior to the UVWA connecting utilities to any property, the applicant for service must complete an application for service and deposit funds with the City of Ukiah's Finance Department in the amount specified unless a deposit is excused.

  - **Property Owner Exception:**
    Deposits may be waived for any applicant who is the owner of record of the property to be served unless service has been disconnected previously for nonpayment.

  - **Satisfactory Credit Exception:**
    Deposits may be waived for an applicant for utility service who has received utility service from UVWA for a period of one year without having service disconnected for nonpayment or having received no more than one Final Notices of Possible Disconnection.

  - **Domestic Water service:**
    - New service applicants who pose no credit risk may have deposit requirements waived.

    - New service applicants who pose minimal risk: The greater of the estimated average monthly consolidated bill averaged over a 12-month period or a minimum of a 50.00 deposit.

    - New service applicants who pose substantial credit risk: The greater of twice the average monthly consolidated bill for water averaged over a 12-month period or a minimum of a $100.00 deposit.

  - **Commercial Water service**
    - The greater of twice the estimated average monthly consolidated bill of a similar business averaged over a 12-month period or a minimum of a $100.00 deposit.

  - **To Restore Disconnected Service.** Domestic and Commercial customers utility service that is disconnected due to non-payment will be required to provide an additional deposit equal to greater of twice the average monthly consolidated bill for water service averaged over a 12-month period or a minimum of $150.00.

<u>Section 4. Rules Governing Utility Deposits:</u>
Utility bills are due and payable upon presentation and considered late if not paid in full 26 days following the bill date. The following delinquency penalties and fees will apply to unpaid utility service accounts:

- **Return of Utility Deposits:**
  - The customer's utility deposit will be returned after one year of service, if the customer has never had service disconnected for nonpayment of a bill for utility service and within the year has not received more than two Final Notices of Possible Disconnection.

  - If, after the return of a deposit, service is disconnected because a customer has failed to pay a utility bill when due, service shall not be restored until the customer pays a new deposit equal to the greater of twice the average monthly consolidated bill for water service, averaged over a 12-month period, or a minimum of $150.00.

- **Use of Deposits**.
  - Use upon termination of service. When utility service to a customer is discontinued for any reason, the deposit shall reduce or eliminate any balance owing for utility service. If the deposit exceeds the balance owing, any remaining amount shall be refunded to the person who furnished the deposit.

  - Use upon filing a petition in bankruptcy. If a customer files a petition with the United States Bankruptcy Court to discharge his or her debts, and the court properly assumes jurisdiction in the case, the deposit shall be considered part of the bankruptcy estate. The customer shall be notified that due to the Bankruptcy notice, a deposit of or payment of an amount to bring the deposit up to an amount equal to the greater of twice the average monthly consolidated bill for water service, averaged over a 12-month period, or $150.00. If the required amount is not paid within 20 day of Notice of Additional Deposit, utility service will be disconnected.

<u>Section 5. Delinquency Penalties and Fees:</u>
In addition to increased deposit requirement in Section 3.

- Payment Reminder Notice: $1.00

- Final Notice: $2.00
- 48-Hour Notice: $6.00
- 48-Hour Notice Door Hanger: $47.00
- Service Disconnect Fee: $49.00
- Premium Disconnect Fee: $197.00
- Service Reconnection Fee: $58.00
- Premium Reconnect Fee: $174.00

  Premium Fees are disconnections and reconnections requiring special handling, such as after-hours requests.

- **Other Fees:**
  - Tampered Meter/ Vandalism Penalty: $100.00
  - Cut Lock Fee: $100.00
  - Returned Payment Fees: $25 for the first returned item and $35 per item if more than one item is returned within the 12-month period. The fee may adjust annually, depending on adjustments to bank fees not to exceed 20% at any given year.

<u>Section 6: Property Owner Responsibility for Service to Leased or Rented Properties:</u>
Property owners shall be obligated for all utility service accounts for rented or leased properties.

- **Obligation for Water Use**: The property owner is ultimately responsible for all utilities used at their property, regardless of whether it is occupied by tenants.

