

**To the Mayor and Members of the City Council****September 19, 2023**

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SUBJECT: MYH2O PORTAL CUSTOMER COMMUNICATIONS

The Fort Worth Water Utility is about to take some significant steps in its MyH2O program that will impact customers not yet registered on the MyH2O portal. This informal report outlines the communications planned over the next several weeks to encourage a smooth transition of remaining residential and small commercial ("Mass Market") customers over to the portal by October 23, and to make the portal available to large commercial and industrial ("Enterprise") customers by the end of October.

Following the successful exchange of some 275,000 water meters to remote read meters, the MyH2O portal was launched to residential customers in 2022. This portal provides residential customers the ability to view their hourly water usage, set up and receive alerts, and more. It provides a secure means for customers to access and manage their account information with enhanced choices for receiving and paying bills, and selecting their preferred methods of communicating with the Utility, such as by mobile app, email, or text. Sixteen months later through continuous communication with our customers, and well above industry acceptance rates, about 40 percent, or 113,000, of our customers are regularly using the portal.

During the multi-year deployment of the MyH2O program, the Utility transitioned its e-payment processor used for all water, wastewater, sanitation and storm water charges to Paymentus. At that time, Paymentus established a web payment presence for Fort Worth Water customers, enabling them to view bills and make online payments. When the MyH2O portal was launched in 2022, customers were not required to register and could continue to process scheduled payments through the Paymentus platform. While Paymentus will remain our behind-the-scenes processor, direct access to that payment site will no longer be available for any customers once the Enterprise portal launches in late October.

All of our residential and small commercial customers wanting to pay online, make a one-time payment, or use auto draft will need to be registered on the MyH2O portal by October 23. Customers who enjoy paying in person, by phone (IVR), or by mail can continue to do so.

Large commercial and industrial customers who are currently using the Paymentus site and who wish to continue paying online or desire access to the MyH2O portal and its many enhanced features will be required to register for and begin using the portal immediately upon deployment, planned for the end of October.

Contacts for Payment Support

Approximately 60,000 residential customers and 7,900 commercial and industrial customers remain active on the Paymentus platform. Staff will begin communicating immediately with these customers, as noted on the following page, using the attached communications plan.

Despite our best efforts, we realize some customers will not see these notices. Customers experiencing payment issues may ultimately call or email the City Council offices. Please refer these customers to the Utility's Contact Center at 817-392-4477 so that our staff may resolve any issues. Customer contact information can also be sent via email to wpe@fortworthtexas.gov.



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- Residential customers on the Paymentus payment site, **but not on autopay**, will be provided a link to transition to the MyH2O portal when they log onto Paymentus. They need to transition by October 23 or they will lose access to their payment history and will be required to re-register in the MyH2O portal. These customers will be sent a mailer as well as weekly emails.
- Residential customers on the Paymentus payment site **and using the autopay feature** will also be provided a link to transition to the MyH2O portal by October 23. If they do not, the autopay will be canceled and the customer will need to re-register and re-establish autopay functionality in the MyH2O portal. These customers will be sent a mailer as well as weekly emails.
- Residential customers on Paymentus **with no email address on file, either on autopay or not**, will receive the same message as above to transition, but will be sent mailers only.
- All enterprise customers on Paymentus will not have a transition option. All of these customers will need to register on the enterprise MyH2O portal when it goes live in late October. Emails and mailers will be sent to these customers.

Should you have any questions about the MyH2O portal communications, please contact Jerry Pressley, Assistant Water Director at 817-392-8257, or Chris Harder, Water Director, at 817-392-5020.

David Cooke
City Manager

Paymentus/SEW Customer Transition Communication Plan

| Step & Time | Mass Market (Residential) | Enterprise (Commercial) |
|--|--|--|
| Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language is updated on social media on previous posts from saying *new* portal to now saying “have you signed up?” and “reminder” language <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Boosts will go in “round robin” style • Banner is added to Paymentus website instructing customers to transition to MyH2O portal • Banner on Water’s homepage instructing individuals to transition to MyH2O portal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webpage created for enterprise to promote portal benefits and provide instructions (accessible to businesses on the homepage after clicking “Businesses-Pay Water Bill”) |
| Postcards Begin Sept. 20 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postcard sent to mailing address of residential/mass market customers still on the Paymentus payment site telling them they need to transition to new portal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Customers are told to transition by Oct. 23 • Emails to residential customers still on Paymentus will start to distribute weekly, until they transition to the MyH2O portal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First round of emails sent to enterprise customers telling them to transition starting Oct. 30 & directing them to enterprise info on the webpage |
| Postcards Again Sept. 25 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous round robin of social media posts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First round of postcards sent to mailing address of enterprise customers telling them to transition starting Oct. 30 & directing them to enterprise info on the webpage |
| Continuing Communication Oct. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emails to residential/mass market customers continue to be sent weekly • Increase social media push - round robin #2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second round of emails sent to enterprise customers telling them “the date is almost here” and they need to transition starting Oct. 30 |
| Continuing Communication Oct. 9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emails to residential/mass market customers continue to be sent weekly | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second postcard stressing that the transition date is soon approaching |
| Final Warning Oct. 16 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second postcard round (if needed) to mass market stressing that they have to transition now or re-register | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third postcard to enterprise sent as needed stressing the transition date is soon approaching |
| Transition Deadline Oct. 23 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deadline for residential customers to transition to MyH2O portal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No impact to enterprise customers |
| GO LIVE Oct. 30 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Switch is “flipped” and residential and enterprise can no longer log in to Paymentus. Everyone must be on MyH2O portal. | |