

SECTION E.

SERVICE RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. ***Service Entitlement.*** The Applicants shall be considered qualified and entitled to water utility service when proper application has been made, terms and conditions of Service and Membership have been met and continue to be met, and all fees have been paid as prescribed. (30 TAC 291.85 (a))

2. ***Service Location and Classification.*** For the purposes of this Tariff, service requested by the Applicants shall be for real estate designated to receive the service provided by the Corporation. Service be through a meter located on that designated real estate unless otherwise approved by the board. Service shall be divided into the following two classes:
 - a. **Standard Service** is defined as service on an existing pipeline where pipeline or service facility extensions are not required and special design and/or engineering considerations are not necessary. Typically, this would include 5/8" X 3/4" or 3/4" sized water meter services set on existing pipelines.
 - b. **Non-Standard Service** is defined as any service request which requires a larger meter service, service to a Master Metered Account (see E. 2. c. (4) of this section), or an addition to the supply, storage and/or distribution/ system. The service requirements as prescribed by Section F of this Tariff shall be required of the Non-Standard Service Applicant prior to providing service.

3. ***Service Requirements.*** The Corporation's Service Application and Agreement Form shall be completed in full and signed by the Applicants. Where applicable in addition to the applicant ant other person sharing an ownership interest in and receiving service at that property shall sign the Service Application and Agreement Form (Typically this would be the applicant's spouse). (See Sample Application RUS-TX Bulletin 1780-9 (Rev. 5/99)
 - a) A Right-of-Way Easement Form, Sanitary Control Easement, or other such easement form, required by the Corporation, must be completed by the Applicant for the purpose of allowing future facility additions. (See Sample Application - RUS-TX Bulletin 1780-9 (Rev. 5/99), 30 TAC 290.47 Appendix C.) **NOTE:** This requirement may be delayed for Non-Standard Service requests.
 - b) The Applicant shall provide proof of ownership to property for which service has been requested in a manner acceptable to the Corporation. Proof of ownership shall consist of warranty deed, deed of trust or other recordable documentation of fee simple title to the real estate designated to receive service. (Texas Water Code 67.016 (e), and 13.002 (11).
 - c) On the request by the property owner or owner's authorized agent, the Corporation shall install individual meters owned by the Corporation in an apartment house, manufactured home rental community, multiple use facility, or condominium on which construction begins after January 1, 2003, unless the Corporation determines that installation of individual meters are not feasible. If the Corporation determines that installation of meters is not feasible, the property owner or manager shall install a plumbing system that is compatible with the installation of submeters or individual meters. The Corporation shall be entitled to the payment of cost, including the cost of individual meter installations, as provided in Section F. The cost of individual meter installation shall be prepaid by the property owner as well as the cost of any additional facilities or supply occasioned by the total water demand represented by full occupancy of the property, as

- determined under applicable provisions of Section F. It shall be the responsibility of the property owner to obtain the memberships required for each individual meter. The Corporation shall consider master metering service to apartments, condos, trailer/RV parks, or business centers and other similar type enterprises at an Applicant's request provided the total number of units to be served are all:
- a. owned by the same person, partnership, cooperative, corporation, agency, public or private organization of any type but not including a family unit,
 - b. directly inaccessible to public right of way, and
 - c. considered a commercial enterprise i.e. for business, rental, or lease purposes.
- d) Notice of application approval and costs of service determined by the Corporation shall be presented to the Applicant in writing and shall remain in effect for a period not to exceed thirty (30) days. After that time the Applicant must re-apply for service. (30 TAC 291.81 (a) (1))
- e) If the water main has been located in the public right-of-way and is adjacent to Applicant's property due to the current or previous landowner's refusal to grant easement to the Corporation for the purpose of installing the water main and appurtenances, and the Corporation has documentation of such refusal recorded in public records file, the Applicant, prior to receiving the requested service, shall grant easement to the Corporation. In addition to the normally required fees for service, the Applicant shall pay such sums as are necessary for the removal of the water main from the public right-of-way and for relocation onto the Applicant's property pursuant to such easement. (see Miscellaneous Transaction Forms)

