



VILLAGE OF
CHATHAM
Family. Community. Prosperity.

Customer Services Policy Handbook

Village of Chatham

116 E. Mulberry Street
Chatham, Illinois 62629

(217)483-2451

January 2016



Customer Services Policy Handbook (Revised 1/20/2016)

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 p.m., Monday-Friday
Drive-up Cashier Window	7:30 a.m. – 4:15 p.m., Monday-Friday
Drive-up Drop Box	24 Hour Drop Box
Call-In Hours	7:30 a.m. – 4:15 p.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:	vocuo@chathamil.net



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I. Residential Service

I.A. Definition of Residential Service

In order to qualify for residential electric service, a property must comprise 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 (see section II.) and may be billed at the residential electric rate. **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, 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.

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).

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 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.

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.

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**

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I.C. Payment for Services

I.C.1. Service Deposit

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.

Existing customers with a good credit history reapplying for service at a new location who have a deposit on file 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.

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).

This service deposit is adjusted periodically.

Payment of the residential deposit must be made when the customer signs up for service. Following 18 continuous months of service from the Village of Chatham, the deposit will be returned in the form of a credit to the account. If the customer terminates service before the deposit is credited, the deposit will be applied to the account's final bill or transferred to the customer's new service address within Chatham.

Sec. 50.03

I.C.2. Monthly Service Payments

In most circumstances, charges for service will be rendered on or about the same day each month based on the service address (see section VI.A. for possible exceptions). Monthly bills for service are due on the 15th of each month. 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 nonresidential 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

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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 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 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 Checks

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 for 30 days after the billing 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, the customer will be required to pay a reconnect charge of \$50 for reconnection before service will be restored. The reconnect charges may be adjusted periodically. **Sec. 50.05**

If a check 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 dishonored check 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 or cash equivalent within seven working days. **Sec. 50.11**

If a second check is tendered within 12 months to the Village of Chatham in 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. **Sec. 50.11**

I.D. Meter Reading

I.D.1. Meter Reading Schedule

Except in the cases cited below and in [section VI.A.](#), 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.

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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 can move an indoor water meter to an external pit at any time at their discretion.

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**

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 Administrator, 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 cost \$ 20.

(2) For testing conducted of electric meters on the premises by a village employee during regular working hours shall cost \$35. **Sec. 50.26**

II. Nonresidential Service

II.A. Definition of Nonresidential Service

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

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II.B. Application for Service

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

Each applicant for nonresidential 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.

Existing nonresidential customers with a good credit history reapplying for service at a new location who have a deposit on file 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.

If the applicant is not the owner of the service address, s/he must provide the lease agreement to the property listing the applicant as the leasee. If the applicant owns the service address, proof of ownership must be provided. The Village of Chatham reserves the right to verify any and all information provided by the applicant prior to initiating service. 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 II.C.1.](#)) before service will be initiated.

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

II.C. Payment for Services

II.C.1. Service Deposit

Previous nonresidential customers who are re-applying for service under the same entity name will not be required to pay a service deposit if their previous service lasted at least 12 months and either had no more than two late penalties or if had more than two late penalties; the penalties and past due balances were paid before the next bill was generated. First-time nonresidential applicants and nonresidential applicants who have failed to pay for previous service in a timely manner will be required to pay the service deposit before service will be initiated. First-time nonresidential applicants who have residential service on their owned, primary residence may avoid paying the deposit for nonresidential service if:

1. the nonresidential service is requested in the same name as the residential service;
2. the applicant applies for the nonresidential 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; and

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5. the applicant agrees to the transfer of unpaid final bills to any existing residential or nonresidential account.

The amount of the nonresidential service deposit is currently:

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

This amount may be adjusted periodically.

However, a deposit may subsequently be required on the nonresidential account if the customer fails to maintain payments on either the residential or nonresidential account in a timely manner.

After 18 months of service, the deposit maintained on account with Village of Chatham by a nonresidential customer will be credited to their account. If the customer terminates service before the deposit is refunded, the deposit will be applied to the account's final bill or transferred to the customer's new service address within Chatham.

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

II.C.2. Monthly Service Payments

In most circumstances, charges for service will be rendered on or about the same date each month based on the service address (see section VI.A. for possible exceptions). Monthly bills for service are due on the 15th of each month. In applying for electric or water service from 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 nonresidential account being maintained by or for the use of the 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 sprinkler meter. **Sec. 50.04**

II.C.3. Penalties: Late Payment; Nonpayment; Returned Checks

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.

