

Question: Do you charge (and if so, how much) a fee to set up a new water/sewer account? Do you charge a different fee for landlords, or people who disconnect their water during the winter while they are gone?

Answers:

Yachats: \$10 for property owners and \$25 for renters.

St. Paul: \$147 deposit for new water and sewer accounts. If the account remains in good standing for 12 consecutive months, the deposit is returned. \$25 fee to disconnect service and \$25 to reconnect service for those that cancel for longer than 30 days.

Vernonia: \$35 for new water/sewer accounts. The fee is the same for landlords and renters. Water turned off in the winter does not have a charge.

Port Orford: \$100 for new renters that goes against the final bill with any remainder returned. Home owners are not charged for new accounts. Anyone having their water turned off for 3 months or more is charged \$180 to have it turned back on.

Coquille: Homeowner \$25 account maintenance fee non-refundable; Renter \$25 account maintenance fee & \$75 deposit refundable after 3 years of good payment history; \$10 vacation disconnect which covers the shut off and turn on

Question: We are working on updating our water fees, and moving from a flat rate charge to a charge based on usage. I would sincerely appreciate a few responses that include your water rates, charges for new installations, and the costs for shut offs and turn-ons. We are facing another issue of vacation houses, where out-of-towners don't want to pay the monthly water/sewer bills, and would rather shut their services off, and a City with only 102 hook-ups can't afford to lose any revenue that is already budgeted into our annual debt service payments.

Thank you!

Andrea Wyckoff, City Recorder, City of Spray

Answers:

Mill City charges a \$16.65 base for water with the first 2 units included. Each unit thereafter is \$2.85 per. We have a flat rate of \$38.52 for sewer. Shut off's for non-payment are charges \$40.00. If a customer wants to turn their water off because they will be out of town, it is \$20.00 to turn off and \$20.00 to turn on. The only way to cease all charges is to pull the meter (ultimately resulting in \$85.00 extra charges). We are reviewing our ordinances and resolutions though so this may change. We require a \$125.00 deposit (\$75.00 water, \$50.00 sewer). The deposit is required of all new accounts.

Cornelius: We do not allow anyone to "rent space" on our utility bills. The utility bill and newsletter are for city use only. We often suggest community announcements be made through other avenues like the chamber of commerce, booster club, community newspaper or schools

Yachats: We send our monthly newsletter out with the water bills and non-profits are allowed to put articles in the newsletter as long as they are not fund-raising.

Ontario: We charge \$1.35 per 1,000 gallons of water on top of a \$10 flat rate. For sewer, we charge \$35.30 flat rate until we can get a winter average for customers. When we have a winter average (Nov. thru Mar.) for sewer we bill a \$5.00 flat rate and \$4.58 per 1,000 gallons of water. To start an account we require a \$136 deposit or a letter of credit from another utility company. In case someone gets their water shut off, they have to pay their balance in full plus \$20 shut off fee plus \$20 reconnect fee. Also, if they didn't have to pay a deposit on their account (due to good payment history with other utility company) they are now required to pay the deposit.

Amity: We are in the process of updating some of these same things so I don't really have any documents to contribute. However, on the vacation houses, Amity has a stipulation in our ordinance that says turning service off for a certain period (ours is 60 or 90 days) can result in your service being deemed abandoned. Hooking back up would require SDC payments and other charges. That usually prevents home owners from choosing to get a zero bill by disconnecting. Amity also has a separate charge for those who do have their service turned off but kept active. For this, we require zero consumption and their meter off and locked for an entire month by request via a "standby rate" form. This is a lower rate but still revenue coming in for regular upkeep and maintenance of services. Because you are right, there are certain bills that the city can not control regardless of how much water/sewer is treated or how many houses are served. A lot of homeowners do not realize this.

