



# MASSANUTTEN WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY

*RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR  
WATER AND SEWER SERVICES*

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## **SECTION I – GENERAL**

1. The purpose of this publication is to set forth the policy and rules and regulations which have been adopted by the Board of the Massanutten Water and Sewer Authority, located in Rockingham Authority, Virginia and which are applicable to the public water and sewer facilities of the Massanutten Water and Sewer Authority (Authority). This publication establishes policy, rates, fees, and rules and regulations which govern the use of the public water and sewer facilities and provides standards for connection to these facilities.
2. Inquiries for information or clarification of any item herein pertaining to matters concerning the Authority's water and sewer facilities should be directed to the Department of Public Works, Rockingham Authority Administration Center, 20 East Gay Street, Harrisonburg, Virginia 22802. Telephone (564) 564-3020.

## **SECTION II - DEFINITIONS**

Unless the context specifically indicates otherwise, the meaning of terms used herein shall be as follows:

1. "Application for Service" shall mean the making of a written request for water and/or sewer service with the Authority.
2. "Authority" shall mean the Massanutten Water and Sewer Authority.
3. "Billing Period" shall mean the basis used to bill for service in each area in which the Authority provides service.
4. "Board" shall mean the Board of the Massanutten Water and Sewer Authority.
5. "Authority" shall mean Authority of Rockingham, Virginia.
6. "Connection Requirements" shall mean the requirement of a separate connection for each dwelling unit, business and/or house unless the Authority shall authorize differently. Trailer Parks and Apartment Buildings shall be permitted to have a master water meter with the Authority to determine cost of connection by size water meter required. The Authority may require a sewage flow meter for purposes of billing for trailer parks and large developments. The Owner in these cases shall maintain all lines and facilities on their property.
7. "Customer" shall mean the party who has applied for water and/or sewer service at the premises.
8. "Delinquent Accounts" shall mean any account for which payment has not been received by the due date on the bill.
9. "Discontinuance of Service" shall mean the turning off of water and/or sewer service, whether upon customer request or due to nonpayment, violation of regulations, or other causes authorized by the Authority.
10. "Dwelling Unit" shall mean:

- a. Each single-family residential dwelling and each single-family residential dwelling unit are contained in an apartment building, in a duplex, in a two or more-family residence, or in any building designed and used for residential purposes.
  - b. Each separate unit contained in any structure used for any purposes other than residential.
11. "Facilities of the Authority" shall mean any and all components and pertinent parts of the entire system of the water and sewer facilities under the jurisdiction of the Authority, such as water and sewer pipe lines and other appurtenances, water storage tanks, filtration or treatment facilities and pumping stations and testing laboratories, including these items and others now constructed, installed, operated or maintained by the Authority or any which may be approved and accepted in the future as additions or extensions of the system.
12. "Fee Compendium" shall mean the officially adopted document, as established and approved annually by the Board, which sets forth all rates and fees associated to water and sewer usage, connections, deposits, and services provided by the Authority.
13. "Hydrant Meter" shall mean a temporary meter issued for construction or special purposes at the discretion of the Authority, subject to deposit, usage reporting, and inspection requirements.
14. "Irrigation Meter" shall mean a meter installed for irrigation purposes only, separate from residential or commercial service, subject to Authority approval and backflow prevention requirements.
15. "Lock Meter Fee" shall mean the fee paid to place a lock on a meter, suspending billing of minimum charges while the lock remains in place.
16. "May" is permissive.
17. "Minimum Charge" shall mean the base monthly fee applied to each meter or account for water or sewer service, as established in the Fee Compendium.
18. "Owner" shall mean the legal owner of the premises served and who shall ultimately remain responsible for all charges, fees, and other costs assessed to the premises for water and sewer service, regardless of who receives service.
19. "Person" shall mean any individual, firm, corporation, association, society or group.
20. "Premise" shall mean any building, group of buildings, or portion thereof, or land upon which buildings are to be constructed which is or may be served by the facilities of the Authority.
21. "Quick Set Fee" shall mean the fee paid to expedite the setting of a meter in an existing meter base for immediate service, provided all applicable connection fees have been paid.
22. "Reconnection" shall mean restoring of service to accounts where service has for some reason been discontinued.