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If the delinquent amount is more than one month overdue, service may be interrupted until all delinquent amounts are paid in full. If service is interrupted, the customer will be required to pay a reconnect charge of \$50 for reconnection before service will be restored. The reconnect charges may be adjusted periodically.

If a check 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 dishonored check plus the \$25 service charge will be added back to a customer's account immediately. The customer will be required to reimburse the Village of Chatham in cash or cash equivalent within ten working days.

If a second check is tendered within 12 months to the Village of Chatham in payment of any village services 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. **Sec. 50.11**

II.C.4. Temporary Electric and Water Service for Special Events

When temporary electric or water hook ups are requested for a Special Event, the Public Utilities Manager will prepare a cost estimate including materials and labor to present to the person(s) or organization requesting the temporary hook ups. Not-for-profit groups who are presented with a cost estimate 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.D. Meter Reading

II.D.1. Meter Reading Schedule

Except in the cases cited below and in [section VI.A.](#), 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 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 might also be estimated if 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**

II.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.

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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**

II.D.3. Relocating Indoor Meters

The Village of Chatham can move an indoor water meter to an external pit at any time at their discretion.

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**

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 Administrator, 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 cost \$ 20.

(2) For testing conducted of electric meters on the premises by a village employee during regular working hours shall cost \$35 **Sec 50.26**

III. 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 Administrator and must be approved by the Chatham Village Board—call (217) 483-2451 for more information. **Sec 50.122**

IV. 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 (see section VII.B.). **Sec. 50.119**

V. Landlord, Owner and Tenant Responsibilities

V.A. Responsibility for Active Service

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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 when a tenant does not apply or qualify for services. Landlords or owners shall have the option of:

1. retaining service and paying all charges in their name during the periods of time when an active tenant does not apply or qualify for service from Village of Chatham; or
2. having service disconnected when an active tenant does not apply or qualify for 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.

V.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**

V.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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VI. Customer Billing

VI.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:

1. a slow-running meter has been providing an inaccurate measure of customer consumption;
2. a meter has stopped, resulting in no registered usage;
3. a customer who signed up for and received service was inadvertently omitted from the monthly billing system; and
4. 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 12 months for residential service and 24 months for nonresidential 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 Arrangement or Extended Payment Plan (see [section VI.D below](#)) 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. **Sec. 50.50**

VI.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 customers, credits will be limited to the 12-month period immediately preceding discovery that an overcharge is occurring. Nonresidential customers are limited to the preceding 24-month period.

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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 customers, back billing of the charges will be limited to the 12-month period immediately preceding discovery that an undercharge is occurring. Nonresidential customers are limited to the preceding 24-month period. **Sec. 50.51**

VI.C. Bill Adjustments for Water Leaks

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 (taken as average usage of the last six full usage readings of the respective season, extrapolated as necessary for customers who have not reside in location for the appropriate time frame; and
2. the leak must be repaired within 30 days of the earliest of either:
 - a. Notification by the Village of an excessive water usage, or
 - b. Mailing date of utility billing first containing the excessive usage
3. the customer has requested the leak adjustment, in the form prescribed by the Village, and has provided proof of repair or inspection in the form of receipts, invoices, or sworn statement, confirmed by Village meter 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.

B. The following water leak adjustments are available:

- I. 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 is 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:

- I. High-demand -Meter readings from April through September

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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 an Extended 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 Arrangement or a previous Extended Payment Plan within the last 12 months will not be permitted to enter into an Extended Payment Plan.

When the payment plan has been agreed upon between the customer and the Utility Collections Specialist, the Utility Collections Specialist 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 Extended Payment Plan, no penalties will be assessed to the account. With a signed payment agreement the customer agrees to the following;

1. The Village may establish a monthly payment schedule over a period not to exceed four months for amounts not eligible under the water leak adjustment policy. The customer must pay one-fourth of the amount due at the time the payment arrangement is entered into.
2. The Village may establish a monthly payment schedule for amounts that are a result of back billed utility services. The payment period shall not exceed the period of time for which the services are back billed for.
3. In addition to the monthly past due installment, the customer must pay their current utility bills on time.
4. If the customer defaults on any part of the payment arrangement, the Village will demand payment in full or their service will be disconnected.

