

RULE NO. 11

DISCONTINUANCE AND RESTORATION OF SERVICE

A. Customer's Request for Discontinuance of Service

- 1. A customer may have service discontinued by giving not less than two days' advance notice thereof to the utility. Charges for service may be required to be paid until the requested date of discontinuance or such later date as will provide not less than the required two days' advance notice.
- 2. When such notice is not given, the customer will be required to pay for service until two days after the utility has knowledge that the customer has vacated the premises or otherwise has discontinued water service.

B. Discontinuance of Service by Utility

1. For Nonpayment of Bills

- a. Past-Due Bills. When bills are rendered monthly or bimonthly, they will be considered past due if not paid within 19 days from the date of mailing. The utility shall allow every residential customer at least 19 days from the date of mailing its bill for services, postage prepaid, to make payment of the bill. The utility may not discontinue residential service for nonpayment of a delinquent account unless the utility first gives notice of the delinquency and impending discontinuance, at least 10 days prior to the proposed discontinuance, by means of a notice mailed, postage prepaid, to the customer to whom the service is provided if different than to whom the service is billed, not earlier than 19 days from the date of mailing the utility's bill for services. The 10-day discontinuance of service notice shall not commence until five days after the mailing of the notice.
- b. When a bill for water service has become past due and a 10-day discontinuance of residential service notice or a 7-day discontinuance of nonresidential service notice for nonpayment has been issued, service may be discontinued if bill is not paid within the time required by such notice. The customer's service, however, will not be discontinued for nonpayment until the amount of any deposit made to establish credit for that service has been fully absorbed.

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Issued by

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Resolution No. W 3770

RULE NO. 11  
(continued)

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B. 1. c. Any customer, residential as well as nonresidential, who has initiated a billing complaint or requested an investigation within 5 days of receiving a disputed bill or who has, before discontinuance of service made a request for extension of the payment period of a bill asserted to be beyond the means of the customer to pay in full within the normal period for payment, shall not have residential water service discontinued for nonpayment during the pendency of an investigation by the utility of such customer complaint or request and shall be given an opportunity for review of the complaint, investigation, or request by a review manager of the utility. The review shall include consideration of whether a residential customer shall be permitted to make installment payments on any unpaid balance of the delinquent account over a reasonable period of time, not to exceed 12 months. Such service shall not be discontinued for nonpayment for any customer complying with an installment payment agreement entered into with the utility, provided the customer also keeps current his account for water service as charges accrue in each subsequent billing period. If a residential customer fails to comply with an installment payment agreement, the utility will give a 10-day discontinuance of service notice before discontinuing such service, but such notice shall not entitle the customer to further investigation by the utility.

d. Any customer whose complaint or request for an investigation pursuant to subdivision (c) has resulted in an adverse determination by the utility may appeal the determination to the Commission. Any subsequent appeal of the dispute or complaint to the Commission shall be in accordance with the Commission adopted Rules of Practice and Procedure.

e. Service to a residential water customer will not be discontinued for nonpayment when the customer has previously established to the satisfaction of the utility that:

- (1) The customer is elderly (age 62 or over) or handicapped,\* or upon certification of a licensed physician or surgeon that to discontinue water will be life threatening to the customer; and

\* Proof of age must be supported by certificate of birth, driver's license, passport or other reliable document. Proof of handicap must be by certification from a licensed physician, surgeon, public health nurse or social worker.

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- B. 1. e. (2) The customer is temporarily unable to pay for such service in accordance with the provisions of the utility's tariffs; and
- (3) The customer is willing to arrange installment payments satisfactory to the utility, over a period not to exceed 12 months, including arrangements for prompt payment of subsequent bills.

However, service may be discontinued to any customer who does not comply with an installment payment agreement or keep current his account for water service as charges accrue in each subsequent billing period.

- f. A customer's residential service may be discontinued for nonpayment of a bill for residential service previously rendered him at any location served by the utility.
- g. Service will not be discontinued by reason of delinquency in payment for service on any Saturday, Sunday, legal holiday, or at any time during which the business offices of the utility are not open to the public.
- h. Where water service is provided to residential users in a multi-unit residential structure, mobilehome park, or permanent residential structures in a labor camp, where the owner, manager, or operator is listed by the utility as the customer of record, the utility will make every good faith effort to inform the users, when the account is in arrears, that service will be discontinued. Notice will be in as prescribed in subdivision (a) above, and in Rules Nos. 5 and 8.
- (1) Where said users are individually metered.

The utility is not required to make service available to these users unless each user agrees to the terms and conditions of service and meets the requirement of the law and the utility's rules and tariffs. However, if one or more users are willing and able to assume responsibility for subsequent charges by these users to the account to the satisfaction of the utility, and if there is a practical

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B. 1. h. physical means, legally available to the utility of selectively providing services to these users who have met the requirements of the utility's rules and tariffs, the utility will make service available to these users. For these selected users establishment of credit will be as prescribed in Rule No. 6, except that where prior service for a period of time is a condition for establishing credit with the utility, proof that is acceptable to the utility of residence and prompt payment of rent or other credit obligation during that period of time is a satisfactory equivalent.

(N)

(2) Where said users are master metered.

The utility is not required to make service available to these users unless each user agrees to the terms and conditions of service, and meets the requirements of the law and the utility's rules and tariffs and the following.

The same Rule 11 item B.1.h. (1) above which applies to individually metered users also applies to master metered users, except a representative may act on the behalf of a master metered user, and the utility will not discontinue service in any of the following situations:

- (a) During the pendency of an investigation by the utility of a master-metered customer dispute or complaint.
- (b) When the master-metered customer has been granted an extension of the period for repayment of a bill.
- (c) For an indebtedness owed by the master metered customer to any other person or corporation or when the obligation represented by the delinquent account or other indebtedness was incurred with a person or corporation other than the utility demanding payment therefor.
- (d) When a delinquent account relates to another property owned, managed, or operated by the master-metered customer.