4. *Activation of Standard Service.*

- a. **New Tap** -- The Corporation shall charge a non-refundable service installation fee as required under Section G of this tariff. The service installation fee shall be quoted in writing to the Applicant. All fees shall be paid or a deferred payment contract signed in advance of installation. (30 TAC 291.86 (a)(1)(A))
- b. **Re-Service** -- On property where service previously existed, the Corporation shall charge the Membership Fee, where the Membership Fee has been liquidated, and reconnection costs and other applicable cost necessary to restore service.
- c. **Performance of Work** -- All tap and equipment installations specified by the Corporation shall be completed by the Corporation staff or designated representative after all application requirements have been met. The tap for a standard service request shall be completed within five (5) working days whenever practicable, but not later than ten (10) working days. This time may be extended for installation of equipment for Non-Standard Service Request. (see Section F. , 30 TAC 291.85)
- d. **Inspection of Customer Service Facilities** -- The property of the Applicant/ Member shall be inspected to insure compliance with state required Minimum Acceptable Operating Practices For Public Drinking Water Systems as promulgated by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality or successor agency. The customer must, at his or her expense, properly install, inspect, test maintain and provide all required documentation of any backflow prevention device required by the corporation. (30 TAC 290.46(j))

5. *Activation of Non-Standard Service.*

- a. **Activation of Non-Standard Service** shall be conducted as prescribed by terms of Section F of this Tariff.
- b. **Re-Service** - The same terms which apply under the Activation of Standard Service Sub-Section on Re-Servicing shall be applied to Non-Standard Re-Service requests. (Section E. 3. b)

6. **Changes in Service Classification.** If at any time the Corporation determines that the customer service needs changed from those originally applied for to a different service classification and the Corporation determines that additional or different facilities are necessary to provide adequate service, the Corporation shall require the Applicant/Member to re-apply for service under the terms and conditions of this Tariff. Applicant/Members failing to comply with this provision shall be subject to the Disconnection with Notice Provisions of this Tariff, Sub-Section 15.a.

7. **Membership.**

a. **Eligibility** - Eligibility for Membership shall not guarantee service to the Applicant or Transferee; however, qualification for service is a prerequisite to Membership eligibility for new Applicants or continued Membership for Transferees.

b. **Membership** - Upon qualification for service, qualification for Membership, and payment of the required fees, the Corporation shall issue a refundable Membership to the Applicant. The Membership shall entitle the Member to one (1) connection to the Corporation's water utility service and one (1) share of Corporation Stock. The Membership entitles the Member to one (1) vote in conducting the affairs of any Annual or Special Membership Meeting of the Corporation as prescribed by the Corporation Bylaws. Ownership of more than one (1) Membership shall not authorize the Member to cast more than one (1) vote at any annual or special meeting. Each Membership and Stock thereby represented may be assigned to the specified parcel of land originally designated to receive service at the time of application. (Texas Water Code 67.016)

NOTE (1): In the event that the Corporation is conducting a potential Members survey for indications of interest in future service for the purpose of determining the feasibility of an initial construction or expansion project under RUS guidelines (see Sample Application Packet - RUS TX Bulletin 1780-8, Membership Survey Data Sheet), regular application procedures may be modified. An Indication of Interest Fee may be required prior to qualifications for receipt of service by the Applicant but shall only be used or applied as a Membership Fee for Membership purposes (upon issuance of a Membership) if service is ultimately received or reserved by the Applicant as a result of the planned project facilities. If service is not provided within the scope of this project, Indication of Interest Fees shall be refunded, less expenses, within sixty (60) days of the loan closing with the Rural Utilities Service. **NOTE (2):** In the event the applicant is in the process of construction the Membership will be considered TEMPORARY until such time as the final Customer Service Inspection is completed and the forms are returned as required. (See Section C., Section E. Sub-Section 1. Service Entitlement)

c. **Transfers of Membership.** (Texas Water Code 67.016)

- 1) A Member is entitled to transfer Membership in the Corporation only under the following circumstances:
 - (a) The Membership is transferred by will to a person related to the Transferor within the second degree by consanguinity; or
 - (b) The Membership is transferred without compensation to a person related to the Transferor within the second degree by consanguinity; or
 - (c) The Membership is transferred without compensation or by sale to the Corporation; or
 - (d) The Membership is transferred as a part of the conveyance of real estate from which the Membership arose.
- 2) In the event that Membership is transferred pursuant to the provisions of Sub-Section 6.c. (1) such transfer shall not be completed or recorded on the books and records of the Corporation until such time as the transferor has provided satisfactory evidence to the Corporation of such transfer. A transfer of Membership shall not be binding on the Corporation until such transfer has been approved as provided by Sub-Section 6.c. (3).

