

SANGAMON COUNTY, ILLINOIS

ORDINANCE
NUMBER 21 - 29

**AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE VILLAGE CUSTOMER SERVICES POLICY
HANDBOOK (REVISED SEPTEMBER, 2021)**

DAVE KIMSEY, Village President
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Village Trustees

Published in pamphlet form by authority of the President and Board of Trustees of the Village of

Chatham
on September 28, 2021

Sorling Northrup – 1 N. Old State Capitol Plaza, Suite 200, P.O. Box 5131, Springfield, IL
62705

ORDINANCE NO. 21-

AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE VILLAGE CUSTOMER SERVICES POLICY HANDBOOK (REVISED SEPTEMBER, 2021)

WHEREAS, the Village of Chatham (“Village”), Sangamon County, State of Illinois, is a duly organized and existing Village created under the provisions of the laws of the State of Illinois, and is now operating under the provisions of the Illinois Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, the Village has created a Customer Services Policy Handbook to clearly outline the rights and obligations of recipients of electric, water, and sewer services from the Village of Chatham, as well as the rights and obligations of the Village as a provider of those services; and,

WHEREAS, the Village has recently completed a comprehensive revision Village’s Customer Services Policy Handbook; and,

WHEREAS, the Village passed Ordinance 18-47 which amended the Village Code to provide a utility look-back period of credits and charges of 24 months, instead of 12 months; and,

WHEREAS, the Village passed ordinance 20-04, which approved revisions to the Customer Service Policy Handbook that inadvertently omitted the change in the look-back period from 12 to 24 months; and,

WHEREAS, the Village President and Board of Trustees of the Village believe it is in the best interest of the Village to adopt the Village Customer Service Policy Handbook Revised September, 2021 as attached hereto as **Exhibit A** to replace the Customer Service Policy Handbook currently in place which was last revised in 2020.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the President and Board of Trustees of the Village of Chatham, County of Sangamon, as follows:

Section 1. Recitals. The foregoing recitals shall be and are hereby incorporated into and made a part of this Resolution as if fully set forth in this Section 1.

Section 2. Adoption of Customer Service Policy Handbook. The Village President and Village Board of Trustees hereby adopt the Village Customer Service Policy Handbook Revised September, 2021 as attached hereto as **Exhibit A** and approve it for use.

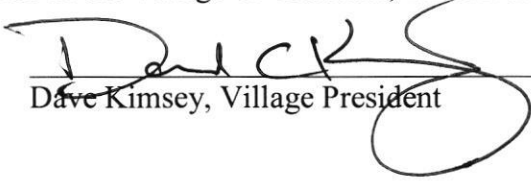
Section 3. Severability. In the event a court of competent jurisdiction finds this ordinance or any provision hereof to be invalid or unenforceable as applied, such finding shall not affect the validity of the remaining provisions of this ordinance and the application thereof to the greatest extent permitted by law.

Section 4. Repeal and Savings Clause. All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed; provided, however, that nothing herein contained shall affect any rights, actions, or causes of action which shall have accrued to the Village of Chatham prior to the effective date of this ordinance.

Section 5. Effective Date. This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage, approval and publication in pamphlet form as provided by law.

	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
KRISTEN CHIARO	✓			
ANDREW DETMERS	✓			
MEREDITH FERGUSON				✓
BRETT GERGER	✓			
MATT MAU	✓			
PAUL SCHERSCHEL	✓			
DAVE KIMSEY				
TOTAL	5	0	0	1

APPROVED by the President of the Village of Chatham, Illinois this ___ day of _____, 2021.



Dave Kimsey, Village President

Attest:


Dan Holden, Village Clerk

EXHIBIT A
VILLAGE CUSTOMER SERVICES POLICY HANDBOOK
(REVISED SEPTEMBER, 2021)



VILLAGE OF
CHATHAM
Family. Community. Prosperity.

Customer Services Policy Handbook

Village of Chatham

116 E. Mulberry Street
Chatham, Illinois 62629

(217)483-2451

Incorporated September
2021



Customer Services Policy Handbook (Incorporated September 2021)

Welcome to the Village of Chatham

We're happy to welcome you as a customer of the Village of Chatham. It is our goal to ensure your association with us will be a pleasant one. With that goal in mind, we have prepared this booklet, which outlines your rights and obligations as the recipient of electric, water and sewer service from the Village of Chatham, and our rights and obligations as the provider of that service.

The Village of Chatham's Utility Office is responsible for all customer account activities, including new service sign-ups, changes of address, billing, bill payments, and service terminations. This office also administers such special bill-related customer service programs as the Senior Citizen Electric Discount and the Budget Billing Program, which are discussed in this booklet and on our website – www.chathamil.net.

The Utility Office is located at 116 E. Mulberry St. Chatham, IL. Wheelchair access is available on the north end of the building.

HOURS OF OPERATIONS

Utility Office	7:30 a.m. – 4:15 a.m., Monday-Friday
Drive-up Drop Box	24 Hour Drop Box
Call-In Hours	7:30 a.m. – 4:15 a.m., Monday-Friday

New customers wishing to obtain service: Apply in person to the Utility Office during the hours noted above. Please bring a copy of your driver's license and a signed lease agreement and deposit (if applicable).

Current customers moving to another location in The Village's service territory: Change your service address in person.

