

ORDINANCE NO. 15,124

AN ORDINANCE to amend the Municipal Code of the City of Des Moines, Iowa, 2000, adopted by Ordinance No. 13,827, passed June 5, 2000, as heretofore amended, by amending Section 118-159, relating to utility deposit.

Be It Ordained by the City Council of the City of Des Moines, Iowa:

Section 1. That the Municipal Code of the City of Des Moines, Iowa, 2000, adopted by Ordinance No. 13,827, passed June 5, 2000, as heretofore amended, is hereby amended by amending Section 118-159 relating to utility deposit, as follows:

Sec. 118-159. Collection procedures; discontinuance of water service; tax lien.

- (a) If full payment of all charges billed in a combined service account billing statement is not received within 50 days after the billing date, the Board of Water Works Trustees of the City of Des Moines, Iowa, doing business as Des Moines Water Works ("water works") is authorized to thereupon discontinue water service to that premises or property owned or rented by the account holder in whose name the delinquent charges were incurred.
- (b) Water service shall not be discontinued at any premises or property owned or rented by the account holder in whose name the delinquent charges were incurred as herein provided unless notice of delinquency has been given to said delinquent account holder. If the account holder is a tenant, and if the owner or landlord has made a written request for notice prior to discontinuance of water service, the water works shall also send notice of delinquency to the owner or landlord. If the account holder is a tenant and requests a change of name for service under the account, such request shall be sent to the owner or landlord of the property if the owner or landlord has made a written request for notice of any change of name for service under the account to the rental property. Notice of delinquency shall be sent to such persons by ordinary mail to their last known addresses as reflected in the computer data base account records of the water works or in the applicable county auditor's real estate computer data file. The notice of delinquency shall include the delinquent charge or charges, and shall indicate that if payment of the total amount is not made by a date certain (corresponding to the 50th day after the billing date for that delinquent account), water service

to the premises or property at which the account is delinquent will be discontinued. The notice shall further indicate that if the account holder believes that his or her billing or account balance is in error, the account holder has the right to appeal the notice of delinquency to a water works customer service representative, who shall be empowered to hear such appeals, and, after investigating the status of said account with the appropriate city department if necessary, to adjust account balances as the facts of each appeal may warrant.

- (c) The physical disconnection or discontinuance of water service to a particular premises as above provided, or the reconnection of water service, shall be performed by the water works according to its established practices and procedures, and the water works may charge to such account its established fees or charges for disconnection and/or reconnection.
- (d) For all active accounts, if full payment of all charges billed in a combined service account billing statement, including late payment charges, is not received within 87 days after the billing date, the water works shall send a notice of pending lien to the account holder in whose name the delinquent charges were incurred. If said delinquent account holder is a tenant, and the owner or landlord has made a written request for notice to water works, the water works shall also send notice of pending lien to the owner or landlord. The notice of pending lien shall be sent, at least thirty days prior to certification of the lien to the applicable county, to such persons by ordinary mail to their last known addresses as reflected in the computer data base account records of the water works or in the applicable county auditor's real estate computer data file. The notice of pending lien shall include the delinquent charge or charges, and shall indicate that if payment of the total amount is not made by a date certain (corresponding to the 117th day after the billing date for that delinquent account), the delinquent charge or charges will be certified to the applicable county as a lien against the property or premises owned or rented by the account holder in whose name the delinquent charges were incurred, unless said property is exempt as a residential rental property as described below.
- (e) For all final accounts, if full payment of all charges billed in a combined service account billing statement, including late payment charges, is not received within 60 days after the billing date, the water works shall send a notice of pending lien to the account holder in whose name the delinquent charges were incurred. If said delinquent account holder is a tenant, and the owner or landlord has made a written request for notice to water works, the water works shall also send notice of pending lien to the owner or landlord. The notice of pending lien shall be sent, at least thirty days prior to certification of the lien to the applicable county, to such

persons by ordinary mail to their last known addresses as reflected in the computer data base account records of the water works or in the applicable county auditor's real estate computer data file. The notice of pending lien shall include the delinquent charge or charges, and shall indicate that if payment of the total amount is not made by a date certain (corresponding to the 90th day after the billing date for that delinquent account), the delinquent charge or charges will be certified to the applicable county as a lien against the property or premises owned or rented by the account holder in whose name the delinquent account charges were incurred, unless said property is exempt as a residential rental property as described below.

