

Door Tag Question

Question:

For those of you that are also involved in utility bills....do you know if we HAVE to put out a door hanger for disconnect notice. We have been sending a letter in the mail and then following up with a door hanger. My assistant thought there might be an ORS that says we have to hang door tags. Is anyone out there just sending a letter and not hanging tags? We have had constant problems that last six months with customers and pw not wanting to hang tags (because it takes so long). Please let me know what your practices are.

Responses:

1. We charge a \$5.00 shutoff notice when it's mailed. There is no additional charge if we have to hang a second copy. Our clerk would very much like to raise that fee though.

2. If we have to hang customers we charge a \$15 fee to do so, the door hanger states that they have 24 hours in which to pay their past due bill, if they don't come in and pay the bill, another door hanger is hung and an additional \$20 fee is charged, and the water is shut off. Our PW crews don't like to do door hangers either, but our finance director took the issue to council, who approved a code revision, and now it gets done.

3. Mt. Angel does door hangers. First door hanger is approximately 10 days before shutoff, no fee. The second door hanger is when the water is being shut off, then a \$50 fee applies and the customer has to bring the entire account balance plus the \$50 charge to have their water service restored.

4. Garibaldi's door hanger provisions from the Water Code. We charge \$22, or half an hour of Public Works time...

5. A "door-hanger" tag shall be written that may be placed on the door of the dwelling or business of any unpaid account which is subject to shut-off for nonpayment pursuant to subsection (O)(3) of this section. A "door-hanger" tag fee, in an amount to be specified by resolution of the city council, shall be assessed at the time the tag is written. Said fee shall be added to and become part of the outstanding balance against the account, and shall bear interest at the same rate as the outstanding balance.

6. The city shall keep a record of the time and placement of all notices on "door-hanger" tags and the placement of such tag shall constitute a presumption of notice allowing the city to shut off service, whether or not actual notice was provided the home or business owner by placement of such tag.

7. The "door-hanger" tag shall state that the third day following placement of the tag is the final due date, with shut-off to occur before noon on that day unless the date falls on a Friday or holiday, in which case shut-off will occur before noon on the next city business day.

8. If the amount stated on the "door-hanger" tag (including the tag fee) is paid in full before the tag is hung, city staff will make a reasonable effort to recall the tag so that it is not hung at the service location

Port Orford sends a letter and then hangs door tags. We charge \$25 for hanging the door tags, and they have 24 hours to pay the amount on the tag. If the water is turned off they have to pay \$75 to have it turned back on. We just raised the fines, a door hanger used to be \$5 and it was \$25 to turn the water back on. It was decided it was too much trouble not to charge for the guys time and the trouble of hanging the tags.

If they call when they get the letter we can usually work something out. If they do nothing it can cost them up to \$100 extra. More of them are making arrangements for payment, now. About an ORS, I know nothing.

In Cottage Grove, we only mail the disconnect notice. However, the day they actually go out and turn the water off, they a door tag. Don't know if there's ORS regarding this, but this is our City policy.

If we have to hang customers, we charge a \$15 fee to do so. The door hanger states that they have 1 week in which to pay their past due bill. If they don't pay the bill, the water is shut off and they are charged a \$30 fee.

We do hang door tags that give them 24 hours to pay after they've received a disconnect notice in the mail. I find that it's very effective....especially if it's done consistently. My PW guy doesn't like hanging them either, mostly because he gets the brunt of unhappy customer remarks. To try to avoid this, I have them hung first thing in the morning (7:30 am). My PW guy prefers this and says he has less contact with the customers.

Fees...at this point we don't charge a fee (except for a \$100 reconnect fee). I do expect to try to get this changed soon, though.

The City of Roseburg Water Rules and Regulations require the City to hang a door hanger before actual turn off of a customer's water service. I'm not aware of an ORS pertaining to door hangers.