

BILL NO. 4737

ORDINANCE NO. 4737

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WEST PLAINS, MISSOURI (THE "CITY") TO AMEND CHAPTER 46, UTILITIES, OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES FOR THE CITY OF WEST PLAINS, MISSOURI, BY REPLACING SECTIONS 46-97, 46-98, AND 46-100 PERTAINING TO UTILITY BILLING AND DELINQUENT UTILITY ACCOUNTS.

WHEREAS, it has been determined by the City Council of West Plains, Missouri, that the efficient operation of the City and welfare of the residents of the City will be promoted by amending the utility billing procedure, and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to enact an ordinance amending the utility billing procedure of the City.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WEST PLAINS, MISSOURI, THAT CHAPTER 46, ARTICLE II, DIVISION 2, SECTIONS 46-97, 46-98, AND 46-100 BE REPLACED AS FOLLOWS:

CHAPTER 46 - UTILITIES

ARTICLE II – SERVICES AND CHARGES

DIVISION 2 – RATES, CHARGES AND BILLING

Sec. 46-97. - Billing; delinquent accounts.

Billing of utility customers in the city shall be as follows:

- (1) The city shall mail out all utility bills at least monthly.
- (2) Accounts not paid by closing time on a date not sooner than the tenth business day on which the city offices are open shall be delinquent.

Sec. 46-98. - Procedure for handling delinquent accounts.

Delinquent accounts shall be regulated and handled in the following manner:

- (1) Cutoff notices shall be mailed out after the account becomes delinquent and a penalty charge as provided in the city fee schedule shall be added to the account.
- (2) Cutoff notices shall specify that if the account is not paid in full, prior to the disconnect date listed on the notice, the service will be subject to disconnect and an additional delinquent fee charge as provided in the city fee schedule will be billed to the account. In the event of services being disconnected for non-payment, the utility department shall be responsible for reconnection of service within one business day of

the payment in full, including all fees. Reconnections requested after regular business hours will result in double the delinquent fee. The notice shall further specify that if the customer believes the billing is incorrect that the customer shall file a written statement with the city clerk, within three days from the date of mailing the notice, setting forth his reasons for believing that the billing is incorrect.

(3) Payments received after the account becomes delinquent which are partial payments or which do not include the penalty charge will be credited to the account, but until the balance is paid, the account shall be considered delinquent and therefore subject to being discontinued.

(4) Accounts having an outstanding balance of less than \$15.00 shall not be disconnected for nonpayment, but the balance shall be added to the next bill.

(5) A service that has been cut off for nonpayment shall not be re-energized until the account is settled at the utility office.

(6) The serviceman assigned to cut off delinquent accounts is not to collect money on the account.

(7) Credit arrangements may be made with the utility department for inactive or finalized accounts only. Active accounts must be paid in full or will be subject to disconnection of service. If the account is not paid prior to the disconnect date listed on the late notice, the additional fees will be applied to the account.

(8) The actual cost of collecting delinquent bills shall be assessed to the customer, including, but not limited to, attorney's fees, court costs and amounts paid to collection agencies.

Sec. 46-100. - Procedure for payment of bills.

All utility bills are due by the due date listed on the utility bill (or the next day city hall is open if closed on the due date). Utility bills may be paid via the following methods:

- (1) In person at the utility counter at city hall;
- (2) Utility payment drop box located outside the utility office in the city hall parking lot;
- (3) Online through City's website;
- (4) By mail to P.O. Box 710 or 1910 Holiday Lane, West Plains, MO 65775;
- (5) Local bank locations if arrangements have been made between the bank location and the City of West Plains (Payments only accepted at approved bank locations with stub for exact payment amount and will not be accepted after the due date.);
- (6) Automatic checking or savings bank draft (which can be arranged in the utility office at city hall).

This ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after the date of its passage.

PASSED this 17th day of April, 2023.

ATTEST:

Allison Skinner
Allison Skinner, City Clerk

Michael Topliff
Michael Topliff, Mayor