City of Boynton Beach Utility Guide



WELCOME!

The City of Boynton Beach Utilities Department is pleased to welcome you as our customer. We are proud of the quality of water produced and of our level of service.

The purpose of this booklet is to describe department policies and procedures and to let you know about other useful information, including conservation tips and special services.

If you should have any questions, please contact us at the numbers listed below or visit us at the Customer Relations counter inside City Hall at 100 E Boynton Beach Boulevard, at the southeast corner of Seacrest and Boynton Beach Boulevard in Boynton Beach.

Email: customers@bbfl.us

Utilities Customer Service Phone Numbers:
Monday – Friday: 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Call (561) 742-6300

To report water line breaks, sewer line breaks and storm water issues,
call the Utilities Department, (561) 742-6430
After-hours: (561) 742-6951

City Hall Location and Business Hours:
City Hall is located at 100 E. Boynton Beach Blvd.
Office hours are Monday – Thursday, 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.
Phone: (561) 742-6000

www.boynton-beach.org

The policies within this Utility Guide are reviewed regularly and are subject to change.

OTHER IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Water Quality	742-6964
After-hours Emergency (Water)	742-6430

OTHER SERVICES OR DEPARMENTS

Visit the City of Boynton Beach website at www.boynton-beach.org

OVERVIEW

The City's mission is to provide high-quality drinking water to all customers and to collect, treat and dispose of wastewater in an environmentally sound and cost-effective manner.

To that end, the City of Boynton Beach Utilities Department is pleased to serve you. Our east water treatment plant, located at the corner of Seacrest Boulevard and Woolbright Road, can produce and distribute over 19 million gallons of water daily to more than 100,000 customers located in our service area.

A second treatment facility, can produce over 10 million gallons of water daily (mgd), is located just west of the City on Boynton Beach Blvd.

Over 30 ground water wells provide raw water to the water treatment plants, a vast water distribution network throughout the service area carries potable water to each customer.

A vast wastewater collection system with over 150 Lift Stations collects and transports wastewater to the South Central Wastewater Treatment facility, is jointly owned and operated by the Cities of Boynton Beach and Delray Beach, which is located on Congress Avenue.

Storm water management is maintained within the City limits of Boynton Beach through various methods, including swale systems, retention ponds and outfalls with required treatment/separator systems.

ABOUT YOUR BILL

When You Are Billed

Each customer is billed monthly for service, regardless of occupancy. The bill may include charges for water, sewer, garbage and stormwater and is due when rendered. If payment is not received BEFORE the date indicated, it becomes past due and is included in next month's bill. If the past due amount is not received shortly after the PAST DUE bill statement date, service is subject to disconnection. No other notice of service disconnection will be given.

NOTE: Failure to receive a bill does not prevent service interruption. A partial payment is not sufficient to resume water service.

A $40 delinquency fee is charged to any account processed for shut-off due to non-payment, whether or not the service is disconnected. A deposit may be required again if it has already been refunded. The account must be paid in full before service will be restored, so it is very important to pay the bill on time.

Paying Your Bill

You can pay your bill by using one of the following methods:

- By mail to:
  City of Boynton Beach
  Customer Relations
  PO Box 31803
  Tampa, FL 33631-3803
- In person at the Customer Service Counter in the lobby of City Hall, 100 E Boynton Beach Blvd.,
- In the after-hours payment box located in the parking lot of City Hall in front of the West Wing. (Payments placed in the box after 7:00 a.m. are posted the next business day).
- Online at the City's website: **www.boynton-beach.org**
- The City also offers an automatic bank drafting service and payment by credit/ATM cards.

Please remember to always return the bottom portion of your bill together with your payment to facilitate proper credit to your account. Include the account number on the check.

While You Are Away

If you plan to be away for an extended period of time, or if your property will be unoccupied, you may provide the City with a temporary mailing address other than the one listed on the account.

The utility bill can then be sent to you during your absence. Simply call our Customer Relations Department and give us the account number and temporary mailing address, and then notify us when you return.

You also have the option of having your meter(s) locked while you are out of town. This prevents any unauthorized usage. There is a $20 charge per visit to lock and reinstate service when you return. If you wish to have this done, please call Customer Relations at (561) 742-6300.

SERVICE AND DEPOSITS

Starting Service

Water service will be provided to a residence or business once an account is opened. A completed application, proof of authorization for property, (lease, sale, or corporate documentation) two forms of identification, one being a photo ID, are required to open an account. When opening an account, 24-hour notice is required after the deposit has been received before water service is activated. Applications are available at the City website www.boynton-beach.org under Departments, Utilities Dept., Utility Billing Forms. Please select the appropriate form.

