



**City of Sherburn**  
**Utility Billing Policy**  
**Policies and Procedures**  
**2025**

### SECTION 1. UTILITY BILLING POLICY

The following policy shall govern the provision of municipal utilities of the City of Sherburn. The purpose of this policy is to provide consistent guidelines and rules for Sherburn Municipal Utilities (SMU) customers in terms of their regular utility bills. Individuals with questions concerning this policy or services provided by The City of Sherburn are encouraged to contact the billing department and/or The City of Sherburn.

### SECTION 2. UTILITY BILLING INFORMATION

Water, sewer, base, storm sewer, maintenance repair/meter readings, or raze and removal, plus any fees, taxes, penalties, or previous balance, shall be billed on one (1) bill as applicable to each account. All bills shall contain the address and telephone number of the utility office. Bills shall be mailed to the customers on or before the last day of each month and specify the water consumed and all utility charges in accordance with the current fee schedule set by the Sherburn Resolution enacted. SMU shall maintain account records including customer's name, billing address, service address, account number, consumption history, payment history, service charges, penalties, and fees in accordance with the latest record retention schedule set. If a resident wants a full history of their account please stop into City Hall during business hours.

#### Utility Office Information

Office Hours: Monday through Thursday 7:00am till 4:00pm, excluding holidays

Friday from 7:00am till 12:00pm

Mailing Address: 21 E. First Street, P.O. Box 667, Sherburn MN 56171

Office Number: 507-764-4491

Website: <https://cityofsherburn.com>

### SECTION 3. UTILITY SERVICE ACCOUNTS

1. Water, sanitary sewer and storm sewer services shall be carried out in the name of the owner who personally, or by his or her authorized agent, applied for such service. The owner shall be liable for all services supplied to the property, whether they are occupying the property or not, and any unpaid charges (including taxes, fees and penalties) shall be a lien upon the property as outlined in Section 6. In the case where an owner is renting the property out to tenants, there should be a contract in place between the tenant and owner of the property. The tenant in any

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case is liable for the services, but if the tenant fails to pay the charges on the services provided then the charges are required to be paid for by the owner of the property. If the charges remain unpaid, the charges may be sent to Martin County for special assessment, and/or a lien may be placed on the property.

2. Rates & Other Charges- The Sherburn City Code 412.321 subdivision 1, can fix rates and establish reasonable rules and regulations for the sale of municipal utility products. Under 444.075, subdivision 3, a city may use a combination of methods to set rates for utility services, including, but not limited to, flat rates, rates based on usage, and different rates based on a reasonable classification of property (for example, commercial or residential property). Water and sewer utility bills are considered public information by the State of Minnesota.
3. Other Charges- Charges for equipment, oversized meters and labor that are furnished by the City of Sherburn will be billed at actual costs. All services required by an owner or contractor outside of the City of Sherburn during normal business hours will be billed at the overtime rate.

### **SECTION 4. BILLING CYCLE**

1. Meters are generally read from the 20<sup>th</sup> to the 24<sup>th</sup> of each month. If a meter read cannot be obtained, consumption will be estimated by utility staff by using an average of either previous months (or average of three months) on the resident's water bill or attempt the reading again.
2. Bills shall be mailed to the customers on or before the last day of each month
3. Bills are due and payable on or before the seventeenth (17<sup>th</sup>) day of each month. If the seventeenth (17<sup>th</sup>) falls on a weekend or holiday, the due date falls on the next business day. Reasonable accommodation can be provided to residents, but the city and clerks will diagnose each situation and take into consideration each account, severity, and situation.
4. The first (1<sup>st</sup>) business day following the due date shall be known as the delinquent date unless it falls on a Federal Holiday.
5. All delinquent accounts shall be assessed with a late payment penalty/s on the full balance in an amount set forth by the City Council and/or fee schedules/utility policy.
6. Failure to receive a bill will not excuse payment of bill, application of penalties, or the regulations pertaining to disconnecting for nonpayment as outlined in this policy. Delinquent accounts are subject to up to 8-18% penalties or annual percentage rate penalties as well if applicable.

7. The City of Sherburn will/can prorate months depending on move in and move out date.
8. The City of Sherburn does not accept post-dated checks, reasonable dates around weekends and holidays are acceptable, but please no post-dated checks as these will be shredded and the payment will not be applied. Due to liability issues the City of Sherburn cannot accept post dated checks that are over a week in advance, and we will not hold checks for residents. These checks could accidentally be deposited, and we therefore would incur fees from the bank. Thank you for your understanding.

### **SECTION 5. PAYMENTS**

The City of Sherburn has multiple forms of payment options for utility bills to make it convenient for residents.