Current customers seeking to terminate service: Make your request in person or by phone.

UTILITY OFFICE CONTACT INFORMATION

Phone:	(217) 483-2451
Fax:	(217) 483-3574
Mail or In-Person:	116 E. Mulberry St. Chatham, IL 62629
Email:	www.chathamil.gov



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I. Residential/Non-Residential Service

I.A. Definition of Residential/Non-Residential Service

Definition of Residential Service

In order to qualify for residential electric service, a property must comprise of one or more separately metered dwelling units, each of which provides living accommodations that include a minimum of a kitchen, bedroom, and bathroom. Each property fitting this definition will be limited to one residential electric meter per residential unit. Any additional service may be billed at the residential electric rate. **Sec. 50.01**

Definition of Non-Residential Service

Any building or outbuilding that does not meet the criteria for residential electric service will be considered non-residential in nature and be eligible only for non-residential electric service rates which the Village refers to as commercial, industrial or government rates. **Sec. 50.01**

I.B. Application for Service

An applicant for Village of Chatham water or electric service must be at least 18 years of age or, if under 18, must present proof of his/her emancipation or marriage.

Each applicant for residential service must complete a written application for service, including:

1. the location where service is to be provided (service address);
2. the names of all adults who will be living full time at this address;
3. the applicant's employer; and
4. the applicant's daytime and evening telephone numbers.

Each applicant for non-residential service must complete a written application for service, including:

1. the location where service is to be provided (service address);
2. the legal name of the entity;
3. local and home office telephone numbers of the entity;
4. the name, address, and telephone number of the property owner, if other than the applicant; and
5. the signature of a principal of the entity.

The applicant must also provide a valid form of identification which must bear a photograph of the holder (e.g., valid driver's license, state ID card, FOID card, and passport).



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If the applicant is a tenant at the service address, s/he must provide the lease agreement to the property showing the applicant as the leasee, as well as the name, address, and telephone number of the property owner.

If the applicant owns the service address, proof of ownership may need to be provided. The Village of Chatham reserves the right to verify any and all information provided by the applicant prior to initiating service or any time thereafter. Any new applicant or any applicant who has failed to pay for previous utility services from Village of Chatham will be required to pay all past due amounts and a service deposit (see section I.C.1.) before service will be initiated. If service is initiated and subsequently it is determined that a customer has a prior past due balance, the prior past due balance will be due immediately or current services will be subject to disconnection.

If a representative of an applicant, acting under a power of attorney, applies for service in the applicant's name, proof of the power of attorney must be provided to Village of Chatham. The Village of Chatham reserves the right to verify any and all information provided by the applicant prior to initiating service.

Once service has been granted, the customer is responsible for informing the Village of Chatham Customer Service representatives of any changes in the information supplied on the application for service. **Sec. 50.20**

I.C. Payment for Services

I.C.1. Service Deposit

First-time applicants will be required to pay a service deposit. Payment of the deposit must be made when the customer signs up for service.

The amount of the residential service deposit is currently:

- a) \$150 for property owners (\$100 electric and \$50 water) and;
- b) \$300 for rental property (\$200 for electric and \$100 for water).

The amount of the non-residential service deposit is currently:

- a) \$300 (\$200 electric and \$100 water).

These service deposits may be adjusted periodically.

Residential customers including individuals who were previously listed on a utility account such as former spouses or roommates who are re-applying for residential service with the Village of Chatham who have had at least 12 continuous months of service, during which no more than two late penalties were assessed and do not owe any balance from previous service with the Village of Chatham are not required to pay a service deposit. First-time applicants and applicants who have failed to pay for previous service in a timely manner will be required to pay a service deposit before service will be initiated.

Non-residential customers who are re-applying for service who have had at least 12 continuous months of service, during which no more than two late penalties were assessed and do not owe any balance from previous service with the Village

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of Chatham are not required to pay a service deposit. First-time non-residential applicants who have residential service on their owned, primary residence may avoid paying the deposit for non-residential service if:

1. the non-residential service is requested in the same name as the residential service;
2. the applicant applies for the non-residential service in person;
3. the applicant provides proof of ownership of his/her primary residence;
4. the applicant has no more than two late penalties on the residential account within the past 12 months;
5. the applicant agrees to the transfer of unpaid final bills to any existing residential or non-residential account.

The service deposit will remain on a rental account until the customer moves out of the Chatham utility service area, at which time the deposit will be applied to their final bill. If a renter purchases a home within Chatham utility service, \$150 of the original \$300 deposit will be applied to the account and the remaining \$150 will be transferred to the new residence. Existing customers with a good credit history reapplying for service at a new location will have their deposit transferred to their new service account for the remainder of the 18 months holding period. Existing customers who do not have a good credit history and have a past due balance on their existing utility account will be required to pay their past due balance before the new service is established. The customer's deposit will be transferred to their new service account and will be held for a period of 18 months from the date the new service is connected.

In the case of two or more roommates, the deposit will stay with the roommate whose name the service is in. If the responsible applicant moves out then a new applicant will need to apply for service and pay a new deposit.