The amount of the required deposit depends on the size of the meter. Most residences and businesses have ¾-inch (5/8") meters or 1-inch meters. The deposit amounts are $100 for ¾-inch or 5/8" meters and $125 for 1-inch meters.

For service turned on after hours there is a $55 charge.

New water service that requires installation of a meter normally takes 7 to 10 days to implement and involves additional fees and an on-site inspection. The connection charge to install a ¾-inch (5/8") meter at a site within the city limits is $220 and $275 outside the city limits, plus the $100 deposit. The connection charge to install a 1-inch meter inside the city limits is $255 and $315 outside city limits, plus a deposit of $125. Capital facility charges to pay for expansion of the utilities system also are required for new service installation.

Deposits and fees are payable in person at the Customer Relations counter in the City Hall lobby, or they can be mailed. Before mailing any payments, first call Customer Relations at (561) 742-6300 to be sure what is required.

Deposits

A security deposit is required for each metered account and it is maintained in a non-interest-bearing account.

The City refunds utility deposits to residential customers who have maintained a consecutive 12-month satisfactory payment record and have established service for at least 24 consecutive months. A "satisfactory payment record" shall mean that the customer:

- Has not made more than one late payment
- Has not paid with a check refused by the bank
- Has not been disconnected for non-payment
- Has not tampered with the meter
- Has not used service in a fraudulent or unauthorized manner

Commercial accounts are not eligible for refunds until the service is terminated.

If a deposit has been refunded and the account becomes delinquent for more than 30 days, the City may require the customer to pay a new deposit. This deposit shall also be subject to refund as explained above. When service is reconnected, the customer will be required to place a new deposit on account according to the current rate. Upon termination of service, the deposit (if not already refunded) shall be credited against the final bill and the balance shall be refunded by check to the customer.

Ending Service

To discontinue service, notify the City at least 24 hours in advance of the requested date of disconnection. We require a forwarding address, as well as the name of your landlord if you pay rent, or the name of the new owner if the property is being sold. Property owners are responsible for all charges associated with the service address until the actual date of sale, change of occupancy, or permanent disconnection. Bills are produced each month regardless of occupancy or water consumption.

The City of Boynton Beach

Utilities Customer Service Division
100 E Boynton Beach Boulevard
P.O. Box 190
Boynton Beach, Florida 33425-0190
Phone: (561) 742-6300
Fax: (561) 742-6303
Website: www.boynton-beach.org

DISCLAIMER FOR UTILITY ACCOUNTS

The water meter located on the property belongs to the City of Boynton Beach and under no circumstance are you allowed to tamper with the meter. If you tamper with the meter and repairs need to be done by the City, a tampering fee and repair costs will be included on your utility billing statement.

Make sure all faucets are in the off position (including bathroom, kitchen, laundry, outside hoses). If water is running inside and no one is home, the City will not leave the water on without your permission, you may experience water damage if the water is turned on and a sink, shower, tub, etc. overflow**.** There will be a service charge for each trip to connect your water service.

You will receive your bill monthly and it is your responsibility to make sure payment is received on time. If payment is not received on time you can receive a late fee in the amount of $10.00 and your service can be interrupted for non-payment. If you do not receive your bill you may contact Customer Service Monday –Friday from 8:00 am-5:00 pm ** for your account balance, 742-6300. The City of Boynton Beach mails bills monthly and is not responsible for lost or non-delivered mail.

There are several payment options, credit card autopay, bank draft, mail, and in person. City Hall/Customer Service is open Monday-Friday from 8:00am to 5:00pm.

www.boynton-beach.org for more information.

WATER & SEWER RATES AND SERVICE CHARGES

The water supply in South Florida is a valuable resource. Therefore, the City of Boynton Beach implemented an inverted rate structure to encourage conservation of water. Through this rate structure, the more water a customer uses, the higher the rate. Again, we encourage you to go to the City of Boynton Beach website at www.boynton-beach.org for more information and links to current rates.

WATER USE & CONSERVATION TIPS

The typical amount of water used by a family of four is approximately 8,000 – 12,000 gallons a month (2,000 – 3,000 per person). This does not include lawn watering which can greatly increase your monthly bill. Other causes of high water usage are:

- Running toilets – toilet tank flapper valve does not close properly causing the toilet to run continuously. This can waste up to 5,000 gallons of water per toilet each day.
- Excessive lawn watering (more than 2 – 3 times per week and/or more than 15 minutes per zone).
- Leaking pipes or plumbing fixtures
- Outside spigot or hose left on in error
- House guests can increase usage by 100 gallons per day per person
- Pressure cleaning
- Pool maintenance

The amount of water used inside and outside the home can be reduced by conserving water whenever you can. Changing water use habits will not necessarily mean having to drastically change living habits. It may simply mean that yesterday's carelessness can be turned into today's efficiency.