23. "Service Connection or Water Lateral" shall be the pipe extending from a water main to the outlet side of the meter setting in the meter box at the property, right-of-way, or easement line, including the meter and meter box.
24. "Sewer Connection or Lateral" shall be the pipe extending from the sewer main or manhole to the property, right-of-way, or easement line.
25. "Shall" is mandatory.
26. "Water Deposit" and "Sewer Deposit" shall mean that deposit required in advance of service.
27. "Water or Sewer Line or Main" shall mean a pipe or conduit for transporting water or sewage.
28. "Water Treatment or Filtration Plant" shall mean any arrangement of devices and structures used for the treatment of water or sewer.

### **SECTION III - POLICY**

1. It is the policy of the Authority to provide water and/or sewer service to any person, business, industry or area within the service area of the Authority where in the judgment of the Authority, it is economically feasible to do so and proper application for service has been made.
2. In any area of the Authority where service may be provided, it will be the policy of the Authority to conform to and meet all requirements of applicable State and Federal Regulatory Agencies and to apply all standards, rules and regulations and specifications of the Authority to those areas.
3. The Authority reserves the right to limit, suspend, or discontinue service in emergencies, for public safety, or for system integrity, regardless of payment status or Customer request.
4. The Authority shall establish and enforce policies for emergencies, drought management, and system conservation, including restrictions on irrigation, hydrant meter use, or other non-essential water uses, in accordance with Authority and State drought response plans. The Authority may suspend or revoke irrigation meters or hydrant meters during drought or system emergency conditions.
5. The Authority shall prioritize water and sewer services to essential facilities, including but not limited to hospitals, fire stations, police stations, and other critical infrastructure during emergencies. Non-essential service may be limited, suspended, or disconnected at the discretion of the Authority to maintain system integrity and public safety. Customers may be notified of temporary service restrictions when feasible, though notice may be waived in situations of immediate threat to public health or system operations.

### **SECTION IV - FEES AND CHARGES**

## 1. CONNECTION FEES

Connection fees for water and/or sewer shall be paid in full prior to service being connected. After payment has been made, the Authority will have thirty (30) days to make the connection or set the meter. If installation takes longer than thirty (30) days, the Authority shall not be held liable for any damages or losses resulting from extended connection time. Reference the fee compendium for current connection fees.

Should the water meter need to be increased in size, an additional connection fee will be required. The additional connection fee shall be the difference between the fee that was initially paid and the fee in effect for the larger meter at the time of the increase.

## 2. QUICK SET FEE

Where an existing meter base or connection is already available, a Quick Set Fee may be paid. Quick Set services shall be performed on the day the fee is paid, provided that all applicable connection fees have also been paid and the service connection meets Authority standards. If the existing meter base or meter pit does not meet Authority standards, a meter will not be set until the necessary repairs or replacements have been completed. No refund for the quick set fee will be given. Reference fee compendium for current fee.

## 3. LOCK METER FEE

A Lock Meter Fee may be paid to have a lock installed on a meter and the corresponding account. When a Lock Meter Fee has been applied, minimum monthly service charges for water and/or sewer shall not be billed to the account while the lock remains in place. Service will not be reactivated until the customer has requested removal of the lock. Reference fee compendium for current fee.

## 4. IRRIGATION METERS

In areas where the residence is served by Authority water and sewer a separate meter for the purpose of irrigation will be installed upon payment of the connection fee and provided that no piping from this meter is connected within the residence. Irrigation meter installations are subject to approval by the Authority and may be suspended or discontinued at any time based on drought conditions, water supply limitations, or system capacity concerns. Reference fee compendium for current fee.