In the case of a homeowner, the service deposit will be applied to a customer's account after an 18-month period. Existing customers with a good credit history reapplying for service at a new location will have their deposit transferred to their new service account for the remainder of the 18 months holding period. Existing customers who do not have a good credit history and have a past due balance on their existing utility account will be required to pay their past due balance before the new service is established. The customer's deposit will be transferred to their new service account and will be held for a period of 18 months from the date the new service is connected.

In the case of two or more roommates, the deposit will stay with the roommate whose name the service is in. If the responsible applicant moves out then a new applicant will need to apply for service and pay a new deposit.

Refer to Ordinance 16-05 for further information. **Sec. 50.03**

I.C.2. Monthly Service Payments

Monthly bills for service are due on the 15th of each month. If services are not paid in full by the due date on each monthly bill, a five-day grace period would be allowed before a penalty charge of 10% per month will be imposed on the bill. The Village will no longer mail a separate shut off notice, notification is now included on the utility bill, also a phone message will be sent to customers on the shut off list on the 21st of the month or the first working day following the 21st, which allows the customer to pay the outstanding bill before shut off. Utility services that remain unpaid 15 days after the due date shall be deemed delinquent; service will be interrupted until all delinquent amounts are paid in full.



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Services interrupted due to delinquency will only be reconnected during normal office business hours after payment is received in full.

In applying for electric or water service from the Village of Chatham, the customer agrees to pay for services as bills are rendered in accordance with the rates, rules, and regulations in effect at the time of delivery. The customer remains responsible for these charges until the customer gives the utility notice of discontinuance and final charges on said account have been paid. Past due final charges may be transferred to any active residential or non-residential account being maintained by or for the use of said customer.

The Village of Chatham collects sewer charges. These charges are based on the amount of water the customer uses. Unless an affidavit stating otherwise has been filed with the Village of Chatham, the utility will assume each property receiving water service is connected to the village's sewer system and that the total amount of water consumed by the customer eventually enters the sewer system. The customer will be responsible for paying all applicable sewer and water service charges for the property. Customers with sprinkler systems can avoid paying sewer charges on water used by those systems if they pay for the installation of a separate meter for the sprinkler system.

The Village of Chatham allows residential residents with swimming pools to check out a deduct meter from the utility office to record water usage related to filling their swimming pools. Meters must be returned during business hours within 3 days. If a meter is not returned at the end of the 3-day period then a \$5.00 late fee per day will be added to the customer's bill with a maximum penalty to be the replacement cost of a meter until the meter is returned. An adjustment for sewer usage will be applied to the customer's account based on the metered water usage recorded on the deduct meters. **Sec. 50.04**

I.C.3. Penalties: Late Payment; Nonpayment; Returned Payments

If services are not paid in full by the due date on each monthly bill, a five-day grace period would be allowed before a penalty charge of 10% per month will be imposed on the bill. Customers may be allowed a one-time penalty waiver if there have been no late payments on the account. This one-time penalty waiver will only be allowed once in a 12-month period. **Sec. 50.05**

If any charges for utility service or penalties remain unpaid after the due date, such charges shall be deemed delinquent; service may be interrupted until all delinquent amounts are paid in full. If service is interrupted due to delinquency, utility services will only be reconnected during normal office business hours after payment is received in full. The Village will no longer mail a separate shut off notice, notification is now included on the utility bill, also a phone message will be sent to customers on the shut off list on the 21st of the month or the first working day following the 21st, which allows the customer to pay the outstanding bill before shut off. (See Section VII.B.1 for more detail) **Sec. 50.05**

If a payment tendered to the Village of Chatham for payment of any village services is returned by the bank for any reason other than error on the part of the financial institution, a service charge will be imposed. The service charge, which is adjusted periodically, is currently \$25. The amount of the returned payment plus the \$25 service charge will be added back to a customer's account immediately. Customers will be required to reimburse the Village of Chatham in cash



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or cash equivalent within seven working days. If a customer's payment was returned due to the customer being a victim of identity theft and proof is provided, then the service charge may be waived by the office staff. **Sec. 50.11**

If a second payment tendered within 12 months to the Village of Chatham for payment of any village services and is returned by the bank for any reason other than error on the part of the financial institution, that customer will be required to pay all utility charges in cash or cash equivalent for the remainder of the 12-month period. **Sec. 50.11**

I.D. Meter Reading

I.D.1. Meter Reading Schedule

Except in the cases cited below, customer water and electric meters are read on or about the same date each month.

Monthly bills occasionally might be estimated at the discretion of the Village of Chatham when circumstances beyond its control, including but not limited to constraints caused by weather, make it difficult or impossible to obtain an actual meter reading.

Monthly bills may also be estimated if the Village of Chatham meter readers do not have access to the water or electric meter when the meter is scheduled to be read. **Sec. 50.22**

I.D.2. Access to Meters

Village Code requires customers to provide safe and unimpeded access to Village of Chatham equipment, including water and electric meters that are on or inside their property. Failure to provide access will result in estimated utility bills. Failure to provide access for six consecutive months could result in an interruption of service until access to the meter has been facilitated. If service has been interrupted due to failure to provide access, all past due amounts must be paid before service will be restored.

Pets, whether inside or outside, must be restrained in such a manner that they cannot harass Village of Chatham personnel attempting to gain access to utility equipment. For details on Village access to easements refer to Ordinance 95-16 and 70-7. **Sec. 50.23**

I.D.3. Relocating Indoor Meters

The Village of Chatham will no longer replace any existing indoor water meters. Meter replacements will be in an external pit.