- (f) If the owner or landlord of the property or premises involved shall give written notice of tenant liability for a residential rental property to water works as hereafter provided, such property or premises shall thereafter be exempt from the imposition of a lien as hereafter provided. Such owner or landlord, or tenant thereof, shall cause a deposit to be made with water works in an amount determined by the public works director that does not exceed the usual cost of ninety (90) days of service for water, sewer, solid waste collection, and stormwater management, and upon receipt, water works shall acknowledge the notice and deposit. The written notice of tenant liability shall contain the name of the tenant responsible for water, sewer, solid waste collection, and/or stormwater management service charges, the address that the tenant occupies or is to occupy, and the date that the tenancy began or is to begin. A change in tenant shall require a new written notice of tenant liability and deposit to be provided to water works by the owner or landlord within thirty business days of the change in tenant. When the tenant moves from the rental property, the water works shall return the deposit if all special charges, service charges, and sales tax have been paid in full, and the lien exemption shall be lifted from the rental property. A change in the ownership of the residential rental property shall require written notice of such change to be given to water works within thirty (30) business days of the completion of the change in ownership. The lien exemption for residential rental property does not apply to charges for repairs to a water service, or to charges for repairs related to a service of sewer systems, stormwater drainage systems, sewage treatment, solid waste collection, or solid waste disposal, if the repair charges become delinquent. The deposit herein provided shall be applied to pay sales tax, special charges, service charges, and late payment charges for final accounts. Any balance owing on said account after application of the deposit as above provided shall be carried forward and billed on the next billing statement of the account holder in whose name the delinquent rates or charges were incurred.

- (g) If full payment of all charges billed in a combined service active account billing statement, including late payment charges, is not received within 117 days after the billing date, the water works shall prepare an assessment schedule, as the city's billing and collection agent, listing such unpaid charges therein. If full payment of all charges billed in a combined service final account billing statement, including late payment charges, is not received within 90 days after the billing date, the water works shall prepare an assessment schedule, as the city's billing and collection agent, listing such unpaid charges therein. A \$5.00 administrative processing fee shall be charged to each delinquent account at the time it is included in the assessment schedule, which amount shall be separately identified on the assessment schedule and included in the amount being assessed. The water works shall prepare an assessment schedule at least once each month, listing all delinquent sewer, solid waste collection, and stormwater management service charges, and late payment charges, which accrued in the prior month or since the last assessment schedule was certified. Each such assessment schedule shall also identify each delinquent charge by name of the account holder in whose name the delinquent rates or charges were incurred, shall identify each property for which the sewer, solid waste collection, and/or stormwater management service charge is delinquent, and shall show the delinquent charges and the administrative processing fee to be assessed against each such property owned or rented by the delinquent account holder, unless said property is exempt as a residential rental property as described above. The treasurer of water works is hereby delegated the authority, on behalf of the city, to certify and file each such assessment schedule with the applicable county treasurer for filing of liens against the properties in the amounts shown thereon as provided in I.C. § 384.84. The treasurer of water works is hereby delegated the authority to correct sewer, solid waste and/or stormwater liens placed in error, to make corrections required by the applicable county due to district or parcel identification issues and to correct assessment schedules when liens are not authorized by statute to be placed or where payment has been made. The water works treasurer will provide a monthly report to the city finance director of any assessment schedule corrections made to the applicable county treasurer.
- (h) Such lien shall be enforced until payment in full of the delinquent charges and the administrative processing fee shown on the assessment schedule is made at the office of the county treasurer.

Section 2. This ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and publication as provided by law.

FORM APPROVED:

Kathleen Vanderpool, Deputy City Attorney

T. M. Franklin Cownie, Mayor

Attest:

I, Diane Rauh, City Clerk of the City of Des Moines, Iowa, hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true copy of an ordinance (Roll Call No. 12-1280), passed by the City Council of said City at a meeting held August 13, 2012 signed by the Mayor on August 13, 2012 and published as provided by law in the Business Record on August 31, 2012. Authorized by Publication Order No. 7931.

Diane Rauh, City Clerk