## 5. HYDRANT METERS

A hydrant meter shall be provided only with the permission of the Director of Public Works and after an application and deposit are submitted. The deposit will be refunded once all fees are paid and the meter is returned in working condition. If the meter is returned in a non-working manner, the deposit will be used to replace the meter. Hydrant meters shall be

subject to inspection and monthly reporting requirements. Reference fee compendium for current fees.

#### 6. ROAD CROSSINGS - WATER

An additional fee for casing installation shall be assessed for work under paved surfaces and road crossings (open cut or bore) for water laterals 2 inches in diameter or less. This fee will be billed as the actual cost to install the casing by an independent contractor hired by the Authority, without markup. Water laterals, larger than 2 inches in diameter, shall be installed by the customer at the customer's expense, and all such installations shall conform to current Rockingham County Design and Specification Standards. The Authority does not offer estimated costs for any road crossings.

#### 7. ROAD CROSSINGS – SEWER

An additional fee for casing installation shall be assessed for work under paved surfaces and road crossings (open cut or bore) for gravity sewer laterals 4 inches in diameter or less and pressurized laterals 2 inches in diameter or less. This fee will be billed as the actual cost to install the casing by an independent contractor hired by the Authority, without markup. Gravity sewer laterals larger than 4 inches in diameter and pressurized laterals larger than 2 inches in diameter shall be installed by the customer at the customer's expense, and all such installations shall conform to Rockingham County Design and Specification Standards. The Authority does not offer estimated costs for any road crossings.

#### 8. INDUSTRIAL

Special consideration shall be given to new industrial waste dischargers. Essentially, consideration shall be based on population equivalent as to flow and waste characteristics. Exotic waste shall be governed by Sewer Regulations adopted by the Authority.

#### 9. RELOCATION

In the event there is an existing connection for a property and the owner requests in writing that the Authority relocate the service, all relocation work shall be performed by the Authority or its contractor and billed to the customer at actual cost of labor, materials, and equipment, without markup.

#### 10. MONTHLY SEWER SERVICE CHARGES

- a. All customers shall be billed based on water consumption at the rates established in the Authority Fee Compendium, as adopted annually by the Board.
- b. Accounts that are sewer only, without a corresponding Authority water connection, shall be billed each month at a fixed sewer usage of 5,000 gallons

## 11. MONTHLY WATER SERVICE CHARGES

Monthly water service charges shall be billed based on consumption at the rates established in the Authority Fee Compendium, as adopted annually by the Board.

## 12. RECONNECTION FEES

A fee, as adopted in the yearly fee compendium, will be assessed after discontinuance of service due to nonpayment.

## 13. DEPOSITS

A deposit shall be required for owner or tenant occupied structures. The deposit will be retained by the Authority on a non-interest-bearing basis and will be refunded after a period of twelve consecutive months during which not more than one late payment has been received. Any remaining deposit shall be applied to the final bill of the customer upon discontinuance of service.

Deposits may be waived for existing Authority water and/or sewer customers who have made 12 months of consecutive payments with no late fees or delinquent notices.

## 14. LATE PAYMENT

All payment for service shall be due and payable within the bill's due date. A late payment charge of one (1) percent shall be applied to any balance remaining following one (1) business day after the bill due date.

## **SECTION V - RULES FOR RENDERING OF WATER AND/OR SEWER SERVICE**

### 1. Service Connection

- a. Before a water or sewer service connection is provided, the owner of the premises to be supplied, or their duly authorized representative, shall apply for such service upon forms prescribed by the Authority and pay any required connection fee prior to obtaining a building permit for the premises. Upon approval of the application, and payment of the connection fee and other applicable charges, the Authority shall install the service connection. A separate service connection shall be required for each premises unless otherwise determined by the Authority. Once application has been made and the connection fee has been paid, the owner will have ten (10) business days to secure a building permit. In the event that the building permit is not secured or expires, an additional connection fee will be required if that connection fee is higher than the time of application. For a water or sewer connection that is for an existing dwelling, service must be connected within six (6) months of application; if not, the owner shall pay the difference

between the connection fee previously paid and the connection fee in effect at the time of connection, if the fee is higher.