Indoor electric meters may also be relocated to the outdoors. The customer must first have the meter base relocated by an independent, licensed electrician. Contact the Utility Office to schedule an interruption of service prior to moving the meter base. Once the meter base has been relocated, the Village of Chatham will move the meter. **Sec 50.27**



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I.D.4. Meter Testing

(A) Any person or organization receiving electric, water, or other public utility service furnished by the village, the use of which is measured by a recording meter, may make application in writing to the Village Manager, or his designee, for such meter to be tested for accuracy. The application shall be accompanied by payment of the applicable service charge deposit hereinafter established

(B) The service charge for meter testing shall be as follows:

- (1) For testing of water meters by such meter testing organization shall be the actual cost charged to the Village by the testing organization. If the testing comes back in the customer's favor, the testing fee will be credited to the customer's account.
- (2) For testing conducted of electric meters on the premises by a village employee during regular working hours shall cost \$35. **Sec. 50.26**

I.D.5 Temporary Electric and Water Service for Special Events

When temporary electric or water hook ups are requested for a Special Event, the individual or organization must apply for a Special Event License. The individual or organization will be charged a Special Event License Fee which may be waived if a temporary meter hook up is requested, in which case the individual or organization will be charged a special event minimum fee of \$100 per meter installation fee plus a \$25 per day usage charge. Not-for-profit groups may request a waiver of fees. This waiver must be approved by a majority of the Village Board prior to the start of the event. **Sec. 50.32**

II. Outside-the-Village Utility Service

Residents outside of the village limits may receive Village of Chatham utilities at the sole discretion of the Village Board and may be required to enter into an annexation agreement with the Village and pay the appropriate costs related to the extension of the utility services. Requests for annexation are handled by the Village Manager and must be approved by the Chatham Village Board—call (217) 483-2451 for more information. **Sec 50.122**

III. Water Leaks and Hazardous Conditions

To protect life and property, as well as to prevent the waste of our resources, when Village of Chatham discovers hazardous electrical service conditions or water leaks, the utility requires these problems to be fixed in a timely manner. Attempts will be made to alert the customer to the unacceptable conditions.

If the problem is not repaired, the utility has the right to disconnect service with notice until the repairs have been made. **Sec. 50.119**



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IV. Landlord, Owner and Tenant Responsibilities

IV.A. Responsibility for Active Service

All landlords/owners should advise the Village of Chatham when they purchase a new property or relinquish ownership of a property receiving utility service from Village of Chatham.

The owner of any lot, building, or premises and the occupant thereof and the customer of the utility service of said system shall be jointly and severally liable to pay for such utility service on said premises; and, the service shall be furnished to the premises by the Village only upon the condition that the owner of the premises, occupant, and customer of the utility service are jointly and severally liable

Landlords/property owners shall be responsible for paying for active Village of Chatham utility services provided to their leased/rented properties. It is the landlord's responsibility to ensure that a new tenant signs up for utility service. The landlord will be responsible for the utility service until a qualified applicant signs up for utility service.

If the landlord/owner directs a new tenant to provide proof that Village of Chatham utility service has been placed in the tenant's name, Village of Chatham will provide the tenant with such confirmation.

IV.B. Master-Metered and Multi-Area Single-Metered Properties

Utility service in buildings with multiple dwelling units served by one master meter (house meter) must be billed in the name of the landlord/owner or his/her duly appointed agent. (Agents appointed to act in the name of the landlord/owner must be identified and authorized in writing to Village of Chatham by the landlord/owner.) Likewise, single meters that serve more than one tenant's area must be billed in the name of the landlord/owner until each service is exclusive to a single tenanted area. A facility charge will be billed for each unit of the building.

When disconnection for nonpayment of service is scheduled for a master-metered property, notice shall be posted on the premises five days before the disconnect date. All tenants would be sent notice in accordance with the Rental Property Utility Service Act. Tenants may petition the circuit court of Sangamon County for appointment of a receiver to collect the rent due and remit a portion to Village of Chatham for payment of Village of Chatham utility bills. **Sec. 50.06**

IV.C. Identifying Meters

Landlords/owners are responsible for clearly and permanently identifying, by stencil or other means, the apartment, mobile home, or area served by each meter. Once meters have been installed and identified, the landlord/owner is responsible for meeting with a Village of Chatham representative to verify that each meter services the correct unit and is accurately, clearly, and permanently identified.

When incorrect billing results from incorrectly identified meters, Village of Chatham is not responsible for credit adjustments to bills issued prior to being notified the meters were incorrectly identified. Upon notification from the landlord/owner of incorrectly identified meters, Village of Chatham will correct all future billing records to reflect the correct meter identification for the units/areas they service. **Sec. 50.28**



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V. Customer Billing

V.A. Multi-Month Billings

There are some circumstances in which Village of Chatham customers might be billed several months after the date of service for services or commodities provided by the utility. Such billings may cover multiple months of service. These circumstances can include, but are not limited to, Village of Chatham's discovery that:

- a) a slow-running meter has been providing an inaccurate measure of customer consumption;
- b) a meter has stopped, resulting in no registered usage;
- c) a customer who signed up for and received service was inadvertently omitted from the monthly billing system;
- d) meter tampering has resulted in the utility's inability to properly bill for service in a timely manner.

