



THE

# LAWRENCE LIFT



NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 51

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## DEAR LAWRENCE UTILITY CUSTOMER,

## A THANK YOU

As we continue to work our way through the Coronavirus situation, I would like to offer a heartfelt "Thank You" to all our wonderful Health Care Workers, Public Safety and other essential workers who are keeping us safe and secure and making sure trash is removed, mail is delivered and grocery stores are stocked and goods delivered. I know I have probably omitted some, but it is not intentional.

And I owe a big Thank You to our Utility Staff too, who have continued to come in and ensure that our customers continue to have a clean, safe and reliable water supply and sanitary sewer services. They have all shown resiliency and adaptability to meet the challenge and have exhibited personal initiative and dedication that is exemplary.

Our water plants and sewer lift stations and grinder pumps are all being checked and maintained daily and our repair crews are addressing system failures like leaks and backups in a timely manner. Permits and plan reviews continue to be done, as well as permit-related inspections and code enforcement.

Our Street crews are addressing potholes, tree issues, drainage issues and all the other things they do on a regular



basis. Are we behind on some things? Yes. But we will get caught up! It will take some time to transition back to normal, however that may be defined going forward.

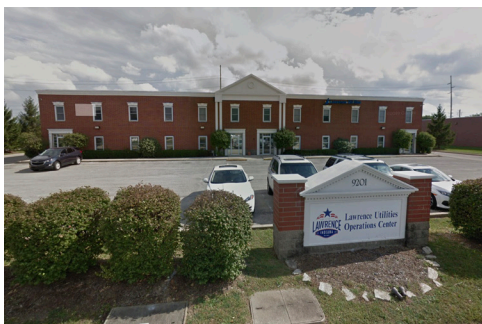
I am tremendously proud to work with all of our Utility, DPW and Street Department managers and employees.

I want to also say Thank You to our Utility customers, who have been patient and cooperative, although the new operating circumstances are not ideal.

I think it is too early to tell yet the extent of the financial impacts to the Utility, but we certainly will not be surprised by decreased commercial usages and decreased revenues from reduced sales as well as lost or reduced income on the part of customers.

## COVID-19 UPDATE

As you should all be aware by now, the walk-in payment lobby has been closed for a few weeks in order to help minimize the spread of the virus.



We have also suspended non-payment disconnection and the application of late payment fees.

Customers have been utilizing the

drop box in the parking lot to make payments as well as using on-line bill pay options and regular mail.

We have also suspended any Work Orders that require entry into customer's homes. As we anticipate bringing staff back in on a daily basis, we will do so keeping in mind that the Coronavirus issue is not over. While we all will get back to normal in the near future, the transition back will be a process that will take time and one that will be done in increments.

We must also be prepared to adapt in order to respond to future developments related to the coronavirus. As this is a fluid situation, we will also be prepared to change our operating

plans on the fly should circumstances and conditions warrant or other developments preclude a return to normal practices.

1. The Utility Billing Office lobby will remain closed until further notice.
2. The Utility will continue to suspend non-payment disconnection and the application of late fees until further notice.
3. When the Business Office opens to the public Payment extensions will be offered to customers who find themselves unable to pay their bills in full or on time.

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# COVID-19 UPDATE CONTINUED

4. If your account is in arrears, you may still receive a red disconnect bill even though we will not be disconnecting services until further notice.

We apologize if this creates some confusion but the disconnect notice generation is automatically done in the system and cannot be changed.

5. Late fees will not be applied to any customer's account while they are on a Payment Extension and as long as the payment extension terms are met, the customer will not be subject to non-payment disconnection.

6. Customers should continue to make their utility bill payments in order to

avoid having large amounts in arrears. If you cannot pay your bill in full, pay what you can. Payment agreements are, and will continue to be, available to customers who are unable to keep their bills current.

7. When the time comes to resume non-payment disconnection and application of late fees, we will publish the specifics in the Lawrence Lift as well as on the city's website and on social media platforms.

8. We strongly encourage our customers to continue to utilize on-line bill payment options and establishing eSuite accounts.

The drop-box and regular mail are also options that can be used in lieu of making payments in person.

9. When the Business Office lobby re-opens, customers are strongly encouraged to wear masks while conducting transactions and, as much as possible, practice safe-distancing and try to limit the number of customers in the lobby to no more than two at a time.

We appreciate all our customers, who continue to be patient and cooperative as we work through these difficult times. And we will continue to work with all our customers who have been adversely impacted by the coronavirus.

## PAYMENT KIOSKS & ASSISTANCE INFO

In order to provide more convenience to our customers, we will soon be installing additional payment kiosks that will accept payments via credit card, debit card, and other payment methods.

These units will be located at the Utility Offices at 9201 Harrison Park Court and will make bill payments faster and easier. There will be a drive up unit by the existing night drop box and one located in the payment lobby. We look forward to getting these units in service.

If anyone contacts you, in any way,

stating they are a Lawrence Utilities employee and tells you that you need to make a payment in order to avoid disconnection of your water service, do not do so!

Lawrence Utilities does not conduct business like that over the phone. You should make a report of the attempt to defraud you out of money by contacting the police and please let the Utility office know too.

If your account is subject to disconnection, you will receive a bill stating so in red.

Please note that there are agencies where assistance with paying utility and other bills may be accessed, such as:

[www.lawtwp.org](http://www.lawtwp.org)

Assistance with rent, utility bills

[www.findhelp.org](http://www.findhelp.org)

Food assistance, paying bills & other assistance.

[www.877gethope.org](http://www.877gethope.org)

Mortgage and rent assistance.

## CONTINUED INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

We are continuing to move forward with other planned water, sanitary sewer and other improvements.

The Elmhurst Basin Sewer Rehab Project (Pendleton Pike to 46th north to south and Shadeland to I-465 east to west), and a smaller area on 48th between Shadeland and I-465 will be starting soon so look for activity in this area in the next couple months.

The Brookhaven Subdivision Water Main Replacement project has already started and the contractor is actively working in this area.

Our Phase II Water Improvement Project will be advertised for bidding in May and will address our Fort Harrison and Indian Lake water treatment plants as well as storage facilities and other targeted water mains.

Please be patient and observe road restrictions and detours and help keep the project moving forward safely!

Thank you,



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