



# CUSTOMER POLICY MANUAL



## TOWN OF WHITELAND WATER DEPARTMENT



*Updated February 2015*

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

**MAILING ADDRESS**

Whiteland Water Works  
549 Main Street  
Whiteland, IN 46184

**WATER DEPARTMENT MANAGEMENT**

**OPERATIONS**

Norm Gabehart	Town Manager
Jason Clayman	Water Superintendent

**BILLING**

Michelle Richards	Town Clerk-Treasurer
Alexandra Krutz	Utilities Clerk

**PHONE NUMBERS**

Emergency	(317) 535-6359
Town Hall	(317) 535-5531
Billing	(317) 530-0201
Fax	(317) 535-8724
Service Line Locates	811

**WEBSITE**

[www.townofwhiteland.com](http://www.townofwhiteland.com)

## **UTILITY BILLING**

### **BILLING CYCLE**

Water meters are read at the beginning of the month. The bills are printed and sent out at the end of the month, with payments due by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the following month. If the 20<sup>th</sup> falls on a weekend or town holiday, the due date will be the next business day.

### **BILLS**

While commonly known as just a “water” bill, Whiteland monthly utility bills include charges for the water, wastewater, and stormwater utilities, as well as fire hydrant service and trash/recycling pickup. Water and wastewater charges are based on actual usage, determined by monthly meter readings. The other charges are flat fees for residential bills.

The Town does not bill for, nor collect for, the electric, gas, or any telecommunications companies.

### **PAYMENT OPTIONS**

#### **TOWN HALL, 549 MAIN STREET**

Cash, credit, or check payments can be made at the Town Hall in person during regular business hours, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

A drop box is located at the Town Hall to the right of the double doors and is available 24 hours a day for cash or check payments. Please include the bill stub with your payment.

#### **BY PHONE**

You may call the utility billing department at 535-5531 or 530-0201 during regular business hours to make a payment over the phone using a Mastercard, Visa, Discover, or American Express credit card\*. For security, payments cannot be accepted if left on voicemail.

#### **ON-LINE**

Go to [www.townofwhiteland.com](http://www.townofwhiteland.com) and follow the links to pay online with a credit card. We accept Mastercard, Visa, Discover, and American Express credit cards for utilities payment\*.

\* Please note that a convenience fee of 3% (or \$1.50 for transactions under \$50.00) will be added to each credit card transaction. This is the service fee charged by the credit card processing company. Due to government regulations, the Town must add the service fee onto the total charge.

#### **BY MAIL**

If mailing your payment, the address is:  
Whiteland Utilities  
549 Main Street  
Whiteland, IN 46184

We request you put your payment in an envelope with the stub of your bill, and please put your account number in the memo space on the check.

### **DISCONNECTS AND RECONNECTION FEES**

Disconnect means that water service has been shut off due to non-payment or a non-sufficient funds (NSF) check. Water service may be reconnected once the balance of the account has been paid.

A \$50.00 fee is added to the amount due if the reconnection is done during regular business hours. If performed after regular business hours, the fee is \$75.00.

NSF checks add an additional fee of \$35.00 to the amount due.



## **PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

If you know you will be unable to pay the full amount due for a utility bill, please contact the billing department as soon as possible. It may be possible to set up a payment arrangement.

## **SUMMER SEWER DISCOUNT**

### **PURPOSE**

During the summer, most residential customers water lawns, wash cars, fill pools, and so on—and these uses of water do not enter the sanitary sewer to be treated. However, the bill for wastewater produced is based on the amount of water consumed as usually the amounts are roughly the same.

To compensate for the difference between water consumed and wastewater treated, during the months of May, June, July, and August, the Town freezes the sanitary sewer charge for residential properties based on the sanitary sewer usage during the preceding winter months. This is known as the “Summer Sewer Discount”, and is automatically applied to all residential customers.

The bill does reflect the actual water usage, but the sanitary sewer usage is the same (or lower) as in the winter.

### **CALCULATION**

To calculate the summer sewer discount, a residential customer’s water usage for the preceding November, December, January, February, and March are averaged. This average number, multiplied by 1.25, is then the basis for sanitary sewer charges in the months of May through August. If the actual summer water usage is lower than the average basis number, the actual amount is the number used to calculate the bill.

## WATER SERVICES

### WATER METERS & SERVICE LINES

The water meter, tail piece, check valve (the adapters on each side of the meter) belong to the Town of Whiteland, and are the responsibility of the water department. These may be located inside the house (crawl space, utility room, closet, garage, etc...) or in a pit in the yard.

Each address has a separate meter and service line. Service lines to the customer are the responsibility of the property owner; the water department's responsibility stops at edge of the right-of-way. Curb stops and meter pits are the property of the water department, and not to be tampered with by anyone.