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

VI.D. Payment Arrangements

Village of Chatham may allow customers subject to disconnection for previously billed past due amounts for their current active utility service to enter into a Promissory Payment Arrangement. Customers who have twice failed to make payment under such a plan during the preceding 12 months, as well as those who have been involved in meter tampering incidents, will not be permitted to enter into a Payment Arrangement.

Under the terms of the Promissory Payment Arrangement:

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1. A customer with a past due amount must make a promissory payment arrangement to pay the past due balance by the 15th of the month following the disconnect date. The promissory arrangement will be entered into the comments section of the customer's account in the Utility Billing Software.
2. If a customer who enters into a Payment Arrangement makes payment late or defaults in any way on the agreement, service may be interrupted and will not be reinstated until all past due amounts, plus the corresponding reconnect fee(s), are paid in full.
3. An additional extension of time may be granted for a customer whose payment arrangement is dependent upon the receipt of support from a local community assistance organization. The extension will be subject to the receipt of a confirmation from the organization that a payment will be issued on behalf of the customer.
4. A payment plan may not be established after utility service has been disconnected. **Sec. 50.52**

VI.E. 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 arrangements.

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**

VI.F. 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; and

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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**

VI.G. Payment Options

VI.G.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.

VI.G.2. In-Person

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

VI.G.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.

VI.G.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.

VI.G.5. 24-hour Payment Drop-Off Box

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

VI.H. 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

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Administration Manger 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**

VI.I. Liens

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

VI.J. Outside Collection Services

The Village submits past due accounts to either the Illinois State Comptroller's Local Debt Recovery Program or a 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**

VII. Interruption of Service

VII.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. pay a past-due bill owed to Village of Chatham for service furnished at the same or another location;
2. make payment in accordance with the terms of a Payment Arrangement;
4. redeem a returned check within seven Village business days;
5. comply with relevant Village of Chatham Code of Ordinances and/or the conditions agreed to in the application for service;
6. repair a water leak(s) within a timely manner following notice from the Village of Chatham;
7. provide Village of Chatham representatives with access to the customer's meter(s); or
8. repair electric equipment hazards within a timely manner following notice from Village of Chatham

The customer will be notified of an impending disconnection either by phone or by mail. The notification will include the date on which the disconnection amount is due to avoid interruption of service. Disconnection can occur up to 21 days after the notice is mailed. **Sec. 50.29**

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VII.C. Guidelines for Interruption of Utility Service

Termination of electric utility service to all residential users, 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

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.

Anyone with a medical condition which is dependent upon utility service who is living full-time at a residence scheduled for service interruption can temporarily avoid disconnection by providing Village of Chatham with a medical certification form certifying the customer's health condition. Upon receipt of this form; Village of Chatham will delay service disconnection for 30 days, providing the customer also contacts the Utility Office during this period to make payment arrangements.

By providing a second form, the customer may extend the disconnection exemptions for an additional 30 days, providing a payment arrangement was scheduled during the initial 30-day period. If a customer has failed to make or has defaulted on a payment arrangement after 60 days from the initial receipt of the medical certification, then legal counsel may be sought.

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

Sec. 50.30

VII.D. 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**

VIII. 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.



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VIII.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.

VIII.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.

VIII.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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IX. Important Telephone Numbers

Village of Chatham Utility Office..... 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..... 523-5497
 Allied Waste..... 522-7797
 ILLINI Disposal..... 789-7025
 Lake Area Disposal..... 522-9317

Chatham Police Department..... 483-2453
 Chatham Fire Department..... 483-2121
 Chatham Post Office..... 483-3312
 Chatham Area Library..... 483-2713
 Chatham Community Building..... 483-2488

Schools
 Administration..... 483-2416
 High School..... 483-2424
 Middle School..... 483-2481
 Intermediate School..... 483-1183
 Ball Elementary..... 483-2414
 Chatham Elementary..... 483-2411
 Glenwood Elementary..... 483-6704
 Bus Garage..... 483-6098

Senior Citizen Center..... 483-3792
 Chatham Chamber of Commerce..... 483-6450
 JULIE (Call before you dig)..... 1-800-892-0123

Village of Chatham Website: www.chathamil.net