

RESOLUTION NO. 8681

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF REDLANDS ADOPTING A REVISED POLICY ON THE DISCONTINUATION OF RESIDENTIAL WATER SERVICE FOR NON-PAYMENT AND RESCINDING RESOLUTION NO. 8647

WHEREAS, in 2019, the City of Redlands adopted Resolution 8048, establishing a Residential Water Service Discontinuation Policy in compliance with SB 998, which included provisions for an appeal process for disputed water bills; and

WHEREAS, in 2023, SB 3 was adopted, expanding protections for residents by requiring water providers to offer alternative payment plans to all customers unable to pay their water bills; and

WHEREAS, on January 21, 2025, the City adopted Resolution 8647 to reflect these expanded protections, rescinding Resolution 8048; however, the revision inadvertently reverted the appeals process to an outdated version inconsistent with the Redlands Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, staff has corrected this policy language by reinstating the appeals process originally adopted in 2019, ensuring consistency with the Redlands Municipal Code and maintaining a structured, final review process for disputed water bills; and

WHEREAS, to ensure accessibility, the updated policy will be translated into Spanish, Chinese, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and Korean and made available on the City's website.

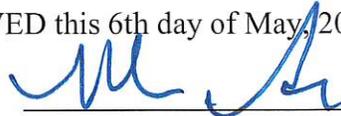
NOW, THEREFORE, BEIT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF REDLANDS AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The City Council hereby adopts the Discontinuation of Residential Water Service for Non-Payment Policy attached hereto as Exhibit "A".

Section 2. This Resolution and the policy established by this Resolution shall become effective on the date it is approved by the City Council.

Section 3. Resolution No. 8647 is hereby rescinded.

ADOPTED, SIGNED AND APPROVED this 6th day of May, 2025.



Mario Saucedo, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
Jeanne Donaldson, City Clerk

**EXHIBIT "A"**  
**POLICY ON DISCONTINUATION OF**  
**RESIDENTIAL WATER SERVICE FOR NON-PAYMENT**

Notwithstanding any other policy of the City, this Policy on Discontinuation of Residential Water Service for Non-Payment shall apply to the City's discontinuation of residential water service for non-payment under the provisions set forth herein. In the event of any conflict between this Policy and any other policy of the City, this Policy shall prevail.

- I. Application of Policy; Contact Telephone Number:** This policy enumerates City's administrative actions for the collection of delinquent accounts, including notifications, fee assessments and discontinuation of residential water service. This policy will be made available to the public on the City's website and translated into the following languages: Spanish, Chinese, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and Korean. The City's Utility Billing Customer Service Division can be contacted by phone at (909) 798-7516 to discuss options for averting discontinuation of residential water service for nonpayment under the terms of this policy.

This policy shall apply only to residential water service for non-payment and the City existing policies and procedures shall continue to apply to commercial and industrial water service accounts.

**II. Discontinuation of Residential Water Service for Non-Payment:**

- A. Rendering and Payment of Bills: Bills for water service are presented to each customer on a bimonthly basis (six times per year). Bills for service are due and payable upon presentation and become overdue and subject to 1) a late charge as specified in RMC 13.12.020 (B), and 2) discontinuation of service if not paid within sixty (60) days from the date of the bill. There are several methods of payment accepted including cash, checks, debit and credit cards. Various payment options are available and can be found on our website. However, it is the customer's responsibility to ensure that payments are received by the City according to the timelines prescribed by RMC 13.12.020.

B. Bills will be computed as follows:

1. Meters will be read at regular intervals for the preparation of periodic bills and as required for the preparation of opening bills, closing bills, and special bills.

2. Bills for metered service will show the meter reading for the current and previous meter reading period for which the bill is rendered, the number of units, date, and days of service for the current meter reading.
3. Customer bills shall be paid in legal tender of the United States of America. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the City shall have the right to refuse any payment of such billings in coin.

C. Delinquent Accounts: Delinquent accounts are identified as any account that remains unpaid (and without having previously made payment arrangements or established an alternative payment schedule) by close of business 25 days after the date of the customer's bill.

1. Late Charge: Any and all late charges will be assessed by the City onto the water service customer's account as prescribed in RMC 13.12.020.
2. Overdue Notice: The City shall not discontinue water service for non-payment until payment by the customer has been delinquent for at least sixty (60) days. The City will make a responsible, good faith effort to contact the customer in writing at least seven (7) business days before disconnection of water services for nonpayment.