1. In Person: Exact cash or over as a credit, personal check, money order, bill payment from a bank, online options.
2. 24 hours a day drop box: There is a drop box outside City Hall which payment can be dropped at any time, and this box is safe, secure, and always locked – checked multiple times per day Monday-Friday.
3. Value Pay (online): Value Pay is an online payment option that a resident can access on our City of Sherburn Website but there is a convenience fee for using a debit card/credit card which usually runs about \$2.95 extra on your card.
4. Doxo (online): This is similar to the Value Pay option; however, a resident can create an account and use their bank account information to avoid any convenience fee. If you do not use a bank account, there currently is a 5% convenience fee to use this system. Both the Doxo and Value Pay options can be done outside of the city and they are available through our City of Sherburn Website and online accessible. For more information, please visit our site. Doxo is usually a green “pay bill” button.
5. ACH: Please call and set up ACH if applicable and we strongly suggest this form of payment, these payments are credited around the 17<sup>th</sup> of the month, so please don’t make any assumptions when the payment isn’t immediately taken, sometimes it takes a few days for the bank to “pull” these funds. We cannot schedule ACH for random times throughout the month and we require full payment for this type of payment, we send these through to the bank as close to the 17<sup>th</sup> of each month as practically possible.
6. The city does not have access to a card reader, so when wanting to complete payments via debit or credit card this should be done at home, or please feel free to stop in and we can assist with an online payment with a credit/debit card here at City Hall by using our website, however we cannot create an account on Doxo due to liability concerns due to then having access to private and personal information,

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once you have a Doxo account we can assist with payment once logged in, however we prefer Value Pay in cases where an account hasn't been created. Most of these forms of payment require account creations and access to personal information, so if completing the payment online we would prefer our resident's to do this from home.

The City of Sherburn strongly recommends whenever possible to request a receipt or get a confirmation number from any payment option from us or any form of payment method you desire so that there is transparency when there are account concerns or complaints if any, we will always write a receipt but if you as a resident don't want one, we strongly suggest you ask for one. This allows the residents and the City of Sherburn to keep track of all documented payments. The City does keep a ledger and receipts for every transaction, but with any online platform there can be the potential for errors and the City is not liable for any third-party system errors or errors made by the residents as to failure to keep appropriate documentation.

If there is an error or missed payment at the City of Sherburn the potential account can be remedied and/or adjusted accordingly with the error in question if proven by documentation that there was an office error, or a documented correct receipt is brought in and presented for verification by city staff. If you bring in multiple payments, from multiple sources with other documentation, please confirm with City Hall staff that you are also dropping off a utility payment as The City of Sherburn does not only accept utility payments here in office, we also work alongside of a vast variety of companies, checks, and invoices.

The City of Sherburn holds ourselves to the highest accounting and accountability standards. If there are ever any questions, please call the City Hall at 507-764-4491.

### **SECTION 6. LANDLORDS, RENTERS, RENTAL PROPERTIES**

The City of Sherburn will require the property owner's name and contact information to always remain on the utility billing account. A tenant's name can be added to the account once specific conditions have been met.

- All tenants on the lease must come into the utility office or call to complete an account application as outlined in this policy.
- An applicant who does not own the property in which they are applying for municipal water service will not have to pay a deposit as determined in the cities schedule.

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The water service account does not transfer into the tenant's name until the application process is complete. When an owner allows a tenant to move in before these requirements are met, and a utility bill for usage by the tenant goes out to the owner, it is the responsibility of the owner to pay the bill and collect any funds from tenant.

Water services will be terminated in the name of a tenant upon notification from either the tenant or owner that the tenant vacating the property. The utility service will then revert to the owner of the property until a new tenant has completed the application process.

The City of Sherburn will only disconnect a rental unit's municipal utility service upon a landlord's request if the unit is unoccupied at the time of disconnection and the landlord completes the appropriate process as outlined in this policy or the account is delinquent with no arrangements made, or the residence is completely vacated by the resident. The City does not have the right to disconnect services if the tenant is currently residing in the home, or simply just at the owner's request, unless there has been a failure to pay utility account balances, failure to set up a payment plan, no payment has been made, and no contact has been given to the city, and the home is vacated. All disconnect letters must be mailed out by first class mail or delivered personally to the residence by a member of the utility service company according to Minnesota State Statute. However, if the resident is on a payment plan and the plan is not met, services can be discontinued immediately.

Also, according to Minnesota State Statute 444.075 the city does have a right to charge minimum charges per City Council of the City of Sherburn regardless of if the line is moving freely or not, as it is attached to our water lines and therefore required maintenance, and repairs are still required, and minimum charges occur. Also included in that statute provided above, we as the City of Sherburn reserve the right as the governing body of Sherburn, Minnesota, to charge the owner, lessee, occupant, or all parties for unpaid charges. Without payment these unpaid charges can then be assessed on next year's taxes directly to the owner of the property and the service can be disconnected, this is why regardless of if the tenants name is on the account it is indeed the responsibility of the homeowner or landlord.

The City of Sherburn does require regardless of who is the billing customer that all landlords and homeowners need to remain on the account for minimally mailing and up to date monthly billing information as the "owner" of the property. Disconnections will be made following lack of payment once the account is past due, notification has been sent, a disconnect has been delivered, and no payment has been made after 10 days. Keep in mind, after disconnection, there still are minimum basic charges on the account.

