

Best Practices for Utility Billing Customers

Utilities, to some extent, can be a controllable expense for both commercial and residential utility customers. With winter and the holidays ahead, the City of Red Bud has several cost saving measures and utility account management recommendations to assist customers and ensure that they are utilizing services that may be beneficial to them. Additionally, there are several ways to pay your monthly bill to avoid the risk of disconnection.

The following are some best practices to consider for anyone who has a utility billing account with the city:

Cost Saving Measures

- Control your thermostat – programmable thermostats can help regulate temperatures during times that no one is home
- Turn the temperature down on your hot water heater
- Be sure to change your filters regularly
- Change out incandescent bulbs for LED bulbs and/or install motion sensors for light switches
- Unplug things that are not being used
- Wash clothes in cold water to use less energy on heating water
- Improve the homes insulation if possible
- Check appliances and eliminate any water leaks

Utility Account Management Recommendations

- Bills are mailed on or about the 15th of every month. If you do not receive a bill in a timely manner, contact City Hall for your balance, due date, or a reprint of your bill
- Enroll in the Budget Billing Program. Sign Up Months are April and September each year with the cycles being effective May and October respectively. The program charges the same amount each month based on usage for a particular household. Budget billing amounts are reviewed and adjusted semi-annually. Customers can see the actual amount owed on the bill each month and can pay additional money if interested.
- Enroll in the Auto-Debit Program. Bills are sent only to notify customers of the amount to be automatically debited from the provided bank account on the 22nd of each month. Bill indicates 'Auto Pay on the 22nd – Do Not Pay'. The form to enroll can be found on the city's website or at City Hall.
- Pay your bill by the last business day of the month to avoid 5% in late fees

Payment Methods / Options

- Enroll in the Auto Debit Program (details outlined above)
- Place your payment in the utility payment drop box located at the south end of the City Hall parking lot. Please do not put cash in drop box and include your payment stub with your payment
- Bring your payment of cash, credit card, check, or money order to the city hall lobby during normal business hours.
- Mail a check via USPS. Please be aware of delivery delays if using this method to ensure that your payment will arrive on time.

- Online banking through your financial institution. Please be aware that some banks hold payments and cut batch checks to be mailed only certain days of the month. This creates delays in the delivery of payments so be sure to verify that your payment will be delivered on time.
- On the city's website under Forms, Services and Payment Center, 'To Pay Your Utility Bill, Click Here'. Please be advised that processing fees will apply.
- Contact City Hall to make a payment over the phone using your debit or credit card. Please be advised that processing fees will apply.
- Drop payments with stubs at any bank in Red Bud as long as the payment is being made on time.

Additional Recommendations to Avoid Late Fees / Disconnection

- Utilize the informed delivery service through the United States Postal Service so you can be notified ahead of time that your bill is arriving. This is a particularly useful service to avoid mishaps of a bill not getting paid and/or if you travel. It allows you to view utility bills and disconnect notices sooner and can help avoid disconnection/interruption in services.
- Even if the postal service fails to deliver your bill, payment is still due by the end of the month to avoid late fees, and by the 10th of each month to avoid disconnection. Set a reminder in your phone or on a calendar to ensure that the bill gets paid in a timely manner.
- Contact City Hall any time you have questions about your account, if you need to know your balance, or to inquire if the bill has been paid.
- Always keep your contact information current so we can reach out if there is a problem with your bill or utility services.
- If you need financial assistance, please inquire about LIHEAP through Western Egyptian.

City Hall is located at 200 East Market Street, Red Bud, Illinois.

Office hours are Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.

The phone number for City Hall is: 618.282.2315

The city's website can be found at: www.cityofredbud.org