- **Delinquent Water Bill Notifications:** If a bill becomes delinquent (unpaid after its due date), the property owner will be provided with copies of the delinquent bill. This ensures they are informed of any issues with non-payment.

- **Liability for Unpaid Bills:** Regardless of the arrangement between the property owner or the tenants regarding payment responsibility for utility services; the property owner will be held liable for any utility bills that are unpaid.

<u>Section 7. Effective date:</u>
This resolution shall become effective 60 days after adoption. Customers will be notified of the change through standard communications, which may include one or more of the following: bill inserts, email notifications, and outreach efforts targeting delinquent customers.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this __ day of August 2025, by the following roll call vote:

AYES:
NOES:
ABSTAIN:
ABSENT:

Adam Gaska, Chair

ATTEST:

Sean White, Secretary

UKIAH VALLEY WATER AUTHORITY
RESOLUTION NO. 2025-01

A RESOLUTION OF THE UKIAH VALLEY WATER AUTHORITY (UVWA) ESTABLISHING UTILITY PAYMENT DUE DATES, FEES, DEPOSITS, AND DELINQUENCY DATES AND PENALTIES.

WHEREAS Ukiah Valley Water Authority has the authority to establish regulations covering payment regulations governing utility billing procedures and fees; and

WHEREAS it has been determined that certain deposits and rules are necessary and reasonable to ensure that customers of utility services provided by the Ukiah Valley Water Authority pay for the services they receive.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Due Dates for Payments: Utility service bills will be sent to customers monthly. Payment on all utility service bills are due within 26 days of the bill date.

Section 2. Application Fees:

- **New Service Application Fee:** $25.00. This fee is not refundable once the application has been submitted.

Section 3. Rules Governing Utility Deposits:

- **Use of a Credit Reporting Agency:** The UVWA uses a Credit Reporting Agency to provide Collection Risk Information.

- **Deposits Required:** Prior to the UVWA connecting utilities to any property, the applicant for service shall deposit funds with the Finance Department in the amount specified unless a deposit is excused.

  - **Property Owner Exception:**
    Deposits may be waived for any applicant who is the owner of record of the property to be served unless service has been disconnected previously for nonpayment.

  - **Domestic Water service:**
    - New service applicants who pose no credit risk will be charged no deposit.

    - New service applicants who pose minimal risk: The greater of the estimated average monthly consolidated bill averaged over a 12-month period or a minimum of a 50.00 deposit.

    - New service applicants who pose substantial credit risk: The greater of twice the average monthly consolidated bill for water averaged over a 12-month period or a minimum of a $100.00 deposit.

  - **Commercial Water service**
    - The greater of twice the estimated average monthly consolidated bill of a similar business averaged over a 12-month period or a minimum of a $100.00 deposit.

- Domestic and Commercial customers utility service that is disconnected due to non-payment will be required to provide an additional deposit equal to greater of twice the average monthly consolidated bill for water service averaged over a 12-month period or a minimum of $150.00.

Section 4. Delinquency Penalties and Fees:
Utility bills are due and payable upon presentation and considered late if not paid in full 26 days following the bill date. The following delinquency penalties and fees will apply to unpaid utility service accounts:

- **Delinquent Penalty:** If payment is not received by the 26th day following the bill date, a $15.00 fee will be automatically assessed.

- **Final Notice:** $15.00 fee will be assessed if the delinquent amount is not received within 7 days of the Delinquent Penalty. The Final Notice will be mailed to the address on record.

- **48-Hour Notice:** $40.00 fee applied if the delinquent amount is not received within 7 days of the Final Notice. This notice will be communicated to the customer through multiple channels, including email, text, and phone call.

- **Disconnection Fees:** In addition to increased deposit requirement in Section 1.

  - Service Disconnect Fee: $85.00
  - Premium Disconnect Fee: $100.00
  - Service Reconnection Fee: $50.00
  - Premium Reconnect Fee: $90.00

  Premium Fees are disconnections and reconnections requiring special handling, such as after-hours requests.

- **Other Fees:**
  - Tampered Meter/ Vandalism Penalty: $100.00
  - Cut Lock Fee: $100.00
  - Returned Payment Fees: $25 for the first returned item and $35 per item if more than one item is returned within the 12-month period. The fee may adjust annually, depending on adjustments to bank fees not to exceed 20% at any given year.

