

FILED

AUG 13 2015

Attn: Terre Haute City Council  
Forwarded By: Terre Haute City Legal  
Re: Sewage Billing FAQ

CITY CLERK

1. Does the City bill landlords for delinquent bills left unpaid by their tenants?

We do not "bill" landlords but inform them when the tenant's bill is past due. We currently send a property owner notification letter at 60 days delinquent and notify that a failure to pay can result in a water shut-off and/or a lien. Numerous follow-up letters are then sent to property owner before any action takes place.

2. On what authority does this billing happen? Please provide a code citation.

Liens are based on IC 36-9-23-32.

3. Does the City notify landlords that their tenants have unpaid bills which may result in a lien? How, when and to where is that notification issued?

See answer to question number 1. All notifications are sent to the property owner of record.

4. What steps does the City go through to collect unpaid bills from the tenant whose name is on a delinquent sewer bill account? Do we use a collection agency?

Monthly bills, past due letter at 60 days, delinquent letter at 90 days, disconnect letter at 120 days, and then water shut-off if no effort to pay or address the bill. The large majority of these people have moved out and not left any forwarding information. We are considering a collection agency but would still use liens if the bill is not collected per state statute.

5. Is there a process in place for a tenant or landlord to appeal a bill?

Leaks or perceived inaccurate billing issues are appealed with the Sewage Billing Department (we then work with Indiana American Water to verify the bill) and financial distress appeals are handled by BOPW. The significant majority of these "appeals" are resolved to the satisfaction of all parties.

6. Does Indiana American Water turn off service to addresses with unpaid sewage bills? When did that practice begin?

Yes, but only after the account holder has failed to address the disconnect notice (which is mailed to the account holder after 120 days of delinquency). This policy began in October of 2014 and is based on *Terre Haute City Code* Sec 9-111(d). Note: In the past (before TPI), Indiana American Water would shut off water for unpaid water/sewer bills.

7. Does the City Building Inspector condemn properties with unpaid sewage bills? When did that practice begin? Please provide a code citation.

We have not condemned any property solely based on failure to pay a sewer bill. The inspectors do have the authority to do that under Indiana Administrative Code 16-1.3-63 Section 601.1

8. Which city staff members can answer citizen sewage billing questions knowledgeably? Please provide names, titles and phone numbers.

Jean Wright, Sewage Billing Clerk  
Susie Dillon, Sewage Billing Clerk  
Bobbie Natale, IT/Sewage Billing Support  
Brad Speidel, IT Director (Sewage Billing Project Coordinator)

All sewage billing related issues go to 812-244-2343 and are routed to one of the above staff.