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*It is **not** the responsibility of the City of Sherburn to manage rental properties owned by another member of the public. The City of Sherburn monitors water billing and usage, but we are not liable for water usage used by the tenant of a rental property. If the water used by a tenant is left unpaid it is the responsibility of the tenant, but nonpayment and incurring fees are still placed with the home/property itself therefore also the responsibility of the homeowner if they contracted services for water through the city and there are unpaid charges on the account. The City of Sherburn prefers any rental property owner or landlord to work out a lease with their tenant where their tenant pays the homeowner/landlord the associated fees with utilities so that the owner of the home can stay on as the billing customer with the city, that makes things easier for all parties involved. This avoids further discussions and confusion down the road in regard to delinquency or potential for there to be any unpaid charges on the utility account. The City of Sherburn is not responsible for the disconnection of services due to nonpayment of a landlord/owner, if this should happen, please reach out to your landlord/rental property manager. Any questions about this section please call The City of Sherburn office or send us an email.*

### **SECTION 7. DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS, SHUT-OFFS FOR NONPAYMENT, DISCONNECTIONS**

Process for disconnection due to non-payment:

1. If any bill is not paid by the due date listed on the bill (17<sup>th</sup>), the City of Sherburn affirms that the next business day the account becomes delinquent and/or “late”. The city will attempt to mail another bill the following month with updated account information. The city, through this monthly process will attempt to contact the billing customer if no payment has been made on the account. If the utility account becomes over 30 days (1 period) past due, then the city will provide a Disconnection Letter via first class/USPS mail or hand delivered to the resident/residence from a member of the/our utility service. If there continues to be no payment, no contact, and no arrangement made than 10 business days following the delivery of the disconnect letter the service will be disconnected. Any account over 60 days delinquent can be disconnected.
2. Water service shall not be shut off until notice has been given and/or an opportunity if applicable for a hearing before an employee/city designated by the public utility commission has been provided to the occupant and owner of the premises involved *if requested*.
3. If the balance remains unpaid, a substantial payment hasn't been made, a payment agreement is not in place prior to 24 hours of the disconnect time indicated on the disconnect letter the response time may be limited and the service could be potentially

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disconnected even if a payment has been made the day of, or a payment that was not substantial enough has been made and for this reason it is preferred that any customer served with a disconnect letter attempt to make payment at least the day prior to disconnection if applicable. If disconnection happens there will be additional fees for turning the water back on and a substantial payment will need to be made towards the account at a minimum 50% of the total balance. A payment arrangement set up for the remainder of the balance can be made, but any other reconnection fees associated with reconnecting the account could incur as well.

4. If a customer fails to pay, fails to make a payment agreement with utility staff, fails to make a substantial payment on the account and fails to request a hearing, service may be shut off on the date specified in the notice and depending on the severity of the account smaller payments will be accepted but may not turn the service back on.

5. Utility services will not be disconnected on a Friday, Saturday, Sunday, holiday, or potentially the day before a holiday if applicable for residents and city convenience and respect. In addition, when temperatures are below zero this may not only be devastating to the account holder, but also risk safety for staff members and water lines. The City of Sherburn cares for its residents and the goal is not to disconnect services, but in turn work out arrangements to make sure the balance is paid in full, on time, and monthly going forward in such a manner.

6. A written guarantee of payment from an assistance agency/MVAC/Health and Human Services/County Assistance/Salvation Army/Surrounding Churches will be accepted as payment on the account to prevent disconnection provided the amount of the guarantee covers the past due balance and gets the account to “current” as outlined in the notice. If you are struggling with making payment on your bill and are considering these options, please start that process immediately as these applications and assistance can take over 30 days, and the city requires the account to be current to avoid disconnecting and will not wait for an application unless contacted by the agency.

7. If payment for reconnection after disconnection does not occur within twenty-one (21) calendar days of the date of disconnection, the city will try to attempt to collect a debt and if not paid the account will be closed and a final bill will be issued. Any currently held deposit, if any, will then be applied to the outstanding balance on the final bill, and in lieu of a rental property the owner then will be responsible for any unpaid charges associated with the account. In this manner the owner then can respond to the tenant and collect any charges from their tenant. If there is no deposit on the account and there are still late charges, The City of Sherburn can potentially also send these charges and balances to a collection agency or the Martin County Auditor.



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### Payment Agreements

The following are the terms and conditions of the City of Sherburn's payment agreement:

- a) All utility payment agreements for delinquent bills must be made at the utility office and signed by the customer and approved by city staff.
- b) Checks returned uncollectible will result in immediate shut-off.
- c) If a scheduled payment is missed, staff will issue one reminder but if payment is still not made disconnection will happen. Further payments not received by the indicated date will result in immediate disconnection with no further notice.
- d) Reminders may be done via email, phone call, doorknob holders, or text message, so it is important to keep up to date contact information with the city to avoid reminders not getting to the appropriate party, but the city is not liable for reminders not received due to incorrect or not updated contact information.