- 3) Qualifications for service upon transfer of Membership set forth in Sub-Section 6.c.(1) and 6.c.(2) shall be subject to approval of the Corporation and shall be recorded on the books and records of the Corporation only upon the following terms and conditions:
 - (a) A Transfer Authorization Form has been completed by the Transferor and Transferee;
 - (b) The Transferee has completed the required Application Packet;
 - (c) All indebtedness due the Corporation has been paid;
 - (d) The Transferee demonstrates satisfactory evidence of ownership of the property designated to receive service and from which the Membership originally arose.
- 4). If the application packet and other information is not completed on the day transfer of membership is requested the corporation will give the transferee written notice of 10 additional days to produce completed documentation to the corporation office. Service will be disconnected on the day following the 10th day according to disconnection with notice requirements. Additional time may be allowed at the directions of the manager or board.
- d. **Cancellation of Membership** -- To keep a Membership in good standing, a Service Availability Charge or a Reserved Service Charge must be paid monthly to the Corporation, whether or not water is used. Failure to pay this monthly charge to the Corporation shall jeopardize the Member's Membership standing and give rise to liquidation of the Membership Fee and forfeiture of the Membership. A Member may be relieved of this obligation to pay by surrendering the Membership, properly documented, to the Corporation. The Member shall also complete a Service Discontinuance Request Form prior to termination of service. (See Misc. Transaction Forms.) However, a Member is not relieved of any obligations incurred prior to the date of surrender of a properly endorsed Membership prior to termination of service. Rights to future service at this tap shall be extended on an as-available basis and subject to the terms of the Activation of Service Sub-Section E.3.a. of this Tariff. (Texas Water Code 67.016)
- e. **Liquidation Due To Delinquency** -- When the amount of the delinquent charges owed by the Member equals the Membership Fee, the Membership Fee shall be liquidated and the Membership canceled and transferred back to the Corporation. In the event the Member leaves a balance due on an account guaranteed under the terms of a Service Application and Agreement, and the delinquent Member owns more than one Membership, the Corporation may liquidate as many of the Member Guarantor's Membership Fees as necessary to satisfy the balance due the Corporation, provided proper notice has been given (see Tariff Section E, Subsection 15.1a.(4)). The Corporation shall collect any remaining account balances by initiation of legal action. Re-instatement of service shall be subject to the terms of the Activation of Service Sub-Section E. 3. a. of this Tariff.
- f. **Cancellation Due To Policy Non-Compliance** -- The Corporation may cancel a Membership anytime a Member fails to comply with policies of the Corporation, including but not limited to Member's failure to provide proof of ownership of the property from which the Membership arose. (Texas Water Code 67.016)
- g. **Re-assignment of Canceled Membership** -- The Corporation, upon cancellation of Membership under the provisions of this Tariff, may re-assign the Membership rights thereby granted to any person who satisfactorily demonstrates eligibility for Membership, including but not limited to proof of ownership of the property from which the Membership arose. (Texas Water Code 67.016)
- h. **Mortgaging of Memberships** -- Nothing herein shall preclude a Member from mortgaging his/her Membership. However, notification to the holder of any security interest (mortgagee/lien-holder) of account status of Member/mortgagor will be provided only upon satisfactory completion of requirements for such conditions under the Membership Mortgage Agreement (See Miscellaneous Transaction Forms). Prior to the cancellation of any Membership as provided under Sub-Section E. 6.d. (Cancellation of Membership), the Corporation will notify

the holder of any security interest in the Membership. The holder of the security interest also must hold a security interest in the real property at which water service is provided under the Membership. The Corporation may transfer the Membership to the holder of such security interest in lieu of cancellation, provided the holder of the security interest pays in full all delinquent and unpaid obligations and provided further that the holder of the security interest has secured title to the real property from which the Membership arose. The Corporation may withhold cancellation of a Membership pending the resolution of any foreclosure proceedings or similar legal proceedings by the holder of the security interest.

