

## SECTION E. SERVICE RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. **Service Entitlement.** The Applicant(s) shall be considered qualified and entitled to water and/or sewer utility service when proper application has been made, terms and conditions of Service and Membership have been met and continue to be met, and all fees have been paid as prescribed. (30 TAC 291.85 (a))
  
2. **Service Location and Classification.** For the purposes of this Tariff, service requested by the Applicant(s) shall be for real estate designated to receive the service provided by the Corporation. Service shall be through a meter or sewer tap located on that designated real estate unless otherwise approved by the board. Service shall be divided into the following two classes:
  - a. **Standard Service** is defined as service on an existing pipeline where pipeline or service facility extensions are not required and special design and/or engineering considerations are not necessary. Typically, this would include 5/8" X 3/4" or 3/4" sized water meter services set on existing pipelines, pressure collection facilities installed or connected to collection lines no more than five feet in depth.
  - b. **Non-Standard Service** is defined as any service request which requires a larger meter service, or an addition to the supply, storage and/or distribution/collection system. The service requirements as prescribed by Section F of this Tariff shall be required of the Non-Standard Service Applicant prior to providing service.
  
3. **Service Requirements.** The Corporation's Service Application and Agreement Form shall be completed in full and signed by the Applicant(s). Where applicable in addition to the applicant any other person sharing an ownership interest in and receiving service at that property shall sign the Service Application and Agreement Form; however, even if the spouse or other person sharing an ownership interest does not sign the Service Application and Agreement Form, they are still responsible for all terms set forth therein, and for any debt obligation related to the account. (See Sample Application RUS-TX Bulletin 1780-9 (Rev. 01/09))
  - a. A Right-of-Way Easement Form, Sanitary Control Easement, or other such easement form, required by the Corporation, must be completed by the Applicant for the purpose of allowing future facility additions. (See Sample Application - RUS-TX Bulletin 1780-9 (Rev. 01/09), 30 TAC 290.47 Appendix C.) **NOTE:** This requirement may be delayed for Non-Standard Service requests.
  - b. The Applicant shall provide proof of ownership to property for which service has been requested in a manner acceptable to the Corporation. Proof of ownership shall consist of warranty deed, deed of trust or other recordable documentation of title to the real estate designated to receive service. (Texas Water Code Sections 67.016 (e), and 13.002 (11)).
  - c. On the request by the property owner or owner's authorized agent, the Corporation shall install individual meters owned by the Corporation in an apartment house, manufactured home rental community, multiple use facility, or condominium on which construction begins after January 1, 2003, unless the Corporation determines that installation of individual meters is not feasible. If the Corporation determines that installation of meters is not feasible, the property owner or manager shall install a plumbing system that is compatible with the installation of sub meters or individual meters. The Corporation shall be entitled to the payment of costs, including the costs of individual meter installations, as provided in Section F 3. The cost of individual meter installation shall be prepaid by the property owner as well as the cost of any additional facilities or supply occasioned by the total water demand represented by full occupancy of the property, as determined under applicable provisions of

Section F. It shall be the responsibility of the property owner to obtain the memberships required for each individual meter.

- d. Notice of application approval and costs of service determined by the Corporation shall be presented to the Applicant in writing and shall remain in effect for a period not to exceed thirty (30) days. After that time the Applicant must re-apply for service. (30 TAC 291.81 (a) (1))
- e. If the water main has been located in the public right-of-way and is adjacent to Applicant's property due to the current or previous landowner's refusal to grant easement to the Corporation for the purpose of installing the water main and appurtenances, and the Corporation has documentation of such refusal, the Applicant, prior to receiving the requested service, shall grant easement required under this Tariff and in addition to the normally required fees for new customer service, shall pay such sums as are reasonably necessary to cap the existing line in the ROW and construct the appropriate line or lines within that easement for the Corporation's system-wide service. (see Miscellaneous Transaction Forms)

4. **Ownership of equipment.** All water meters and equipment and materials required to provide water service to the point of customer connection; water meter or service tap, is the property of the Corporation upon installation, and shall be maintained by the water system only.

5. **Activation of Standard Service.**

- a. **New Tap** – The Corporation shall charge a non-refundable service installation fee as required under Section G of this tariff. The service installation fee shall be quoted in writing to the Applicant. All fees shall be paid or a deferred payment contract signed in advance of installation. (30 TAC 291.86 (a)(1)(A))
- b. **Re-Service** – On property where service previously existed, the Corporation shall charge the Membership Fee (where the Membership Fee has been liquidated or refunded), reconnection costs, any delinquent charges if the applicant is the person that previously incurred those charges, seasonal reconnect fee as appropriate, and other applicable costs necessary to restore service.
- c. **Performance of Work** – All tap and equipment installations specified by the Corporation shall be completed by the Corporation staff or designated representative after all application requirements have been met. The tap for a standard service request shall be completed within five (5) working days whenever practicable, but not later than 10 working days. This time may be extended for installation of equipment for Non-Standard Service Request. (See Section F)
- d. **Inspection of Customer Service Facilities** – The property of the Applicant/Member shall be inspected to insure compliance with state required Minimum Acceptable Operating Practices For Public Drinking Water Systems as promulgated by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality or successor agency. The customer must, at his or her expense, properly install, inspect, test, maintain and provide all required documentation of any approved backflow prevention device required by the Corporation. (30 TAC 290.46(j); Service Agreement Form)

7. **Activation of Non-Standard Service.** Activation of Non-Standard Service shall be conducted as prescribed by terms of Section F of this Tariff.