Nearly half of inside water usage is from toilet flushing. Each flush uses an average 5.5 gallons. Save one half to one gallon per flush by placing a plastic displacement bag in the tank. Be careful that it does not get in the way of the flushing mechanism. If the time has come to replace the toilet, make sure the replacement toilet uses no more than 1.6 gallons per flush, according to city and county code requirements.

Check your toilet for leaks. Add a few drops of food coloring to the tank and wait 15 minutes. If any of the color appears in the bowl, then you have a leak. Flush to remove all coloring from tank and bowl. Avoid using the toilet as a trash basket. Flush only when needed.

TYPICAL OR AVERAGE WATER USAGE

Studies show the average shower length is five minutes, which uses about 20 gallons of water. A low-flow showerhead will save at least 7.2 gallons per person per day. For a family of four this would be almost 900 gallons of water per month.

A bathtub that is ⅔ full uses 28 gallons of water. A bathtub that is ½ full uses 20 gallons and a bathtub that is ⅓ full uses 15 gallons.

Water savings can be realized if the water is not left on while washing hands, brushing teeth or shaving. Fill the basin with water instead of letting it run unnecessarily.

A dishwasher uses 10-15 gallons per load. Use only for full loads. If washing dishes by hand, fill up two basins; one for washing and one for rinsing; letting the water run continuously uses a lot of water.

A washing machine uses 30 – 60 gallons per load. Make sure the water level is right for the amount of load.

The greatest water use outside the home is for lawn watering. You should water a maximum of three times a week and only between 5:00 p.m. and 9:00 a.m. as required by the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD).* Most lawn watering during daylight hours evaporates before it can soak into the ground.

These times may differ if the SFWMD has imposed any water restrictions. For more conservation tips and SFWMD news releases, visit their website at **www.sfwmd.gov**.

METERS

General Information

A meter is installed in the water line of a house or building to accurately measure the water being consumed. The accuracy of the meter is guaranteed by its manufacturer when it is purchased by the water utility. The American Water Works Association establishes limits on the accuracy for the water industry. These standards ensure that all of the water used will be accurately measured.

However, we know that situations may occur in which the customer questions the accuracy of the water meter. This may happen when an old, worn meter is replaced by a new meter that more accurately measures water consumption. Typically, this higher accuracy level will result in a higher water bill for the customer. Toilet leaks or high consumption of water from sprinkler systems are two common causes of an abnormally high water bill.

In a residential water meter, the motion of the measuring element, called a nutating disc, is transmitted with gears to the register, which records the flow in gallons. For a new meter, calibration takes place at the manufacturer's plant. All new meters received are shipped by the manufacturer with a "meter test tag" that documents the accuracy of the meter.

Meter Reading

Most meters are located in a concrete box or pit setting. The meter is identified by a serial number that appears on the meter. Water usage is recorded through dials on the register. The City has replaced manual read meters with electronic transmitter registers on the meters for even better accuracy and efficiency. The system collects reads hourly. In the future with proper resources the Utility and system would be able to alert customers in regard to possible high consumption.

All meters are furnished, installed by, and remain the property of the City. Customers are required to provide continuous access to the meter so that each meter may be read and maintained.

It is our practice to investigate abnormal readings prior to mailing your bill; however circumstances may prevent this, if you would like your meter reread, please call our Customer Relations Division at (561) 742-6300. The charge for this service is $20 if the reading is found to be correct; however, if the City has made an error in reading the meter there will be no charge.

A number of factors may cause inaccurate registration, even after a comparatively short interval. However, in every case, these factors will cause the meter to under-register, not over-register. Factors that cause inaccurate registration include:

- Excessive wear
- Temperature extremes
- Corrosion
- Material in suspension

Excessive usage resulting from a leak will normally be brought to the customer's attention. Abnormally low usage may be an indication to the utility that the meter is suffering from one of the previously mentioned factors.

Checking for Leaks

If you think you may have a water leak in or around your home, you can do the following:

1. Turn off everything using water inside and outside the house
2. Look at your meter for approximately 3 – 5 minutes. If you detect any spinning or movement on the dial, you have a leak
3. To determine whether the leak is inside or outside your home, shut off the house valve (usually located outside the house near the spigot). Wait a few minutes and check your meter again. If there is no movement on the dial, the leak is inside your home. However, if there is still movement, the leak is between the house and the meter (your service line).

It is the customer's responsibility to correct leaks located between the building and the meter. The account holder will be charged for any water that goes through the meter, so it is important that all leaks be repaired as soon as possible.

A meter test may be requested if you cannot account for high water usage shown on your bill. If the meter meets the standards set by the American Water Works Association, a fee will be charged for the test. The customer will not be charged if the meter does not meet these standards.

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