



**EMERGENCY POLICY AND PROCEDURE**  
**COLLECTION AND ENFORCEMENT OF UTILITY BILLS**

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to allow for waiving of water and sewer utility past due penalties and postponement of utility shutoffs during the Declaration of Emergency, declared by the Mayor of the City of Napavine, WA on March 18, 2020, related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

**SCOPE**

This policy applies to all City of Napavine utility customers who are currently in arrears or who fall into arrears during Declared Public Health Emergency.

**DEFINITIONS**

“Declared Public Health Emergency” or “Declaration of Emergency” means a Public Health Emergency that has been formally declared by the City of Napavine.

“Public Health Emergency” means an occurrence or imminent threat of illness or health condition, caused by bio terrorism, epidemic or pandemic disease, or a novel and highly fatal infectious agent or biological toxin, that poses a substantial risk of a significant number of fatalities or incidents of permanent or long-term disability.

“Pandemic” means a disease that is prevalent over a region, a country or the world.

**POLICY GUIDELINES**

It is the policy of the City of Napavine to take all appropriate and necessary measures to address a public health emergency. Protecting the community and City staff is a top priority. This policy establishes actions that the City will take during a Declared Public Health Emergency related to the collection and enforcement of City of Napavine bills of water and sewer.

During a declared Public Health Emergency, it is the policy of the City of Napavine to postpone all utility service shutoffs for the duration of the emergency. It is also the policy of the City to suspend late fees for the duration of the declared emergency.

This policy does not suspend regular bi-monthly utility charges for water and sewer utilities.

**PROCEDURE**

The following procedures are established to allow for customers who are in arrears or who may fall into arrears during the Declared Public Health Emergency to continue receiving water and sewer utility service, without penalty, during a declared public health emergency.

**Notification**

- A. The Utility Billing Department will be notified when a Declaration of Emergency related to public health is proclaimed.
- B. The City will post notice of the policy, including an explanation that all past due amounts are still owed, but that during the duration of the declared emergency additional past due penalties and shutoffs will be suspended.
- C. It shall be the responsibility of those customers whose accounts are in arrears to contact the Utility Billing Department to request payment arrangements for all past due amounts. Payment arrangements may consist of specified date by which all past due amounts must be paid, or payments made on an established, mutually agreed upon, schedule.

**Post-Emergency Procedures**

- A. After the Declaration of Emergency has been lifted, the Utility Billing Department will review those accounts in the arrears under established payment arrangement procedures. Accommodations for further payment arrangements option may be reviewed by the Mayor or Council on a case-by-case basis.
- B. Regular penalty and shutoff timelines, as outline in Napavine Municipal Code Chapter 13.12, will be re-established within thirty (30) days following the Declaration of Emergency being lifted.

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Shawn O'Neill, Mayor

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