8. **Changes in Service Classification.** If at any time the Corporation determines that the customer service needs changed from those originally applied for to a different service classification and the Corporation determines that additional or different facilities are necessary to provide adequate service, the Corporation shall require the Applicant/Member to re-apply for service under the terms and conditions of this Tariff. Applicant/Members failing to comply with this provision shall be

subject to the Disconnection with Notice Provisions of this Tariff, Section E 17.

### 9. **Membership.**

- a. **Eligibility** – Eligibility for Membership shall not guarantee service to the Applicant or Transferee; however, qualification for service is a prerequisite to Membership eligibility for new Applicants or continued Membership for Transferees.
- b. **Membership** - Upon qualification for service, qualification for Membership, payment of the required fees, and any debt owed to the Corporation, the Corporation shall certify the Applicant as a Member. The Membership shall entitle the Member to one (1) connection to the Corporation's water/sewer utility service and one (1) share of Corporation Stock. The Membership entitles the Member to one (1) vote in the election of directors and in such other matters requiring the approval of the Corporation's Members at any Annual or Special Membership Meeting of the Corporation as prescribed by the Corporation Bylaws. Ownership of more than one (1) Membership shall not authorize the Member to cast more than one (1) vote at any annual or special meeting. Each Membership and Stock thereby represented may be assigned to the specified parcel of land originally designated to receive service at the time of application. (Texas Water Code Section 67.016) **NOTE (1):** In the event that the Corporation is conducting a potential Members survey for indications of interest in future service for the purpose of determining the feasibility of an initial construction or expansion project under RUS guidelines (see Sample Application Packet), regular application procedures may be modified. An Indication of Interest Fee may be required prior to qualifications for receipt of service by the Applicant but shall only be used or applied as a Membership Fee for Membership purposes (upon issuance of a Membership) if service is ultimately received or reserved by the Applicant as a result of the planned project facilities. If service is not provided within the scope of this project, Indication of Interest Fees shall be refunded, less expenses, within sixty (60) days of the loan closing with the Rural Utilities Service. **NOTE (2):** In the event the applicant is in the process of construction the Membership will be considered TEMPORARY until such time as the final Customer Service Inspection is completed and the forms are returned as required. (See Section C, Section E Sub-Section 1. Service Entitlement)
- c. **Transfers of Membership.** – (Texas Water Code Section 67.016)
  - 1) A Member is entitled to transfer Membership in the Corporation only under the following circumstances:
    - (a) The Membership is transferred by will to a person related to the Transferor within the second degree by consanguinity; or
    - (b) The Membership is transferred without compensation to a person related to the Transferor within the second degree by consanguinity; or
    - (c) The Membership is transferred without compensation or by sale to the Corporation; or
    - (d) The Membership is transferred as a part of the conveyance of real estate from which the Membership arose.
  - 2) In the event that Membership is transferred pursuant to the provisions of Subsection 9 c. (1) of this Section, such transfer shall not be completed or recorded on the books and records of the Corporation until such time as the transferor has provided satisfactory evidence to the Corporation of such transfer. A transfer of Membership shall be considered a new application for service and is not binding on the Corporation until such transfer has been approved as provided by Subsection 9 c. (3) of this Section.
  - 3) Qualifications for service upon transfer of Membership set forth in Subsection 9 c. (1) of this and 9 c. (2) of this Section shall be subject to approval of the Corporation and shall

be recorded on the books and records of the Corporation only upon the following terms and conditions:

- (a) The Transferee has completed the required Application Packet including granting the Corporation with a private utility easement on the form provided by the Corporation;
  - (b) The Transferee has paid the balance of the Transferor's membership fee to the face value of the Transferor's membership fee, to the extent that it was partially liquidated; and
  - (c) The Transferee demonstrates satisfactory evidence of ownership of the property designated to receive service and from which the Membership originally arose.
- 4). If the application packet and other information is not completed on the day transfer of membership is requested the corporation will give the transferee written notice of 10 additional days to produce completed documentation to the corporation office. Service will be disconnected on the day following the 10<sup>th</sup> day according to disconnection with notice requirements. Additional time may be allowed at the directions of the manager or board.
- d. **Cancellation of Membership** – To keep a Membership in good standing, a Base Rate or a Reserved Service Charge must be paid monthly to the Corporation, whether or not water is used. Failure to pay this monthly charge to the Corporation shall jeopardize the Member's Membership standing and give rise to liquidation of the Membership Fee and forfeiture of the Membership. A Member may be relieved of this obligation to pay by surrendering the Membership, properly documented, to the Corporation. The Member shall also complete a Service Discontinuance Request Form prior to termination of service. (See Misc. Transaction Forms.) However, a Member is not relieved of any obligations incurred prior to the date of surrender of a properly endorsed Membership prior to termination of service. Rights to future service at this tap shall be extended on an as-available basis and subject to the terms of the Activation of Service Subsection E 6. of this Tariff. (Texas Water Code Section 67.016)
- e. **Liquidation Due To Delinquency** – When the amount of the delinquent charges owed by the Member equals the Membership Fee, the Membership Fee shall be liquidated and the Membership canceled and transferred back to the Corporation. In the event the Member leaves a balance due on an account guaranteed under the terms of a Service Application and Agreement, and the delinquent Member owns more than one Membership, the Corporation may liquidate as many of the Member Guarantor's Membership Fees as necessary to satisfy the balance due the Corporation, provided proper notice has been given (see Tariff Section E, Subsection 17.). The Corporation shall collect any remaining account balances by initiation of legal action. Re-instatement of service shall be subject to the terms of the Activation of Service Subsection E 6. of this Tariff.
- f. **Cancellation Due To Policy Non-Compliance** – The Corporation may cancel a Membership anytime a Member fails to comply with policies of the Corporation, including but not limited to Member's failure to provide proof of ownership of the property from which the Membership arose. (Texas Water Code Section 67.016)
- g. **Re-assignment of Canceled Membership.**
- 1) The Corporation, upon cancellation of Membership under the provisions of this Tariff, may re-assign the canceled Membership to a person or entity that has legal title to the real estate from which the canceled membership arose and for which water service is requested (Texas Water Code Section 67.016). Membership will not be re-assigned unless the person or entity that has legal title to the real estate has complied with the corporation's current rates, charges, and conditions of service, including current membership fee, set forth in the tariff and service application package.

- 2) The Corporation shall reassign a canceled Membership to a person or entity that acquires the real estate from which the Membership arose through judicial or nonjudicial foreclosure. The Corporation will require proof of ownership resulting from the foreclosure and compliance with the corporation's current rates, charges, and conditions of service, including current membership fee, set forth in the tariff and service application package. In the event of foreclosure by a mortgage institution, the Corporation may allow a property management company to acquire the Membership if the management company provides written documentation showing that the management company is legally responsible for the management of the property and it is not feasible for the mortgage institution to be the Member.
- h. **Mortgaging of Memberships** – Nothing herein shall preclude a Member from mortgaging his/her Membership. However, notification to the holder of any security interest (mortgagee/lien-holder) of account status of Member/mortgagor will be provided only upon satisfactory completion of requirements for such conditions under the Membership Mortgage Agreement (See Miscellaneous Transaction Forms). Prior to the cancellation of any Membership as provided under Subsection E 9.d. (Cancellation of Membership), the Corporation will notify the holder of any security interest in the Membership. The holder of the security interest also must hold a security interest in the real property at which water service is provided under the Membership. The Corporation may transfer the Membership to the holder of such security interest in lieu of cancellation, provided the holder of the security interest pays in full all delinquent and unpaid obligations and provided further that the holder of the security interest has secured title to the real property from which the Membership arose. The Corporation may withhold cancellation of a Membership pending the resolution of any foreclosure proceedings or similar legal proceedings by the holder of the security interest.
- i. **Cancellation and Re-Assignment of Membership as a Result of Bankruptcy Proceedings** – Upon notice of the filing of a petition in bankruptcy, the Corporation may require the posting of a deposit or other form of security, acceptable to the Corporation, as a condition for continuing utility service. Unless special circumstances require otherwise, the amount of security shall equal the amount of charges for the month of greatest use during the preceding 12 months. The Corporation shall not require the payment of any security prior to the expiration of 20 days following the date on which the petition is filed. Failure to provide this security by the date specified by the Corporation may result in termination of service according to the Disconnection with Notice Provisions of Section E 17. of this Tariff, with a copy of the notice to the bankruptcy Trustee.
- j. **Cancellation and Re-Assignment of Membership as a Result of Divorce (or Dissolution of Joint Tenancy)** – The Corporation shall transfer the membership to a spouse (or joint tenant) who has been awarded the property designated to receive service. The Corporation must be provided adequate documentation of the ownership rights of the spouse (or joint tenant) requesting transfer, such as final divorce decree, temporary court order, or agreement. In no event shall any membership(s) be transferred if the transferee does not otherwise meet the qualifications for membership and for service.

**10. Owners and Renters.** Any Member having complied with the requirements of this Tariff, renting or leasing property designated to receive service according to the terms of this tariff to other parties, is responsible for all charges due the Corporation. The membership for rental or leased properties shall be in the name of the owner of the property as required by this Tariff. The Corporation may bill the renter or lessee for utility service (at Member Request) as a third party, but the Member is fully responsible for any and all unpaid bills left by the renter/lessee. The owner shall be required to sign

an Alternate Billing Agreement if the owner requests that the tenant be billed for utility service. (See Miscellaneous Transaction Forms.) The Member shall take responsibility for any necessary deposits from the renter/lessee to ensure payment of a past due bill. The Corporation will notify the Member of the renter's past due payment status. Such notification will be subject to a service charge (see Miscellaneous Transaction Forms).

If at any time the member requests that membership be canceled thereby discontinuing service to an occupied rental property, the Corporation shall provide written notice to the tenant(s) a minimum of five (5) days prior to the scheduled disconnection date.