i. **Cancellation and Re-Assignment of Membership as a Result of Bankruptcy Proceedings**

-- Upon notice of the filing of a petition in bankruptcy, the Corporation may require the posting of a deposit or other form of security, acceptable to the Corporation, as a condition for continuing utility service. Unless special circumstances require otherwise, the amount of security shall equal the amount of charges for the month of greatest use during the preceding 12 months. The Corporation shall not require the payment of any security prior to the expiration of 20 days following the date on which the petition is filed. Failure to provide this security by the date specified by the Corporation may result in termination of service according to the Disconnection With Notice Provisions of Section E (15) (a) of this tariff, with a copy of the notice to the bankruptcy Trustee.

8. **Owners and Renters.** Any Member, renting or leasing real estate property designated to receive service according to the terms of this tariff to other parties, is responsible for all charges due the Corporation. The Corporation may bill the renter or lessee for utility service (at Member Request) as a third party, but the Member is fully responsible for any and all unpaid bills left by the renter/lessee. The owner shall be required to sign an Alternate Billing Agreement. (See Miscellaneous Transaction Forms.) The Member shall take responsibility for any necessary deposits from the renter/lessee to ensure payment of a past due bill. The Corporation may notify the Member of the renter's past due payment status subject to service charges (see Section: Miscellaneous Transaction Forms).

9. **Denial of Service.** The Corporation may deny service for the following reasons:

- a. Failure of the Applicant or Transferee to complete all required forms and pay all required fees and charges;
- b. Failure of the Applicant or Transferee to comply with rules, regulations, policies, and bylaws of the Corporation;
- c. Existence of a hazardous condition at the Applicant's property which would jeopardize the welfare of the Members/Users of the Corporation upon connection;
- d. Failure of Applicant or Transferee to provide representatives or employees of the Corporation reasonable access to property, for which service has been requested;
- e. Failure of Applicant or Transferee to comply with all governmental rules and regulations of the Corporation's tariff on file with the state regulatory agency governing the service applied for by the Applicant;
- f. Failure of Applicant or Transferee to provide proof of ownership, to the satisfaction of the Corporation, of property for which the tap has been requested, and/or
- g. Applicant's service facilities are known to be inadequate or of such character that satisfactory service cannot be provided.

10. **Applicant's or Transferee's Recourse.** In the event the Corporation refuses to serve an Applicant under the provisions of these rules, the Corporation must notify the Applicant, in writing, on the basis of its refusal. The Applicant may file for an appeal, in writing, with the Board of Directors of the

Corporation.

11. ***Insufficient Grounds for Refusal of Service.*** The following shall not constitute sufficient cause for the refusal of service to an Applicant:
 - a. Delinquency in payment for service by a previous occupant of the premises to be served;
 - b. Failure to pay a bill to correct previous underbilling due to misapplication of rates more than six (6) months prior to the date of application;
 - c. Violation of the Corporation's rules pertaining to operation of non-standard equipment or unauthorized attachments which interferes with the service of others, unless the customer has first been notified and been afforded reasonable opportunity to comply with said requirements;
 - d. Failure to pay a bill of another customer as guarantor thereof unless the guarantee was made in writing to the Corporation as a condition precedent to service;
 - e. Failure to pay the bill of another customer at the same address except where the change of customer identity is made to avoid or evade payment of a utility bill;
 - f. Failure to comply with regulations or rules for anything other than the type of utility service specifically requested including failure to comply with septic tank regulations.