- b. The Authority will make or have made all connections to its mains and will specify the location, size, kind and quality of all materials entering into the service connection.
  - c. The service connection, including special connections for fire service or for service of a temporary nature, shall remain the property of the Authority and be under its sole control and jurisdiction and will be maintained by the Authority at its expense.
  - d. The Authority will extend water and/or sewer laterals to the property or easement line or fifty (50) feet, whichever is less. The owner shall be responsible for extensions beyond fifty (50) feet, and all such extensions shall be constructed in accordance with Rockingham County Design Specifications and Standards.
2. Private Service Pipes
- a. The private service pipe, which shall be installed between the property or easement line and the place of consumption, shall be furnished and installed by the Owners at the Owner's expense and risk.
  - b. The private service pipe and all connections and fixtures attached thereto shall be subject to the inspection and approval of the County before service commences.
  - c. The private water service pipe shall be installed at least three feet below the surface of the ground in a trench which shall be at least ten feet in a horizontal direction from any other trench wherein are installed gas pipe, sewer pipe, or other facilities, public or private, unless otherwise specifically authorized or approved by the County.
  - d. No fixture shall be attached to, or any branch made in, the private service pipe between the meter and the water main.
  - e. The Owner at their expense and risk shall perform any repairs, maintenance, replacement or relocation necessary on the private service pipe or fixtures in or upon the Owner's premises.
3. Cross-Connection and Back Siphonage
- a. No pipes or fixtures connected with the mains of the Authority shall also be connected with pipes or fixtures supplied with water from any other source. This is a state law, and severe penalties result in violation.
  - b. Piping systems supplying swimming pools or tanks shall be so arranged as to prevent water from re-entering the water distribution system by siphonage or other means. An independent supply pipe shall be provided in such a way that its discharge end is at least two diameters above the highest possible water level in the swimming pool or tank. The Authority shall approve all such installations.

- c. The plumbing system in all premises supplied by the Authority's water system shall conform to all applicable codes of Rockingham County.
  - d. A requirement of the State Department of Health is that a cross-connection control and backflow prevention program be established and enforced. To accomplish this, the Authority will make periodic inspections and make recommendations to eliminate the possibility of contaminating the water supply.
  - e. All irrigation meters and other potential cross-connections shall require annual backflow prevention device testing by a certified tester, with test results submitted to the Authority.
4. Meters and Meter Installations
- a. The Authority shall determine the location, type and size of meter to be installed and shall furnish all meters, which remain the property of the Authority. Residential meters less than two (2) inches in size will be installed by Authority crews. Meters two (2) inches or greater, or any meters serving commercial, duplex, or subdivided properties, shall be installed by the applicant or their contractor at their expense in accordance with all applicable Authority design and construction standards and subject to Authority inspection and approval. The Authority will provide the meter for such installations, and ownership of the meter shall remain with the Authority.
  - b. Unless otherwise determined by the Authority, each premises shall be supplied through a separate meter, or if necessary and at the option of the Authority, through a separate battery of meters. Meters will be read to the nearest 100 gallons.
  - c. Meters will be maintained by the Authority at its expense insofar as ordinary wear is concerned, but damage to any meter due to causes arising out of or caused by the customer's facilities, operations, negligence or carelessness shall be paid for by the customer, except, however, the Authority shall be responsible for damage to meters due to freezing in outside meter vaults.
  - d. The customer shall promptly notify the Authority of any defect in or damage to the meter or its connections. Customers are responsible for ensuring meter boxes remain accessible and free from obstruction.
  - e. Irrigation meters may be installed upon payment of applicable connection fees, provided no piping from such meter is connected within the residence. All irrigation meters require an Authority approved backflow prevention device which must be installed, maintained, and tested annually by a certified tester, at the Customers' expense, with results submitted to the Authority. Installation of irrigation meters is subject to Authority approval and may be suspended or discontinued at any time due to drought conditions, water supply limitations, or system capacity concerns.
  - f. Hydrant meters may be issued by the Authority at its discretion and remain the property of the Authority. All hydrant meter accounts are subject to the water usage fees outlined in the adopted Fee Compendium. Customers must notify the Authority