- 11. Denial of Service.** The Corporation may deny service for the following reasons:
- a. Failure of the Applicant or Transferee to complete all application requirements, including granting an easement, completing all forms, and paying all required fees and charges;
  - b. Failure of the Applicant or Transferee to comply with rules, regulations, policies, and bylaws of the Corporation;
  - c. Existence of a hazardous condition at the Applicant's property which would jeopardize the welfare of the Members/Users of the Corporation upon connection;
  - d. Failure of Applicant or Transferee to provide representatives or employees of the Corporation reasonable access to property, for which service has been requested;
  - e. Failure of Applicant or Transferee to comply with all governmental rules and regulations of the Corporation's tariff on file with the state regulatory agency governing the service applied for by the Applicant;
  - f. Failure of Applicant or Transferee to provide proof of ownership, to the satisfaction of the Corporation, of property for which the tap has been requested, and/or
  - g. Applicant's service facilities are known to be inadequate or of such character that satisfactory service cannot be provided.
  - h. Failure of Applicant or transferee to comply with applicable regulations for on-site sewage disposal systems if the Corporation has been requested to deny service by the TCEQ or the TCEQ's designated representative under Chapter 366 of the Texas Health and Safety Code.
  - i. Failure of the Applicant or Transferee to pay any previous outstanding delinquent account(s) in full. This could be delinquencies resulting from the same account location or other service location(s) within the system where the Applicant or Transferee received service. (Also see E 9.)
- 12. Applicant's or Transferee's Recourse.** In the event the Corporation refuses to serve an Applicant under the provisions of these rules, the Corporation must notify the Applicant, in writing, on the basis of its refusal. The Applicant may file for an appeal, in writing, with the Board of Directors of the Corporation.
- 13. Insufficient Grounds for Refusal of Service.** The following shall not constitute sufficient cause for the refusal of service to an Applicant:
- a. Delinquency in payment for service by a previous member or occupant of the premises to be served;
  - b. Failure to pay a bill to correct previous under billing due to misapplication of rates more than six (6) months prior to the date of application;
  - c. Violation of the Corporation's rules pertaining to operation of non-standard equipment or unauthorized attachments which interferes with the service of others, unless the customer has first been notified and been afforded reasonable opportunity to comply with said requirements;

- d. Failure to pay a bill of another member or customer as guarantor thereof unless the guarantee was made in writing to the Corporation as a condition precedent to service;
- e. Failure to pay the bill of another member or customer at the same address except where the change of customer identity is made to avoid or evade payment of a utility bill;

**14. *Deferred Payment Agreement.*** The Corporation may offer a deferred payment plan to a Member or rental tenant who cannot pay an outstanding balance in full and is willing to pay the balance in reasonable installments as determined by the Corporation, including any Late Penalty Fees or interest on the monthly balance to be determined as per agreement. (See Miscellaneous Transaction Forms) Failure to make required and timely payments as provided in any deferred payment agreement will void that agreement and service will be discontinued. The Corporation may consider another deferred payment agreement provided payments will be made by automatic bank draft or credit/debit card. Non-payment of any amount under an additional deferred payment agreement will cause service to be disconnected immediately and service will not be restored until the account is paid in full and all other charges resulting from the disconnection of service are fully paid. In the event the requestor is a tenant of rental property the Corporation shall notify the owner/member of the deferred payment agreement.

**15. *Charge Distribution and Payment Application.***

- a. **The Base Rate or the Reserved Service Charge** is for the billing period from the 17<sup>th</sup> day of the month to the 17<sup>th</sup> day of the month. Charges shall be prorated for meter installations and service termination's falling during the billing period. Billings for this amount shall be mailed on or about the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month preceding the month for which this charge is due. All services shall be subject to this charge whether or not the service is in use by the Member.
- b. **Gallonge Charge** shall be billed at the rate specified in Section G and billing shall be calculated in one hundred (100) gallon increments. Water charges are based on monthly meter readings and are calculated from reading date to reading date. Readings used in all billing calculations shall be taken by the Corporation's employees or designated representative.
- c. **Posting of Payments** – All payments shall be posted against previous balances and late fees prior to posting against current billings.
- d. **Forms of Payment:** The Corporation will accept the following forms of payment: cash, personal check, cashier's check, money order, credit card, automatic debit on customer's bank account, or draft on bank. The Corporation will not accept two-party checks, pay checks, or any other instrument of payment that is not made out to the Corporation. The Corporation reserves the right to require exact change and may refuse to accept payments made using more than \$1.00 in coins. The Corporation will not assess the credit card processing fee associated with Credit Card payments to those customers which make payment by credit card in accordance with consumer laws.

**16. *Due Dates, Delinquent Bills, and Service Disconnection Date.***

- a. The Corporation shall mail all bills on or about the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month. All bills are considered the responsibility of each person signing the Service Application and Agreement Form. All bills shall be due and payable upon receipt and are past due beyond the date indicated on the bill (allowing approximately twenty (20) days to pay, after which time a penalty shall be applied as described in Section G. A bill is delinquent if not paid on or before the past due date. Payments made by mail will be considered late if postmarked after the past due date. A seven day grace period may then be allowed for delayed payments prior to mailing of final notices. The seven (7) additional days shall begin on the day the final notice is deposited

with the U.S. Postal Service with sufficient postage. If the past due date for the regular or final billing is on a weekend or holiday, the past due date for payment purposes shall be the next day the Corporation office is open for business after said weekend or holiday. For all disputed payment deadlines, the date postmarked on each bill will determine the beginning of each billing cycle or final notice mailings.

