



THE

# LAWRENCE LIFT



NEWSLETTER

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## DEAR LAWRENCE UTILITY CUSTOMER,

# COVID UTILITY BILL UPDATE

As many of you know, the moratorium on non-payment service disconnections was lifted effective August 14, 2020.

Lawrence Utilities did not resume non-payment disconnections until September 2 and have been following normal procedures since then. Many

of our customers have utilized our Payment Extension Plan.

This plan, per the Governor's recommendation, allows up to a 6-month payment extension, where our normal extension period is 1 to 2 weeks.

The COVID extension agreement re-

quires the customer to pay their arrears installment, plus their current bill amount during the period set forth in the COVID extension plan.

If an executed payment plan is not adhered to, the customer would be subject to service disconnection without further notification.

# WATER & SEWER PROPERTY ISSUES

I would like to provide some information which will, I hope, help our customers with respect to water and sanitary sewer issues on your property.

With respect to customer leak inquiries, I would like to point out that we are not set up to provide in-home evaluations of customer plumbing and in fact, do not have licensed plumbers on staff and do not offer "professional" advice on home plumbing systems.

There are many times when it seems it is expected that we should be able to answer customer questions about their internal plumbing and/or diagnose leaks. While we can offer tips, which we always try to do in a spirit of helpfulness, customers should understand that these are only tips; things that we have seen happen that may offer some insight to a customer faced with a leak of some nature, oftentimes mysterious.

As a property owner, or tenant for that matter, it is incumbent upon you to ensure that, should you need a leak investigation and/or plumbing repair services, you contact a qualified and licensed plumber. You should ask to see a copy of the license and also insurance documents of any person or company you hire to do work on your home or property, no matter what type of work it is. It is your home and your money you are protecting! Fortunately, for our water and sewer utili-

ties, it is more of just some basic do's and don'ts when it comes to advice we have to offer to our customers with respect to problems with their plumbing.



The most important thing is to be aware of the condition of the plumbing you can see, such as pipes under sinks, in utility closets, faucets, plumbing for toilets, and outside spigots. These are pipes and fixtures that you can see, and which can be easily checked for leaks by the homeowner.

If a leak is discovered, the sooner it is fixed, the better. For instance, a 1/16-inch pinhole in a pipe at 60 psi (we average about 55 psi here in Lawrence) can leak 25,000 per month! A toilet leak at 1/2 gallon per minute will use 21,600 gallons per month.

Water using appliances can also be a source of water loss. Water softeners, automatic humidifiers, ice-makers, water-activated backup sump pumps and other appliances connected to a water supply should be routinely checked for proper operation.

If you suspect a problem with one of these units you should contact a qualified and licensed plumber, service department where they were purchased or, if all else fails, the manufacturer. It is always a good idea to read and save the owner's manual for all such items purchased.

With respect to items that should not be flushed down the toilet, i.e. things that lead to clogs in customer service laterals as well as causing problems in the public portion of the sewer system, the main culprits are fats, oils and greases. But feminine hygiene products, so-called "biodegradable" wipes for babies and household cleaning, diapers, clothing, etc. are also problems for sanitary sewers.

# E-SUITE ACCOUNT

If you haven't done so already, you may want to consider signing up for an eSuite account, which allows you access to your account information so you can look at usage history, past and present billings and it also provides convenient



payment options too, such as recurring credit card payments, onetime credit card and e-check payments, and you may also elect to receive your bill electronically. Our Business Office staff can assist you in doing so.

# SELF-SERVE PAYMENT KIOSKS

Lawrence Utilities customers now have the opportunity to pay their bills using secure, self-service kiosk technology from CityBase. The City of Lawrence has deployed a payment kiosk located inside the Government



Center at 9001 E. 59th Street, Lawrence, IN.

An additional drive-up kiosk that will offer 24/7 service will be installed just outside the Government Center next month.

"This is a new opportunity to help our constituents and employees to stay safe by using CityBase kiosks for bill payment," said Jason Fenwick, Deputy Mayor/Controller/Utility CFO at the City of Lawrence. "It has always been our priority to equally serve every Lawrence resident.

We are partnering with CityBase because their technology provides a 24/7 secure, convenient way for the City to serve customers who pay their bills in person, even as the nature of in-person interactions evolve during a pandemic." These kiosks accept cash, credit card and check payments.

As part of these changes, the walk-in lobby will permanently close on December 1st 2020 in an effort to keep our customers and staff safe by eliminating cash handling and in-person transactions.

IVR (phone) payment and our eSuite portal will continue to be available for customers to access their account and to make payments. Customers may also continue to mail in check or money order payments.

The Business Office has eliminated the in-person requirement for executing Extension Agreements and Resume Service forms.

Extension Agreements may be performed over the phone and the Resume Service form can be completed and submitted on the City's website (under the "How Do I..." tab/pull down menu).

We are making these changes to better serve and protect our customers and staff along with providing safe and secure payment methods.

We appreciate your cooperation and patience as we make these changes that are designed to better serve our customers moving forward.

# LEAF SEASON

Please don't forget during the Fall Season to not allow your leaves to remain on the ground where they end up in the gutter and thereby

cause drainage problems due to blocking of storm water inlets. Removing leaves, trash and other obstructions will allow water to get

away more efficiently and will also improve the appearance of our community.

# A LAWRENCE CHRISTMAS

The City's Annual Christmas Parade/Tree Lighting Event will be held on November 28th and this year an Ice Skating Rink will be installed at the Civic Plaza located on Wheeler Road and Memorial Park Drive.

There will be fun and entertainment as in years past and, quite possibly, some fireworks! This event is still in planning stages so please monitor the city's website and face book page for more information.

Thank you,

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