Section 5: Property Owner Responsibility for Service to Leased or Rented Properties:
Property owners shall be obligated for all utility service accounts for rented or leased properties.

- **Obligation for Water Use**: The property owner is ultimately responsible for all utilities used at their property, regardless of whether it is occupied by tenants.

- **Delinquent Water Bill Notifications:** If a bill becomes delinquent (unpaid after its due date), the property owner will be provided with copies of the delinquent bill. This ensures they are informed of any issues with non-payment.

- **Liability for Unpaid Bills:** Regardless of the arrangement between the property owner or the tenants regarding payment responsibility for utility services; the property owner will be held liable for any utility bills that are unpaid.

Section 6. Effective date:

This resolution shall become effective 60 days after adoption. Customers will be notified of the change through standard communications, which may include one or more of the following: bill inserts, email notifications, and outreach efforts targeting delinquent customers.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 30th day of January 2025, by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Members Prince, Shoeneman, Orozco, Crane, Nevill, Gordon, Cardoza, and Chair Gaska
NOES: None
ABSTAIN: None
ABSENT: None

Adam Gaska

Adam Gaska, Chair

ATTEST:

Kristine Lawler

Kristine Lawler, CMC/CPMC

City of Ukiah Finance and IT Department		**TITLE:** **DISCONTINUATION OF UTILITY SERVICE, INCLUDING WATER SERVICE, FOR NONPAYMENT POLICY**	
CATEGORY:	CUSTOMER SERVICES AND UTILITY BILLING	**ADOPTION LEVEL:** UVWA BOARD and CITY COUNCIL	**DATE:**
POLICY NO.:		**ENABLING RESOLUTION(S)** (resolution no)	(adoption date)
Authorizing Signature		**ORIGINALLY ADOPTED**	(adoption date)
		REVISED	(adoption date)
		POLICY COMMITTEE	(approval date)
		DEPARTMENT HEAD	(approval date)

Policy

A. Purpose and Objective

This Policy enumerates the City of Ukiah and Ukiah Valley Water Authority's (UVWA) (collectively referred to as the" City" in this Policy) administrative actions for the collection of delinquent accounts, including notifications, fee assessments and discontinuation of electric, water and garbage service. This policy set forth the City and UVWA's compliance with the requirements of California's Water Shutoff Protection Act. The individual water agencies that are members of UVWA are considered, pursuant to California Health and Safety Code § 116904, urban or community water systems that supply water to more than 200 service connections and are thus subject to the requirements of SB 998, i.e. the Water Shutoff Protection Act.

This Policy will be made available to the public on the City's and UVWA's website in both English and Spanish, and available in writing, in any language required by law, upon a written request to the City's customer service department.

The City's customer service department can be contacted by phone at (707) 463-6228 and 707-463-6715 for all UVWA Waer Districts, to discuss questions about this Policy, payment options and options for averting discontinuation of utility service for nonpayment under the terms of this Policy.

Please see the City and UVWA's website for current fees that may be assessed for late payment, disconnection and reconnection of utility services.

B. Definitions

1. **City:** The City of Ukiah who provides electric, water and sewer services to residents within the city limits. The City also provides billing services for garbage services to City residents and utility billing services for members of UVWA.
2. **UVWA**: The Ukiah Valley Water Authority is a consolidated water management organization, committed to providing efficient and reliable water services to residents and businesses within the greater Ukiah Valley. The formation of this joint powers' authority unifies the formerly independent water agencies: the City of Ukiah, Millview County Water District, Redwood Valley County Water District, Calpella County Water District, and Willow County Water District, creating coordination that aims to optimize our region's water resources.
3. **UVWA Executive Committee**: Referred to as the "Committee" in the policy. The Executive Committee is established by the UVWA Joint Powers Agreement and has broad responsibility for the operation of UVWA.
4. **Bill Date:** The Bill Date is presented on each utility monthly bill and refers to the date the bill was generated.
5. **Due Date**: Utility service bills will be sent to customers monthly and are due and payable upon presentation. The Due Date is presented on each monthly utility bill and represents the date your payment must be received to avoid fees and possible disruption of service. Payments must be received by Close of Business on the Due Date. The Due Date is the end of your monthly grace period.
6. **Delinquent Date:** Delinquent utility accounts are defined as any account that remains unpaid (and without having established in writing, payment arrangements or established an alternative payment schedule) by Close of the Business on the 10th day after the Bill Date.
7. **Close of Business:** Defined as 5 PM on regularly scheduled workdays, usually Monday -Friday. City offices are closed on all major holidays.
8. **Customer Service:** The City's customer service department can be contacted by phone at (707) 463-6228 or email at utilityservices@cityofukiah.com and for all UVWA Water Districts 707-463-6715 or email uvwacs@cityofukiah.com, to discuss questions about this Policy, payment options and options for averting the discontinuation of utility service for nonpayment under the terms of this Policy. Customers can also meet with a customer service representative in person at the City of Ukiah Civic Center at 300 Seminary Avenue, Ukiah, CA 95482.