- b. The board of directors or general manager may elect to not charge a late fee or disconnect fee in accordance with this Tariff during or after the occurrence of a natural disaster or other incident that impacts the property of members or interrupts the management and operation of the system.
- c. Upon written request, any residential customer 60 years of age or older who occupies the entire premises of a dwelling receiving water utility service from the Corporation shall receive extension of the past due date, without penalty. The extension shall not exceed 5 days beyond the usual 20 day payment period for a total of no more than 25 days from the date the bill is issued. The request may specify extension of the late payment periods for current and subsequent billings. (Utilities Code Sections 182.001 - 182.005) If this request originates from a tenant at a rental property the owner / member will be notified in writing of any extension request.

**17. Rules for Disconnection of Service.** The following describes the rules and conditions for disconnection of service. Notwithstanding any language to the contrary in the Service Application and Agreement Form, the Corporation may only discontinue service for the reasons set forth in this Section. In instances of nonpayment of violations by a Member who is not a water customer, the Corporation has the option to disconnect the water tap or take other appropriate actions.

- a. **Disconnection with Notice** – Water utility service may be disconnected for any of the following reasons after proper notification has been given.
  - 1) **Returned Checks** – The Corporation shall mail, via the U.S. Postal Service, a notice requiring redemption of the returned instrument within ten (10) days of the date of the notice to be made in the Corporation office. Redemption of the returned instrument shall be made by cash, money order, or certified check. Failure to meet these terms shall initiate disconnection of service. (see Miscellaneous Transaction Forms) Any such instruments returned as insufficient or non-negotiable for any reason for any two billing periods within a 12-month period shall be considered evidence of bad credit risk by the Corporation. The Member/Customer in violation shall be placed on a “cash-only” basis for a period of 12 months. **NOTE:** “cash only,” means certified check, money order, or cash.
  - 2) Failure to pay a delinquent account for utility service, failure to timely provide a deposit or other security under Section E 9 (i), or failure to comply with the terms of a deferred payment agreement (Miscellaneous Transaction Forms);
  - 3) Violation of the Corporation’s rules pertaining to the use of service in a manner which interferes with the service of others or the operation of non-standard equipment if a reasonable attempt has been made to notify the Member and the Member is provided with a reasonable opportunity to remedy the situation;
  - 4) Failure of the Member to comply with the terms of the Corporation’s Service Agreement, Tariff (including, where appropriate, Section H), Bylaws, or Special Contract provided that the Corporation has given notice of said failure to comply, and Member has failed to comply within a specified amount of time after notification.
  - 5) Failure to provide access to the meter under the terms of this Tariff or to property at which water service is received when there is reason to believe that a hazardous condition or policy violation exists for which access is necessary to verify.

- 6) Misrepresentation by any Applicant or Transferee of any fact on any form, document, or other agreement required to be executed by the Corporation.
- 7) Failure of Member to re-apply for service upon notification by the Corporation that Member no longer meets the terms of the service classification originally applied for under the original service application.
- 8) Failure to pay a delinquent account billed by the Corporation for water utility service provided by [Retail Public Utility] pursuant to the Corporation's Agreement with the [Retail Public Utility]. (See Miscellaneous Transaction Forms; 30 TAC 291.88(e), 291.87(g); Texas Water Code 13.147, 13.250(b)(2))
- 9) Cancellation of membership by Member on an account that the Member holds for water service to the Member's renter/lessee, even if the renter/lessee has kept the account balance current under an Alternate Billing Agreement. (Note: The cancellation of membership must be in writing and signed by the Member. CORPORATION ASSUMES NO LIABILITY TO RENTER/LESSEE; MEMBER IS SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR COMPLIANCE WITH, AND LIABILITY UNDER ANY FEDERAL, STATE OR LOCAL LAW CREATING OR PROTECTING RIGHTS OF RENTERS/LESSEES.)
- 10) Violation of any applicable regulation or pertaining to on-site sewage disposal systems if the Corporation has been requested in writing to disconnect service by the TCEQ or the TCEQ's designated representative under Chapter 366 of the Texas Health and Safety Code.
- 11) Failure to pay charges arising from service trip fee as defined in Section G 14., meter re-read fee, or meter read fee when customer on self-read plan failed to submit their meter reading.
- 12) Failure by a Customer/Member to pay for all repair or replacement costs resulting from the Customer/Member damaging system facilities including, but not limited to water or sewer lines, service taps, meter boxes, valves, or meters by engaging in activities such as property excavations, installment of a driveway or roadway requiring encasements, lowering or re-routing of lines or system components, or by any other action. The Corporation will provide the Customer/Member with notice detailing the extent of the damage, the location of the damage, the cost of repair, and whether the damage occurred on private property or on a public right-of-way. Failure to pay the cost of repair or replacement will result in the Customer's/Member's service being disconnected in accordance with the Disconnection with Notice Provisions in this Section. Service will remain disconnected until payment is received or an acceptable payment plan is approved.
- 13) Failure to disconnect or secure additional service tap(s) for an RV or other service connection (See E 25. of this Section) after notification by the Corporation of violation of the Prohibition of Multiple Connections.