12. ***Deferred Payment Agreement.*** The Corporation may offer a deferred payment plan to a Member who cannot pay an outstanding balance in full and is willing to pay the balance in reasonable installments as determined by the Corporation, including any Late Penalty Fees or interest on the monthly balance to be determined as per agreement. (See Miscellaneous Transaction Forms)

13. ***Charge Distribution and Payment Application.***
 - a. **The Service Availability Charge or the Reserved Service Charge** is for the billing period from the 1st day of the month to the 15th day of the month. Charges shall be prorated for meter installations and service termination's falling during the billing period. Billings for this amount shall be mailed on or about the 1st of the month preceding the month for which this charge is due. All services shall be subject to this charge whether or not the service is in use by the Member.
 - b. **Gallonge Charge** shall be billed at the rate specified in Section G and billing shall be calculated in one hundred (100) gallon increments. Water charges are based on monthly meter readings and are calculated from reading date to reading date. Readings used in all billing calculations shall be taken by the Corporation's employees or designated representative.
 - c. **Posting of Payments** -- All payments shall be posted against previous balances prior to posting against current billings.

14. ***Due Dates, Delinquent Bills, and Service Disconnection Date.*** The Corporation shall mail all bills on or about the 1st of the month. All bills are considered the responsibility of each person signing the Service Application and Agreement Form. All bills shall be due and payable upon receipt and are past due beyond the date indicated on the bill (allowing approximately fifteen (15) days to pay), after which time a penalty shall be applied as described in Section G. A bill is delinquent if not paid on or before the past due date. Payments made by mail will be considered late if postmarked after the past due date. A 10 day grace period may then be allowed for delayed payments prior to mailing of final notices. Final notices shall be mailed allowing ten (10) additional days for payment prior to disconnection. The ten (10) additional days shall begin on the day the final notice is deposited with the U.S. Postal Service with sufficient postage. If the past due date for the regular or final billing is on a weekend or holiday, the past due date for payment purposes shall be the next day the Corporation office is open for business after said weekend or holiday. For all disputed payment deadlines, the date postmarked on each bill will determine the beginning of each billing cycle or final notice mailings.

- a. Upon written request, any residential customer 60 years of age or older who occupies the entire premises of a dwelling receiving water utility service from the Corporation shall receive extension of the past due date, without penalty. The extension shall not exceed 10 days beyond the usual 15 day payment period for a total of no more than 25 days from the date the bill is issued. The request may specify extension of the late payment periods for current and subsequent billings.
15. **Rules for Disconnection of Service.** The following describes the rules and conditions for disconnection of service.
- a. **Disconnection with Notice** -- Water utility service may be disconnected for any of the following reasons after proper notification has been given.
 - 1) Returned Checks -- The Corporation shall mail, via the U.S. Postal Service, a notice requiring redemption of the returned instrument within ten (10) days of the date of the notice to be made in the Corporation office. Redemption of the returned instrument shall be made by cash, money order, or certified check. Failure to meet these terms shall initiate disconnection of service. (see Miscellaneous Transaction Forms) Any such instruments returned as insufficient or non-negotiable for any reason for any two billing periods within a 12-month period shall be considered evidence of bad credit risk by the Corporation. The Member/Customer in violation shall be placed on a "cash-only" basis for a period of 12 months. **NOTE:** "cash only," means certified check, money order, or cash.
 - 2) Failure to pay a delinquent account for utility service, failure to timely provide a deposit or other security under Section E (6) (i), or failure to comply with the terms of a deferred payment agreement (Miscellaneous Transaction Forms);
 - 3) Violation of the Corporation's rules pertaining to the use of service in a manner which interferes with the service of others or the operation of non-standard equipment if a reasonable attempt has been made to notify the Member and the Member is provided with a reasonable opportunity to remedy the situation;
 - 4) Failure of the Member to comply with the terms of the Corporation's Service Agreement, Tariff, Bylaws, or Special Contract provided that the Corporation has given notice of said failure to comply, and Member has failed to comply within a specified amount of time after notification.
 - 5) Failure to provide access to the meter under the terms of this Tariff or to property at which water service is received when there is reason to believe that a hazardous condition or policy violation exists for which access is necessary to verify.
 - 6) Misrepresentation by any Applicant or Transferee of any fact on any form, document, or other agreement required to be executed by the Corporation.
 - 7) Failure of Member to re-apply for service upon notification by the Corporation that Member no longer meets the terms of the service classification originally applied for under the original service application.
 - 8) Failure to pay a delinquent account billed by the Corporation for sewer utility service provided by [Retail Public Utility] pursuant to the Corporation's Agreement with the [Retail Public Utility]. (See Miscellaneous Transaction Forms - Figure 1: 30 TAC 291.85 (e)(2) Appendix A "SEWER BILLING SERVICES FOR A RETAIL PUBLIC UTILITY PROVIDED BY A NON-PROFIT WATER SUPPLY CORPORATION")
 - b. **Disconnection Without Notice** -- Water utility service may be disconnected without notice for any of the following conditions:
 - 1) A known dangerous or hazardous condition exists for which service may remain disconnected for as long as the condition exists, including but not limited to a violation of the Texas Sanitation and Health Protection Law 4477-1, or there is reason to believe a dangerous or hazardous condition exists and the Member refuses to allow access for the purpose of