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON PAYMENT PLANS - In order to keep service on, a payment plan has to be in effect, a payment must be made, agreed to, and signed by both parties, and it must be sufficient enough to pay towards your past due charges. The payment each month must be at minimum current charges plus an additional amount towards arrears so that the account progressively gets caught up instead of adding to the arrears balance. Any failure to stay consistent on the plan means the plan will void and services will be shut off. If the balance is over three periods past due there will need to be sufficient payment to keep services on to avoid getting on a plan and not following through. To start a payment arrangement, the first payment should be at or over 25% of the balance, anything less and the city can determine if the plan is capable of being followed through on and working towards progressively catching the account up to current charges. If the resident is consistently delinquent and consistently requesting more payment plans, The City of Sherburn has the right to deny said payment plan.**

### SECTION 8. RATES

1. Current Rates as of 2025
  - a. Residential Water: \$15.20 per 1,000 gallons
  - b. Rural Water: \$22.05 per 1,000 gallons
  - c. Residential Sewer: \$18.38 per 1,000 gallons
  - d. Rural Sewer: \$29.40 per 1,000 gallons
  - e. Base Fee: \$16.04

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- f. Storm Sewer Base: \$4.00
- g. Main Repair/Replacement Base: \$4.15
- h. Raze/Remove Fee: \$1.50

*Your water service will always incur basic minimum charges even if the water is turned off at the property. This is because it's not only included in the state statute, but it is the way the city still makes income off the property due to access to the water supply system and it is included in the city's budget in terms of our enterprise fund. Keep in mind that regardless of access according to state statutes- the potential of having water is still acceptable to charge basic minimum charges.*

2. There are many reasons why cities charge for water and why prices increase at times. All revenue collected needs to go back to the water utility service and its entities for many reasons, please see some of the reasons below.
  - Infrastructure such as pipes, pumps, treatment facilities, repairs, upgrades, environmental protections, providing clean water, providing quality water, costs of sourcing, treating and treatment, wastewater and stormwater issues and repairs/treatment, delivery process/s. The water service is an enterprise fund that must pay for itself and be self-sustaining.
  - Raze/Remove (Dilapidated Property) is a fee that helps our community by assisting homeowners and the city with a certain amount of funds for dilapidated properties once they are removed. This fee assists with those clean-ups, so that eventually the lot can be used for something new. This fee allows The City of Sherburn to assist with a payment of 2500.00 to the homeowner after removal- pending approval of the resident's application.
  - We also have potentially one of the best processes for water out there in reverse osmosis and our facilities. Please see the reverse osmosis section for more information in this policy and the brochure included.

- ❖ For basic minimum charges not to be accessed on the properties account please see below the requirements.
  - The line must be capped, the structure must be removed, and there is no meter which is removed by city personnel. The water meter is the property of the city unless purchased by the homeowner. The removal of the meter is so that The City of Sherburn and its residents have transparency, safety, and a way to maintain affordability due to the expensive water meters.

The City Council has determined that the best option currently for sewer charges is no longer an average of January, February, and March (first quarter) billing water usage as previously voted on. The City of Sherburn found it more equitable and reasonable for our residents to charge the actual used monthly sewer rate per month going forward (Voted on April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025) and the average usage is no longer charged as such for the remainder of the year. Please note, this is only for residential and rural connections. Please also note, at times this usage is not gallon for gallon- it may be slightly different per usage on how much water goes down the drain. Any commercial connection will be charged actual usage by month for sewer usage.

### **SECTION 9. REVERSE OSMOSIS – WATER TREATMENT PLANT- PROCESS- CLEAN WATER**

Our plant capacity is 300,000 gallons per day, and the process goes through two major steps which is sand filtration followed by RO membrane treatment. If you have questions about this process, please ask for a brochure from our new plant which has helpful information about why RO is beneficial for our community. Our public works department stays on top of testing and confirms water softness regularly. Blending the water back via RO creates better taste and adds the minerals required for the taste and healthiness/minerals the body needs. Drinking straight RO water would not give a person the required minerals so that is why the water is blended.

A lot of things go into Reverse Osmosis, but the main goal is to take out the bad that we as humans don't need and filter in the good so that our drinking and water, we use daily is better for our lives. Our water system is important, and we need to monitor our water consumption and usage while also maintaining our water systems going forward and making certain that we (The City of Sherburn) have one of the best systems out there.

Eventually, chances are, more cities and surrounding communities will go to reverse osmosis and the chances of them doing that are getting higher every day with water issues throughout the country, potentially they will have to invest in everything we have invested in and the beauty of that is that we will be ahead of everyone else in that scenario, and costs will be more expensive going forward in the future for them.

Our goal is to stay ahead of that so eventually our residents won't have to be charged as much as those other surrounding communities will be charging more when they go to their new systems because unfortunately costs may not come

down for those materials and plants, the chances are those costs will continue to go up.

Also, most plants will eventually need repair/replacement and ours is already completed. These reasons are also why we The City needs to continue to keep up with maintenance daily of these facilities. So, partner with us and keep our water safe and healthy for our families, kids, pets, and ourselves for futures to come!

### **SECTION 10. METERS, METER OWNERSHIP, METER TESTING, FUTURE CELLULAR, METER READINGS, LEAK DETECTION, AND INSPECTION**