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- B. 1. h. (e) When a public health or building officer certifies that determination would result in a significant threat to the health or safety of the residential occupants or the public. Proof of age or handicap are described in Rule 11.B.1.e. (N)
- i. A reasonable attempt must be made by the utility to personally contact an adult person on the residential customer's premises either by telephone or in person, at hours prior to discontinuance. For elderly or handicapped residential customers, the utility shall provide at least 48 hours' notice by telephone or in person. For these customers, if telephone or personal contact cannot be made, a notice of discontinuance of service shall be posted in a conspicuous location at the service address at least 48 hours prior to discontinuance. Such notice shall be independent of, and in addition to, other notice(s) as may be prescribed in the utility's tariffs. (N)
- j. Residential Customer's Remedies Upon Receipt of Discontinuance Notice (C)
- (1) If upon receipt of a 10-day discontinuance notice, a residential customer is unable to pay, he must contact the utility before discontinuance of service to make payment arrangements to avoid discontinuance of service. (N)
- (2) If, after contacting the utility, the residential customer alleges to the Commission an inability to pay and that he is unable to make payment arrangements with the utility he should write to the Commission's Consumer Affairs Branch (CAB) to make an informal complaint. This action must be taken within the 10-day discontinuance of service notice. (N)
- (3) The CAB's resolution of the matter will be reported to the utility and the residential customer within ten business days after receipt of the informal complaint. If the customer is not satisfied with such resolution, he must file, within ten business days after the date of the CAB's letter, a formal complaint with the Commission under Public Utilities Code Section 1702 on a form provided by the CAB. (N)

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- B. 1. j. (4) Failure of the residential as well as nonresidential customer to observe these time limits shall entitle the utility to insist upon payment or, upon failure to pay, to discontinue the customer's service.
- k. Designation of a Third-Party Representative (Elderly or Handicapped only)
  - (1) Customer must inform utility if he desires that a third party receive discontinuance or other notices on his behalf.
  - (2) Utility must be advised of name, address, and telephone number of third party with a letter from third party accepting this responsibility.
  - (3) Only customers who certify that they are elderly or handicapped are entitled to third-party representation.\*

2. For Noncompliance with Rules

The utility may discontinue service to any customer for violation of these rules after it has given the customer at least five days' written notice of such intention. Where safety of water supply is endangered, service may be discontinued immediately without notice.

3. For Waste of Water

- a. Where negligent or wasteful use of water exists on a customer's premises, the utility may discontinue the service if such practices are not remedied within five days after it has given the customer written notice to such effect.
- b. In order to protect itself against serious and unnecessary waste or misuse of water, the utility may meter any flat rate service and apply the regularly established meter rates where the customer continues to misuse or waste water beyond five days after the utility has given the customer written notice to remedy such practices.

\* Proof of age must be supported by certificate of birth, driver's license, passport or other reliable document. Proof of handicap must be by certification from a licensed physician, public health nurse, or social worker.

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**B. 4. For Unsafe Apparatus or Where Service is Detrimental or Damaging to the Utility or its Customers**

If an unsafe or hazardous condition is found to exist on the customer's premises, or if the use of water there on by apparatus, appliances, equipment or otherwise is found to be detrimental or damaging to the utility or its customers, the service may be shut off without notice. The utility will notify the customer immediately of the reasons for the discontinuance and the corrective action to be taken by the customer before service can be restored.

**5. For Fraudulent Use of Service**

When the utility has discovered that a customer has obtained service by fraudulent means, or has diverted the water service for unauthorized use, the service to that customer may be discontinued without notice. The utility will not restore service to such customer until that customer has complied with all filed rules and reasonable requirements of the utility and the utility has been reimbursed for the full amount of the service rendered and the actual cost to the utility incurred by reason of the fraudulent use.

**C. Restoration of Service**

**1. Reconnection Charge**

Where service has been discontinued for violation of these rules or for nonpayment of bills, the utility may charge \$25.00 for reconnection of service during regular (I) working hours or \$40.00 for reconnection of service at other than regular (I) working hours when the customer has requested that the reconnection be made at other than regular working hours.

**2. To be Made During Regular Working Hours**

The utility will endeavor to make reconnections during regular working hours on the day of the request, if conditions permit, otherwise reconnections will be made on the regular working day following the day the request is made.

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Timothy S. Guster

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General Counsel

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C. 3. To Be Made at Other Than Regular Working Hours

When a customer has requested that the reconnection be made at other than regular working hours, the utility will reasonably endeavor to so make the reconnection if practicable under the circumstances.

4. Wrongful Discontinuance

A service wrongfully discontinued by the utility, must be restored without charge for the restoration to the customer within 24 hours.

D. Refusal to Serve

1. Conditions for Refusal

The utility may refuse to serve an applicant for service under the following conditions:

- a. If the applicant fails to comply with any of the rules as filed with the Public Utilities Commission.
- b. If the intended use of the service is of such a nature that it will be detrimental or injurious to existing customers.
- c. If, in the judgement of the utility, the applicant's installation for utilizing the service is unsafe or hazardous, or of such nature that satisfactory service cannot be rendered.
- d. Where service has been discontinued for fraudulent use, the utility will not serve an applicant until it has determined that all conditions of fraudulent use or practice has been corrected.

2. Notification to Customers

When an applicant is refused service under the provisions of this rule, the utility will notify the applicant promptly of the reason for the refusal to service and of the right of applicant to appeal the utility's decision to the Public Utilities Commission.

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