C. Procedure

<u>Utility Bill Due Date</u>

Utility service bills will be sent to customers monthly and are due and payable upon presentation, defined as the Bill Date, which is noted on the face of the Bill.

The City assumes no responsibility for address, telephone or email contact information that has not been kept current and accurate by the customer and or property owner, nor the USPS delivery. Customer contact information can be updated by contacting Customer Service at (707) 463-2882 or by email at utilityservices@cityofukiah.com.

Utility Account Delinquent Date

Delinquent utility accounts are defined as any account that remains unpaid (and without having established in writing, payment arrangements or established an alternative payment schedule) by close of the business on the 10th day following the Bill Date. Payments must be received by the City prior to Close of Business on the 10th date following the Bill Date.

The following rules apply to the collection of Delinquent Accounts:

Payment Reminder Notice and Fee

The customer will receive an automated call, text and or email (when we have a valid email address on file or if the customer has signed up for text messages, a valid phone number) with a Payment Reminder message on the 31st day following the Bill Date. In addition, a Payment Reminder Fee will be applied to the account. The Payment Reminder message will also include information about how to obtain a copy of this Policy and how to contact the City to discuss payment arrangements. If the customer is not the occupant at the utility service address, and we have a valid phone number or email address for the occupant noted in the account, the Payment Reminder message will also be delivered to the occupant.

Final Notice of Possible Disconnection and Fee

The City shall make a reasonable, good faith effort to contact the customer in writing at least ten (10) days before the discontinuation of utility services for non-payment (61st day after the Bill Date). In addition, a Final Notice of Possible Disconnection Fee will be applied to the account.

The Final Notice of Possible Disconnection will be mailed to the mailing address designated on the account and the customer will receive an automated call, text and or email (when we have a valid email address on file or if the customer has signed up for text messages, a valid phone number) with notification that a pending disconnection could occur if payment is not received by the Close of Business within ten (10) days, or if written payment arrangements or establishment of a written alternate payment schedule are not made with the City. If the customer's mailing address is not the service address to which utility service is provided, a second notice will be mailed to the service address and addressed to "Occupant" and the automated call, text and or email will be sent if we have a valid phone number or email address on file.

The Final Notice of Possible Disconnection and will include:

- Customer's name and address.
- The amount that is past due.
- Date and time by which payment or payment arrangements are required to avoid discontinuation of utility service.
- Description of the process to apply for payment arrangements (amortization plan of delinquent charges) or an alternative payment arrangement.
- Description of the process to dispute or appeal a bill.
- City phone number and instructions on how the customer may obtain a copy of this Policy.

If the written Final Notice of Possible Disconnection is returned through the mail as undeliverable, the City will make a reasonable, good faith effort to reach the customer by telephone or visit the residence and leave in a conspicuous place, a copy of the Notice of Disconnection as well as a copy of this Policy translated into all required languages.

For properties that are not located within the City limits: If the customer is not the owner of the property, and we have a valid address, phone number or email address for the owner, the Final Notice of Possible Disconnection and message will also be delivered to the owner as noted in the Property Owners Responsibility for Service to Leases or Rented Properties provisions below.