1. The City of Sherburn will furnish 5/8 inch to ¾ inch meters for residential and commercial applications. The City will and shall maintain those meters at its expense. Any meter that has become unserviceable will need to be replaced by its expense. If a meter is larger than normal furnishing or requested larger by the billing customer, then that cost shall be deemed responsible for the owner of the property or current customer. If a meter was purchased by the occupant, then the owner has an option to request a standard sized meter if that should fit according to plumbing requirements. The City of Sherburn retains ownership of all water meters, and they should never be broken, tampered with, or replaced without city notification and approval. In the case of tampering the owner is fully responsible for damages and full replacement of the parcel's meter according to Sherburn City Code 402.02 Subdivision 4.
2. If a resident has a complaint about their water meter, we as the City of Sherburn can provide meter testing, meter reading, and leak detection according to usage in the home. Leak detection is a process where city staff drive in front of the home or wherever the meter is located, run an electronic test. If the test shows a leak signal, there is a leak in the home. The test runs at least one gallon every hour for a 24-hour period. If this is the case, the flag will show a leak and we, The City of Sherburn can notify the resident of the leak. This process works because it would technically show some sort of water running through a 24-hour period (most residents aren't constantly running water every second of every day). Our goal as a city is to continue to replace meters around the city from mechanical to cellular meters which offer the residents not only a replacement of their old meter but also access to reports like usage and other online opportunities where it shows diagnostics of the said meter. By 2027 we hope to have a cellular meter in every household in the City of Sherburn.

### **SECTION 11. COLD WEATHER RULE**

1. If you have questions or concerns about the Cold Weather Rule please look the information up on [Shut-Off Protection / Public Utilities Commission](#) through the State of Minnesota.
2. In order to be considered for this rule, the billing customer must require their service as a heating device or a heating source or a medical need, be current prior to the rule going in to effect, or set up a payment plan and follow through with that said plan with your utility company
3. This rule truly only applies to homes with water radiated heat being that it may be considered a “heating source”. It also applies to electricity and gas services for heating homes. Water utility services don’t qualify in most cases unless they are used for heating services. The City of Sherburn is in compliance with the Cold Weather Rule. We will look at the household income and take those things into consideration if the rule applies to your family, please send in documentation so that the city has those documents for review and apply for the rule prior to the application date.

### **SECTION 12. NSF OR RETURNED CHECKS**

1. According to The City of Sherburn’s fee schedule and bank procedures the minimum charge for returned checks is a \$40 charge plus any fees from the bank if those apply. Individuals on payment plans also will have a \$50 fee attached to reconnect services after the disconnection. There are at times bank errors and we understand that, if this happens please reach out to the city so we can all remedy the situation.
2. If returned items happen the City of Sherburn will attempt to notify the resident with the contact information they provided with the information of the NSF item or dishonored check. If three or more are issued and are received in our office The City of Sherburn must make future arrangements with the customer instead of taking personal checks or bill payments.
3. If The City of Sherburn receives an NSF/Returned check from a delinquent payment plan customer, services will be terminated immediately, and another fee will apply.
4. There can be additional late charges and penalties of 1.5% to 18% depending on the severity of the account.

### **SECTION 13. OWNER RESPONSIBILITY- WATER LINE- CURB BOX-SHUT OFF**

1. With any questions about this section of the policy please view City Code Sec. 402.01 Subdivision 4 and Sec. 302.05.

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2. As it is in the best interest of the City of Sherburn and the property owner to maintain a working shut off, the City will continue to annual work on repairing or replacing private existing residential shutoffs as deemed necessary, a copy of which is kept on file at the office of the City Clerk. Interior water shut offs for the supply of water to the home is the owner's responsibility and not the liability of the city. The city does not perform any duties of a licensed plumber. If there are interior water issues, please call a licensed plumber for work so that the work can be certified and guaranteed by that plumber or plumbing company.
3. If the exterior line or shut off is damaged, mishandled, or tampered with by the owner or billing customer of that property then the repairs and/or replacement is therefore the responsibility of the customer, billing customer, owner, or whomever does the damage to the shut off/curb stop.
4. The curb stop to the main road line is the responsibility of the homeowner/billing customer. Please see your insurance information to see if they cover any other expenses associated with water lines as in most cases exterior lines need to be dug up and replaced, and these issues are not the City of Sherburn's liability unless damage is caused by the City itself or its employees.
5. If a resident requests a water shut off, the authorized person doing the shut off must work for the city and must be done through the city or it's entity with a permit or a licensed plumber with approval.

### **SECTION 14. FREEZING TEMPERATURES- FROZEN LINES WATER/SEWER**

The purpose of this section is to provide The City of Sherburn's procedures in the event of frozen water and sewer lines. Procedures identified in this section are intended to maintain the city-wide formality and to identify responsibility of maintenance and repair. The city will provide such maintenance in a safe and cost-effective manner.

1. It is the responsibility of the city to mend the frozen water mains and sewer mains.
2. It is the responsibility of the owner/business customer for the laterals from the house to the water main.
3. Property owners are responsible for frozen sewer lines from the house to the sewer main.
4. If only one house is affected, the city will consider this a frozen lateral and no credit for water or sewer will be discussed.
5. Council will call for a motion if any monetary credit is to be allowed or issued.
6. The City of Sherburn will respond to these calls on a first come, first serve basis.
7. The City of Sherburn is responsible for thawing the main only, not plumbing or laterals attached.

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8. The city uses hot water or steam in most cases, most machines are prohibited and those in use are held liable for damages.
9. If a resident has lateral or home piping issues The City of Sherburn recommends the use of a licensed professional.
10. The city has a right to modify this information accordingly and make exceptions depending on severity and temperature, if it is below a certain degree and unsafe staff will not attempt to repair or replace unless it's vitally important, if it is not vital to the city then it will wait until temperatures are safe to operate in.