Except where tampering has occurred, if Village of Chatham has failed to bill for services or commodities it has provided, the back billing will be limited to ~~24~~ 12 months for residential and non-residential service.

Except in circumstances involving meter tampering, any customer receiving a multi-month bill for previously unbilled utility services will be eligible to enter into a Promissory Payment Plan or Payment Plan with Village of Chatham.

If Village of Chatham discovers that there has been tampering with any of its equipment and the customer has enjoyed the benefits of such tampering, the utility is not restricted to the above time limitations on unbilled services. The customer will be responsible for all service usage during the period that tampering occurred, including estimated consumption where unmetered usage occurred. Village of Chatham may bill a customer for diverted service not used by that customer if that customer had knowledge of or consented to the diversion.

If tampering (or any malicious act on the part of the customer) results in damage to Village of Chatham equipment, the customer will also be responsible for the cost of repairing or replacing that equipment. Service will be interrupted until all such charges are paid in full. A Police Report will also be filed for any meter tampering. **Sec. 50.50**

V.B. Errors in Billing

The Village of Chatham shall credit the customer's account for any amount overcharged on a bill rendered by the utility within the period specified below if it is discovered, following payment, that the customer was overcharged because Village of Chatham:

1. used the incorrect customer service rate; or
2. inaccurately measured the quantity or volume of service provided.

For residential and non-residential customers, credits will be limited to the ~~24~~ 12-month period immediately preceding discovery that an overcharge is occurring.

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Village of Chatham will back bill a customer for any amount undercharged on a bill rendered by the utility if it is discovered, following payment, that the customer was undercharged. For residential and non-residential customers, back billing of the charges will be limited to the ~~24~~ 12-month period immediately preceding discovery that an undercharge is occurring. **Sec. 50.51**

V.C. Bill Adjustments for Water Leaks

A. If a customer has a water leak that causes an increase in their monthly bills, Village of Chatham may provide an adjustment to the customer's bill as long as the following criteria are met:

1. the leak must have caused water usage to exceed twice the normal seasonal usage used by the customer
 - a. (taken as average usage of the last six full usage readings of the respective season, extrapolated as necessary for customers who have not resided in location for the appropriate time frame; and
2. the leak must be repaired upon either:
 - a. Notification by the Village of an excessive water usage, or
 - b. Mailing date of utility billing first containing the excessive usage; and
3. the customer has requested the leak adjustment, in the form prescribed by the Village, and has provided proof
 - a. of repair or inspection in the form of receipts, invoices, or sworn statement, confirmed by Village meter
 - b. reading verification; and
4. except as set forth in Subsection B (3), the customer has not received a water leak adjustment in the presiding 3 years.

After the Village office receives the leak adjustment request and a resolution cannot be determined, the request will be forwarded to the Utility Oversight Committee for approval or denial at their next scheduled meeting.

B. The following water leak adjustments are available:

1. For Indoor leaks or other leaks when the water has discharged through the sanitary sewer system -50% credit of charges for water usage in excess of the seasonal average, with no credit for sanitary sewer charges.
2. For Underground, external, or other leaks when the water has not discharged through the sanitary sewer system -50% credit of charges for water usage in excess of the seasonal average and up to 100% credit for sewer charges in excess of the seasonal average, to the extent such credit is approved by the Springfield Metro Sanitary District.
3. A credit of up to 100% for sewer charges in excess of the seasonal average usage may be available for all confirmed and repaired underground/external leaks without regard to the 3-year limit, to the extent such credit is approved by the Springfield Metro Sanitary District.

Water leak credits are limited to a maximum of two billing periods.

C. Seasonal usage is computed based on the following demand periods:

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- I. High-demand -Meter readings from April through September
 2. Low-demand -Meter readings from October through March
- D. A residential customer who has experienced increased usage but is unable to identify a specific leak source, may still qualify for the relief offered herein, provided the criteria in Subparagraph A are otherwise met and further provided that through meter readings, the Village is able to confirm the increase in consumption has ceased.
- E. The Village of Chatham may offer up to a 4 Month Payment Plan under the following circumstances; a customer has been back billed for utility services, a customer has a large balance remaining after an adjustment is granted under the water leak adjustment policy, or for a large balance due for a water leak that was not eligible for adjustment under the water leak adjustment policy. Customers who have failed to make a payment under a previous Promissory Payment Plan or a previous Payment Plan within the last 12 months will not be permitted to enter into an additional Payment Plan.

When the Payment Plan has been agreed upon between the customer and the Utility Administration Manager, the Utility Administration Manager will confirm each payment amount due and each due date with the customer. A payment plan confirmation notice will also be mailed to the customer's billing address. As long as the customer complies with the agreed upon Payment Plan, no penalties will be assessed to the account. If the customer does not comply with the agreed upon Payment Plan, the account will be subject to disconnection. Once disconnected, the full balance must be paid in order to be reconnected.

Refer to Ordinance 15-04 for further information. **Sec. 50.120**

V.D. Budget Billing Program

Village of Chatham offers a budget billing program to residential customers that have a 12-month history at their current location.

This plan provides for payments in equal installments.

To qualify for the Budget Billing Program, the customer must be a customer in good standing with no more than two late payment penalties within the last 12 months. Budget Billing accounts must have a zero balance before their first Budget Billing statement.