- confirming the existence of such condition and/or removing the dangerous or hazardous condition (Section E. 3. d., E. 24., 30 TAC 290.46 (j));
- 2) Service is connected without authority by a person who has not made application for service or who has reconnected service without authority following termination of service for nonpayment; and
 - 3) In instances of tampering with the Corporation's meter or equipment, by-passing the meter or equipment, or other diversion of service.
- NOTE:** Where reasonable, given the nature of the reason for disconnection, a written statement providing notice of disconnection and the reason therefore shall be posted at the place of common entry or upon the front door of each affected residential unit as soon as possible after service has been disconnected.
- c. **Disconnection Prohibited** -- Utility service may not be disconnected for any of the following reasons:
 - 1) Failure of the Member to pay for merchandise or charges for non-utility service provided by the Corporation, unless an agreement exists between the Applicant and the Corporation whereby the Member guarantees payment of non-utility service as a condition of service;
 - 2) Failure of the Member to pay for a different type or class of utility service unless a fee for such service is included in the same bill;
 - 3) Failure of the Member to pay charges arising from an underbilling occurring due to any misapplication of rates more than six (6) months prior to the current billing;
 - 4) Failure of the Member to pay the account of another Member as guarantor thereof, unless the Corporation has in writing the guarantee as a condition precedent to service;
 - 5) Failure of the Member to pay charges arising from an underbilling due to any faulty metering, unless the meter has been tampered with or unless such underbilling charges are due under the Inoperative Meters subsection E. 19. of this tariff.
 - 6) Failure of the Member to pay estimated bill other than a bill rendered pursuant to an approved meter reading plan, unless the Corporation is unable to read the meter due to circumstances beyond its control;
 - 7) In response to a request for disconnection by an Owner/Member of rental property where the renter is billed directly by the Corporation as authorized by the owner, and the renter's account is not scheduled for disconnection under the Rules for Disconnection of Service in this Tariff.
 - d. **Disconnection on Holidays and Weekends** -- Unless a dangerous condition exists or the Member requests disconnection, service shall not be disconnected on a day, or on a day preceding a day, when personnel of the Corporation are not available to the public for the purpose of making collections and reconnecting service.
 - e. **Disconnection Due to Utility Abandonment** -- The Corporation may not abandon a Member or a Certificated Service Area without written notice to its Members and all similar neighboring utilities and approval from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.
 - f. **Disconnection for Ill and Disabled** -- The Corporation may not discontinue service to a delinquent residential Member permanently residing in an individually metered dwelling unit when that Member establishes that discontinuance of service will result in some person at that residence becoming seriously ill or more seriously ill if service is discontinued. Each time a Member seeks to avoid termination of service under this Sub-section, the Member must have the attending physician call or contact the Corporation within sixteen (16) days of issuance of the bill. A written statement must be received by the Corporation from the physician within twenty-six (26) days of the issuance of the utility bill. The prohibition against service termination shall last sixty-three (63) days from the issuance of the utility bill or such lesser period as may be agreed upon by the Corporation and Member's physician. The Member shall enter into a Deferred

Payment Agreement (see Miscellaneous Transaction Forms).