**b. Disconnection Without Notice** – Water utility service may be disconnected without notice for any of the following conditions:

- 1) A known dangerous or hazardous condition exists for which service may remain disconnected for as long as the condition exists, including but not limited to a public health nuisance under Chapter 341.011 of the Health and Safety Code. If there is reason to believe a dangerous or hazardous condition exists, the Corporation may conduct a customer service inspection (CSI) to verify the hazardous condition and may notify the local county health office. The Corporation will disconnect without notice if the Member refuses to allow access for the purpose of confirming the existence of such condition

and/or removing the dangerous or hazardous condition (30 TAC 290.46(j) and 290.46(i)). Service will be restored when a CSI confirms no health hazard exists, the health hazard has been removed or repaired, or the health hazard has been isolated from the Corporation's water system by the installation of a backflow prevention device.

- 2) A line leak on the member's side of the meter is considered a potential hazardous condition under b(1). If the Corporation conducts a CSI and discovers that the line leak has created a hazardous condition, the Corporation will provide the member up to five (5) business days, or another time period determined reasonable under the circumstances, to repair the line prior to disconnection of service.
- 3) Service is connected without authority by a person who has not made application for service or who has reconnected service without authority following termination of service for nonpayment; and
- 4) In instances of tampering with the Corporation's meter or equipment, by-passing the meter or equipment, or other diversion of service.

**NOTE:** Where reasonable, given the nature of the reason for disconnection, a written statement providing notice of disconnection and the reason therefore shall be posted at the place of common entry or upon the front door of each affected residential unit as soon as possible after service has been disconnected.

- c. **Disconnection Prohibited** – Utility service may not be disconnected for any of the following reasons:
  - 1) Failure of the Member to pay for merchandise or charges for non-utility service provided by the Corporation, unless an agreement exists between the Applicant and the Corporation whereby the Member guarantees payment of non-utility service as a condition of service;
  - 2) Failure of the Member to pay for a different type or class of utility service unless a fee for such service is included in the same bill;
  - 3) Failure of the Member to pay charges arising from an underbilling occurring due to any misapplication of rates more than six (6) months prior to the current billing;
  - 4) Failure of the Member to pay the account of another Member as guarantor thereof, unless the Corporation has in writing the guarantee as a condition precedent to service;
  - 5) Failure of the Member to pay charges arising from an underbilling due to any faulty metering, unless the meter has been tampered with or unless such underbilling charges are due under the Inoperative Meters subsection E 21. of this tariff.
  - 6) Failure of the Member to pay estimated bill other than a bill rendered pursuant to an approved meter reading plan, unless the Corporation is unable to read the meter due to circumstances beyond its control.
- d. **Disconnection on Holidays and Weekends** – Unless a dangerous condition exists or the Member requests disconnection, service shall not be disconnected on a day, or on a day preceding a day, when personnel of the Corporation are not available to the public for the purpose of making collections and reconnecting service.
- e. **Disconnection Due to Utility Abandonment** – The Corporation may not abandon a Member or a Certificated Service Area without written notice to its Members and all similar neighboring utilities and approval from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.
- f. **Disconnection for Ill Customers** – The Corporation may not discontinue service to a delinquent residential Member or tenant permanently residing in an individually metered dwelling unit when that Member or tenant establishes that discontinuance of service will result in some person at that residence becoming seriously ill or more seriously ill if service is discontinued. To avoid disconnection under these circumstances, the Member or tenant

must provide a written statement from a physician to the Corporation prior to the stated date of disconnection. Service may be disconnected in accordance with Subsection (a) of this Section if the next month's bill and the past due bill are not paid by the due date of the next month's bill, unless the Member or tenant enters into a Deferred Payment Agreement (see Miscellaneous Transaction Forms). The Corporation shall provide notice to an owner of rental property in the event a tenant requests service not be discontinued due to illness as per this subsection.

- f. **Disconnection of Temporary Service** – When an applicant with a Temporary service fails to comply with the conditions stated in the Service Application and Agreement Form or other rules of this Tariff service may be terminated with notice.