Village of Chatham shall review the residential customer's monthly level payment no less than every 6 months. However, the level payment may be adjusted more frequently if the customer's consumption indicates a need for such adjustment.

The monthly level payment must be made each month in full by the due date. Any customer that has two delinquent payments is not eligible for the Budget Billing Program for a minimum period of 12 months and will be automatically removed from the Budget Billing Program. Any payment less than the budget amount will be subject to disconnection. Budget Billing accounts are not eligible for time extensions or payment plan.



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Any customer who voluntarily withdraws from or defaults on any conditions of the Budget Billing Program will be ineligible to enter into another Budget Billing Program for one year from the date of withdrawal or default. Any past due balance at the time of the withdrawal or default must be paid in full. **Sec. 50.53**

V.E. Senior Citizen Discount

Village of Chatham offers a discount, currently 10% on the residential electric consumption charge to qualifying senior citizens for their primary residence. To qualify:

1. the applicant must be 62 years of age or older;
2. there is no one residing in the residence who is employed on a full-time basis;
3. the electric service must be in the senior applicant's name;

Initial application can occur at any time by contacting the Utility Office. If the customer is currently on a Budget Billing Program, the discount will be effective at the start of the next Budget Billing Cycle. From time to time the Village may require re-application. Contact the Utility Office for more information. **Sec. 50.571**

V.F. Payment Options

V.F.1 Mail

Customers can make their bill payments by U.S. mail, using the return envelope provided with their bill. (If a preprinted return envelope is not available, mail the payment to: Village of Chatham, 116 E. Mulberry, Chatham, IL 62629.) Mail payments may be made using a check (checks will be processed using electronic check conversion), or money order.

V.F.2. In-Person

In-person payments can be made at the Village of Chatham Utility Office's lobby on the north side of the building located at 116 E. Mulberry St, Chatham, IL. Cash, checks (checks will be processed using electronic check conversion), money orders, most debit and credit cards are accepted.

V.F.3. Online

Bill payments also can be made online at (www.chathamil.net) using a credit card or debit card. Customers can also elect online to sign up for monthly recurring payments.

V.F.4 Direct Debit

Village of Chatham offers bill payment by direct debit to the customer's checking or savings account. Any customer who provides written authorization and a voided blank check or savings account deposit form may have his/her monthly bill or level payment amount submitted by Village of Chatham directly to his/her financial institution.

V.F.5 24-hour Payment Drop-Off Box

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Village of Chatham has a 24-hour payment drop-off box located in drive-through on the east side of the Utility office located at 116 E. Mulberry St., Chatham, IL 62629. When using the drop-off box, be sure to use the payment-return envelope provided with your bill and make your payment using only a check or money order. Do not use cash.

Sec. 50.54

V.G. Customer Disputes

A customer who has a dispute about a Village of Chatham bill or service should first discuss the problem with a Utility Office Representative. If the customer is still not satisfied, the next steps will be to seek redress from the Utility Administration Manager and then, Village of Chatham management personnel, in that order. If Village of Chatham management is unable to resolve the dispute, then the customer will be advised of a hearing conducted by a committee designated by the Board of Trustees. The person making the dispute must request review of the matter in writing, directed to the Village Clerk. Refer to Ordinance 15-09 for further information. **Sec 50.09**

V.H. Liens

Any charges for utility service that are delinquent shall constitute a lien upon the premises served. The Village Manager or their designee may file with the County Recorder of Deeds a statement of lien claim. **Sec. 50.10**

V.I. Outside Collection Services

The Village submits past due accounts to a third-party collection agency when the customer no longer has an active utility account. Additional collection fees may be applied. All collection balances must be paid before application for utilities will be accepted. **Sec. 50.13**

V.J. COVID-19 Utility Payment Plan

~~V.J.1. The Village will temporarily suspend utility disconnections until March 1, 2021 May 1, 2021. While the Village will perform no disconnections during this period, residents are encouraged to stay as current as possible with their utility payments. Residents are encouraged to make payments in an amount so as to avoid eventual disconnection. The Village will continue to charge late payment fees during this time. Such penalties shall accrue at a rate of 5% 3% through March 1, 2021, at which time the penalty rate shall revert to the 10% rate. No penalties or interest will be charged from March 1, 2021 and March 31, 2021 due to customers receiving their bills late.~~

~~V.J.2. For balances accruing between December 1, 2020 and March 1, 2021, residential customers will be allowed to enter a payment plan for delinquent accounts under the following terms and conditions:~~

~~V.J.2.i. — Balances of \$500 or more shall be allowed a twelve-month payment plan where the total amount owed as of the date the payment plan is entered is divided equally into twelve payments one being due each of the following twelve months on the due date of that month's bill, beginning on the due date of the March bill payable in April, in addition to that month's charges. For example, if a customer has a past due balance of \$600~~

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~~and requests a payment plan, that customer would have twelve monthly installments of \$50 due over the next twelve months in addition to that month's current charges.~~

~~V.J.2.ii — Balances of under \$500 shall be allowed a six month payment plan where the total amount owed as of the date of the payment plan is divided equally into six payments with one being due each of the following months on the due date of that month's bill, beginning on the due date of the March bill payable in April, in addition to that month's charges. For example, if a customer has a past due balance of \$300 and requests a payment plan, that customer would have six monthly installments of \$50 due over the next six months in addition to that month's current charges.~~