If the customer's address is not the address of the property to which the service is provided, the City shall mail a second notice to the service address at least ten (10) business days before disconnection of water services for nonpayment, addressed to "Occupant." The Past Due Reminder Notice and Final Notice shall contain the following:

- a) Customer's name and address
- b) Amount of delinquency
- c) Date by which payment or arrangement for payment must be made in order to avoid discontinuation of service
- d) Description of the process to apply for a payment plan
- e) Description of the procedure to dispute or appeal a bill
- f) City phone number and the web address to the City's written Policy on Discontinuation of Residential Water Service for Non-Payment

The City may alternatively provide notice to the customer of the impending discontinuation of service by telephone. If that notice is provided by telephone, the City shall offer to provide the customer with a copy of this policy and also

offer to discuss with the customer the options for alternative payments, as described in Section III, below, and the procedures for review and appeal of the customer's bill, as described in Section IV, below.

3. Unable to Contact Customer: If the City is not able to contact the customer by written notice (e.g., a mailed notice is returned as undeliverable) or by telephone, the City will make a good faith effort to visit the residence and leave or make other arrangements to place in a conspicuous location, a notice of imminent discontinuation of service for non-payment, and a copy of this Policy.
4. Turn-Off Deadline: Payment for water service charges must be received by the City no later than 4:00 p.m. on the date specified in the Past Due Reminder Notice and Final Notice. Postmarks are not acceptable.

D. Conditions Prohibiting Discontinuation: The City shall not discontinue residential water service if the customer is willing to enter into an alternative payment schedule, consistent with the provisions of Section III, below.

E. Landlord-Tenant Scenario: The below procedures apply to individually metered detached single-family dwellings, multi-unit residential structures and mobile home parks where the property owner or manager is the customer of record.

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

The written notice must also inform the tenants/occupants that they have the right to become customers to whom the service will be billed (see Subdivision 2, below), without having to pay any of the delinquent amounts.

2. Tenants/Occupants Becoming Customers: The City is not required to make service available to the tenants/occupants unless each tenant/occupant agrees to the terms and conditions for service and meets the City's requirements and rules.

- a. However, if (i) one or more of the tenants/occupants assumes responsibility for subsequent charges to the account to the City's satisfaction, or (ii) there is a physical means to selectively discontinue service to those tenants/occupants who have not met the City's requirements, then the City may make service available only to those tenants/occupants who have met the requirements.
- b. If prior service for a particular length of time is a condition to establish credit with the City, then residence at the property and proof of prompt payment of rent for that length of time, to the City's satisfaction, is a satisfactory equivalent.
- c. If a tenant/occupant becomes a customer of the City and the tenant's/occupant's rent payments include charges for residential water service where those charges are not separately stated, the tenant/occupant may deduct from future rent payments all reasonable charges paid to the City during the prior payment period.

**III. Alternative Payment Arrangements:** For any customer who is unable to pay for services within the normal payment period may request an alternative payment arrangement consisting of the amortization of the unpaid balance under Subdivision (A), below.

A. Amortization: Any customer who is unable to pay for water service within the City's normal payment period may enter into an amortization plan with the City on the following terms:

1. Term: The customer shall pay the unpaid balance, less twenty percent (20%) down payment due immediately, over a period not to exceed twelve (12) months. The unpaid balance less the 20% down payment shall be divided into five (5) installments to be billed bi-monthly (every two months) for twelve (12) months and that amount shall be added to the customer's ongoing bi-monthly bills for water service. The initial payment of 20 percent represents the down payment, with the first installment beginning with the customer's next billing cycle, which may be in the same week installments were initiated. If the amount due is greater than \$3,000, a payment plan may be granted, according to the same payment terms above, but for a longer repayment period in excess of twelve (12) months, but under no circumstances longer than eighteen (18) months at the discretion of and approval by the City Manager.

2. Down Payment: For any approved amortization plan, a twenty percent (20%) down payment of the unpaid balance as calculated at the time of entering into a payment arrangement with the City will be due and payable immediately as a condition of entering into a payment arrangement.
3. Compliance with Plan: The customer must comply with the amortization plan and remain current as charges accrue in each subsequent billing period. Where the customer fails to comply with the terms of the amortization plan for sixty (60) days or more, or fails to pay the customer's current service charges for sixty (60) days or more, the City may discontinue water service to the customer's service address at least five (5) business days after the City posts at the customer's residence a final notice of its intent to discontinue service.
4. Payment Priority: The customer is required to keep up with new and current charges along with the payment plan.
5. Restrictions: The customer may not request further payment arrangements of any subsequent unpaid charges while paying delinquent charges pursuant to any other payment arrangement.
6. Default on Payment Arrangement: If a customer defaults on an existing payment arrangement, the remaining balance must be paid in full. Once a payment arrangement is defaulted, the balance is no longer eligible to be restructured under a new payment arrangement.

