

ELMIRA WATER BOARD

Commissioners
Martin D. Chalk, President
John J. Burin, Vice President
Danny W. Gray
Robert Briggs



Mark D. LaDouce, PE
General Manager

Alyssa L. Mack
Secretary-Treasurer

July 22, 2021

Implementation Plan for Water Utility Shut Off

1. The most recent moratorium (Dated May 24, 2021) has been posted on our website and a note is being included on every bill stating: "The State imposed moratorium on residential water shut-off's expired on June 24, 2021. Please visit our website at www.elmirawaterboard.org for more information on utility shut off's. If you do not access to our website please contact our office."
2. Attached to every residential bill is the notice included on page 2.
3. Charges, Penalties and late fees are being added as usual according to our policies and procedures.
4. A phone call stating "Hello. This is the Elmira Water Board calling with an important message regarding your account for _____ account number _____ which is currently past due. The State disaster emergency expired on June 24, 2021 and therefore interruption of water service could take place any time after the due date on your notice, unless the deeded owner obtains a deferred payment agreement. The amount due is _____ and is scheduled for interruption of service any day after _____. Please make payment immediately to avoid interruption of service and additional fees. Please reference account number _____ for the address of _____ when making your payment. Payments can be made at our office or through our automated system at 607-333-9675 and also through our website at www.elmirawaterboard.org. Thank you and have a nice day."
5. Each account that is currently past due is receiving a letter from our office noting the option to set up a deferred payment plan with our office and avoid future penalty and late fees during the life of their active agreement. All previous accrued fees (from March 17, 2020 to date of signed agreement) are not being included in the payment plan, and will instead remain due at the end of the state of emergency / 180-day grace period.
6. All payment plans and signed self-certification letters will be documented and tracked. See page 3 for our Self Certification Letter.
7. Once the emergency has been lifted, we will continue to send interruption notices to our customers along with an insert noting: 1. They have 30 days to pay their bill to avoid interruption. 2. If they can provide proof of financial hardship suffered during COVID-19, they will be allowed a 180-day grace period on their account. After the 180 days, their balance will be due in full to avoid interruption.
8. All service interruptions will be tracked once they begin, until the end of the 180-day grace period.

NOTICE TO RESIDENTIAL AND SMALL BUSINESS WATER CUSTOMERS

Moratorium on Water Service Interruption, Moratorium on Water Relevy, and Opportunity for Deferred Payment Agreements

On May 11, 2021, Governor Cuomo signed into law amendments to the Public Service Law that prevent municipalities and public utilities from interrupting water service provided to residents and small businesses for non-payment during the COVID-19 state of emergency. Additionally, the amendments prevent municipalities from relevying previously accrued water charges on or after May 11, 2021 until the end of COVID-19 state of emergency. The state disaster emergency expired on June 24, 2021.

All water suppliers must notify residential and small business customers of the protections afforded under the law.

Please be advised that service interruption and relevying past due water charges is prohibited for an additional 180 days after June 24, 2021 for those residential and small business customers who have experienced a change in financial circumstances due to the COVID-19 state of emergency.

If you are a resident or small business that has experienced a change in financial circumstances due to the COVID-19 state of emergency and would like to request relief from service termination and relevying until December 22, 2021, you must contact our customer service department at 607-733-9179 between the hours of 9am and 4pm, Monday through Friday, to discuss the possible option of entering into a deferred payment agreement. Additional information and supporting documentation from customers seeking to enter into a deferred payment agreement may be required.

Please be further advised that the law ***does not eliminate a customer's obligation to pay accrued charges.*** However, customers who have experienced a change in financial circumstances due to the COVID-19 state of emergency must be provided with the opportunity to enter into a deferred payment agreement without the imposition of late fees, or penalties. The Elmira Water Board Rules and Regulations Section 2.5 defines a "customer" as "the owner or agent of the owner of a premise who is legally responsible for payment of charges or other facilities and services furnished by the Board. The agent of the owner will be a person or organization possessing the legal authority to act on behalf of the owner. **Under no circumstances will the terms occupant, lessee, tenant, or resident be defined as the agent of the owner.**" If you are a tenant, we recommend you contact the deeded owner or property manager.

Customers that do not request protection from service termination, or relevying, or do not enter into a deferred payment agreement, will be subject to the enforcement and lien provisions authorized by State and local law upon the expiration of the Public Service Law's protections.

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ELMIRA WATER BOARD SELF CERTIFICATION LETTER

Date: _____

I attest that due to the COVID-19 state of emergency, which began on or after March 7, 2020, I have experienced a change in financial circumstances.

Location Address: _____

Print: _____

Sign: _____