

FAQs about Water Billing!

This information and more is available on the Town of Munster's website: www.munster.org/waterbilling.

Expect your first bill the first week of the month mentioned in your initial email from our staff. It may be larger or smaller than a usual bill due to timing and proration of the first bill. The bills will arrive monthly from that point forward.

The Trash/Recycle calendar can be found online at <https://mydisposal.com/towns/munster>

The current billing rates & charges are listed in the Policies & Procedures attached to your initial email from the Town and also at our website www.munster.org/waterbilling under *Information Sheets*. Also see the back of each bill for explanation of charges.

The following topics are summarized in this packet:

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| *Billing cycle | *High usage |
| *Due date | *Previous Balance |
| *Payment options | *Trash delays for holidays |
| *Sprinkler Season | *Credit bills |
| *Minimum charges | *Estimated bill |
| *Filling a pool | *Selling your home |

- **What is the billing cycle?** - Our billing cycle is the 16th to the 15th of each month. We read all the meters in the middle of each month and the bills will arrive at your home or business during the first week of the following month.
- **When is my bill due?** - Your bill is due on the 20th of each month. If the 20th falls on a weekend or *Town recognized* holiday, the due date will be the following business day. Always check the payment stub to see the due date.
- **What are my options for payment?** - There are several options.
 - Cash/Check/Credit/Debit card are all accepted in the Clerk-Treasurer's office in the Town Hall (no service fees).
 - Credit/Debit card accepted online with Invoice Cloud, access at www.munster.org/waterbilling. Choose *Pay your Water Bill*. You may sign up for Auto Pay with a Credit Card*, e-billing, & paperless options there as well. **There are fees (charged by the provider-not the Town) for ALL online payment and online auto pay options.**
 - You may sign up for ACH (auto pay) from a checking or saving account with NO FEES through our office. The form for ACH can be found online at www.munster.org/waterbilling choose *Sign up for ACH/Auto Pay*. Completing the form will electronically submit to our staff. Watch for a confirmation of submittal immediately and a response from our staff within 3 business days.

(Auto pay with a checking account is also available through the online provider, but

there are monthly fees and may be additional fees charged by the online service provider. We encourage you to sign up for auto pay from a checking or savings account with the electronic form available on our website to avoid additional service fees.)

- Check/Money order may be dropped in the red drop box in the Town Hall parking lot or mailed to the Town Hall* (please do not put cash in the drop box or send through the mail).
- You may pay via your bank's online bill pay*.

PLEASE be aware they may be sending us a paper check so allow plenty of time for the mail (we suggest 14 days) to avoid late fees.

***We are not responsible for mail delays or online processing delays.**

Please allow adequate time for these methods. If a payment is not received by the due date, there will be a late fee applied. **Please keep an eye on your email if you have online auto pay. THAT is the only way you will be notified by the online provider of online payment issues.**

- **My bill is due today, how can I pay it?** - There is still time to drop your payment in the red drop box in the parking lot of the Town Hall. We pick up the bills from the drop box about 7am the morning after the due date. You can pay online on the due date after the office is closed without penalty. However, we recommend paying before 8pm to allow time for the sites to settle the payment. If it does not settle until AFTER the due date, late fees will apply*.
- **Why do I have a fee for my sprinkler when I have not used it?** - *Sprinkler Season*, as defined in the Utility Billing Policies, Rules & Regulations Section 7.2 is *May 15 through October 15*. If you have a sprinkling system with a separate meter, it will be subject to minimum billing amounts for the July through November bills. If

there is usage outside of those dates, you will be billed based on usage only.

- **What if I go away for the winter?** - There are several options if this applies to you.
 - If your home will be vacant, you can set up a time to have your water shut off (fee applies) & then turned back on when you return (fee applies). Someone must be able to access the home for each event, for your safety. This option is usually advantageous if you will be gone longer than 1 billing cycle. This is the only way to halt billing during your absence.
 - If you do not want your water shut off, we can temporarily change the mailing address of your bill, so you still receive your statement at your winter get-away. This allows you to monitor usage & be sure you are paying the correct amount each month to avoid late fees.
 - If you have an email address on file with us, you will also receive statement notifications and you are able to view invoices through that notification.
 - You can access your bill online & pay online also (fee applies to online payment). But you must remember to do so by the due date each month to avoid late fees.
(www.munster.org/waterbilling)
 - Paying ahead is acceptable, but PLEASE check each month to be sure the bill is paid in full because late fees will apply if there is a balance on the account after the due date.

- You are ALWAYS welcome to call the office to find out the amount due.
- **My house is vacant, why do I have to pay a bill?** - According to the Utility Billing Policies, Rules & Regulations Section 2.3.2 - *There is a cost to the Utility to provide service to each customer regardless of whether water is consumed or not in each billing period.* The minimum water charge is based on the size of the meter and the other charges will apply unless the Utility has turned off the water. If you choose to set up to have the water turned off, there must be someone present and there will be a fee*. If you need to then turn the water back on, there is another fee*. It will not be turned on unless there is someone available to access the home. (*see current policies and procedures for fee amounts)
- **I am filling my pool; do I get a break on the water?** - You must pay for any water that passes through your meter. As far as the Hammond Sanitary District Flow Charge, residential customers may qualify for a 'break' based on their winter usage, if there is a prior winter history to compare to. The residential rate is the same (\$2.31 per thousand gallons of water consumed), but the consumption it is figured on **may** be less. It is advisable to fill pools after the May reading date if possible.
- **WOW, why is my usage so high this month?** - That may be due to many factors, but the biggest culprit to unknown water usage is a toilet. Most unusually high consumption amounts are traced back to a toilet that either stuck while the customer was away or a bad seal on a flapper. You can also find a document called **High**

Consumption under Information Sheets on our website:

www.munster.org/waterbilling.

- **Why is there a previous balance listed on my bill?** - If we received payment for your last bill AFTER the due date, chances are that payment is not showing on your current statement.
- **Why is trash service delayed?** - You can view/print the Trash/Recycle Calendar that indicates which holidays will delay collection by one day (www.munster.org) These holidays are usually New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day. Keep an eye on your water bill and/or the News You Can Use for information as well.
- **Why does my bill say "CREDIT BALANCE-DO NOT PAY?"** - If your amount due has a dash (-) in front of it or (parenthesis) around it, your account had a credit at the time the bill was printed. If you did not make an extra payment, call us and we will investigate.
- **Why does my bill say *Estimated*?** - There may be several reasons your bill had to be estimated. Usually, it is because your transmitter did not transmit the reading. Please call us & we can set up an appointment to check on your meter & make any necessary repairs.
- **I have sold my home, what should I do?** - Please visit our website **at least** one *business* day before you are moving out and fill out the Form to *Final Water/End Service*. We will take a final reading and send you a final bill. REMEMBER, when you move, it may seem like you are being 'double billed', but the regular bills are for the

prior month and the FINAL bill brings your account to the current date.

- If you cannot find answers to your questions here, you can contact

us at:

219/836-6948

219/836-6949

e-mail: waterbilling@munster.org

We will do our best to find answers for you!