48 Hour Notice of Disconnection

On the 68th day after the Bill Date the customer will receive an automated call, text and or email (when we have a valid email address on file or if the customer has signed up for text messages, a valid phone number) within 48 hours of disconnection with notice of the date of disconnection, information about where to obtain a copy of this Policy and information on how to apply for payment arrangements or the establishment of an alternate payment schedule. In addition, a 48Hour Notice fee will be charged to the account.

If we are unable to leave a message for the customer, the City will make a reasonable, good faith effort, to contact the customer personally on the phone with notice of the date of disconnection, information about where to obtain a copy of this Policy and information on how to apply for payment arrangements or the establishment of an alternate payment schedule.

If these two attempts to contact the customer fail, the City will make a reasonable, good faith effort to visit the residence and leave a 48 Hour Notice of Disconnection for non-payment as well as a copy of this Policy translated into all required languages. If a visit is required, a 48 Hour Notice Visit Fee will be assessed.

Disconnection Deadline

- All delinquent utility service charges and associated fees must be received by the City by the Close of Business on the day specified in the 48 Hour Notice of Disconnection.
- Field personnel are not authorized to accept payments under any circumstances.

Notice to Residential Tenants/Occupants in an Individually Metered Residence

The City will make a reasonable, good faith effort to inform the occupants of a residence where the occupants are not the customer on the utility service account, by means of written notice, when the utility service account is in arrears and subject to disconnect at least ten (10) days before service is shut off. The written notice will advise the tenant/occupant that they have the right to become customers of the City without being required to pay the amount due on the landlord's delinquent account, if they are willing to assume financial responsibility for subsequent charges for utility service at the address.

For the amount due on the delinquent account to not be assessed on the new account for the services assumed by the tenants, the tenant/occupant must provide verification of tenancy in the form of a valid rental agreement or proof of rent payments and complete the City's normal new customer process, including a credit check and payment of a deposit.

Notice to Tenants/Occupants in a Multi-Unit Complex Served through a Master Meter

The City will make a reasonable, good faith effort to inform occupants, by means of written notice hung on the door of each residence, when the service account is in arrears and subject to disconnection at least ten (10) days before utility service is shut off. The written notice will advise the tenant/occupant that they have the right to become customers of the City without being required to pay the amount due on the delinquent account, if they are willing to assume financial responsibility for subsequent charges for utility service at the address(es) served by the master meter. If one or more of the occupants are willing and able to assume responsibility for the subsequent charges for utility service to the satisfaction of the City, or if there is a physical means, legally available to the City of selectively terminating service to those occupants who have not met the requirements for service, the City will make service available to the occupants who have met those requirements.

For the amount due on the delinquent account to not be assessed on the new account for the services assumed by the tenants, the tenant/occupant must provide verification of tenancy in the form of a valid rental agreement or proof of rent payments and complete the City's normal new customer process, including a credit check and payment of a deposit.

Property Owners Responsibility for Service to Leased or Rented Properties

For properties that are not located within the City limits:

Obligation for Utility Use: The property owner is ultimately responsible for all utilities used at their property, regardless of the terms of the lease or rental agreement or whether it is occupied by tenants.

Delinquent Bill Notifications: If an account is subject to possible disconnection for non-payment, the property owner will be contacted as noted in the Final Notice of Possible Disconnection provisions of this Policy. This ensures they are informed of any issues with non-payment.

Liability for Unpaid Bills: Regardless of the arrangement between the property owner or the tenants regarding payment responsibility for utility services; the property owner will be held liable for any unpaid utility bills.

Notice Languages:

All written notices required under this Policy, and copies of this Policy, shall be provided in English, the languages listed in Section 1632 of the Civil Code, and any other language spoken by 10 percent or more of the customers in the urban and community water system's service area. As of the most recent update to this Policy, the required languages include:

1. English.

2. Spanish.

Alternative Payment Arrangements

The City shall offer alternative payment arrangements for any customer who is unable to pay for utility service within the normal payment period and requests an alternative payment arrangement to avoid late fees or disruption of service. The City will consider all circumstances surrounding the request and decide as to whether the payment arrangement is warranted. The alternative payment arrangement options include:

Promise to Pay

A Promise to Pay is a short-term arrangement that provides the customer up to 30 additional days to bring their account current. This option is available only when the payment period extends into the next billing cycle. .