### **SECTION 15. ADJUSTMENTS TO CITY UTILITY BILLS**

1. It is the policy of The City of Sherburn to adjust customer utility bills where said adjustment is required or necessary to correct bills due to a billing error, to correct errors due to equipment error or failure, or to fairly and equitably apply the rates and rules of the utility service. The purpose of the policy is to improve customer service by enabling staff to quickly, efficiently, and accurately respond to customer requests for adjustments to their city utility bill rather than waiting for council approval which can take a certain amount of time and waiting periods. There are situations where adjustments will and will not be considered. City staff take adjustments very seriously and cannot give adjustments to real used water unless there was a billing error, a machine or equipment malfunction, or a sever water leak that was noticed immediately and brought to the city's attention. In those rare cases, the billing isn't just adjusted off, staff will confirm and go through averages of water used and the customer could be potentially charged appropriately and approximately according to their usage average/s.
2. A panel made up of the public works department, the deputy clerk, the clerk/treasurer, and potentially at times the city council shall determine the amount, if any, of the adjustment/s to be made.
3. Staff are authorized to adjust bills or set up payment arrangements without city council action, in the following cases.
  - a. Billing errors (office billing errors made by staff)
  - b. Late Fees (which relies mostly on payment history and on time payments)
  - c. Sanitary Sewer (extraordinary water consumption, leak, equipment malfunctions, and water not entering the storm sewer)
4. When an adjustment is made a credit will be made toward the billing customers account. No cash adjustments or refunds will be made to the billing customers, they will only be made to credit the utility account.
5. The clerks will provide the council with any adjustments.

6. Customers who disagree with any utility-related matter have the right to request an appeal to the city council. Said appeal must be in writing and shall be scheduled to be heard at the meeting immediately after receipt of the written appeal and billing customer should be at the hearing/meeting. All Council Meetings are posted at City Hall.
7. Customers who have an extraordinary leak and are requesting assistance or an adjustment should be able to provide proof of repair. Examples of proof would be pictures of the before and after repair if repaired by the owner, otherwise a report and/or a receipt from a plumber before or after the fix has occurred. The City of Sherburn does not want to give an adjustment if the problem isn't fixed because we want to limit the adjustments to the month of the leak or thereafter. When the city uses averages, we can potentially use a different average for that specific month of the leak if that month is between January to March.

### **SECTION 16. ESTIMATED READS**

In the case where there is an issue with equipment and the current reads on the utility account are setting to estimated reads, this can be fixed by repairing the meter, replacing the meter, or the resident informs the city monthly of what the current read is and how much it increased from the previous month. The City of Sherburn realizes this can be a hassle for its residents, but if we replace the meter the resident will still need to do this for a few months afterwards until the new meter begins to read. However, if the customer prefers not to have an estimated read this would be the process of obtaining the appropriate read. The customer can also assist the city in taking a picture at the end of every month and submitting it to the city.

### **SECTION 17. REPLACEMENT OF METERS TO CELLULAR METERS**

1. Through the transition from mechanical to cellular meters The City of Sherburn requires and needs assistance from its residents to comply with meter replacement procedures. If the City of Sherburn isn't able to get the resident scheduled for meter replacement, staff make multiple attempts to contact and schedule repair, and the resident isn't complying with the policy and procedures, the water can be immediately shut off as this affects the accuracy of our billing system and charges will be incorrect on that specific residents account if the meter is in need of replacement or repair. The City of Sherburn requires transparency from its staff and its residents and needs to be as fair and accurate as possible.
2. The day of the replacement and the visit from our public works staff for the appointment normally takes about an hour, but we would like to give them 4 hours