**IV. Appeals**: The procedure to be used to appeal or contest the amount set forth in any bill for residential water service is as follows, in accordance with RMC 13.12.070, 13.16.030 and 13.04.010:

- A. Disputed Bills: In the event of a complaint by a customer that his or her water bill is excessive, a reread of the meter shall be made and a check shall be made to determine in particular if there are leaks in the meter. Should no leak in such meter be found, then, upon request of the customer, the meter shall be removed and be subject to a test upon it as set forth in RMC 13.16.030 and section (B) Meter Testing below. In the event that meter tests within the approved limitations, and the customer continues to question the water bill, a personal investigation of said premises served by the meter shall be made by the water superintendent or his or her appointed representative. Should such

investigation find no reason to adjust said bill, he or she shall refer the disputed bill to the Board for a final ruling.

- B. Meter Testing: When the accuracy of a water meter is questioned, the City, upon request from the customer, will cause an official test of the meter to be made for a charge as set forth by resolution. The meter will be tested on variable rates of delivery and if the average registration is more than two percent (2%) in excess of actual quantity of water passing through the meter, the City shall refund to the customer the overcharge based on the test, for the prior twelve (12) months, unless it can be shown that the error was due to some cause for which the date can be fixed. In the latter case, the overcharge shall be computed back and not beyond such times. In the event the accuracy of the meter is determined to be in error, then all testing and meter replacement charges shall be at the City's expense.
  
- C. Board: For the purpose of serving as a board to which customers may refer their disputed bills for a final ruling, the Board shall consist of the Assistant City Manager and two (2) City directors, exclusive of those directors that oversee Finance and Municipal Utilities and Engineering, as from time to time appointed by the City Manager. Board rulings are not subject to appeal.
  
- D. Appeal Hearing: Following receipt of a complaint or a request for an investigation, a hearing date shall be set by the Board. After evaluation of the evidence provided by the customer and the information on file with the City concerning the water charges in question, the Board shall render a decision as to the accuracy of the water charges and shall provide the appealing customer with a brief written summary of the decision.
  - 1. If water charges are determined to be incorrect, a corrected invoice will be provided and payment of the revised charges will be due within ten (10) days of the invoice date for revised charges. If the revised charges remain unpaid for more than sixty (60) days after the corrected invoice is provided, water service will be disconnected, on the next regular working day after expiration of that sixty (60) day period; provided that the City shall provide the customer with the Overdue Notice in accordance with Section II(C)(2), above. Water service will only be restored upon full payment of all outstanding water charges, penalties, and any and all applicable reconnection charges.
    - a. If the water charges in question are determined to be correct, the water charges are due and payable at the time the Board's decision is rendered.

- b. In the event the charges are not paid in full within sixty (60) days after the original billing date, then the City shall provide with the Overdue Notice in accordance with Section II(C)(2), above, and may proceed in potentially discontinuing service to the customer's property.
- c. Any overcharges will be reflected as a credit on the next regular bill to the customer, or refunded directly to the customer, at the sole discretion of the City.
- d. Water service to any customer shall not be discontinued at any time during which the customer's appeal to the Board is pending.
- e. The Board's decision is final, binding, and not appealable.

V. **Restoration of Service:** In order to resume or continue service that has been discontinued by the City due to non-payment, the customer may be required to post a pre-payment deposit to re-establish the customer's public services account in the event any previous prepayments have already been applied. In addition, the customer is responsible for all bills, fees and charges.

- a. The City will set a disconnection of service fee at no more than fifty dollars (\$50), but not to exceed the actual cost of disconnection if it is less. Disconnection fees shall be subject to an annual adjustment for changes in the Consumer Price Index beginning January 1, 2021. For the reconnection of residential service during nonoperational hours, the City shall set a reconnection of service fee, which shall be combined with the disconnection of service fee, and the two combined shall not be more than one hundred fifty dollars (\$150), but not to exceed the actual cost if it is less. Nonoperational hours reconnection fees, including the disconnection service fee, shall be subject to an annual adjustment for changes in the Consumer Price Index beginning January 1, 2021.

The City will endeavor to make such reconnection as soon as practicable as a convenience to the customer. The City shall make the reconnection no later than the end of the next regular working day following the customer's request and payment of all outstanding water charges, penalties, and any and all applicable disconnection/reconnection charges up to and including pre-payment deposits.

I, Jeanne Donaldson, City Clerk of the City of Redlands, hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly adopted by the City Council at a regular meeting thereof held on the 6th day of May, 2025, by the following vote:

AYES: Councilmembers Barich, Tejada, Davis, Shaw; Mayor Saucedo

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:



Jeanne Donaldson, City Clerk