- The customer must comply with the terms of the Promise to Pay and remain current on all subsequent charges.
- Only one Promise to Pay may be in effect at a time. Customers may not request a new Promise to Pay while delinquent charges are being paid under a prior agreement.
- Failure to comply will result in a written **Disconnection Notice**, delivered via door hanger or other physical posting to the premises no less than five (5) business days before discontinuation of service.

Deferred Payment Plan

A Deferred Payment Plan is a formal payment plan agreement, signed by the customer and the City, that extends past the next billing period. A Deferred Payment Plan will amortize the unpaid balance over a period of not more the one (1) year and be combined with, and be subject to the due date of, the customer's regular bill. The customer must comply with the terms of the Deferred Payment Plan and remain current as charges and fees accrue in each subsequent billing period. The customer may not request a further Deferred Payment Plan of any subsequent unpaid charges while paying delinquent charges pursuant to a Deferred Payment Plan and are not eligible for a subsequent Deferred Payment Plan if they have defaulted on a prior arrangement within the past 24 months.

Failure to comply with the terms of a Deferred Payment Plan for 60 days or more will result in the issuance of a written Disconnection Notice. The disconnection notice resulting from failure to meet the terms of an amortization plan will be in the form of either a door hanger or other physical document posted to the premises no less than five (5) business days in advance of the discontinuance of service

Disconnection of Utility Service for Nonpayment

The City will disconnect utility services by turning off, and in some cases by locking off the meter(s). A Notice of Service Disconnection will be placed in a conspicuous place noting that utility services have been disconnected, and the customer will be charged a Service Disconnect Fee to disconnect services and an additional Reconnection Fee and deposit equal to 2 X average of monthly bill, in addition to paying all outstanding charges on the account to re-establish service 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 seven (7) days of the initial termination.

The notice includes:

- The date that utility services were disconnected.
- Amount the balance required to be paid to re-establish service and the amount the reconnection fees.
- Description of the process to apply for payment arrangements (amortization plan of delinquent charges) or an alternative payment arrangement.
- Description of the process to dispute or appeal a bill.
- City phone number and instructions on how the customer may obtain a copy of this Policy.

Delinquent Accounts of Residential Customers Financially Unable to Pay for Service with Medical Requirements to Access Water and Electricity

If a residential customer satisfies all the conditions below, their utility service cannot be shut off for nonpayment. The conditions require:

• The customer or tenant of the customer submits to the City certification from a primary care provider, as defined by Section 14088 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, that discontinuation of utility service will be life threatening to or pose a serious threat to the health and safety of a resident of the premises where residential utility service is provided. The City will require an annual recertification from the customer, and

• The customer demonstrates he or she is financially unable to pay for residential utility service within the City's normal billing cycle. The customer shall be deemed financially unable to pay for residential service within the City's normal billing cycle 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 the customer declares that the household's annual income is less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level. The City will require the customer to provide evidence that the customer or someone in their household is receiving assistance from one of these programs and will require an annual recertification, and

• The customer is willing to enter into a payment arrangement, consistent with this Policy.

However, any delinquent utility charges and in some cases, fees under this requirement are not waived. Instead, any delinquent charges for services shall be recorded as a lien to the property as authorized in the Ukiah City Code. This helps to ensure that other utility rate payers are not subsidizing the utility rates for customers that are not paying their charges but cannot have their service discontinued under State law.

Re-Connection of Service During Regular Business Hours

To resume or continue service that has been disconnected for non-payment, the customer must pay a re-connection fee as adopted by a resolution of the City and must pay all outstanding charges on the account, including payment of any fees.

If payment is received by 3:00 pm, the City 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 fees attributable to the delinquency and termination of service.

Utility service that is turned on by any person other than City personnel or without City authorization will be subject to fines or additional charges or fees. Any damage that occurs because of unauthorized restoration of service is the responsibility of the customer.