18. **Billing Cycle Changes.** The Corporation reserves the right to change its billing cycles if the workload requires such practice. After a billing period has been changed, the billings shall be sent on the new change date unless otherwise determined by the Corporation.
19. **Back-billing.** The Corporation may back-bill a Member for up to four (4) years (48 months) for meter error, misapplied meter multiplier, incorrect meter readings, or error in computing a Member's bill. Failure to pay the most recent six (6) months billing will result in disconnection of service. Back-billing shall not extend beyond current Membership except in cases involving the transfer of a Membership conditioned upon payment of delinquent obligations by the Transferee, as provided in Section E 9.c.
20. **Disputed Bills.** In the event of a dispute between the Member and the Corporation regarding any bill, the Corporation shall forthwith make and conduct an investigation as shall be required by the particular case, and report the results in writing thereof to the Member. All disputes under this Subsection must be submitted to the Corporation, in writing, prior to the due date posted on said bill except in cases involving the transfer of a Membership conditioned on payment of delinquent obligations by the Transferee, as provided under Section E 9.c.
21. **Inoperative Meters.** Water meters found inoperative will be repaired or replaced within a reasonable time. If a meter is found not to register for any period, unless by-passed or tampered with, the Corporation shall make a charge for units used, but not metered, for a period not to exceed six (6) months, based on amounts used under similar conditions during the period preceding or subsequent thereto, or during corresponding periods in previous years.
22. **Bill Adjustment.**
- a. **Due to Meter Error.** The Corporation shall test any Member's meter upon written request of the Member. In the event the meter tests within the accuracy standards of The American Water Works Association, a test fee as prescribed in Section G of this Tariff shall be imposed. In the event the test results indicate that the meter is faulty or inaccurate, the test fee shall be waived, the meter shall be calibrated or replaced, and a billing adjustment may be made as far back as six (6) months but not extending beyond current Membership except in cases involving the transfer of a Membership conditioned on payment of delinquent obligations by the Transferee, as provided under Subsection 9 c. The billing adjustment shall be made to the degree of the meter's inaccuracy as determined by the test. The Member shall complete a Meter Test Request Form prior to the test. (See Misc. Transaction Forms.)
  - b. **Due to Estimated Billing.** If the Corporation has estimated usage because the Corporation is unable to access the meter due to circumstances beyond the Corporation's control, such as a natural disaster; or because access is hindered or denied by a Member, the Corporation shall

adjust the bill once access has been regained and actual usage is determined.

**23. Meter Tampering and Diversion.**

- a. For purposes of this Section, the term "Tampering" shall mean meter-tampering, by-passing, or diversion of the Corporation's service equipment, or other instances of diversion, including:
  1. removing a locking or shut-off device used by the Corporation to discontinue service,
  2. physically disorienting the meter,
  3. attaching objects to the meter to divert service or to by-pass,
  4. inserting objects into the meter,
  5. other electrical and mechanical means of tampering with, by-passing, or diverting service, and
  6. preventing the supply from being correctly registered by a metering device due to adjusting the valve so that flow is reduced below metering capability.

The burden of proof of Tampering is on the Corporation. Photographic evidence or any other reliable and credible evidence may be used; however, any evidence shall be accompanied by a sworn affidavit by the Corporation's staff when any action regarding Tampering is initiated. A court finding of Tampering may be used instead of photographic or other evidence, if applicable. Unauthorized users of services of the Corporation shall be prosecuted to the extent allowed by law under the Texas Penal Code Section 28.03.

- b. If the Corporation determines under subsection (a) that Tampering has occurred, the Corporation shall charge the offending party the total actual loss to the Corporation, including the cost of repairs, replacement of damaged facilities, and lost water revenues.
- c. In addition to actual damages charged under subsection (b), the Corporation may assess a penalty against the offending party. The penalty shall not exceed six (6) times the Base Rate.

**Note:** For purposes of this Section, "offending party" means the person who committed the Tampering. So, for example, in an owner/tenant situation where the tenant committed the Tampering, the Corporation cannot charge a penalty to the owner.

**24. Meter Relocation.** Relocation of services shall be allowed by the Corporation provided that:

- a. The relocation is limited to the existing property designated to receive service;
- b. A current easement for the proposed location has been granted to the Corporation; and
- c. The Member pays the actual cost of relocation plus administrative fees.

**25. Prohibition of Multiple Connections To A Single Tap.**

- a. No more than one (1) residential, commercial, or industrial service connection is allowed per meter. Any unauthorized sub-metering or diversion of service shall be considered a Multiple Connection and subject to disconnection of service. If the Corporation has sufficient reason to believe a Multiple Connection exists, the Corporation shall discontinue service under the Disconnection with Notice provisions of this Tariff for a first violation and for subsequent violations service will be disconnected without notice in accordance with E 17. b. (See Sample Application Packet RUS-TX Bulletin 1780-9 (Rev. 01/09))
- b. For purposes of this section, the following definitions shall apply:

- 1) A "multiple connection" is the connection to any portion of a member's system that is connected to a primary delivery point already servicing one residence, one commercial or industrial facility of a water line serving another residence or commercial or industrial facility. Water lines to outbuildings, barns or other accessory structures shall not be considered a multiple connection if: (i) those structures are located on the same tract as the primary delivery point and (ii) such structures are not used as a residence or as a commercial or industrial facility.
  - 2) A "primary delivery point" shall mean the physical location of a meter tap that is installed in accordance with this Tariff and applicable law and which provides water service to the residence or commercial or industrial facility of a member.
  - 3) A "residence" shall mean any structure which is being used for human habitation, which may include kitchen and bathroom facilities or other evidence of habitation as defined by the Corporation.
  - 4) "Commercial" facility shall mean any structure or combination of structures at which any business, trade, occupation, profession, or other commercial activity is conducted. A member that utilizes water within their residence or property for commercial purposes may be required to obtain a separate meter. A business conducted within a member's residence or property that does not require water in addition to that provided to the member's residence shall not be considered a separate commercial facility.
- c. The corporation agrees to allow members in good standing to share water usage with a visitor on their property with a recreation vehicle (RV) or travel trailer for a period of no longer than three months. If the recreation vehicle/travel trailer is being used for a permanent residence, this Tariff requires that an additional meter installation and membership be purchased. If the member routinely has more than one visitor at a time with recreation vehicles or travel trailers or has multiple visitors throughout the year, the corporation may require that a second or additional meter(s) be purchased. The member must submit a written request to the corporation's business office at least 5 business days prior to sharing corporation water with a visitor. The corporation has the right to refuse or deny the shared usage for any reason. The corporation also has the right to inspect the premises for any potential cross-contamination issues as outlined in the Customer Service Inspection requirements and to ensure that the meter is properly sized for the additional usage at the time of total peak water demand. These requirements pertain to visitors ONLY. No commercial usage where fees for water are charged is allowed. If a member is found to violate these conditions, the member will be sent a letter of notice stating that water service will be cut off in ten days if the situation is not corrected.

## 27. Member's Responsibility.

- a. The Member shall provide access to the meter or sewer tap location as per the easement and service agreement. If access to the meter is hindered or denied preventing the reading of the meter, an estimated bill shall be rendered to the Member for the month; and a notice shall be sent to the effect that access could not be gained. If access is denied for three (3) consecutive months after proper notification to the Member, then service shall be discontinued and the meter removed with no further notice.
- b. The Member shall be responsible for compliance with all utility, local, and state codes, requirements, and regulations concerning on-site service and plumbing facilities.
  - 1) All connections shall be designed to ensure against on-site sewage contamination, back-flow or siphonage into the Corporation's water supply. In particular, livestock water troughs shall be plumbed above the top of the trough with air space between the discharge and the water level in the trough. (30 TAC 290.46, Health & Safety Code

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- 2) The use of pipe and pipe fittings that contain more than 8.0% lead or solder and flux that contain more than 0.2% lead is prohibited for any plumbing installation or repair of any residential or non-residential facility providing water for human consumption and connected to the Corporation's facilities. Customer service pipelines shall be installed by the applicant. (30 TAC 290.46 )
- 3) All pipe and fittings used by the customer to convey sewage from its source to the sewer line must be a minimum of D-3034, SDR-35 or equivalent, 4-inch diameter pipe. No DWV (drain waste and vent) pipe or fittings will be allowed. All joints must be watertight and pipe must be installed to recommended grade. All non-household sewer customers who have potential for dirt, grit, sand, grease, oil, or similar substances must install and maintain a trap ahead of their entrance to the Corporation's sewer collection piping. A double cleanout is required at the property line and recommended at the house. The Corporation may impose other site-specific requirements. All sewer and potable water service pipeline installations must be a minimum of nine feet apart and meet all applicable plumbing standards for crossings, etc.

## Requirements for Traps:

- (A) Discharges requiring a trap include but are not limited to:
  - (i) grease or waste containing grease in amounts that will impede or stop the flow in the public sewers;
  - (ii) oil, flammable wastes;
  - (iii) sand, and other harmful ingredients.
- (B) Any person responsible for discharges requiring a trap shall, at his own expense, and as required by the approving authority:
  - (i) Provide equipment and facilities of a type and capacity approved by the approving authority;
  - (ii) locate the trap in a manner that provides ready and easy accessibility for cleaning and inspection; and
  - (iii) maintain the trap in effective operating condition.
- (C) Approving Authority Review and Approval (By the Board of Directors or Agency):
  - (i) If pretreatment or control is required, the approving authority shall review and approve design and installation of equipment and processes.
  - (ii) The design and installation of equipment and processes must conform to all applicable statutes, codes, ordinances and other laws.
  - (iii) Any person responsible for discharges requiring pretreatment, flow equalizing or other facilities shall provide and maintain the facilities in effective operating condition at his own expense.

Service shall be discontinued without further notice when installations of new facilities or repair of existing facilities are found to be in violation of this regulation until such time as the violation is corrected.

- c. A Member owning more than one (1) Membership shall keep all payments current on all accounts. Failure to maintain current status on all accounts shall be enforceable as per Service Application and Agreement executed by the Member.
- d. The Corporation's ownership and maintenance responsibility of water supply and metering equipment shall end at the meter or other service equipment. Therefore, all water usage registering upon and/or damages occurring to the metering equipment owned and maintained by the Corporation shall be subject to charges as determined by the Corporation's Tariff as amended from time to time by the Board of Directors.
- e. The Corporation shall require each Member to have a cut-off valve within two feet of the

meter on the Member's side of the meter for purposes of isolating the Member's service pipeline and plumbing facilities from the Corporation's water pressure. The valve shall meet AWWA standards (a ball valve is preferred). The Member's use of the Corporation's curb stop or other similar valve for such purposes is prohibited. Any damage to the Corporation's equipment shall be subject to service charges. (This cut-off valve may be installed as a part of the original meter installation by the Corporation.)

- f. The member is required to notify the system 48 hours prior to digging or excavation activities along or near water/sewer lines and appurtenances.