by the fifteenth (15) of every month on the hydrant meter reading. At least one Authority inspection of each hydrant meter shall be performed annually. Failure to comply with reporting meter reads or inspection requirements may result in the confiscation or forfeiture of the hydrant meter and discontinuance of service. Any damage noted during inspection caused by negligence in the operation or storage of the hydrant meter will result in forfeiture of the deposit to cover necessary repairs.

5. Meter Test and Test Fees

- a. All meters will be factory certified before installation. Meters may be periodically tested in accordance with accepted practice. The Authority may at any time remove any meter for routine tests, repairs, or replacement.
- b. The Authority shall upon written request of a customer make, without charge, a test of the accuracy of the meter in use at their premises through means of a bucket test. If the customer does not agree with the results of the bucket test, the Authority shall remove the meter at the request of the customer for a standardized bench test. If the test shows that the meter is accurately recording water usage, the customer shall be billed the actual cost for installation of the new meter. The customer will agree to abide by the results of such test in the adjustment of disputed charges. A written report of the results of the test shall be furnished to the customer.
- c. Whenever a test of a meter reveals it to have an average error above standards established by the American Water Works Association (AWWA), the Authority shall bill or refund to the customer, as the case may be, such percentage of the amount of bills, covering the consumption indicated by the meter for the previous six months, as the meter was found to be in error at the time of test, unless it can be shown from the records of either party that the error found has existed for a greater or lesser period, in which case the adjustment shall cover such actual period.

6. Bills for Service

- a. Customers are responsible for furnishing the Authority with their correct address. Failure to receive bills will not be considered an excuse for non-payment, nor will it permit an extension of the date when the account will be considered delinquent.
- b. If bills are to be sent to an address other than the premises served, the Authority must be notified in writing by the customer of any change of address.
- c. If requested in writing by the customer, the Authority will send bills to and will receive payments from agents or tenants. However, this accommodation will in no way relieve the Customer or the Owner of ultimate liability for all charges; the Authority shall not be obligated to notify the customer of the non-payment of bills by such agents or tenants.
- d. Payments shall be made at the office of the Treasurer of Rockingham County, Rockingham County Administration Center, Harrisonburg, Virginia 22802.

- e. The Authority reserves the right to correct any bills rendered in error.
- f. Each "Premises" shall be billed separately for service.
- g. If a meter should fail to register for any reason, an estimated bill will be submitted. Such bill shall be based on an average of the consumption shown by six (6) consecutive billing periods, or, in the case of a new customer, where previous consumption cannot be used for computing average, reasonably estimated consumption shall be utilized.
- h. Meters will be read each month. Should meters not be able to be read due to being covered by snow or the like, an estimated bill will be rendered as computed under 6.G. above.
- i. Bills for service shall be rendered monthly.

7. Terms of Payment, Delinquent Notice, and Cutoff.

- a. Bills for service shall be due and payable when rendered.
- b. An account shall be considered delinquent if payment has not been received by the due date on the bill. A delinquent notice will be issued no earlier than forty-five (45) days after the account becomes in arrears.
- c. All utility bills are subject to disconnection if not paid in full by the due date on the delinquent notice. Service disconnection for nonpayment will occur no sooner than sixty (60) days after the original bill became in arrears. A cutoff fee, as adopted by the Fee Compendium will be applied to the account at the time of disconnection.
- d. To restore service following a cutoff, the customer shall pay the entire account balance in full, including all delinquent amounts, fees, and interest. Service shall not be restored until payment is received by the Authority.