- g. **Disconnection of Master-Metered Accounts** -- When a bill for water utility services is delinquent for a master-metered service complex (defined as a complex in which a single meter serves two (2) or more residential dwelling units), the following shall apply: (30 TAC SUBCHAPTER H. 291.126)
- 1) The Corporation shall send a notice to the Member as required. This notice shall also inform the Member that notice of possible disconnection will be provided to the tenants of the service complex in five (5) days if payment is not rendered before that time.
 - 2) At least five (5) days after providing notice to the Member and at least five (5) days prior to disconnection, the Corporation shall post at notices, stating "Termination Notice" in public areas of the service complex notifying the residents of the scheduled date for disconnection of service.
 - 3) The tenants may pay the Corporation for any delinquent bill in behalf of the owner to avert disconnection or to reconnect service to the complex.
- h. **Disconnection of Temporary Service** -- When an applicant with a Temporary service fails to comply with the conditions stated in the Service Application and Agreement Form or other rules of this Tariff service may be terminated with notice.

16. **Billing Cycle Changes.** The Corporation reserves the right to change its billing cycles if the workload requires such practice. After a billing period has been changed, the billings shall be sent on the new change date unless otherwise determined by the Corporation.

17. **Back-billing.** The Corporation may back-bill a Member for up to four (4) years (48 months) for meter error, misapplied meter multiplier, incorrect meter readings, or error in computing a Member's bill. Failure to pay the most recent six (6) months billing will result in disconnection of service. Back-billing shall not extend beyond current Membership except in cases involving the transfer of a Membership conditioned upon payment of delinquent obligations by the Transferee, as provided in Section E. Sub-Section 6.h.

18. **Disputed Bills.** In the event of a dispute between the Member and the Corporation regarding any bill, the Corporation shall forthwith make and conduct an investigation as shall be required by the particular case, and report the results in writing thereof to the Member. All disputes under this Subsection must be submitted to the Corporation, in writing, prior to the due date posted on said bill except in cases involving the transfer of a Membership conditioned on payment of delinquent obligations by the Transferee, as provided under Sub-Section 6.h.

19. **Inoperative Meters.** Water meters found inoperative will be repaired or replaced within a reasonable time. If a meter is found not to register for any period, unless by-passed or tampered with, the Corporation shall make a charge for units used, but not metered, for a period not to exceed three (3) months, based on amounts used under similar conditions during the period preceding or subsequent thereto, or during corresponding periods in previous years.

20. **Bill Adjustment Due To Meter Error.** The Corporation shall test any Member's meter upon written request of the Member. In the event the meter tests within the accuracy standards of The American Water Works Association, a test fee as prescribed in Section G of this Tariff shall be imposed. In the event the test results indicate that the meter is faulty or inaccurate, the test fee shall be waived, the meter shall be calibrated or replaced, and a billing adjustment may be made as far back as six (6) months but not extending beyond current Membership except in cases involving the transfer of a Membership conditioned on payment of delinquent obligations by the Transferee, as provided under Sub-Section 6.h.

The billing adjustment shall be made to the degree of the meter's inaccuracy as determined by the test. The Member shall complete a Meter Test Request Form prior to the test. (See Misc. Transaction Forms.)

