

PAYMENT OPTION IMPROVEMENTS CONTINUE

Please remember that the Utility has installed two new payment kiosks at the City of Lawrence Government Center located at 9001 East 59th Street.

The one outside on the south side of the building is available 24/7. There is another one in the lobby of the Government Center that is available during normal business hours. Both take cash, check or credit card payments.

Also, please be aware that with our continuing efforts to better serve our customers we are preparing to make some additional changes to the on-line bill pay process that will provide customers with more account management features as well as a mobile-friendly site.

This new process is through Citybase, the same company that provides the new pay-



ment machine services. It is our hope that these changes will address many of the is-

ssues our customers have identified. Some of the great new features are:

- Flexible Online Account Maintenance
- Recurring & Scheduled Payments via Credit Card and eCheck
- Mobile Friendly

Please note that we do anticipate this transition to take roughly 2-5 months and more information will be provided as we move forward. Customers will need to make a new account on the new system and we will provide additional information on this as we move forward. At this time, we are anticipating this site to be live by the end of June. The existing online payment platform will continue to be available through the end of 2021.

IRRIGATION PERMITS & METERS



It is that time of year when people are interested in having irrigation systems installed. I am aware that some customers have called in stating that they cannot find a contractor who will do irrigation system work in Lawrence because they do not like our requirements. We have in fact made it easier to obtain an irrigation permit and have lowered the connection/permitting costs for residential systems. However, one thing we will not change is our policy of requiring property owners to have their irrigation system on a dedicated meter. For those customers with their domestic meter located outside in a meter pit, this means the existing pit needs to be changed to ac-

commodate a dual meter setter. For those with an inside meter, the contractor can tap the customers service line upstream of the domestic meter and install a single meter pit in the yard for the irrigation system.

The reason for the dedicated meter is that it allows us to better track water used specifically for irrigation and it allows Utility staff to access the meter in order to change it or shut the irrigation system off and pull the meter in cases of failure to comply with backflow testing requirements. Additionally, the dedicated meter is a "water only" account, meaning the customer does not pay any sewer charges on the water used through the irrigation meter.

Residential customers automatically receive a sewer adjustment per the "summer sprinkling" ordinance, but many customers contact us asking for additional adjustments for watering outside the period when the summer sprinkling rate is in effect. With a dedicated meter, the customer can irrigate their lawn and landscape features at any time without paying sewer charges for the water used.

At this time, the Utility charges \$531.81 for an irrigation permit and connection fee. That covers all fees or charges required by the Utility to install the system. The contractor needs to provide a drawing on a plat of the property showing where the sprinkler system and appurtenances are located on the property, including the backflow device, when they make application. Before a system can be placed into service, the backflow device must be tested by an Indiana-Certified Backflow Tester. The test report has to be filed with the Utility office and the device must be tested annually thereafter. I hope this clears up any confusion and answers any questions our customers may have regarding irrigation system installation.



DISCOLORED WATER ISSUES

Customers in the Indian Lake/Oaklandon area experienced issues with discolored water in early April. The reason for this was an increase in manganese levels leaving the plant. Upon investigation and con-

sultation, adjustments were made to our chlorine feed rates both pre and post-filter which corrected the situation virtually overnight. The manganese, while not harmful if consumed, was aesthetically unpleasant.

A robust main flushing was performed and aided in eliminating the discolored water. The manganese levels are now back to normal.

WATER MAIN REPLACEMENT CONTINUES

Information sharing is a key part of our overall initiative of ensuring the highest quality water for you as our valued customer.



A major component of every quality water system is the infrastructure we build and maintain.

We want you to know the important work planned when we bid out our Phase II – Contract “B” water main replacements, our project that will replace mains on Maple Lane, Zoeller Avenue and Wallingwood Drive and the completion of a new main

installation in the 5400 block of Carroll Road.

With these much-needed projects under construction soon, customers in the project areas should be aware that while we are not making any changes to our system’s operating pressure at the plant or with our elevated storage tanks, some minor pressure increases in customers’ plumbing is possible.

Per the Ten States Standards, ideally water distribution systems should operate between 60 and 80 pounds per square inch (psi). Our typical water system pressure runs about 55 to 60 psi. Old mains with heavy iron deposits generally have lower pressure under flowing conditions. New mains with no deposits will have slightly higher pressure under flowing conditions, but not at a level exceeding what properly installed home plumbing is designed to withstand.

Customers whose water meters are located inside the structures served and do not have a check valve to prevent water flowing back into the public main cause illegal cross-connections.

Since the 1980s, Lawrence Utilities staff has installed meter pits equipped with check valves to prevent this “backflow” from happening. The typical scenario is that a customer’s water heater will increase the pressure on his/her plumbing which would relieve itself by flowing back



into the lower-pressure public water main. The new pits and check valves prevent this situation from happening.

Customers experiencing their water heater relief valves activating should contact a plumber to install an expansion tank on their plumbing to solve this issue. Lawrence Utilities does not provide expansion tanks or reimbursement for installation costs in cases where customers’ plumbing is impacted by a water main replacement project.