~~V.J.2.iii — The payment plan amount shall include all balances owed (current and past due) as of the date of its entry, and it will be divided into six or twelve monthly installments (see details above). The first of which will be due on the due date of the March bill payable in April. If the first payment plan monthly installment is not paid when due or by the regular monthly utility shut-off date (whichever is later) the customer's utilities will be shut off.~~

~~V.J.2. iv. — Customers who enter a payment plan will not be subject to disconnection under Section I.C.2 of this Handbook provided they adhere to the terms of this Policy and the payment plan. Customers that fail to meet the obligations set forth in the payment plan will be subject to disconnection. Once services have been disconnected, all charges on the account must be paid in full in order for utilities to be re-established.~~

~~V.J.2.v. — Customers who enter into a payment plan that are subsequently disconnected will not be charged fees for any disconnection.~~

~~V.J.2.vi. — Customers who enter into a payment plan, are subsequently disconnected, and then reconnected will not be charges fees for any such disconnection.~~

~~V.J.2.vii. — There is a limit of one payment plan per customer at any given time.~~

~~V.J.2. viii. — If a customer seeks an expansion of an existing payment plan, that customer must petition their case to the Utility Oversight Committee which meets at 6:00 p.m. on the second Monday of every month (Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, Oct, & Dec). The Utility Oversight Committee shall have the discretion to extend such payment plan on a six or twelve month basis in accordance with this policy.~~

~~V.J.2. ix. — Entering into a payment plan shall not stop monthly penalties for past due balances.~~

~~V.J.2.x. — Payment plans entered into under this Section V.J.2. must be requested by the customer between March 1, 2021 and March 15, 2021.~~

V.J.3 Beginning March 1, 2021 until December 31, 2021, those with no past due balance as of March 1, 2021, but with a past due balance arising after March 1, 2021, can request a payment plan beginning April 1, 2021 under the following terms and conditions:

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V.J.3.i. Balances of \$500 or more shall be allowed a six-month payment plan where the total amount owed as of the date the payment plan is entered is divided equally into six payments with one being due each of the following six months, in addition to that month's charges. For example, if a customer has a past due balance of \$600 and requests a payment plan, that customer would have six monthly installments of \$100 due over the next six months in addition to that month's current charges.

V.J.3. ii. Balances of under \$500 shall be allowed a three-month payment plan where the total amount owed as of the date of the payment plan is divided equally into three payments with one being due each of the following three months, in addition to that month's charges. For example, if a customer has a past due balance of \$300 and requests a payment plan, that customer would have three monthly installments of \$100 due over the next three months in addition to that month's current charges.

V.J.3.iii. The payment plan amount shall include all balance owed (current and past-due) as of the date of its entry, and it will be divided into three- or six-monthly installments (see details above), the first of which will be due within 7 calendar days of the payment plan request date. ~~on the due date of the March bill payable in April.~~ If the first payment plan monthly installment is not paid when due or by the regular monthly utility shut-off date (whichever is later) the customer's utilities will be shut off.

V.J.3. iv. Customers who enter a payment plan will not be subject to disconnection under Section I.C.2 of this Handbook provided they adhere to the terms of this Policy and the payment plan. Customers that fail to meet the obligations set forth in the payment plan will be subject to disconnection. Once services have been disconnected, all charges on the account must be paid in full in order for utilities to be re-established.

V.J.3.v. Customers who enter into a payment plan that are subsequently disconnected will not be charged fees for any disconnections.

V.J.3.vi. Customers who enter into a payment plan, are subsequently disconnected, and then reconnected will not be charged fees for any such reconnection.

V.J.3.vii. There is a limit of one payment plan per customer at any given time.

V.J.3.vii. If a customer seeks an expansion of an existing payment plan, that customer must petition their case to the Utility Oversight Committee which meets at 6:00 p.m. on the second Monday of every other month (Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, Oct, & Dec). The Utility Oversight Committee shall have the discretion to extend such payment plan on a three- or six-month basis in accordance with this policy.

V.J.3. ix. Entering into a payment plan shall not stop monthly penalties for past due balances.

V.J.4. Payment plans can be requested by phone at 217-483-2451. The Village will maintain a list of resources for customers at the following website: <http://chathamil.net/resource/billassistance>. Customers are encouraged to seek assistance as soon as possible as aid, if available may be delayed by the assisting body due to resource limitations.

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VI. Interruption of Service

VI.A. Interruption without Notice

If any Village of Chatham service has been tampered with, the service will be disconnected and removed without notice. Service will not be reinstalled or activated until all damages to Village of Chatham equipment, all consumption charges, including those for estimated lost consumption; a service deposit; and a reconnection charge(s) have all been paid in full.

Sec. 50.24

Village of Chatham routinely reports tampering to the Village of Chatham Police Department and reserves the right to prosecute for tampering under the Illinois Criminal Code 5/16-14, Unlawful Interference with Public Utility Services.