In the event you need your water turned off during regular business hours, contact the utility clerk at 535-5531 (or 530-0201). An employee of the water department will be sent to perform the shut-off.

For after-hours emergency shut-offs, please call 535-6359 to connect with the on-call personnel.

### HIGH USAGE

#### USAGE VS PRICES

If your bill seems higher than usual, please compare the actual water usage, not the dollar amount, with your previous bills. Rates change every so often and, during the summer months, there is an automatic sewer discount in place that affects the price charged (more details on this discount are elsewhere in this manual). Also note that billing cycle lengths can vary by several days from month to month, which could cause up to 20% fluctuations between bills.

Comparing usage over the number of days in the bill cycle is best way to determine if you have actual higher-than-usual usage or a price fluctuation.

#### LEAKS

Over a period of time, almost every water service does develop leaks. These leaks can add up to a significant loss of water, causing your bill to increase. Leaks will always get larger if left unrepaired and wind up costing more and more in water usage and repair bills.

Toilet tanks are often the largest source of lost water. They are notorious for their hidden, silent loss of water tricking through the tank into the bowl.

Other common things to check are water softeners, garden hose spigots, and faucets for drips and leaks.

If you have a meter inside your house, you can look at the triangle on top of it. This triangle will only turn if water is flowing through the meter. So, if it is turning even if all of your faucets, taps, and appliances are off, you likely have a leak somewhere.

After checking all of these common things, you still cannot locate the cause of the problem, you may contact the water department for further assistance.

For service lines which have the meter inside the building that develop a leak before the meter (that is, on the water main side of the meter) can be shut off at the main. This is at the water department's discretion, depending on the size of the leak and how long it takes the property owner to have the leak repaired.

#### EXAMPLES OF WATER LOSS CAUSING INCREASED COSTS TO CUSTOMER

<i>Diameter Of Leak</i>	<i>Water Wasted per Month (Gallons)</i>
1/4"	393,800
1/8"	98,700
1/16"	25,000
1/32"	6,200

*Assumes a continuous leak at an average pressure of 60 psi, per month.*

## **SHUT OFFS**

### **CONVENIENCE SHUT OFFS**

The water department will shut off water service upon request for vacations, irrigation systems, etc. These shut offs will be performed only during business hours. Please contact the billing clerk to schedule these.

### **EMERGENCY SHUT OFFS**

Please call 535-5531 during business hours or 535-6359 after hours to have your water service shut off due to an emergency.

Note that emergency shut offs performed after hours will not be turned back on until the next business day.

All shut offs are free of charge.

## OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

### WINTER WEATHER TIPS

#### PREVENTION

Cold weather can cause many problems with water. To help prevent frozen and split lines, here are some suggestions:

- Disconnect and drain garden hoses from outside spigots.
- Close crawl space vents.
- Keep garage doors closed.
- Insulate exposed pipes or use a heat tape.
- Leave a faucet dripping. The cost of the extra water usage is still cheaper than a plumber coming to repair a burst pipe.
- Leave under-sink cabinets open to let warm air reach those pipes.



#### THAWING

Here are a few suggestions of what to do if a pipe does freeze in your home:

- Shut off your main water valve in your home.
- Open a faucet in one of your sinks (as the water line thaws, if it doesn't have somewhere to go it will burst your pipe).
- Heat the air around the pipe. Use a hairdryer or a space heater. Don't apply heat directly to the pipe; it can cause the pipe to burst.



#### HYDRANT FLUSHING

The Whiteland Water Department flushes fire hydrants as a continuing maintenance procedure to assure quality drinking water to its customers.

Fire hydrant flushing takes place twice a year, in the spring (usually late April or early May) and fall (usually early October). Notice of the upcoming flushing period will be posted on the Town's website. Flushing is done during regular business hours.

Please use caution when doing laundry during this period, as the water may be discolored during the flushing operation. Any discoloration should clear within one to two hours.

#### ABOUT FIRE HYDRANT FLUSHING

Fire hydrant flushing is done to remove rust and sediment from water lines and to perform testing of fire hydrants for public safety. The flushing operation may result in brief periods of reduced water pressure or discolored water. Iron in the water that may have settled into the water mains causes the discolored water. The water is only discolored. It is still safe.

If you experience discoloration and rust particles in your water:

- Locate the farthest and lowest cold water faucet in your home from the water meter.
- Remove the aerator if there is one and turn on the cold water faucet until the water runs clear.
- If the water is still discolored after running the cold water for 10 minutes, please turn off the faucet and check it again one hour later.
- Please refrain from washing white or light colored clothes.

When the flushing operation is complete, normal water pressure and clear water should return.