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“No water and extra fees – need any other reason to pay your water bill?”



Dennis Watts, City of Norfolk Water and Sewer Director, shows a curb stop used to shut off water to a residence.

There are a number of reasons to pay your water bill on time. Having water is probably the most important reason but the consequences of non-payment don't end there. Additional fees and possibly additional costs for replacement equipment are more reasons to pay the bill on time.

Dennis Watts, City of Norfolk Water and Sewer Director, said the Water Division gives people 15 days from when they receive their bi-monthly bill to pay it. They can send the check in, pay it online, drop it off in a box outside the administration building, bring it inside the building or have it set up to be automatically paid.

If the water bill is not paid promptly, a letter is sent to the customer stating it is delinquent and the date the service will be shut off. If the bill is not paid by the delinquent date noted in the letter a notice is hung on the person's door warning that the water will be shut off. If it's still not paid on the date noted on the notice hung on the delinquent address, City staff will come to the home and shut the water off at the curb stop. A special tool is used to shut an underground valve in a pipe connecting the City water main to the resident's water system.

“There have been instances when this valve mechanism breaks. According to City code, it is the homeowner's responsibility to maintain and repair the curb stop. At times, the curb stop can break in the 'off' position. The cost for the home owner to possibly have to break up concrete around the shut

off and then have a plumber dig down to the valve to repair it can run anywhere from \$500 to \$2,000,” said Watts.

Even if the curb stop operates correctly, there will still be a \$30 fee during office hours and \$45 after hours fee assessed to have the water turned back on to the home.

Since property owners are responsible for any broken curb stop, Watts recommends that landlords emphasize to renters to keep current on paying their water bills. Landlords can also ask that they are sent a notification if a tenant has received a disconnect notice.

“The last thing we want to do is shut off someone’s water. Still, we have to put out about 25 notices a week to people who haven’t paid their bill. With all the extra costs that may come with shutting off a person’s water, the thing is to just pay your water bill,” Watts said.

For more information about the City of Norfolk Water call 402-844-2210.