VII.B. Interruption with Notice

Village of Chatham may disconnect service with notice when a customer fails to do any of the following:

1. Monthly bills for service are due on the 15th of each month. If services are not paid in full by the due date on each monthly bill, a five-day grace period would be allowed before a penalty charge of 10% per month will be imposed on the bill. The Village will no longer mail a separate shut off notice, notification is now included on the utility bill, also a phone message will be sent to customers on the shut off list on the 21st of the month or the first working day following the 21st, which allows the customer to pay the outstanding bill before shut off. Utility services that remain unpaid 15 days after the due date shall be deemed delinquent; service will be interrupted until all delinquent amounts are paid in full. Services interrupted due to delinquency will not be shut off on Fridays or Village observed Holidays, and will only be reconnected during normal office business hours after payment is received in full.
2. make payment in accordance with the terms of a Payment Plan;
3. remit a returned payment;
4. comply with relevant Village of Chatham Code of Ordinances and/or the conditions agreed to in the application for service;
5. repair a water leak(s) within a timely manner following notice from the Village of Chatham;
6. provide Village of Chatham representatives with access to the customer's meter(s); or
7. repair electric equipment hazards within a timely manner following notice from Village of Chatham

Sec. 50.29

VI.C. Guidelines for Interruption of Utility Service

Termination of electric utility service to all customers, including all tenants of master metered apartment buildings, for nonpayment of bills, where electricity is used as the only source of space heating/cooling or to control or operate the only space heating/ cooling equipment at the residence is prohibited:

on any day when the National Weather Service forecast for the following 24 hours covering the area of the utility in which the residence is located includes a forecast that the temperature will be 32 degrees Fahrenheit or below, or 95 degrees or above; or

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on any day preceding a holiday or a weekend when such a forecast indicated that the temperature will be 32 degrees Fahrenheit or below, or 95 degrees or above during the holiday or weekend;

unless:

1. consumption occurs in the absence of an approved application for service; or
2. a hazardous condition was not repaired within the time limit included in the written notice from Village of Chatham.

Termination of water utility service to all residential users may be disconnected at any time.

VI.D. Medical Certification

Anyone with a medical condition which is dependent upon electric service who is living full-time at a residence scheduled for service interruption can temporarily avoid disconnection of electric service:

What You Must Do:

Contact your physician and request a written certification to the Village of Chatham within 5 days which contains the following information:

- Must be on letterhead with the name, business address and telephone number of the certifying physician
- Name of the sick person
- A statement that the person is a permanent resident of the residence in question
- The nature of the illness
- The period of time during which termination of electrical services will aggravate the illness

How Long is the Certification Good For?

The certification is good for one month. It can be renewed for one month if the physician provides another written certification. If the certification is not renewed, your utility service may be shut off after the first month.

Conditions:

- A medical certification does not relinquish the customer's responsibility for paying the outstanding balance on their account
- The customer must enter into an agreement for the payment of the outstanding balance of the account within the first thirty days of the medical certification and keep the current account paid
- Failure to do so will void the medical certification and notice of discontinuance of service will be sent to the residential customer

Village of Chatham reserves the right to verify any and all information provided concerning a customer's illness.



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Sec. 50.30

VI.E. Service Department Appointments

When setting up an appointment for service appointments and disconnects, please allow for a 48-hour notification unless it is an emergency situation **Sec. 50.31**

VII. Sources of Assistance

Village of Chatham cooperates with the following community agencies that provide financial assistance to qualifying customers who need help paying their utility bills.

VI.A. Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program [LIHEAP]

LIHEAP is funded by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs and administered by the Sangamon County Department of Community Resources. Sangamon County residents may apply annually, beginning in September. The telephone number is (217) 535-3120.

VII.B. Chatham Township

Chatham Township's Assistance Program is currently administered by Capital Township which is located at 901 S. 11th Street in Springfield; this governmental agency assists qualifying residents of Chatham Township. The telephone number is (217) 525-1736.

VII.C. Ball Township

Ball Township's Assistance Program may assist qualifying residents. The Ball Township Supervisor's telephone number is (217) 483-5071.



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VIII. Important Telephone Numbers

Village of Chatham Utility Office.....	217-483-2451
Customer Service	
New Service/Transfer/Terminate Service	
Billing Questions	
Report Service Outages/Emergencies (Electric/Water)	
Ameren Illinois (gas services)	1-800-755-5000
Cable/Internet/Phone Providers:	
Comcast (all services)	1-800-COMCAST
Direct TV (Satellite).....	1-877-373-9168
Frontier (Internet/phone)	1-877-462-1266
Waste Haulers	
Waste Management.....	217-523-5497
Republic Services.....	217- 522-7797
Lake Area Disposal.....	217-522-9317
Chatham Police Department.....	217-483-2453
Chatham Fire Department.....	217- 483-2121
Chatham Post Office.....	217-483-3312
Chatham Area Library.....	217-483-2713
Chatham Community Building.....	217-483-2488
Schools	
Administration.....	217-483-2416
High School.....	217-483-2424
Middle School.....	217-483-2481
Intermediate School.....	217-483-1183
Ball Elementary.....	217-483-2414
Chatham Elementary.....	217-483-2411
Glenwood Elementary.....	217-483-6704
Bus Garage.....	217-483-6098
Senior Citizen Center.....	217-483-3792
Chatham Chamber of Commerce.....	217-483-6450
JULIE (Call before you dig)	1-800-892-0123

Village of Chatham Website: www.chathamil.gov