8. Customer's Liability for Charges

A Customer who has made application for or received service at a premises shall be held liable for all service furnished to such premises until such time as the customer properly notifies the Authority to discontinue the service on their account.

The property owner remains ultimately responsible for all unpaid water and sewer charges, including any associated fees.

9. Abatements and Adjustments

There shall not be abatement of the Minimum Charges in whole or in part, by reason of the extended absence of the customer, unless service has been discontinued at the customer's request. Adjustments will not be granted for water used for lawn watering, landscaping, gardens, or other irrigation purposes, except as specified under Subsection A (Sod Credits)

- a. Sod Credits

Sod Credits may be requested for the purpose of establishing new sod. A sod credit may only be requested one (1) time per account. The credit shall be calculated based on the six (6) month average of water usage and applied only to the sewer portion of the account balance. No credit shall be given for water usage. Only one (1) month of sod credit will be approved. No credits shall be given for irrigation use outside of establishing new sod for new construction.

b. Leak Adjustments

Leak adjustment requests may be made for verified repairs to the customer's side of the service line that resulted in unintentional water loss not caused by improper use or intentional water loss. Credit shall apply only to the sewer portion of the utility bill; no credit will be given for water usage. Credits shall not be approved for leaks where water entered the sewer system. The credit shall be calculated based on the customer's average usage during the six (6) months prior to the leak occurring.

c. Pool Fill Adjustments

Pool fill adjustments may be requested one (1) time per calendar year. No adjustments will be granted for the filling of hot tubs. Customers must provide the pool size, approximate number of gallons, and the number of days it took to fill the pool. Credit shall apply only to the sewer portion of the utility bill; no credit will be given for water usage.

d. Limitations

Sewer-only accounts are not eligible for adjustments or credits.

10. Discontinuance of Service

- a. Service may be discontinued by the Authority after five (5) days' notice for any of the following reasons:
  - i. For willful or indifferent waste of water due to any cause.
  - ii. For failure to protect and maintain the service pipe or fixtures on the property of the customer in a condition satisfactory to the Authority.
  - iii. For molesting or tampering by the customer, or other with the knowledge of the customer, with any meter, connection, service pipe, curb stop, seal or any other appliance of the Authority controlling or regulating the customer's water supply.
  - iv. For failure to provide the Authority's employees with free and reasonable access to the premises supplied, or for obstructing the way of ingress to the meter or other appliances controlling or regulating the customer's water supply.

- v. For non-payment of any account for water supplied or for any fee or charge accruing under these Rules and Regulations and the effective Schedules of Rates and Charges.
  - vi. For violation of any rule or regulation of the Authority.
  - vii. For potential damage to system wide Authority infrastructure resulting from water usage characteristics that cause uncontrollable system dynamics such as water hammer, abnormal spikes, or dips.
- b. Discontinuing the supply of water to a premises for any reason shall not prevent the Authority from pursuing any lawful remedy by action at law or otherwise for the collection of monies due from the customer.
  - c. When water service to a customer has been terminated for any of the above stated reasons, other than temporary vacancy of the premises, it will be renewed only after the conditions, circumstances or practices which caused the water service to be discontinued are corrected to the satisfaction of the Authority and upon payment of all charges due and payable by the customer in accordance with these Rules and Regulations and the effective fees, rates and charges.
  - d. The Authority reserves the right to discontinue water service without prior notice in the event of emergencies, main breaks, or other conditions affecting public health, safety, or system integrity.
  - e. The Authority may temporarily interrupt water or sewer service for planned maintenance, system upgrades, or other operational needs. The Authority will make efforts to provide notice to affected Customers prior to service interruption. The Authority shall not be liable for damages resulting from planned service interruptions.