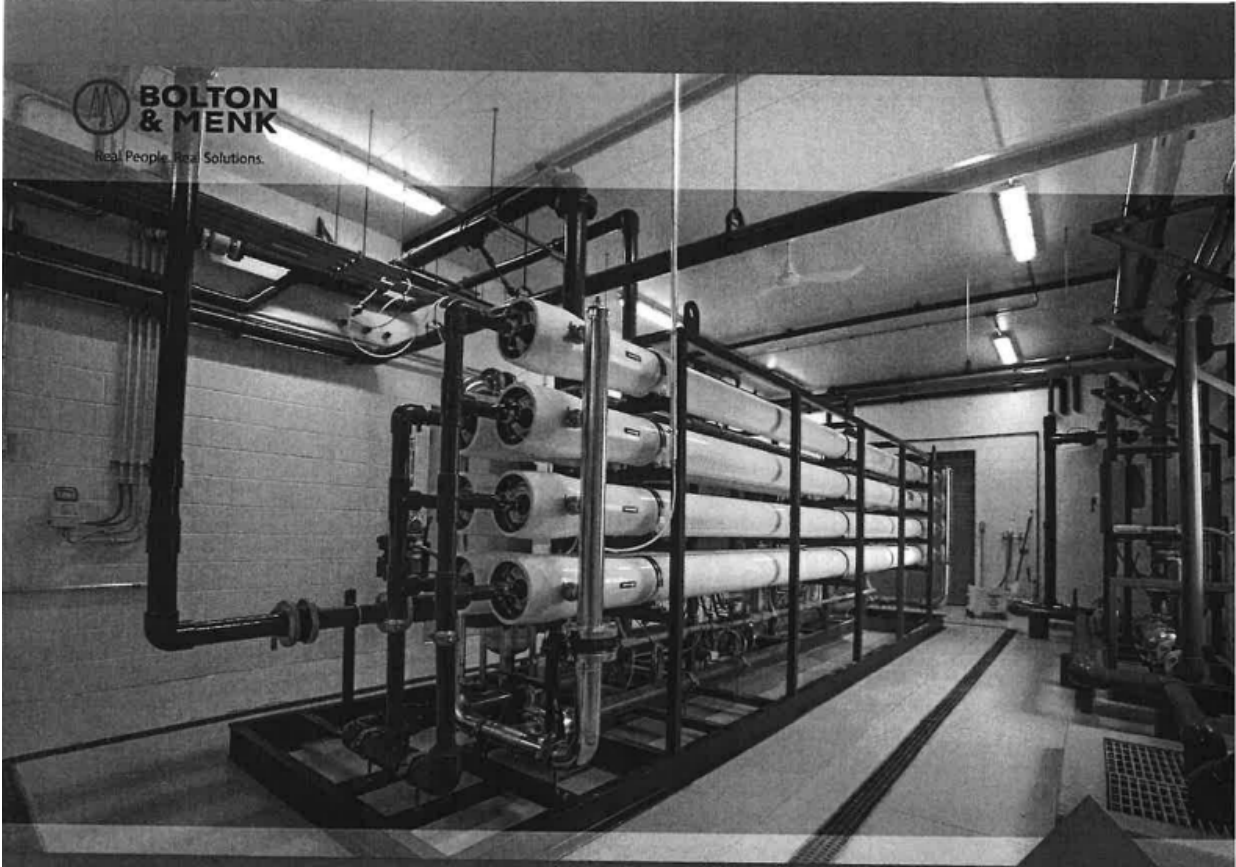


## UTILITY BILLING POLICY

to complete the procedure in case they run into issues. In any case, the area needs to be free and clear of debris, no animals near the technicians/secured due to safety and liability concerns, and staff usually like the resident home due to liability as well. However, The City of Sherburn understands that people at times work various hours and aren't available. In the case where the resident isn't available and they give permission to public works to perform the procedure and permission to enter the home, the technicians will and can enter the home, but they will bring two technicians for liability concerns.

### **TO OUR RESIDENTS:**

The City of Sherburn wants to thank all its residents and wants you to know that we care, we want the best for our city, we want honesty and transparency, and we want you to know that a city isn't a city without you. The city wants to grow, be more successful, sustainable, bring new residents to town, and bring new big and small businesses to town as well. So, thank you for all that you do and thank you for living in this small great local town in Sherburn, Minnesota!



# Municipal Reverse Osmosis Water Treatment Facility

Sherburn, Minnesota

Consulting Engineers  
Bolton & Menk, Inc.  
Fairmont, Minnesota

Water Treatment Facility Contractor  
KHC Construction  
Marshall, Minnesota

Water Tower Contractors  
M.K. Painting  
Wyandotte, Michigan

Funding Agency  
PFA



## BACKGROUND

The City has been performing monitoring testing for Salty Discharge at the Wastewater Treatment Facility as part of our NPDES Permit. Total Chlorides will need to be reduced in the Wastewater Treatment Facility's Effluent to the level required by the facility's NPDES Permit.

Approximately 75 percent of the chloride (salt) contribution to the wastewater plant is from the brine used for regenerating home softeners. The only cost effective way to reduce the Salty Discharge Levels in the wastewater is to reduce the amount of Salty Discharge being discharged

from your home. By reducing the hardness in the water you may not need to soften the water any further. If you choose to continue to soften the water, please adjust your softener to treat a water with a hardness between 4-6 grains so it recharges less frequently. This will help reduce the salty discharge from your home or business. We need your cooperation to reduce the amount of salt discharged to our Wastewater Treatment Facility.

If you have questions or concerns, please call Sherburn City Offices at (507) 764-4491

## DESCRIPTION & PROCESS

The Sherburn Water Treatment Facility has a design capacity of approximately 300,000 gallons per day. The treatment process consists of two major processes, sand filtration followed by reverse osmosis membrane treatment.



The filtration process begins with the groundwater being pumped to the aerator. In the aerator, the water cascades over a series of horizontal PVC tubes, creating small "waterfalls" that introduce oxygen to the water. This oxidizes the iron in the water,

forming small insoluble "rust" particles that can be filtered out. The aeration process also removes hydrogen sulfide, reducing any potential odors. An induced draft fan draws air through the aerator further aiding the oxidation process by maintaining fresh air with a high oxygen content.

The water flows from the aerator to the detention tank where it is held for about 30 minutes. This allows time for the oxidation process to be completed, resulting in larger and more efficiently filtered iron particles. The chemical sodium permanganate is also added to oxidize the manganese in the water, which does not easily oxidize through aeration.



After the detention tank, the water flows into four filter cells. In each cell, an 18-inch layer of anthracite on top of 12-inches of silica sand filter out the iron and manganese particles.

