

**To the Mayor and Members of the City Council****June 16, 2020**

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**SUBJECT: REINSTATEMENT OF WATER BILL DELINQUENCY PROCESSES
AND FEES**

On March 13, Fort Worth Water temporarily stopped the process of disconnecting active residential, commercial and industrial accounts for non-payment. This action was taken to limit the impact to customers experiencing financial hardship due to the COVID-19 event and acknowledged the importance of active water service for hygiene and sanitation during the pandemic. The move was consistent with guidance provided by the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to non-municipal water systems, which temporarily suspending rules that allow a utility to disconnect service for non-payment. The PUC suspension expired May 15, 2020. In addition to temporarily halting non-pay disconnects, the Utility suspended the application of late fees on its bills. This measure applied to bills with due dates from April 1 through June 30.

Assessment of the late payment fee will resume in July and will be applied to bills with a due date on or after July 1st. The city will return to normal business operations, which include interruption of service for non-payment after Labor Day. This will give customers an opportunity to address any outstanding balances prior to the reimplementation.

Customer's experiencing a continuing financial hardship due to the COVID-19 event are encouraged to call 817-392-4477 between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. to make payment arrangements. Referrals are being made to the Community Action Partners program so that eligible customers can apply for utility assistance funding under the Emergency Household Assistance Program, as well as through the City of Fort Worth's donation-based utility bill assistance program.

As the City continues to reopen facilities and return to normal operations, Water Customer Relations staff will be available in the City Annex to accept all forms of payment and to assist customers with payment plans in person beginning June 29, 2020.

Should you have any questions, or require additional information, please contact Chris Harder, Water Director at 817-392-8207.

David Cooke
City Manager