Re-connection of Service After Business Hours

Service restored after 3:00 pm Monday through Friday, weekends, or holidays will be charged an after-hours Service Re-connection Premium Fee as adopted by resolution of the City. Service will not be restored after regular business hours until the customer has been informed of the after-hours Service Re-connection Premium Fee and has paid such a fee.

City staff responding to service calls are not permitted to collect payment but will instruct the customer to contact the City customer service department before noon the following business day.

Sometimes utility service is discontinued because a customer has requested a disconnect of service, and the City has not received a request to establish a new account. Service will not be turned on until the customer has completed the normal new account process, including the completion of an application, credit check and payment of any required deposit.

Notification of Disposition of Returned Check or Electronic Payment

Upon receipt of a returned check or electronic payment taken as payment of utility service or other charges, the City will consider the account not paid. The City will make a reasonable, good faith effort to notify the customer by phone or email of the returned check.

If payment was for an account that is already delinquent, then the date of discontinuation of service will remain unchanged. If the payment was made within forty-eight (48) hours of discontinuance, a minimum of a forty-eight (48) hour notice of termination of service due to a returned check will be generated, ensuring at least forty-eight (48) hours before the service is discontinued. The customer will be notified by email and phone, and a 48 Hour notice of Disconnection Fee will be assessed.

If the City is unable to make contact by phone and or email, the City will make a reasonable, good faith effort to visit the residence and leave a 48 Hour Notice of Disconnection for non-payment as well as a copy of this Policy translated into all required languages and a 48 Hour Notice Visit Fee will be assessed.

Utility service will be disconnected if the amount of the returned check and the returned check charge are not paid on or before the date specified in the notice of termination. All amounts paid to redeem a returned check and to pay the returned check charge must be in cash, credit card or certified funds.

Any customer issuing a non-negotiable form of payment for any utility bill (regardless of the status of the account) two times in a 12-month period will be required to pay cash, credit card or certified funds to for all future payments for a period of twelve (12) months from the date of the returned payment and will be subject to an increased deposit requirement.

Returned Payment for Previously Disconnected Service

In the event a customer tenders a non-negotiable form of payment to restore utility service previously disconnected for non-payment and the City restores service, the City may promptly disconnect service without providing further notice. No forty-eight (48) hour notice of termination will be given in the case of a non-negotiable form of payment tendered for utility charges that were subject to disconnection.

Any customer issuing a non-negotiable form of payment to restore service turned off for nonpayment 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 and will be subject to an increased deposit requirement.

Process for Bill Review and Appeal

Before filing a formal appeal, customers are required to contact Utility Billing Customer Service to resolve the issue informally. Staff may request support documentation and will make every effort to resolve the matter within five (5) business days. Customer Service contact information is provided at the beginning of this Policy.

If the matter is not resolved informally, a formal written appeal must be submitted to the Finance Director within twenty-five (25) calendar days of the date of the disputed bill or notice.

Customers may file an appeal related to:

- Disputed utility charges or billing errors,
- Disconnection or reconnection of service,
- Assessment of late fees or penalties,
- Meter accuracy or consumption concerns,
- Alleged unauthorized use or tampering,
- Denial of service or service conditions.

Request for appeals must include:

- Customer name and utility account number,
- Service address,
- Detailed explanation of the dispute,
- Relevant supporting documentation (e.g., bills, photos, letters), and
- Customer's requested resolution.

A formal appeal must be submitted via:

- Email: utilityappeals@cityofukiah.com, or

- Mail: City of Ukiah – Finance Director
  300 Seminary Avenue
  Ukiah, CA 95482

The Finance Director or their designee will issue a final decision within fifteen (15) business days.

Any customer who has followed the procedure set forth above and is dissatisfied with the decision of the Finance Director or designee, may within ten (10) calendar days thereafter, appeal to the Executive Committee of the UVWA (the "Committee") (and where applicable to the City Council) by submitting a notice of appeal to the City Clerk. The City Clerk will give notice to the appellant of the time and place of the hearing, and they shall have the opportunity to appear in person or by counsel and present evidence. The City Council or the Committee shall hear and consider evidence and shall decide the issue based upon the evidence presented. The decision of the Council and or the Committee shall be final.

While a timely written appeal is under review, the City will not disconnect utility service for non-payment while the appeal is pending.