

199—21.19(476) Customer relations for storm water drainage service.**21.19(1) Customer information.**

a. Each utility shall:

(1) Post a notice in a conspicuous place in each office of the utility where applications for service are received, informing the public that copies of the rates and rules relating to the service of the utility are available for public inspection.

(2) Maintain up-to-date maps, plans, or records of its entire storm water drainage system.

(3) Upon request, assist the customer or prospective customers in selecting the most economic rate schedule available for the proposed type of service.

(4) Upon request, inform the customer as to the method of computing the customer's bill.

(5) Notify customers affected by a change in rates or rate classification as directed in the commission rules of practice and procedures.

b. Inquiries for information or complaints to a utility shall be resolved promptly and courteously. Employees who receive customer telephone calls and office visits shall be qualified and trained in screening and resolving complaints, to avoid a preliminary recitation of the entire complaint to employees without ability and authority to act. The employee shall provide identification to the customer which will enable the customer to reach that employee again if needed.

c. Each utility shall notify its customers, by bill insert or notice on the bill form, of the address and telephone number where a utility representative qualified to assist in resolving the complaint can be reached. The bill insert or notice shall also include the following statement: "If (utility name) does not resolve your complaint, you may request assistance from the Iowa Utilities Commission by calling 877-565-4450; by writing to 1375 E. Court Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0069; or by email to customer@iuc.iowa.gov."

d. The bill insert or notice on the bill will be provided no less than annually. Any utility which does not use the standard form contained herein shall file its proposed form in its tariff for approval. A utility which bills by postcard may place an advertisement in a local newspaper of general circulation or a customer newsletter instead of a mailing. The advertisement must be of a type size that is easily legible and conspicuous and must contain the information set forth above.

21.19(2) Customer deposits.

a. *Deposit required.* Each utility may require from any customer or prospective customer a deposit intended to guarantee payment of bills for service.

b. *Amount of deposit.* The total deposit shall not be less than \$5 nor more in amount than the maximum estimated charge for service for 90 days or as may reasonably be required by the utility in cases involving service for short periods or special occasions.

c. *New or additional deposit.* A new or additional deposit may be required from a customer when a deposit has been refunded or is found to be inadequate. Written notice shall be mailed advising the customer of any new or additional deposit requirement. The customer shall have no less than 12 days from the date of mailing to comply. No written notice is required to be given of a deposit required as a prerequisite for commencing initial service.

d. *Customer's deposit receipt.* The utility shall issue a receipt of deposit to each customer from whom a deposit is received.

e. *Interest on customer deposits.* Interest shall be paid by the utility to each customer required to make a deposit. Utilities shall compute interest on customer deposits at 7.5 percent per annum, compounded annually. Interest for prior periods shall be computed at the rate specified by the rule in effect for the period in question. Interest shall be paid for the period beginning with the date of deposit to the date of refund or to the date that the deposit is applied to the customer's account, or to the date the customer's bill becomes permanently delinquent. The date of refund is that date on which the refund or the notice of deposit refund is forwarded to the customer's last-known address. The date a customer's bill becomes permanently delinquent is the most recent date the account is treated as uncollectible.

f. *Deposit refund.* The deposit shall be refunded after 12 consecutive months of prompt payment, unless the utility has evidence to indicate that the deposit is necessary to ensure payment of bills for service. In any event, the deposit shall be refunded upon termination of the customer's service.

g. *Unclaimed deposits.* The utility shall make a reasonable effort to return each unclaimed deposit and accrued interest after the termination of the services for which the deposit was made. The utility shall maintain a record of deposit information for at least two years or until such time as the deposit, together with accrued interest, escheats to the state pursuant to Iowa Code section 556.4, at which time the record and deposit, together with accrued interest, less any lawful deductions, shall be sent to the state treasurer pursuant to Iowa Code section 556.13.

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