21. ***Meter Tampering and Diversion.*** For purposes of these Sections, meter-tampering, by-passing, or diversion shall all be defined as tampering with the Corporation's service equipment, by-passing the same, or other instances of diversion, such as:
- a. removing a locking or shut-off device used by the Corporation to discontinue service,
 - b. physically disorienting the meter,
 - c. attaching objects to the meter to divert service or to by-pass,
 - d. inserting objects into the meter, and
 - e. other electrical and mechanical means of tampering with, by-passing, or diverting service.
- The burden of proof of meter-tampering, by-passing, or diversion is on the Corporation. Photographic evidence or any other reliable and credible evidence may be used; however, any evidence shall be accompanied by a sworn affidavit by the Corporation's staff when any action regarding meter-tampering as provided for in these Sections is initiated. A court finding of meter tampering may be used instead of photographic or other evidence, if applicable. Unauthorized users of services of the Corporation shall be prosecuted to the extent allowed by law under the Texas Penal Code 28.03.
22. ***Meter Relocation.*** Relocation of services shall be allowed by the Corporation provided that:
- a. No transfer of Membership is involved;
 - b. An easement for the proposed location has been granted to the Corporation;
 - c. The Member pays the actual cost of relocation plus administrative fees, and
 - d. Service capacity is available at proposed location.
23. ***Prohibition of Multiple Connections To A Single Tap.*** No more than one (1) residential, commercial, or industrial service connection is allowed per meter. The Corporation may consider allowing an apartment building or mobile home/RV park to apply as a "Master Metered Account" and have a single meter (This refers to Section E. 2. c. (4)). Any unauthorized submetering or diversion of service shall be considered a Multiple Connection and subject to disconnection of service. If the Corporation has sufficient reason to believe a Multiple Connection exists, the Corporation shall discontinue service under the Disconnection with Notice provisions of this Tariff. (see Sample Application Packet RUS-TX Bulletin 1780-9 (Rev. 5/99))
24. ***Member's Responsibility.***
- a. The Member shall provide access to the meter as per service agreement. If access to the meter is hindered or denied preventing the reading of the meter, an estimated bill shall be rendered to the Member for the month; and a notice shall be sent to the effect that access could not be gained. If access is denied for three (3) consecutive months after proper notification to the Member, then service shall be discontinued and the meter removed with no further notice. (Section E. 3. d.)
 - b. The Member shall be responsible for compliance with all utility, local, and state codes, requirements, and regulations concerning on-site service and plumbing facilities.
 - 1) All connections shall be designed to ensure against back-flow or siphonage into the Corporation's water supply. In particular, livestock water troughs shall be plumbed above the top of the trough with air space between the discharge and the water level in the trough. (30 TAC 290.46)
 - 2) The use of pipe and pipe fittings that contain more than 8.0% lead or solder and flux that contain more than 0.2% lead is prohibited for any plumbing installation or repair of any residential or non-residential facility providing water for human consumption and connected

to the Corporation's facilities. Customer service pipelines shall be installed by the applicant and shall be a minimum of SDR-26 PVC pipe. (30 TAC 290.46)

- c. A Member owning more than one (1) Membership shall keep all payments current on all accounts. Failure to maintain current status on all accounts shall be enforceable as per Service Application and Agreement executed by the Member.
- d. The Corporation's ownership and maintenance responsibility of water supply and metering equipment shall end at the meter or other service equipment. Therefore, all water usage registering upon and/or damages occurring to the metering equipment owned and maintained by the Corporation shall be subject to charges as determined by the Corporation's Tariff as amended from time to time by the Board of Directors.
- e. The Corporation shall require each Member to have a cut-off valve on the Member's side of the meter for purposes of isolating the Member's service pipeline and plumbing facilities from the Corporation's water pressure. The valve shall meet AWWA standards (a ball valve is preferred). The Member's use of the Corporation's curb stop or other similar valve for such purposes is prohibited . Any damage to the Corporation's equipment shall be subject to service charges. (This additional cut-off valve may be installed as a part of the original meter installation by the Corporation.)

27. ***Main Extension Policy.***

- a. The Applicant shall be responsible for the cost of any extension(s), including looping, from existing Corporation mains determined by the Corporation's engineer to be necessary to bring adequate water utility service to meet the anticipated service demands of a new customer or of a new meter for an existing customer. The Corporation shall be responsible for any oversizing of the main necessary to meet the service needs of other Members or system reliability.
- b. The customer is responsible for constructing his service line from the point of water consumption to the meter. The customer shall own and maintain his own customer service line. Any leak or defect in the customer's service line must be repaired immediately in order to avoid possible contamination or hazard to the public water supply.
- c. Distribution and transmission main sizes shall be determined solely by the Corporation's Engineer based upon the reasonably anticipated needs of the utility in the area to be served. Minimum distribution system line size shall be six (6) inch diameter C-900, DR-18 PVC unless otherwise recommended by the Corporation's engineer, for extensions within the Corporation's service area. Looping or cross-connecting distribution lines may be a smaller size only if approved by the Corporation's engineer. Minimum transmission line size shall be eight (8) inch diameter C-900, DR 18 PVC unless otherwise recommended by the

Corporation's engineer. If larger minimum main sizes are required by TCEQ regulations or applicable municipal building codes, the larger minimum main size shall control.

- d. Dead End Mains. All new water mains designed and constructed shall be required to be constructed in a loop as to avoid dead end mains. The Corporation's engineer shall determine final configuration. This requirement may be waived by the Corporation's Board of Directors as a part of an overall plan of phased transmission and/or distribution main upgrades.