

MEDIA RELEASE

Council to Review Wastewater Collections Procedures

SAHUARITA, Ariz. — The Town of Sahuarita (TOS) will soon be implementing a new stricter set of standard operating procedures for dealing with delinquent wastewater customers. Town staff will give an overview of the new standard operating procedures as part of the Feb. 24 council meeting agenda. These procedures, proposed by Town Manager Kelly Udall and staff, come after exhausting all options over a period of several years to collect on past-due accounts by other means. The new procedures would include the option for the town to terminate service on customers who have delinquent accounts.

While garnishing of state income tax returns has netted some results with the successful collection of \$121,264 in past-due balances, the outstanding balance due to the town on delinquencies totals \$1,614,047 with the largest outstanding balance being over \$7,000.

Prior to termination of service, delinquent customers would be scheduled a hearing to present their case as to why their service should not be terminated. Notice of hearing would be sent at the same time as notice of termination. For customers who are renters, a copy of all notices would be sent to the property owner too. Termination of service dates would be determined at the time of the hearing, and no-show customers would be scheduled a termination of service date. For terminated services, the customer would incur disconnection and reconnection fees in addition to any amount owed. These fees and all delinquent balances would need to be paid in full for the service to be reconnected.

Delinquent customers would be eligible to schedule payment plans (and prevent termination of service by doing so) up to seven days prior to the termination of service date.

Background:

TOS's wastewater billing was previously billed to customers as part of a comprehensive utility bill from Rancho Sahuarita Water Company (RSWC), but in mid-May of 2014, RSWC notified TOS that they would no longer collect on behalf of the town, and that their services for collection would cease in June 2014. From August of 2015 forward, the town has instituted various methods to attempt collection on past-due balances such as payment plans, garnishing tax returns, notices of legal action, third-party collections, and small claims law suits. In 2018, the town began discussion of terminating service to delinquent accounts to resolve issues with delinquent customers.

CONTACT: Mark Anthony Febbo
Communications Coordinator
520-822-8825 mfebbo@sahuaritaaz.gov