The iron and manganese particles trapped in the filter media are periodically cleaned by backwashing. Backwashing is accomplished by reversing the water flow through the filter at a high rate. The iron and manganese particles are washed out, while the heavy sand media grains remain in place. The backwash water flows to holding tanks from which it is slowly pumped to the sewer system.

The reverse osmosis (RO) process begins with a high pressure pump which increases the water pressure to approximately 160 pounds per square inch (psi). The pressure forces the water molecules through the RO membrane.



The pores in the membrane are so small however, that dissolved solids in the water (radium, hardness, sulfates, etc.) are not able to pass through the membrane and are discharged in a reject stream. The membranes remove 95 to 99 percent of all contaminants found in Sherburn's water including hardness and sulfates. This reverse osmosis process is the opposite of the osmosis process that occurs in nature when clean water passes through plant membranes into the roots.



## UTILITY BILLING POLICY



commonly done by many of the bottled water brands.

The blended water is then pumped to the distribution system and tower using two, 250-gallon per minute booster pumps.



The RO water is blended with a small portion of filtered water to reduce the corrosiveness of the water and improve taste. Pure RO water also tends to have little taste. Blending water back adds the minerals required for the taste many consumers desire and is

The water is chlorinated before leaving the plant to provide disinfection. Fluoride is added to enhance the public dental health. A polyphosphate corrosion inhibitor is also added to reduce lead and copper corrosion in watermains and plumbing.

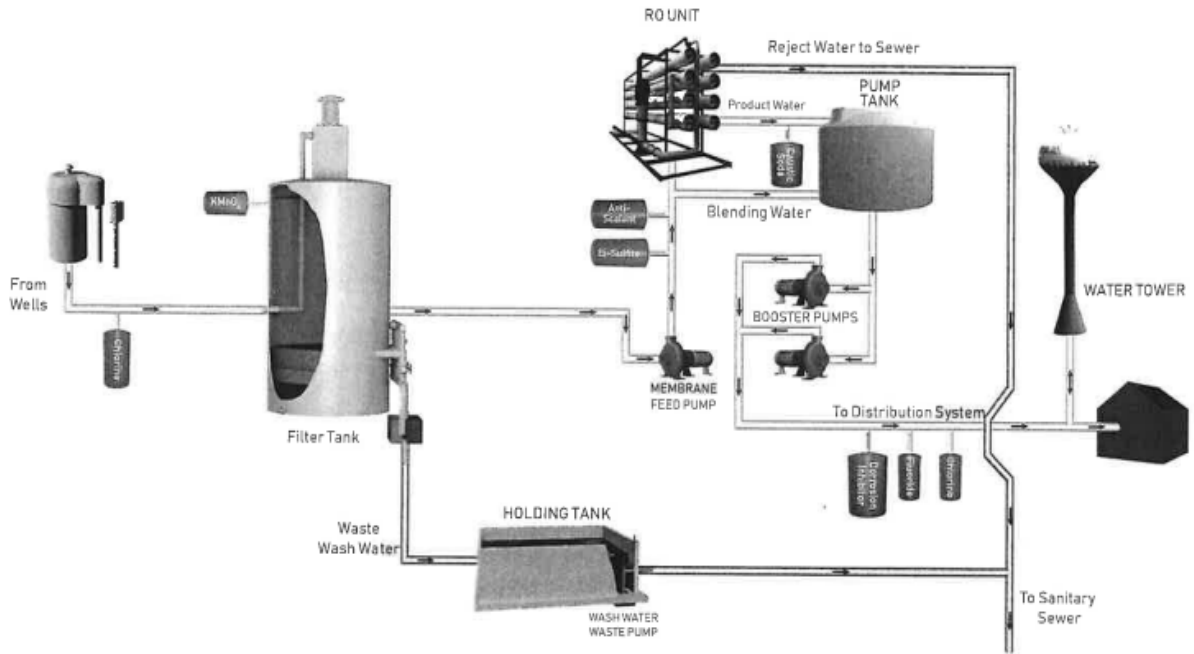
The operation of the wells, treatment plant, pumps, and RO are automatically controlled by Programmable Logic Controller's (PLC's) and a Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) computer. The PC-compatible SCADA system allows the operator to run the treatment plant

from the control room. The SCADA system records all water use, motor run times, and tracks system alarms. Alarms are sent out to the operator via an automatic telephone dialer.

The existing 250,000 gallon water tower was repainted as part of the Water Treatment Improvement Project.



# PROCESS FLOW DIAGRAM



## DESIGN SUMMARY

- ▶ **Water Treatment Facility**  
New Plant Capacity - 300,000 gallons per day  
Construction Cost - \$3,178,676
- ▶ **Water Tower**  
Capacity - 250,000 gallons  
Height 132 feet  
Rehabilitation Cost - \$350,000

## WATER QUALITY

Parameter	Untreated Water	Treated Water
Iron	2-3 mg/L	< 0.05 mg/L
Sulfates	400-425 mg/L	15-25 mg/L
Hardness	40-50 grains	4-6 grains
Total Dissolved Solids	840-850 mg/L	50-75 mg/L

## UTILITY BILLING POLICY

## UTILITY BILLING POLICY

This policy will be effective immediately upon approval by the City Council.

Adopted: March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Revised to Council Decision on REMOVAL OF SEWER AVERAGE April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025