

**HAWLEY PUBLIC UTILITIES  
UTILITY REGULATIONS**

305 6<sup>TH</sup> ST, PO BOX 69, HAWLEY, MN 56549

PHONE (218) 483-3331  
UTILITY EMERGENCY (701) 238-7657

**SERVICES**

The Hawley Public Utilities provides dependable electric, natural gas, water, sewer and garbage service to customers within the Hawley city limits. All customers will be liable for charges incurred at their billing address until they give written notification to City Hall that specifies the date they are moving and the new billing address. New customers are required to fill out a Utility Service Application to aid in the billing process.

**BILLING**

A full-page utility billing and newsletter is sent out on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of each month for services already provided to the customer. All utility bills are due and payable on or before the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month. The Hawley Public Utilities does not intend to extend credit to its utility customers and the Hawley Public Utilities does not anticipate late payment of its utility bills. As a result, a late payment fee of 2 percent per month (24 percent per annum) on all outstanding charges will be imposed on all accounts not paid by the 18<sup>th</sup> of each month.

**DELINQUENT BILLS/SHUT-OFFS**

If a utility bill is not paid in full by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month, such bill is delinquent. A late fee of 2 percent per month (24% per annum) on all outstanding charges will be imposed on all accounts not paid by the 18<sup>th</sup> of each month. Two notices will be sent prior to disconnection.

**Late Payment Notices** will be sent by mail to all persons having delinquent accounts as of the 19<sup>th</sup> of each month. Each notice will include the billing name and the total amount past due. We will also clarify that the options are to: (1) pay the bill in full; or (2) to immediately contact the Public Works Supervisor to make payment arrangements that bring the account current within 35 days.

Accounts will again be reviewed on the 5<sup>th</sup> of the following month. Shut-off Notices will be sent by mail 20 days prior to the shut-off date. These notices will state the billing name and the amount past due. This notice will state that payment must be made in full within 20 days. The actual shut off date will be 35 days from the date the late payment notice was sent. *No post dated checks will be taken. We do accept credit card payments.*

If full payment is not received and no payment schedule has been set up to bring the account current within the 35 day time limit, utility service will be either limited or disconnected on the day listed on the Shut Off Notice. Once utility service has been limited/disconnected, payment in full (including current bill) plus a \$25.00 reconnect fee must be paid to resume normal service.

**PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

The Hawley Public Utilities Commission strongly encourages making payment arrangements. All arrangements must bring the account current within 35 days. Payment arrangements must specify the date and amount that will be paid. All payment arrangements will be documented in writing and failure to make a prearranged payment will result in limiting/disconnecting service without any further notice. If prior to disconnection a customer appeals a notice of involuntary disconnection, as provided by the utility established procedure, the utility cannot disconnect until the appeal is resolved.

**SERVICE DEPOSIT**

To ensure utility payments, all new tenants must provide a good credit reference from their current utility service provider for a period of a year or more, or they must render a deposit to Hawley Public Utilities. This deposit will be held until such time as their lease expires, they vacate the premises, or they show financial responsibility by prompt payment of all utility bills for a period of one year. Deposit amounts required are the **higher amount of these two options**:

1. Lump sum per type: Apartment - \$100.00; Houses/Mobile Home - \$200.00; Business - \$200.00, or;
2. The actual bill amount of the property being leased from February 1 of the previous year (or last year property was occupied for the February 1 period).

Customers who have purchased their property can provide a copy of closing papers instead of paying a deposit. The City may assess unpaid utility billings to property owners on their tax statements as allowed by Minnesota Statutes.

## **WINTER DISCONNECT POLICY**

Subdivision 1. The Hawley Public Utilities must not disconnect and must reconnect the utility service of a residential customer during the period between October 15 and April 15 if the disconnection affects the primary heat source for the residential unit and all the following conditions are met:

1. The household income of the customer is at or below 50 percent of the state median household income. The Hawley Public Utilities Commission may (i) verify income on forms it provides or (ii) obtain verification of income from the local energy assistance provider. A customer is deemed to meet the income requirements of the clause if the customer receives any form of public assistance, including energy assistance, that uses an income eligibility threshold set at or below 50 percent of the state median household income.
2. The customer enters into and makes reasonably timely payments under a payment agreement that considers the financial resources of the household.
3. The customer receives referrals to energy assistance, weatherization, conservation, or other programs likely to reduce the customers' energy bills.

The Hawley Public Utilities will notify all residential customers of the provisions of the above points every year between August 15<sup>th</sup> and October 15<sup>th</sup>.

Subdivision 2. Before disconnecting service to residential customer during the period between October 15<sup>th</sup> and April 15<sup>th</sup>, the Hawley Public Utilities will provide the following information to the customer:

1. A notice of proposed disconnection;
2. A statement explaining the customer's rights and responsibilities;
3. A list of local energy assistance providers;
4. A form on which to declare inability to pay; and
5. A statement explaining available timely payment plans and other opportunities to secure continued utility service.

Subdivision 3. If a residential customer must be involuntarily disconnected between October 15<sup>th</sup> and April 15 for failure to comply with subdivision 1, the disconnection must not occur;

1. the disconnection must not occur on a Friday, unless the customer declines to enter into a payment agreement offered that day in person or via personal contact by telephone by a Hawley Public Utilities employee;
2. on a weekend, holiday or the day before a holiday;
3. when utility offices are closed; or
4. after the close of business on a day when disconnection is permitted, unless a Hawley Public Utilities employee who is authorized to enter into a payment agreement, acct payment, and continue service, offers a payment agreement to the customer.

If a customer does not respond to a disconnection notice, the customer must not be disconnected until a Hawley Public Utilities employee investigates whether the residential unit is actually occupied. If the unit is found to be occupied, we must immediately inform the occupant of the provisions of this section. If the unit is unoccupied, we must give seven days' written notice of the proposed disconnection to the local energy assistance provider before making a disconnection.

If, prior to disconnection, a customer appeals a notice of involuntary disconnection, as provided by the utility's established appeal procedure, the Hawley Public Utilities must not disconnect until the appeal is resolved.

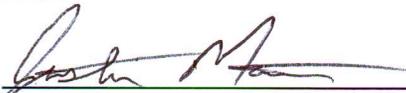
## **APPEALS/DISPUTES**

Any disputes with regard to a utility bill must be brought forth in writing and addressed to the Hawley Public Utilities Commission, 305 6<sup>th</sup> St, PO Box 69, Hawley, MN 56549-0069, within thirty (30) days of receipt of the utility bill being disputed. Upon receipt of a dispute, the utility will investigate the dispute promptly, advise the customer of its investigation and results of the investigation, will attempt to resolve the dispute, and will not disconnect service until the investigation is completed and the customer is informed of the results of the investigation in writing.

If a customer wishes to appeal a denial of qualification under the Winter Disconnect Policy, the customer shall appeal said denial in writing within seven (7) working days after receipt of said denial to the Hawley Public Utilities Commission, 305 6<sup>th</sup> ST, PO Box 69, Hawley, MN 56549-0069, and said Commission shall review the matter within thirty (30) calendar days after receipt of the written request for appeal and shall mail its written decision to the customer.

Revised by the Hawley Public Utilities Commission the 18<sup>th</sup> day of November 2015, and effective immediately.

Attest:

  
Justin Martin  
President, Hawley Public Utilities Commission

  
Lisa Jetvig  
Clerk Treasurer