



Source: Water & Light *rad*

Agenda Item No: REP 166-13

To: City Council

From: City Manager and Staff *MM*

Council Meeting Date: Dec 2, 2013

Re: Ending in field collection of utility payments, February 1, 2014

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In order to comply with the City's Payment Card and Bank Account Information Security Policy, Water and Light staff will no longer be collecting field payments for utility bills, disconnection fees or re-connection fees beginning February 1, 2014.

DISCUSSION:

On September 24, 2013 the City Manager approved the Payment Card and Bank Account Information Security Policy. This policy secures the City of Columbia customers' financial data by limiting and controlling who, how, when and where City personnel may access this information. This policy is required for the City's compliance with the Payment Card Industry (PCI) Regulations by establishing a minimum set of security standards for receiving payments which include personal bank account information or credit card data.

Complying with the City policy, requires all documents containing any element of cardholder data or customer bank account information be maintained in a locked, secured fashion with limited access. Access to payment or bank systems and cardholder data information shall only be given to employees based strictly on necessity of job function. Currently, Treasury personnel of the Finance Department and other designated cashiers in specific departments are the only ones that meet these qualifications. Field personnel in service vehicles do not have the ability to comply with this policy.

The City currently has six methods that comply with this policy that customers can use to make payments for services:

1. In person, at City Hall (drop box, drive-thru, cashier's office).
2. Online, through the City's website.
3. Automatic deduction of bills through customer's bank account.
4. Telephone, using Teleworks.
5. Mail, sending payments in by mail using supplied return addressed envelopes.
6. Various local business sites throughout the City (Gerbes, HyVee, Merchants and Farmers Bank, Schnucks, and Wal-Mart).

Beginning in mid-December and throughout the month of January, staff will conduct an educational campaign to educate customers of the changes which will take effect February 1, 2014. To communicate to customers that delinquent payments will not be taken by crew members that are disconnecting utilities for non-payment, the following methods will be used:

1. A Note will be added to disconnect notice sent to customer in the mail at least five days prior to disconnection date.
2. A reminder will be given in the automatic phone call message sent prior to the disconnection day.
3. City Source newsletter (February and March)

4. City Channel announcement

5. Web site information (announcement & on Utility Customer Service web pages)

6. Utility crew members have been verbally communicating to customers, subject to disconnect, that accepting payments from them might not be possible in the near future. Once it has been decided to no longer take payments, the staff will give the customer a handout reminding them the practice will end on February 1, 2014.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None

VISION IMPACT:

<http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/Council/Meetings/visionimpact.php>

None

SUGGESTED COUNCIL ACTIONS:

None. Information only.

FISCAL and VISION NOTES:					
City Fiscal Impact Enter all that apply		Program Impact		Mandates	
City's current net FY cost	\$0.00	New Program/ Agency?	No	Federal or State mandated?	No
Amount of funds already appropriated	\$0.00	Duplicates/Expands an existing program?	No	Vision Implementation impact	
Amount of budget amendment needed	\$0.00	Fiscal Impact on any local political subdivision?	No	Enter all that apply: Refer to Web site	
Estimated 2 year net costs:		Resources Required		Vision Impact?	No
One Time	\$0.00	Requires add'l FTE Personnel?	No	Primary Vision, Strategy and/or Goal Item #	
Operating/ Ongoing	\$0.00	Requires add'l facilities?	No	Secondary Vision, Strategy and/or Goal Item #	
		Requires add'l capital equipment?	No	Fiscal year implementation Task #	